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Model for Designing Affiliated Clothes with Local Identity

Model oblikovanja pripadnostnih oblačil z lokalno identiteto

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Abstract

The paper describes a new research methodology through design that has also proven relevant for the field of fashion design. According to some scientific opinions, the field of research in fashion design does not meet scientific standards, although that research produces original knowledge and products. The newly and artificially designed affiliated clothing image, which addresses the needs of tourism, found its inspiration in cultural heritage. The inspiration for the creation of symbolic signs and their application in individual garments was carefully selected from the story of local heritage. Newly designed clothing inspired by the story of local heritage should promote the recognition and acceptance of the affiliated clothing image as part of the identity of people from a particular region. This paper presents the definition and analysis of design processes for a known client, in this case a tourism organisation. The designer seeks practical and innovative solutions throughout the design process, from the definition of the local story to be interpreted, through collaboration with a client and the public, to the design of an affiliated symbol and its application in the clothing image, the production planning process and manufacturing, and finally the presentation of products to the public and the promotion of those products. An example of best practices in the designing of affiliated clothing for Bohinj is presented, where the design in question was tested in practice. In this process, the designer took into account the fact that design, as a process, is a form of cooperation, in which the members of the development team should be respected and understood.

Keywords: tourism, authenticity, fashion design, cultural heritage

Izveček

Članek opisuje nov pristop raziskovanja s pomočjo oblikovanja, ki je pomemben tudi za področje modnega oblikovanja. V skladu z nekaterimi znanstvenimi mnenji, raziskovanje za potrebe modnega oblikovanja ne zadošča znanstvenim standardom, čeprav je produkt raziskav izvirno znanje oziroma originalni izdelki. Navdih za novoblikovana pripadnostna oblačila za potrebe turizma, izhaja iz kulturne dediščine. Osnova za oblikovanje simbolnih znakov in njihovo uporabo na posameznih oblačilih je bila skrbno izbrana lokalna dediščinska zgodba. Vizualizacija lokalne zgodbe v posamezne oblačilne kose spodbuja prepoznavnost področja in sprejetje nove pripadnostne oblačilne podobe kot del identitete lokalnih prebivalcev. V članku so opredeljeni in analizirani procesi pri oblikovanju za naročnika na primeru turistične organizacije. Oblikovalec išče praktične in inovativne rešitve skozi celoten proces oblikovanja, od definicije izhodiščne zgodbe, preko sodelovanja z naročnikom, vključevanja lokalnega prebivalstva, do oblikovanja in aplikacije simbolnih znakov v oblačilno podobo, priprave proizvodnje in izdelave ter predstavitve izdelkov javnosti. Predstavljen je primer dobre prakse oblikovanja pripadnostnih oblačil za Bohinj, s katerim je bil praktično preizkušen model oblikovanja. Oblikovalec v njem upošteva vodilo, da je oblikovanje kot proces oblika sodelovanja, v katerem spoštuje in razume člane razvojnega tima.

Ključne besede: turizem, avtentičnost, modno oblikovanje, kulturna dediščina

1 Introduction

As a fashion designer, I was asked to design garments (*uniforms*) for a local tourism organisation in Bohinj. The new affiliated clothing design is to be used as a uniform for workers at tourist information centres. It should be the representative clothing of staff in their workplace, and of the local inhabitants when they present a particular destination, local products and services.

The story of that destination should be told through clothing, while its visual appearance should serve as a “clue” to the local stories that the destination would like to present. The visual appearance of clothing should at once evoke the traditional vibe of the destination, the theme of interpretation and the geographical characteristics of the region. A clothing image should also be consistent with the way customers dress, and be adapted to working conditions and job diversity, with a comfortable cut and materials that are easy to maintain. Staff should identify themselves with the clothing and feel good wearing it. The clothing must therefore allow for combining and individual accessories.

If we follow Knific, [1] who emphasises that numerous meanings are attached to a clothing image, which through its appearance completes a comprehensive visual image of the mythical stories that describe it, we can achieve all objectives through sound structural design. The primary challenge in design concerns the visual interpretation of selected heritage stories and the way they are applied in clothing, so that visitors will at once relate them to a particular destination, while local inhabitants will accept them as their own.

