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***I love freedom!* – The Role of Art in Social Movements: Women’s Strike Protests in Poland 2020**

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Dedication

To Ana Luisa Sanchez Laws who is the supervisor everyone dreams about & to people who chose art as their life path, guys, your job is more important than you even think.

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I would like to thank my family for being amazing, my Emilie for being proud of me, loving and supporting every day, my Ciupi for his presence and Marija for her brain that always knows the answers for academic questions.

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And thank you Norway for considering freedom one of the most important values, please, do not change that, ever.

Abstract

This thesis refers to the fields of art, social science and politics and the role of artworks in social movements. It emphasizes the meaning and power of art in social movements. Using concepts of structural violence, protest art, activism, and transformative power of art as theoretical background as well as multimodal discourse analysis as methodology, it provides answers to research questions. They are related to artist's motivation to create during social movement and the way the art was interpreted and used by the protesters. The main focus and subject of analysis for this thesis are social movements known as Women's Strike in Poland in 2020 opposing abortion restrictions imposed on women by the right-wing ruling party.

Key words: protest art; social science; social movements; structural violence; activism; social change; multimodal discourse analysis

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1. Introduction

Polish abortion law has always been rigorous. However, it previously allowed abortion in cases of a severe and permanent disability of the fetus, pregnancy as an effect of the rape, or incurable and life-threatening disease. In October 2020, a Constitutional Tribunal consisting mainly of judges appointed by the ruling Law and Justice Party (Polish: *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS) dominated by United Right, tightened the law on abortion in Poland. Almost all cases of abortion were made illegal, including those mentioned above.

These events in Poland regarding the restrictions of abortion law have caused social resistance, expressed in the form of numerous protests known as “The Women’s Strike.” Even though the Women’s Strike protests have not changed the Constitutional Tribunal’s decision and restrictions have been brought into force (despite the huge opposition of the Polish society) the strength of the protests was significant and marked a new beginning for social awareness around these issues. The Women’s Strikes contributed to building a collective social identity characterized by expressing resistance to the right-wing government and its policies of division, both between society and government, and within society itself.

1.1. Literature review

The literature review draws upon the interpretation of the role of art in social movements, its reference to structural violence and connection between art and politics regarding the ethnography of conflict. It also presents the response by means of art to the government’s policies in the context of the Women’s Strike protests. The literature review reveals many gaps in the research of art’s role and influence in the field of peace and conflict studies.

Street performances, producers and performers of music, art projects and other creative expressions are usually disregarded as influential and meaningful factors of social change. Protest art has multiple forms of expression as well communication. It is not only instrumental to movement’s leaders’ political agenda but makes important and unique contributions to social change (Olcese, 2009). During the Women’s Strike protests, art in the form of graffiti, posters, music, street performances was ubiquitous. However, it was not given enough attention as a factor enhancing social change.

The autonomous status of art in pursuing social change is not recognized, and this is reflected by the small number of theoretical and empirical studies of protest art. Studies

influenced by the European New Social Movements theory present a less instrumental understanding of art as means of collective expression which makes it able to reach the broader culture. However, they neglect the individual dimension of resistance produced by art. Also, not sufficient empirical research has been conducted on the actual art expressions to which they attribute such cultural significance (Olcese, 2009). Exploring the interaction of social life (social movements) and art can highlight how artistic expression reflects social life. More importantly for this research, however, is how art affects social movements and social life generally, what can be understood as art's 'transformative power' (Rosenthal & Flacks, 2015). Analysis of the protests in Poland may show that they were a form of social movement expressing resistance to the government's policies regarding the abortion law. Art attracted attention to the prevalent structural violence expressed by such law changes. The increasing importance of street art (graffiti, street performances) is emphasized in context of transformation of the violent infrastructural strategies of oppressive state governance into a canvas that articulates calls for democratic and political freedom (Davies, 2017). It is significant in case of the protests in Poland as their street art is considered a set of unique resistant techniques reflecting different kinds of structural violence inscribed into the infrastructural layouts of the city. It serves to raise global awareness of structural forms of violence, it gives a voice to the city understood as the citizens feeling oppression from the state. It constitutes the connection of local acts of creative resistance and alternative practice (Davies, 2107), and a bonding mechanism that helped to construct a collective social identity during Polish protests.

Polish government's actions were the subject of reference in the process of the formation of the protests. Polish mainstream media presented art as a response to political violations of the human rights. For many artists protests constituted an inspiration to create in order to visualize in a creative way the actual state of affairs and to express feelings and resistance as well as lack of consent to the government's actions (Właszczuk, 2020). The majority chose art as a form to support the society providing them with graphics and posters to their private use during demonstrations. However, the way these artworks were used may be inconsistent with the artists' intention and idea while creating works of art.

