Sophie Chapdelaine de Montvalon

sophiechapdelaine@orange.fr

06 64 21 42 03

Communication Project -

Business History - Erasmus Rotterdam

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Prisunic: An approach of an ecosystem of style in a French retail chain, 1949 - 1969.

This communication aims to question the creative process at work in the French retail chain Prisunic between 1949 and 1969.

Prisunic was created in 1931 on the concept of value chain. In the aftermath of World War Two, the enterprise shifted its strategy and created a studio of design and fashion from scratch. A number of fashion designers, graphic designers, photographers and artistic director joined a team in charge of the packaging, of the advertising campaigns, and eventually appeared a range of product designs and fashion collections- womenswear, menswear and child wear. The analysis of the career path of those actors of style enlightens the approach of mediation in fashion. The purpose is to explore the interaction of the designers of the retail chain, with the designers of its predicting agency and the fashion journalists, notably *Elle* fashion magazine - in a process, which was at the time termed 'La Mafia du Style' - which could be translated into the *mafiosi of style*.

Eventually the communication is questioning the change in the consumption patterns in post war France and to which extent both Prisunic and its suppliers' factories were challenged in their organization and production processes.

Sophie Chapdelaine de Montvalon is Canadian and French. She is a lecturer at Istituto Marangoni, Ecole Centrale de Paris and NYU Paris. Her book 'Le Beau pour tous. Maïmé Arnodin et Denise Fayolle, l'aventure de deux femmes de style: mode, graphisme, design' was published in 2009 at éditions L'Iconoclaste, Paris.