Tourism staff and representatives of Bohinj usually wear their own modern clothing. At the main Tourist Information Centre in Bohinj, where the staff are visitors’ first contact with the destination, employees dress in work clothes (black trousers, a white blouse, a neckerchief and a red coat).

Local inhabitants understand the typical clothing of Bohinj to be the “Bohinj national costume” (i.e. a Bohinj version of the national costume) or semblances of the historical clothing image of Bohinj Alpine herdsmen. Generally, they are not acquainted with what is the “correct alpine herdsmen” or the “correct Bohinj costume” clothing image according to historical clothing heritage and affiliated costumes. They thus rely on stereotyped perceptions.

Consequently, when they want to dress in a style typical of Bohinj (in Bohinj costume or Alpine herdsmen costume), they simplify cuts, search for cheap clothing solutions, and combine modern fashion that deviates significantly from the authentic presentation of historical clothing, which should be based on historical facts [1]. The feeling that something is authentic (even if it is not based on historical facts) is the key factor affecting the choice and recognition of elements of cultural heritage [2], and it is also the essential element for the holistic perception of the identity and style of a tourist area. As Copeland and Hodges [3] determined, the clothing themes of the representatives and performers at festivals, and presentations of a destination play a key role in the perception of what is traditional or an interpretation of heritage. Affiliated clothing allows the community to be recognisable from the outside, and reinforces an essential identity communication between its members. Through a clothing image, both tourism workers and local inhabitants are able to convey a message within the community and to visitors, as well. By dressing “traditionally”, members not only present an image, but also demonstrate their perception of local traditions [4]. This involves the aesthetic experience through which all senses are stimulated and garments serve as the medium of communication with a group, strengthening a certain aesthetic sense of belonging and presenting themselves [4].

Affiliated costumes can be considered a defining factor of a destination’s image and local identity. Based on a practical example, we will attempt to answer the questions of how to find and interpret local stories, and how to apply newly designed symbols in affiliated clothing (“local costume”), so that it will be recognised as being an authentic reflection of Bohinj.

1.1 Cultural heritage and authenticity

Cultural heritage is closely related to the development of nationhood and countries. It represents the basis of the collective identity and the self-respect of an individual and society, as it answers the basic questions of who we are, where we come from and what we belong to [5]. A common cultural heritage connects the members of a group and excludes those who do not belong to the group. In order to be able to exclude “others”, heritage cannot be universal. The main purpose of heritage is a subjective

pride in the history of a community that reveals its identity and glorifies its values [5]. As cultural heritage develops, history can be misinterpreted; it becomes a fabrication that in time, or because of its continuity over an extended period of time, can become an authentic memory of itself. Heritage can be recreated in order to make it attractive for modern times, and to adapt it to our image and wishes [6]. Bogataj synthesises the dimensions and the meaning of heritage into three concepts: continuity – memory; identity – reminder, and alternative – challenge [7]. The most important is continuity. The reappearance of elements of heritage over an extended period of time causes people to recognise these elements as local, original and authentic [1]. The perception and choice of cultural heritage is influenced by authenticity [2]. Authenticity is a problematic and insufficiently explored concept that hinders its practical application [8]. There are many types and meanings of authenticity, i.e. as an attribute of objects (object-based) and as an existential experience of the “true self” (existential authenticity) [8, 9]. The notion of authentic identifies something that is genuine, real, not invented or virtual, and something that is in accordance with broadly accepted, long-standing tradition and reflects the character of a certain time [6, 10], but is in fact a great part of the phenomena that are today understood as the tradition that we invented, or at least pieced together in a particular historical and social context [11].