The artists who contributed to the protest art growth were not only the authors of the visual arts, but also those for whom music was the main form of expression. Protest songs gained popularity during the Women's Strike protests. Music has always been present in politics in Poland as it was referring to main political changes. Only during the period of the abortion restriction protests many songs were composed; according to Barbara Erling (2020)

songwriters are no longer afraid to express their political view and opinions. All the songs referring to Women's Strike have one thing in common, they present anti-governmental attitude and resistance as well as lack of consent to the structural violence gleams. In this case the artists' intention of creation and expressed feelings met the audience's emotions and opinions as they were willingly used during the demonstrations as a hymn of the whole social movement, therefore, created one harmonious voice of the society. Their analysis could cast light on the power of music in forming social attitudes and constructing collective identity and help find connections between art and politics from the artists' as well as the society's perspective regarding the Women's Strike protests.

Referring to the connection of art and politics, it is important for research to acknowledge the goals that protest movement leaders aimed to achieve. The main goals were: full women rights and the right to abortion on demand; recognition of the LGBT rights; secular state; modern education; stopping fascism; government for everyone not only for the Right-Wing Party; recognition of climate change matters; modernization of the education system; improvement of the public health system; stopping public television propaganda (*Czego domaga się Strajk Kobiet? 13 postulatów - Polityka - rp.pl*, 2020).

It must be noted that while the goals of protest movement leaders are important, they go beyond the main focus of this thesis. The leaders, their attitude, and approach is different than the one of the society at large, as they are the source of constituting the goals on behalf of the society to which the artists belong to as well. Usually, they are involved in political matters and follow them for a longer period of time, unlike the regular citizens who join the protests and do not have to have any previous link with socio-political affairs. This research focuses on regular citizens and artists and their motivations, goals, and attitude. Therefore, whether protest leaders' goals were fulfilled or not and what was art's contribution to this task is not going to be answered in this thesis, although it perhaps constitutes a good point of departure for further research.

1.2. Problem Statement and Relevance to Peace and Conflict Studies

Undoubtedly, art has played an important role in the protests as a form of expression of the opinions and feelings of the artists as well as the citizens. However, it is not clear whether the same works were used in the same intention, which is meeting the artist's intention of creation. In these protests, citizens protesting government's decisions related to the abortion law have used a range of artistic products (music, posters, street performances, graffiti, leaflets,

paintings) to express their dissent. Many artists have contributed to the protests by sharing and making public their art to enable all protesters to use it. By doing so, these artists risk having their work used in ways that are different to their original idea (for instance, just expressing their emotions and opinion). Citizens can use artworks for other purposes, such as for example trying to unify others around a given political message or creating division in the society.

These briefly described events and the repetitive motif of art in them have encouraged me to try to find and document the connection between art, social movements, and psychosocial perspectives on peace and conflict transformation. A psychosocial perspective of the definition of conflict in the field of peace and security has been presented previously by Demola Akinyoade (2013), who emphasizes that:

‘the classical theories argue that conflict is a process “of group formation and differentiation – particularly the role that images, (mis)perceptions, stereotyping, and dehumanization plays in decision-making – lead to violent conflict. [Assuming] as common to macro theories [...] that the roots of conflict stem from group competition and the pursuit of power and resources.’

Processes of social change can be understood as emerging from different groups in society, which can lead to violence and conflicts. Investigating the role of art in peace and conflict studies can be helpful to understand how powerful art can be in a social movement context. The way social movements use art is an understudied area. There is a need to examine whether power of art can influence people’s minds and opinions as well as make them express their stance. What’s more, the juxtaposition of artist's intention and the way art was interpreted should be examined. Art used in protests can be interpreted according to the genuine idea of the artist. It can as a side effect promote social change, but it is primarily about expressing individual opinions.

The Women’s Strikes in Poland provide the opportunity to investigate the role of art in social movements from two distinct perspectives: a) from the perspective of the artists who had their contribution in protests by artistic means, and b) from the point of view of the audience who were the receivers of the art and main “authors” of the social movement itself. Both of these may be connected by way of an investigation into the function of the artwork as an independent text that can have multiple meanings. This connection between them, this common

ground, could help us understand what their interdependence is, and how the fields of protest art theory and peace and conflict studies overlap.

1.3. Research Objectives and Contribution to Academic Research

The main objective of this research is to contribute to the field of protest art by introducing an alternative approach of perception of peace and conflict and factors influencing their emergence and the way they progress. The research refers to and provides remarks relevant to the intersection of politics, social movements, and art thanks to applied theoretical and methodological frameworks deriving from peace studies, social studies, and linguistics. This work aims at mapping the extent to which art in Women's Strikes has been used to promote social change independently from the political goals. It also presents how art was received by the audience (conveying political meanings/increasing resentment towards government or not) and on what basis it can be considered activist art of transformative power. In order to achieve that the following research questions were formulated.

RQ1. What are the motivations the artists and songwriters express regarding protests art for the Women's Strike?

RQ2. How did the protesters use these graphic artworks and songs and how does it correspond to the artists' expressed intent?

The subject of analysis is visual art as well as complete artwork of text, music, and video. Analysis of 6 graphics and song together with videoclip according to chosen methodology and with support of conceptual framework is expected to contribute to findings providing answers for above-presented questions.

1.4. Research Limitations

The main limitations detected on the stage of planning the research were connected to the fact that it was supposed to be conducted one and half years from the events in Poland in 2020. With a span of time the emotions, involvement and devotion to certain movement fade away, so it was not considered relevant to conduct interviews with the artists and people involved, but to take advantage of testimonies published online no later than in 2020. The goal was to focus on the protests and art and the effect of both in the pink of the strikes.