The reality and experience of local inhabitants and visitors is shaped by various structural contrasts, i.e. distinctions between the modern and the primitive, the sacred and the shallow, insiders and outsiders, reality and show, tourists and intellectuals [12]. These can be associated with the concept of authenticity, which reflects the immense complexity of interactions involving a cultural conflict, an identity quest, the purpose of the use and various dialectical tensions that exist between tradition and change, reality and fictional history and contemporaneity, and culture and individuality [13]. The authenticity and historical meaning of an item are merely evaluated by the individual's opinion [14]; it is a socially and above all individually constructed and evaluated perception of experience [15].

The post-modernist tourist is an affection-driven, experience-seeking hedonist, who does not judge authenticity from an intellectual distance, but

through emotional experience; an adventurer, who does not separate consumption from any other experience in life [16]. In terms of post-modernism, as mentioned above, authenticity is a socially and individually constructed and evaluated perception and experience, and can be influenced (claimed, presented, assured, authorised, and promoted) by tourism managers [15, 17].

The commercial presentation of cultural heritage or of culture itself has two different sides. Some authors cf. [18-20] claim that anything created and offered for commercial purposes automatically loses its authenticity (i.e. its natural meaning and value). Evidently, however, commercial presentation is often necessary for tourists to recognise the authenticity of cultural heritage [21], and often keeps traditional cultures and customs alive that would otherwise be lost [22]. The intent of the commodification of cultural heritage does not destroy its authenticity, but exposes its exchange value [23]. Tourism does, however, undoubtedly bring both positive and negative effects to the local economy and the integrity of heritage cf. [24, 25].

In our case, we are inventing new affiliated clothing that is supposed to become part of cultural heritage – authentic clothing from Bohinj. The interpretation of heritage – traditional stories – in a modern clothing image for tourism purposes may encompass both commercial presentation in a modern form and authentic content that should be recognised through affiliated symbols.

1.2 *Affiliated dress*

Dress, especially affiliated clothing, is a form of non-verbal communication – a means of interaction that conveys a message through symbolism. Affiliated clothing is a type of dress that facilitates the reception and promotion of ideas, and makes it easier for individuals and groups to identify the roles that they are to present through their clothes [1]. In the region involved in this study, expressing affiliation through a clothing image is mostly associated with affiliated costumes, which are understood to be costumes for special occasions [26]. The development of the regional affiliated costume began in the second half of 19th century, as a special means of manifesting identity through a clothing image [27]. To construct the regional affiliated costume, individual clothing pieces and accessories were taken from the clothing image of the peasantry. These components (parts of the

clothing image) conveyed a new and clear meaning because they were used to express regional identity before “others” (mostly through folklore programmes and the organisation of traditional events for tourists, where affiliated costumes and their various versions are presented). They became symbols that society associates with its roots, and identifies with and recognises “as its own”. In this way, the clothing image and its individual parts gained the status of clothing heritage in the eyes of the members of the imagined community [1]. Therefore, the identity that is expressed through clothing should not only be sought in cultural heritage and its symbols, but also, and above all, in the recreated stereotypes that were asserted through clothing heritage. According to Copeland and Hodges, modern forms of national costumes are in sharp visual contrast to traditional styles and performing traditions, as business and costume-making skills have been replaced by mass production. Transformations from individuality to uniformity and consequently to modifications based on one’s own comfort level can also be observed. A shift in traditional dress styles has fostered a division between those who emphasise tradition and those who embrace the idea of the modernisation of traditional costumes [1, 3].

Under the influence of tourism, artificial constructs are emerging that falsely represent the clothing of the past and invented traditions. They also gain new images through repeated interpretations in traditional events, and over time they gain “recurrent authenticity” and are accepted as “authentic” by tourists and cultural producers [1, 28, 29].

The design of a clothing image for the Bohinj region is based on a similar premise – the artificial construction of a clothing image that seeks inspiration in cultural heritage and that will spread the notion of a “traditional” clothing heritage by repeated use at traditional events and tourist shows. Thus, the constructed clothing image should over time be recognised and become part of the identity of the people of Bohinj. The newly designed affiliated clothing should express the character of the region stylistically and visually. It should be in line with the guidelines of the tourist destination, encompass the elements of not only previous clothing practices and forms, but also current clothing fashions and, through subtly included affiliation symbols, it should also enable local inhabitants and visitors alike to identify the clothing as coming from Bohinj.

2 Methods and model development

The research methodology through design that has also proven relevant for the field of fashion design is, according to Findelie, the most relevant for design practice. However, it has also been pointed out that this research method does not meet scientific standards, although this project-grounded research approach produces original knowledge [30]. Because very few researchers are involved in scientific research for the needs of fashion [31], the scientific approach in design for, in and through fashion is deemed negligible.

A model of interpretation of cultural heritage in clothing has been developed in active research through design in two projects dealing with the design of affiliated clothing for tourism. One of them will be presented in the following chapter.

The projects were managed according to Borja de Mozota’s [32] statements that design is an interdisciplinary field, where the active design process involves the following activities:

- problem solving,
- creation,
- systemisation,
- coordination, and
- cultural contribution.

Furthermore, design can be also equated with management, as it follows the systematic, logical and orderly process of problem solving. The designer assumes the function of the coordinator and is therefore involved in the entire design process as an innovator and trendsetter, an initiator of changes and someone who puts forth ideas [32]. However, according to Borja de Mozota, the design process relies on the 4C theory [32]:

- creativity: something new that does not exist yet,
- complexity: integration / selection of various parameters and options,
- compromise: taking into account different influential parameters (costs, functionality, material, durability, etc.), and
- choice: choice between various options (from the basic concept to the smallest details in production).

Affiliated dress should become a symbol that community members can identify with. Its form should include the correct balance of fashion, trends, cultural aspects, aesthetics, comfort, durability and price

[33]. At the same time, it must include symbolic signs and elements from the past, as well as clothing practices that must be appropriately modified to create a new tradition. This is a phenomenon that can be contextualised by Hobsbawm’s term [34] “invented traditions”. These are created in contemporaneity, with the reiteration and implementation of certain rules that create allusions to continuity with the past [34]. The design process, in which cultural heritage is interpreted into affiliated clothing, first includes the definition of a platform, the meaning of a symbol/story/heritage, which relates to determining local characteristics and stereotypically recognisable signs, cultural heritage, past and contemporary dressing practices, the selection of local materials and various technological solutions, as well as cooperation, coordination and communication with the public and the client. This confirms the previously mentioned argument that a designer is a manager and coordinator who must identify all of the relevant facts of a project (complexity and compromise), while design is a process that involves creation and decision making (choice). Design, as an

element of the entire process, plays a smaller but very important role, where design skills and good knowledge of cultural heritage is of a great importance. As it turned out in practice, a designer also requires the competences needed to manage a project: inventiveness, communication skills and a sense for details, as well as good knowledge of materials and technical solutions.

3 Discussion

A new model for transforming cultural heritage into a clothing image consists of five important and indispensable phases:

1. preparation/research – choice of a representative local story,
2. designing an affiliated symbol,
3. designing clothing with the application of that affiliated symbol,
4. the production planning process and manufacturing, and
5. the promotion and acceptance of clothing.

Table 1: Activities in process of designing affiliated clothing

Design process	Designing of affiliated clothing	Interaction with the 4C theory
Problem solving	Preparation/research – choice of a representative local story: <i>cooperation between a designer and an ethnologist, anthropologist and the local tourism organisation, local authorities and future users</i>	Complexity Compromise Choice
Creation	Design of an affiliated symbol: <i>design skills and good knowledge of local cultural heritage and traditions; dialog with local inhabitants, the client and future users</i>	Creativity Complexity Compromise Choice
Systemisation	Design of clothing pieces with the application of an affiliated symbol: <i>design skills in clothing, including all constrains (client requirements, future users’ wishes, technological and cost performance limitations, etc.)</i>	Creativity Complexity Compromise Choice
Coordination	Production – the production planning process: <i>technical planning design, material selection, technology, management of the production process and timing, and cost and resource management</i>	Creativity Complexity Compromise Choice
Cultural contribution	Promotion and acceptance of clothing: <i>promotion of an idea, selected story, symbol and affiliated clothing via different media, cultural and other events, and tourism promotions</i>	Creativity Complexity Compromise Choice

3.1 Preparation/research – choice of a representative local story – inspiration

- Literature review: ethnological and historical records, cultural heritage and traditional crafts.
- Overview: tourism and local development strategies.
- Interview with local inhabitants: local traditions, living heritage stories, traditional crafts and skills.
- Clothing habits: past and contemporary clothing habits, communication with the client and representatives of the community.