Another limitation that was noted is the fact that as an author of the research I am of

Polish origin, so the events in Poland refer to me personally as to the citizen of the country. Therefore, the high level of subjectivity was at risk to appear. Another potential issue was the fact that analyzing art is always complicated and it is hard to find a middle ground between subjectivity and facts. The art does not really provide us with facts and its main characteristics is the freedom of interpretation it leaves for the receivers. Hence, subjectivity constituted risk but as well the concern of imposing too square norms and rules resulting from concepts and methods used to analyze it. Artworks while analyzed cannot be treated subjectively (even though art in its principle is to be subjective and to be read subjectively), but also cannot be framed with a top-down approach. Analyzing art academically to draw expected conclusions not too personally, but also not too strictly was probably the biggest challenge of this research.

After presenting literature review inspiring to start this research and providing information on the current state of the research, as well as goals of this thesis, follows theoretical framework describing and stating relevance to the thesis. It consists of the concepts of structural violence, activism, protest art and transformative power of art. After that methodological chapter provides details about methodological tool chosen to answer research questions, multimodal discourse analysis. The last chapter followed by conclusions presents key findings and analysis of the gathered data for this qualitative research proving the accuracy of choice of the conceptual and methodological frameworks and summing up the contribution to the academic research.

2. Theoretical Framework: Art as Artists' Responses to Structural Violence

In this chapter, I explore the interdependence of art and politics as the theoretical foundation for the analysis of the Polish protests and significance of art in them. At first sight, art and politics seem to be two extremely opposite fields. However, investigating the case of art and its role in the protests in the analyzed case of Women's' Strikes in Poland proves that this is not the case. Especially in the context of the society opposing to certain occurrences, art and politics are intertwined. As I will discuss in this chapter, societal and artists' oppositional views and reactions to governments' injustice expressed through art are recognized as structural violence in the literature of peace studies.

The connection between art and politics is present and made evident thanks to protests and thanks to activists. In order to explore concepts of activism, protest art, and the transformative power of art that are relevant to this research, it is necessary to establish an overarching, unifying framework. In this thesis, structural violence inflicted by the government is identified as one of the reasons behind societal responses in the form of art. Structural

violence is thus one of the main guiding concepts underpinning the research and is discussed at length in this chapter.

Also in this chapter, previous cases of art used as way of resistance to structural violence aimed at the less powerful are also presented. It must be noted that by its very definition, art is an unlimited form of expression impossible to put in consistent frames. It has thus been difficult to find similar cases in the field of social resistance and protest movements, yet there are a few examples in the history of protests that I found to be relevant to the case of Polish strikes. Presenting them in this chapter helps further disambiguate the link between protest art and structural violence from a theoretical point of view, thus their inclusion in this chapter.

2.1. Structural Violence

The term structural violence originated in peace studies from the work of Johan Galtung (1969). Structural violence refers to social circumstances, frequently aspects of social structures as well as institutions which keep individuals from fulfilling needs, peaceful existence in the fields of economy, health, gender, and racial disparities (Galtung, 2018). Galtung spent many years investigating the subject of peace, conflict and violence and was particularly interested in indicating dimensions of violence that seem significant and can guide thinking, research and potential action to solve the most important problems (Galtung, 2018). For this thesis, the most crucial dimension is the dimension of violence committed not by actors who can be identified (personal or direct violence), but where there is no such actor and therefore the violence is indirect or structural. In both cases (direct or structural violence) individuals might be hurt, killed, mutilated or manipulated, but while direct violence is traced down to concrete persons as actors, in the case of structural violence, this is no longer meaningful. In the structure, there might not be any person who harms directly another individual. Violence is built into the structure and is visible as unequal power leading to unequal life chances.

For Galtung, violence with a clear subject-object relation is manifest as direct action. Without this relation, it is structural, silent (Galtung, 2018). What makes structural violence visible is the reaction it provokes, expressed for example through art and protests in case of abortion restriction rights in Poland, or calls for human rights, democratic and political freedom through street art in Egypt, the UK or Palestine.

The type of art used as an answer in the above-mentioned places can be encompassed by the term *street art*. Even though it is not the same type of art as the one chosen to be analyzed

in this thesis, it is relevant from the point of the context and art's function in it. Davies (2017) argues that *Street art*, known also as *graffiti*, is an expression of power to resist structural violence, since

‘it is shaped and exacerbated by-even embedded within-the physical walls of city spaces, ricocheting off into alternative and on occasion more democratic modes of urban habitation. Street art transforms the violent infrastructural strategies of oppressive state governance into canvas that articulates calls for freedom from this violence’ (Davies, 2017).

Hence, street art can be understood as a way to communicate resistance towards structural violence, to make violence visible on the walls of the cities, to make sure that structural violence is remembered. It does not communicate acceptance and gratefulness expressed by those who feel the closest to the city walls or are living in these streets or buildings (citizens, individuals, society). Rather, street artists visualize and manifests opposition to what is uneasy, problematic, painful for them, the power “from above” – that is, the structural violence.