In order to form a new group identity, the history, traditions, stereotypes, image of the region and development strategies must be reconstructed. A presentation story and symbols of the region must be extracted from it, thereby creating the inspiration for the creation of symbolic affiliation symbols and signs. It is difficult to define the story, as the identity of a certain (even national) region is not an unchangeable fact passively handed down from generation to generation, but is rather a series of interconnected trends that occasionally go in different directions. For this reason, each generation must decide which of these it will accept and build on them further [35]. In the Bohinj region, several authentic underlying topics can be found that are suitable for a presentational heritage story to serve as a basis for the formation of the symbolic signs of an affiliated clothing image. However, the chosen story must also be linked to the orientation of the tourism destination and, more importantly, the local inhabitants must identify themselves with that story. In the *Strategy of the Development and Marketing of the Bohinj Tourist Destination 2012-2016*, the biodiversity of indigenous plants and wild flower meadows are highlighted as the main distinctive advantages of the region over other tourist areas. This is the reason why, in searching for an appropriate heritage story, the focus was on concepts relating to floral richness. Among these, living stories connected with the experience of local inhabitants and their personal involvement were most interesting. Lowenthal explains that only the traditions that we are touched by, and not those that we are taught, are those that we sense [5]. For the symbolic sign, we considered using the iris of Bohinj (*Iris pallida* subsp. *Cengialti* f. *vochinensis*), described as early as 1917 by the botanist Alfonz Paulin, who named it as an independent subspecies after

Bohinj [36]. However, research conducted for the *Strategy of the Development and Marketing of the Bohinj Tourist Destination* found that local inhabitants do not identify themselves with it. Further searching leads to the article by Cvetek entitled “*Flora in the Storytelling of Bohinj*”, which describes flowers that are close to the local inhabitants, as they connect it with their own experience and personal involvement. It also features a description of the “*Bohinj Bouquet*” and the symbolic meaning of its flowers: “*At the Cow’s Ball, we can see how Alpine herdsmen and herdswomen drive cows decorated with an alpine bouquet on top. /.../ It had to include edelweiss, gentians, rhododendrons and nigritella*” [37]. The article also features interviews with older local inhabitants who discussed their attitudes towards the flowers in the bouquet. It also tells about gathering the flowers and why: “*We gave them as gifts to friends; if someone knew you were going to the mountains, they asked for them. It was a beautiful present from the mountains.*” [37]. The deciding factor for the choice of the story was the confirmation that these flowers are closely connected with the lives of the local inhabitants, and that tradition is still very much alive today. In this way, the Bohinj Bouquet symbolically represents that tradition and the flowers, as a very common theme, as an ideal starting point for stimulating personal emotions and storytelling that give added value to clothing. Given existing images, the choice of a symbol is not difficult to update and can also be recognised in a stylised form. In this way, the Bohinj Bouquet becomes a symbolic affiliation symbol.

3.2 Designing an affiliated symbol

- Search for the appearance/application of the symbol in the past.
- Graphic design of the symbol.
- Consideration of technological possibilities and limitations to application.
- Verification of whether the symbol is recognisable, and the exchange of views about it with the client and local inhabitants.

We approached the design process of the clothing image to express the identity of Bohinj using the “creative thinking” design method. This approach understands design as a process, a way of cooperation, where the designer is part of an interdisciplinary team and the design itself conforms to the understanding and vision of the individuals who will wear the clothing [38].