Graffiti is usually seen as a direct, simple way of stating political subjectivity by artists and activists, announcing their integration (or lack of it) into a particular space of the city. It is also intended to communicate a message that can be politicized or not and creates a place of public engagement inviting to collaborate in its production and reading. Moreover, street art fosters solidarities against the often violent, discriminatory effects of urban walling.

The first example of art used to manifest dissent and resistance is *The 18 Day Egyptian Revolution*, which took place in January 2011. It is emblematic for revolutionary movements that marked their presence using graffiti art in Cairo. Street art use also exploded in Tahrir Square and other parts of Cairo. This was documented by two book-length projects, *Revolution Graffiti: Street Art of the New Egypt* (2013) and *Walls of Freedom* (2014) as well as many news outlets (Abaza, 2013; Lennon, 2014).

What the creativity of graffiti subculture exploited was the loosening of state hegemony. It is important to mention that the walls used as canvasses for street art had been constructed to reinstate power and limit the movements of protests. Moreover, Davies (2017) has argued that this infrastructural effort itself revealed the precarity of that power. The only power that became strongly manifested was that of art's symbolism. Added to other means of resistance, activism contributed to the abnegation of the presidency by Hosni Mubarak. It also served to support continued protests against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces.

Another meaningful example of the power of art in response to structural violence can be found in East Palestine. The Israeli separation barrier functioning as an instrument of partition and apparatus of control and observation became the *Wall*. This Wall is a symbolic pinnacle of the occupation for Israelis and Palestinians alike. Professional as well as amateur graffiti artists covered the Wall with their art to re-cast the Palestinian side of the separation barrier as a visual proof of resistance and to protest the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Even though cans of spray did not stop Israel from building the highly controversial Wall, thanks to the multifunctionality of art and its speechless power of communication, it became a weapon in the struggle for minds, hearts, and justice (Davies, 2017). The most known graffiti associated with that case is the one created by Banksy. Using nothing but paint and symbolism, a clear stance was expressed, not only by the artist, but also by the individuals whose hearts and minds the Palestine-Israeli conflict was close to. The artwork of one man expressed the feelings of thousands.



Figure 1 Armoured Dove of Peace, Banksy (Davies, 2017)

The Palestinian protest graffiti on the Wall engages a self-consciously cross-national politics, including quotations from fighters for freedom like Gandhi and Mandela challenging the inhumanity of Israel as oppressor and occupier. Their symbolism also points at Palestinian identity denoting resistance, liberation, attachment to the land and national unity. Thanks to Banksy's involvement into the local graffiti subculture in 2005 it was launched (together with the violence to which it responded) onto a global stage (Davies, 2017).

Banksy's artwork presents a dove in a flak jacket carrying a spring leaf. He is targeted by a red crosshair. It conveys transformation of Israel as a holy site (it is located in Bethlehem) into a site of military occupation. Drawing on the Christian biblical text rather than speaking to the majority Muslim communities surrounding it, the dove orients the protest graffiti outwards, toward Britain and the US, thereby raising a global awareness and solidarity against increasingly segregationist infrastructural strategies of Israel (Davies, 2017). Although neither local artist nor contribution of globally known Banksy did not make the Wall break and conflict disappear, they provided a tool for individuals to express resistance, to fight the violence in a

non-violent way. Art became an outlet for emotions, anger, fear, disagreement, opposition - it communicated more without using the long speeches that usually lose their power right after the echoes of their last sentence can be heard. Street artists managed to attract attention, express feelings and communicate opposition towards oppression, yet street art has not yet received enough attention and recognition as a meaningful and powerful tool of expression, resistance and struggle towards structural violence in the field of peace and conflict transformation.

One further example of art's role in peace and conflict transformation and of the need to acknowledge it in social science research on this topic, is the case of street art in London's Brick Lane. On the wall of the building, there is an image of South Asian woman with her child who is clearly malnourished. The mother's position suggests her inability to provide for him. Their ethnicity denotes Brick Lane's immigrant community, while the theme of the shelter suggested by the image makes a silent comment on London's architecture of extreme capitalism producing a divided landscape of owned privately, high security enclaves gated from enclaves of poverty remaining untouched by the wealth around them.

The artwork on Hanbury Street is created on a disintegrating wall contrasting with the glittering and continually developing buildings on Canary Warf just a few streets further. This location of mural highlights the impoverishment of London's urban indigence and inequality by drawing attention to its unevenly developing infrastructural walling (Davies, 2017). Brick Lane is covered with street art in majority vivid in shape and colors, constituting not only canvas for street artist and being exhibition of their works, but mainly giving voice to these walls of the district to communicate message on behalf of individuals mainly from the lowest social class, many of them immigrants. Art depicts problems, social injustices, the so-called structural violence. It sends a message that is deeper than "look, I am a great piece of art". It makes others look, pay attention to the problem, to injustice, to struggle of daily life. It permanently reminds us that the problem exists.