As a design inspiration, the chosen underlying story of the Bohinj Bouquet played an important role in the process of creative thinking. The creation of the symbol was carried out in two steps. The first step involved designing a symbol to be applied to individual affiliated garments. The symbol should facilitate the perception and identification of community members. In the second step, individual garments were designed, with the symbol applied to them. Based on the chosen story of the Bohinj Bouquet and old embroideries, a simple stylised symbol was designed, consisting of four alpine flowers: edelweiss (*Leontopodium alpinum*), gentian (*Gentiana clusii*), hairy alpenrose (*Rhododendron hirsutum*) and nigritella (*Nigritella nigra*).



Figure 1: Graphic design of the symbol “Bohinj Bouquet” [Photo: J. Vilman Proje] and knitted cardigan with the applied symbol [Photo: M. Sodja]

3.3 Designing clothing pieces with the applied affiliated symbol

- Croquis images of clothing.
- Selection of a production technology.
- Colour collection.

- Selection of fabrics.
- Preparation of motifs for technological application.
- Production of prototype garments.
- Evaluation of the collection of affiliated clothing with the client and potential wearers (representatives of the community – local inhabitants).

The newly designed symbol serves as the symbolic sign for both the identification and creation of the identity of the clothing image. The decision to make the most representative affiliated garment pieces using knitting techniques was closely linked to historical clothing habits. Hand-knitted pieces were essential in the past, in both the male and female wardrobe.

We presented the sketches and the idea of affiliated clothing, with a knitted cardigan as the central piece of the newly designed collection, first to the client (in this case representatives of the local tourism organisation) and then to the potential wearers (employees of the tourism organisation and members of the community). Some doubts were raised about the lack of a ‘business look’, with the knitted cardigan instead of a jacket. However, the majority expressed a positive opinion about the knitwear, especially in terms of comfort. The knitwear (cardigan) with the motif of the Bohinj Bouquet was recognised as the basic piece of the newly designed affiliated clothing image, which was agreed by tourism representatives and potential wearers alike.

The cardigan was produced using yarns (55% cotton and 45% acrylic) in speckled grey, burgundy and beige, forming the basis of the emerging clothing image. The complete design pattern for the women’s cardigan derived from knitted samples, while a fitted cut was chosen, as it is suitable for different body types. Three versions of the cardigans with the same motif in different colour combinations were produced. Sample fabrics for other garments were chosen according to the colour combinations used for cardigans. These matched the style and rounded off the whole clothing image, and were presented to the client and potential wearers again.

3.4 Production –production planning process

- Evaluation of prototypes with the client and potential wearers, and corrections.
- Final selection of fabrics, colours, cuts and pattern.

- Production planning process: technical drawings of clothes, selection of manufacturers/contractors, cooperation with manufacturers and management.
- Graphic design of labels and packaging.

The complete design pattern for the women's cardigan derived from knitted prototypes. We chose a fitted cut for the cardigans, as it is suitable for different body types. The hems of the knitwear were finished with a wavy border. The shape of the men's cardigans followed the same concept as the women's – in the same colour combination of speckled grey and burgundy, but in a plain knitting technique, while the motif was much less prominent than on the women's cardigans, as the bouquet only appears in the striped pattern on the chest and collar. The chosen model of the men's cardigan was simple, with a ribbed welt at the bottom and on the sleeves, with a high collar, and a zipper.

The same knitting technique was also used for a belt, scarf and cap. We also added a destination logo on the cardigan sleeve, scarf edge and cap cuff.

The colour combination of speckled grey and burgundy were selected for the cardigan; a burgundy checked cotton fabric for the blouse; a beige cotton pique jersey fabric for T-shirts; and a dark blue light elastic denim for the skirt.

Besides the cardigans, other garments from the collection, according to selected sketches, were also produced: two versions of the skirt and two women's blouses (in plain and checked fabric), and men's and women's T-shirts made of jersey material. In the final phase of the design process, we presented all the prototype models and possible combinations to the client and employees of the local tourism organisation – future wearers of the affiliated garments. In the final selection of clothing pieces, the suggestions of community members (potential wearers) were considered, such as the possibility of wearing the tops with jeans, the cut of the skirt, colour combinations, etc. After the tourism organisation confirmed the whole collection, the chosen clothing pieces officially became the affiliated clothing with the identity of Bohinj.