Figure 2 Street Art on Hanbury Street, Brick Lane, London (Davies, 2017)

Artistic interventions visible on the walls of global cities feature both a disregard for as well as engagement with the structural violence of the global city, even more as it is ingrained into its physical infrastructure (Davies,2017). Although this thesis focuses on Polish case of art's role in the protests and street artworks are not part of data corpus, all the posters and song that are going to be analyzed played their part during the manifestations on the streets of Polish cities. The relevance of graffiti and the function of artworks created and used during the Women's Strike is prominent, as even though posters and music did not constitute part of urban landscape for longer, they did have their release in the cities and streets. This is why connecting the Polish case to the above examples can help reveal further the many layers present in artworks deployed during the protests.

2.2. Protest Art

The literature on art and its power in social movements context is not abundant. However, some work is available on how social responses to structural violence are expressed through various forms of art, amongst them protest art. Sociologist Edward J. McCaughan conducted a comparative study analysis of Mexican and Chicano artists' contribution to three constellations of social movements associated with the student movement in Mexico City known as "the Revolution of '68". After surveying a broad sample of banners, posters, engravings, paintings, installations, and murals, McCaughan argued that art originating from this movement had the potential to demystify national symbols, to shed light on social injustice and to express needs and demands for civil liberties and democracy (see Michael Fraga, 2012). From this, one can argue that art, regardless its form, is not only present during social movements, but since it emerges often from individuals in the lowest level of the social structure – those most prone to suffer from any kind of structural injustice - it becomes the preferred means of expression of resistance by those struggling with and opposing structural violence.

Adding to the argument in favor of a powerful role of art in peace and conflict transformation, one of the factors amplifying the global scope of protests is protest art. Protests are almost universally rooted in a particular place (street, square, digital world space), but they can also be global in their scope. While triggered by local political issues, the frames of engagement in protest art are wider than they may appear on first glance:

‘Given the complex political linkages connecting different places and people, often through the immaterial and ephemeral machinations of capital, the intense connectivity offered by the Internet, the globalized punitive common sense of austerity, and biospheric limits on economic growth, localized forms of protest necessarily announce an engagement with the wider world’ (Johnson & Suliman, 2020).

Many recent examples exist of people in very different parts of the globe uniting around a common cause to show solidarity. For example, in 2003, millions of people went to the streets in different parts of the world to protest the second Iraq War by the “Coalition of the Willing”. Ten years later, global protest challenged the new world order that this war legitimized (Johnson & Suliman, 2020). To draw a parallel, Polish protests against abortion restrictions started on the streets of Polish cities but quickly spread over the Continent and within a few weeks inhabitants of the UK, Germany and Norway were protesting to support Polish Women’s Strikes.

Protests are powerful tools with a strong driving force to challenge political order and social injustice. They often constitute departure points for many important changes and transformations. Supported by protest art, they have a chance to reach even larger audiences for example, the Banksy’s graffiti or protest art in the form of arpilleras from Chile that is discussed next.

Ethnographic research from the point of view of art’s role in protest in prodemocracy movements in Pinochet’s Chile suggests that art plays an important part in social movements. It is used for framing, to communicate information, to attract resources, to foster useful emotions and as a symbol of coherent identity, membership, and commitment to the movement. Moreover, art is claimed to have political power what has been examined by many scholars in the context of social movements suggesting ways in which art is useful.

Referring to art usefulness in the context of communication, social movements are believed to use the medium of artistic expression for communication with the larger society, also for communicating internally. For example, religious songs in the Civil Rights Movement constituted a communication bridge between the students, and others, outsiders, and less-educated blacks. When it comes to art’s role in attracting resources, art is considered a strong medium to mobilize protest. It does so by raising consciousness in potential recruits and public. Performance art can be treated as manifestation of political attitudes, sometimes including audience members. Performances using music as a form of expression can be an occasion for party members to explain their views and make the first step to gain support. Songs and other art forms are helpful in recruiting individuals to a specific movement since they bring

reassuring emotional messages and help reach the spirituality of prospective recruits and activists. They also provide a feeling, a belief that social and political change is possible (Adams, 2002).

Once people have joined the movement, art is useful as it maintains them active and devoted to the movement. Very often they develop bonds between each other by i.e., collective artmaking, that creates solidarity and feeling of a group belonging and unity. It serves individuals to express feelings and opinions and often it is more effective than speech. Protest art also prolongs the effect of the protest, meaning it echoes thanks to art's diffusion into a broader culture (Adams, 2002). This is what constitutes the uniqueness of the protest art: even though the social movement fades away with time, it is the accompanying art that makes it not only last longer and reach global scope, but mainly preserves the memory of the events in the form of posters, photographs, or songs that shape cultural heritage of the societies.

A great example merging all the described above functions of protest art are arpilleras created in Chile. Their story begins with the Pinochet's regime, lasting from 1973 to 1990, the time of political repression, widespread unemployment, and implementation of neoliberal economic policies. During that time, many prodemocracy movement organizations arose with one common desire for a return to democracy and to help victims of the regime. The most prominent of those organizations was *Vicaria de la Solidaridad* funded by the Catholic Church, CARITAS, foreign aid agencies, foreign churches and its sale of artwork and handicrafts. The *Vicaria* staff consisted mainly of middle-class professionals who had become unemployed in the Allende government. Although *Vicaria* did not have any clear strategy, its members were helping the poor and victims of human rights abuses, whilst educating politically. One of the ideas to do it was by organizing arpillera workshops to help shantytown women to earn an income. Arpilleras are pictures in cloth usually presenting hunger, political repression, and unemployment in shantytowns.



Figure 3 An arpillera workshop (Adams, 2002)

The women recruited to the workshop were those who had trouble feeding families since their husbands did not have jobs. Women used to meet in the groups of around twenty, three times a week, but meetings were kept secret as the activity was considered subversive. The *Vicaria* employees according to the goals of the organization were encouraging discussions about politics, they were giving speeches about economy, human and women's rights. That part of the workshop was important, but its main aim was to provide income for women as well as educate buyers of arpilleras abroad about the situation in Chile (Adams, 2002). Thus, Chilean protest art was fulfilling many important roles: to communicate with larger society, to mobilize and provide reassuring message thanks to idealistic goals of arpilleras being the medium of information for the rest of the world about the situation in the country. The workshop created bonds between women, increased their political and social awareness thanks to its educational module and also created unity and gave active members of the group the important tasks of providing income for them and profit for the whole society.

Thanks to export, protest art from shantytowns acquired a very important role: it was attracting attention of those untouched by situation in Chile; it sent the message to the world to raise awareness and present the problem. The majority of arpilleras were exported, the buyers included human rights organizations, nongovernmental organizations, Chilean exiles in North America and Europe. As the *Vicaria* interpreted it, buyers bought them to express solidarity

and they also wanted to know what was happening in Chile. Pieces of art on cloth were made by the shantytown women. However, the women had been told by the *Vicaria* what to depict. They became a very valuable source of data on framing efforts of the *Vicaria* staff, demands of the customers and importantly, the women's experiences (Adams, 2002).

Referring to framing, it is possible to say that even though the women were those who manually made the artworks, the "designers", authors, or so-to-speak, artists, were the *Vicaria* employees. They had a clear vision not only on what to present in the artworks, but also how these should function and whose attention they should attract. The prodemocracy movement of which they constituted a vast part needed to show the suffering caused by the regime and why democracy was desirable. The functions of arpilleras planned by the *Vicaria* were providing information about the bad conditions of life in Chile, presenting the antagonist (Pinochet government) as evil, and using workshop as socialization site into a movement's way of thinking. The question is whether they reached the goals. Indeed, thanks to using arpilleras to present situation in its own terms, the movement acquired power. In addition, it helped to develop an activist identity in women and worked on emotions and feelings which is what successful art should be capable of (Adams, 2002). People were buying arpilleras because they were moved, they wanted to show solidarity and support, the message was received.

Another important factor is the symbolism in protest art. Arpilleras became symbols of suffering in Chile, they marked membership in the movement (Adams, 2002). For those who bought arpilleras clearly it meant more than a picture to complete interior design, it was a symbol of solidarity, and compassion. In Poland, during the Women's Strikes, protesters were also using a symbol of a thunder. This symbol clearly had many functions, from branding the movement, to showing solidarity with Polish women fighting for their rights.

2.3. The role of music

The symbolism of art in Poland during the protests is going to be analyzed in detail in the following chapters, but it is important to note at this point that protest art is not limited to visual countenance. As music had important role in anti-abortion restrictions protests, it is also necessary to provide the theoretical underpinnings required to analyze that form of artwork in social movements.

According to Adams (2002), music can perform many of the same functions as visual art for social movements. Music understood as form of art can be considered also as a useful framing device active at cognitive and emotional levels. However, due to differences for

example in form of reception, music must be examined as separate category of art. Referring to art as framing device, Adams argues that music is more widely available to large numbers of people, since unlike physical visual artworks, there is not a finite number of music pieces (Adams, 2002). However, with the Internet as main outlet of information, music and visual art have arguably become equally available.

Yet there is another aspect about making music that is less accessible than visual arts - with music and songs, there is a need for people to understand the language of the lyrics if they are to access the message. The language of visual arts might be more universally understood. Referring again to Banksy's artwork in Palestine, the visual symbol of a dove was easily understood and interpreted in the context it was presented. In music, there are no obvious symbols, even if lyrics contain symbolic references. One could say that symbols in music are not as universal as symbols in the visual arts (Adams, 2002).

Music cannot function as a symbol of affiliation as easily as visual art can. It has less immediate effect in creating an emotional impact either, as music needs to be listened through, while paintings or posters can work on emotions and feelings in a second (Adams, 2002). Nevertheless, I will argue in the upcoming analyses that we should look at music in the field of protest art and include it in the analysis of the role of art in protests in Poland. I argue that music is a more demanding piece of art, it needs literal and symbolic understanding of lyrics and time to process them to find relevance and power as tools to strengthen a social movement.

2.4. Artivism

In addition to the type of art analyzed, it is important for this thesis to focus also on those creating the art. I thus provide an overview on theorizations on the process of creating artworks from the perspective of the artists. In this regard, artivism is a concept that seems to provide adequate grounds to study not only the creation of art itself, but its setting within the frame of structural violence, of protests, and of a transformative power emanating from the artist.