The knitted women's and men's cardigans, and a scarf and cap in the same style are also sold in a souvenir shop. The items are sold in gift packages made of felt, to which a compact brochure is tied, describing the story of the Bohinj Bouquet.



Figure 2: Affiliated clothing image of the Bohinj region [Photo: U. Urbanc], scarf and cap with a gift package (sold in a gift shop) [Photo: M. Sodja]

3.5 Promotion and acceptance of affiliated clothing

- Promotion of the Bohinj Bouquet story and affiliated clothing via different media, events and tourist promotions.
- Expanding the recognition of the affiliated symbol – the Bohinj Bouquet motif – with application on a variety of products.
- Monitoring the sale of clothing pieces to local inhabitants and tourists.

We presented the newly-designed affiliated clothing at a fashion show during the opening ceremony of the International Wild Flower Festival in Bohinj, which is attended by many local inhabitants each year. The presentation of the affiliated clothing was highlighted in the invitation to the opening ceremony, and promoted in an article in the local newspaper, where the story of the Bohinj Bouquet was also retold. When announcing the fashion show featuring the affiliated clothing, the host told the story of the Bohinj Bouquet, associating it with the clothing and emphasising that “people in Bohinj will finally be dressed according to the identity of Bohinj”. During the festival, the staff of the Tourist Information Centre, who are also members of the community, and those engaged in the design process wore the affiliated clothes and gave information to local inhabitants and visitors about the inspirational story and the possibilities of buying the items. They did so with enthusiasm, which further contributed to the recognisability of the clothes.

The anticipated positive effect of the design process led to the achievement of the main objective – local inhabitants recognised and accepted the affiliated dress with the applied heritage-based symbol. The possibility of being involved in the design process gave a special relevance to each individual, as well as a sense of belonging. Female members were much more passionately involved in the creation of the women’s affiliated clothing image of Bohinj. Moreover, they did not take the task of spreading and strengthening the idea of affiliated clothing as an obligation, but as a pleasure. With that, we also fulfilled the desire to transform local heritage into a newly-made clothing image with a modern feel. With the transformation of the local traditional story into a symbol and comfortable affiliated clothing, individuals (such as tourist guides, vendors of local crafts, and employees of pubs and taverns) have the

possibility of promoting the heritage of the community for commercial purposes, while at the same time subconsciously preserving their own heritage. With repeated use and a continuous presence, individuals could have a positive influence on the adoption of new affiliated clothing that could eventually become a trademark of the community.

4 Conclusion

The task of designing an affiliated clothing image extends beyond the field of fashion design. The key moment in the process is the definition and choice of a local heritage story that follows the development strategy, lifestyle and vibe of the destination, and the non-material heritage that is still alive among the local inhabitants and that identifies them.

The newly-designed affiliated clothing expresses the character of the region both stylistically and visually. Thanks to carefully-studied planning and its association with the story, the clothing is in line with the guidelines of the tourist destination, encompassing the elements of not only previous clothing practices and forms, but also current clothing fashions. Through a subtly applied affiliation symbol, it also enables local inhabitants and visitors alike to identify the clothing as coming from *Bohinj*.

Engaging the client and the future wearers of the affiliated clothing in the process of design is also an important factor, as they were in this way included in the decision-making process. This ensured a personal relationship between the users and the clothes, through which identification with the affiliated clothing image was achieved, while the clothing was also more effectively promoted. The individual pieces, especially the cardigans, are understood as a part of their own creation. Including the parties in the design process meant that the wearers became familiar with the story depicted on the garments. This information could thus be passed on to local inhabitants and visitors.

The artificially constructed affiliated clothing image seeks inspiration in cultural heritage that should spread the notion of “traditional” clothing heritage by the means of reiteration and use at tourist, traditional and business events. Thus, the constructed clothing image should be recognised over time as part of the identity of the inhabitants of Bohinj. It

facilitates the integration of local cultural heritage into modern life, and to the recreation of a story through which Bohinj can be identified, thus creating a new tradition.

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