Although the term is considered new, artivism has been performed for many generations. The first connotation with its name leads mainly to an easy, linear equation of art + activism = artivism. This is not wrong, but the concept is much more complex than just a linear correlation between these two aspects. Many subcategories of activism based on art can be identified. Usually these are forms of resistance accessible to the general public. They are often related as "mainstream activism," as they represent styles and tactics employing easy-to-

understand, in-your-face, often comical, and satirical techniques of conveying their broader message. These subcategories/groups include artists who undeniably emphasize activism as part of their practice (Diverlus, 2016). However, it would be too bold of a statement to claim without prior exploration of the concept that all artists creating art under the influence of social reality consider themselves activists or have broader goals for their work than for example simply self-expression.

Rodney Diverlus (2016) describes activism from his perspective of a professional dancer, choreographer, creative director, and performance artist working also as a community organizer and grassroots educator as

‘[...] an educational, creative, choreographic, movement-building, performance, and organizing tool. Activism simultaneously combines all these functions [...]’(Diverlus, 2016).

Diverlus describes how he felt passionate about the community he lived in as well as about the art he was producing and creating, and thus started identifying himself as an activist. His art was a tool to craft particular campaigns, initiatives, actions in limitless, relatable, fresh ways. His activism in turn, allowed him to produce art that can be found not only socially relevant, but also conscious of humanity. According to Diverlus (2016), even though art does not have to include an explicit political message and leaves room for abstraction or personal art, when artist lives in a certain social reality, it will always implicitly influence their work. What is more, as art does not exist in a vacuum, even those most abstract forms need to be influenced by and influence the world around. Art seems to be intertwined with communities in the same way as as ‘art making’ and ‘making the world a better place’ are.

Diverlus argues that art and activism are one and the same. In fact, Diverlus’ statements are quite subjective and strongly suggesting a belonging of artist to the activists’ wave by default. Knowing that artist like to emphasize their freedom and independence, this may be too bold statement for many of them. However, taking into consideration that art is very often the creator’s response to a certain phenomenon, or depiction of thoughts, there is truth in the above opinion, since the incentive to create artworks often arises from the surrounding reality.

For the purposes of this research and of the art to be analyzed further, much more convincing seems to be notion of activism as a phenomenon where artists do not necessarily need to have an explicit mission to change the world or to find world peace. This is a point that will be discussed later, but if artist who created the protest art for the Women’s Strike in Poland

are to be called activists, these artist “missions” were at best implicit/assumed. As will be seen in the upcoming analyses, it seems like the artists involved in the protests based their identity on the creative process more than on the activist movement. Thus, and adapting Diverlus’ (2016) definition, in the case of Poland, activism involves artists’ role is to highlight injustices, propose alternatives and help people imagine a better reality, yet it also involves attracting global attention to structural violence through creating art while being first of all artists who create to express, not to convey political messages.

Thankfully, and as everything connected to art does, the concept of activism gives room for interpretation, and presents us with some interesting questions: if the artist feels part of an activism movement and self-identifies as an activist, there is no problem, but if the artist does not feel like an activist attitude is something worth emphasizing in their artistic work, or simply does not have any need of belonging to the group of those influencing society with art and empowering social moods and change, do we still talk about activism? It has been stated before that it does not matter how intentionally or not the element of activism is present in all the artistic works, as artists’ inspiration on what to create comes from surrounding reality whether is personal art, social art, portrait of individual, or community art documenting family story. There is a reality that caused, influenced, or initiated the creative process. In fact, this is why activism is such a broad, open umbrella under which artists can engage with their work. Following this perception of activism, it is important to note that among artists there is a disconnect between those who self-identify as activists and those who do not, even though they actively engage in what is considered activism (Diverlus, 2016). And here is the crucial point: to be an activist, one does not have to self-identify as such. The concept is broad and complex enough to include even those pieces of artistic work created by artists who will never associate themselves with an activist group.

Activism can be subtle and nuanced as well as radical and bold. It is liberating and it is a creative justice. It can appear as ‘light’ art meant to uplift, a comedy attempting to heal people and communities, or personal art exhibit documenting one’s history with depression (Diverlus, 2016). Artists do not have to consider themselves part of an activist movement while creating to express their feelings, emotions, or stance, but they can be considered activists. Perhaps if there was a better understanding of the scope of activism, more artists would be willing to see themselves and their work reflected in its definition, and also that could lead to more self-identified activists (Diverlus, 2016).

Activism as art created in response to surrounding reality is clearly linked with structural violence. The art category (for example protest art described previously in this

chapter) develops to express resistance, raise awareness, to show a stance towards a certain action arising as a structural violence act. Art encapsulated in the concept of activism is considered to have a transformative power, as in fact, activism makes art a valid tool for social change.

However, one may ask what prevents practitioners from engaging in activism earlier and more often. Political and human rights activists' nonengagement with art can be attributed to their lack of familiarity of the utility of art. Moreover, it can derive from an unspoken rule in the world that social change needs to be rigorously monitored, measured, evaluated, reported upon. While activists evaluate the technical merits of their work, they are ambivalent at best about evaluating the potential for social change, if any, that their art inspires. This potential for change cannot be limited to outputs, numbers, or percentage of media hits (Nossel, 2016).

Some of the contemporary protests use or are animated through activism. One example are the numbers of protests in the capital of Kenya, Nairobi. Craig Halliday in his article 'Animating political protests through activism in 21st century Nairobi, Kenya' (2019) argues that the use of activism in protests can be employed as a mean to ridicule those in power, provide means to mobilize people in new and often powerful ways. It has also the potential to enrich protest with traits of carnival. However, he also discusses activism's limitations or potential to divide and polarize protesters.

Some of the characteristics of activism highlighted by Halliday are that activism is about being compelled not only to represent a change but also become part of an action engaged with society's transformation. This can be achieved thanks to art's potential to unite people, to disrupt everyday life, to improve public understanding of civic issues, to create new, different physiological experiences, to instruct, and to persuade (Halliday, 2019). For uniting people and disrupting everyday life, a particularly successful strategy is to infuse protests with carnival traits. When demonstrations include symbolism and performance and become like a carnival, people at the protest start having fun. The carnival features change the mood and while protesters are still frustrated and angry (the reason to protest is not forgotten), the art performance provides a different way of looking at the problem. There is a moment for fun, a moment to ridicule the issue without losing sight of the problem.

Mikhail Bakhtin's theory on medieval carnival in Europe is often cited as a framework for understanding of contemporary protests shaped by artistic considerations (Bakhtin et al., 1984). Bakhtin's concept of carnival is the creation of an alternative space, full of freedom, moments when anything goes and boundaries between performers and spectators do not exist. During carnival everyone is an active participant and communes in the carnival act. All the

laws, prohibitions, restrictions, and life itself are suspended for as long as it lasts (Halliday, 2019).

The combination of activism and carnival-like vision of protests is visible in a real example of political protest that happened in Nairobi. The outline of situation is as follows: early in 2013, Kenya's Parliament was coming to a close for general election to be held in March. The 221 Members of Parliament (MPs) made an attempt to significantly increase their end of term financial bonuses and other amenities. Moreover, a request for a state funeral was included. PAWA 254 (an organization which name comes from combination of 'power' in Swahili and 254, Kenya's country code) was outraged by the MP's demands and entitlement and organized the protest 'State Burial'. The main idea was to give the MPs the state funeral they wanted, so 221 mock coffins were made by a group of artists. They were painted black with the words 'State Burial' and 'Ballot Revolution' painted across them. All the coffins were delivered to Uhuru Park on 16th of January 2013. The number of protesters could be counted in hundreds gathered for a performance in which the coffins were carried by a satirical funeral service to Parliament Building. Outside they were set ablaze piled together. The ensuing inferno was interpreted as a celebration denoting the recurring democratic process of Parliament shutting before the election. First-hand opinions from participants in 'State Burial' testify that these artistic and performative additions emboldened the crowds' participation as they created a carnival atmosphere and involved action attracting people to come together in the street, in effect working as a means of mobilization. (Halliday, 2019).

The performance was important as it was useful not only mobilized people, to gather them together, and created carnival-like atmosphere to express their stance, but also emphasized people's power. Through artistic means, the electorate reminded the MPs that people do hold the power to remove them. It was a successful event thanks to artistic means, parody and theater-like shows which attracted people and moved both those endorsing the resistance and those towards whom it was directed (MPs). One may say that visual art will always move people more than words. If we see hundreds of coffins buried, it will be printed in our memory much more than a sentence read in a newspaper about a government's outrageous behavior. That is why using art has potential to make resistance memorable and fierce.

'State Burial' was just an example of the power of activism and its potential as a valid tool for change. Protests in Nairobi had a significant role in winning democratic rights and extending them. The activism used in so-called third wave of protests in Nairobi is believed to have had a significant impact, so it is worth reflecting on its role on bringing democracy and development there (Halliday, 2019).

The concept of activism, which is definitely complex and multidimensional, can shed light on artistic expressions created during the time of the Women's Strike protests. Assessing how powerful a tool in bringing social change art was, or if there was any change thanks to that art at all, will be done later in in this research. Before that, however, one more issue should be discussed. It concerns moving beyond describing the use of art in protests and towards unpacking art's power to bring social change.

2.5. The transformative power of art

Art in contemporary democratic societies functions not only to maintain social traditions and to depict the world, but also to delve into issues of social justice, identity, and freedom. Artists and scholars agree on that art alone does not have the power to change society, but art gives form and voice to individual and collective needs, which then motivate and sustain social movements. What is more, art is also useful for communicating issues and concepts important to the movement beyond the activist group. Re-presenting the history of an issue lets art revise or establish an emotional tone or a public perception. Art can be used to criticize a movement's ideology, keeping it grounded and true to its purpose. Additionally, it provides aesthetic joy meaningful for activists to rejuvenate and recharge the energy and efforts they put in their work and continue the activity in social movement (Milbrandt, 2010).

Yet how do the visual arts contribute to contemporary social transformation? Art can be used to strengthen the values of the group, to raise questions regarding current social conditions, and to build an image of social change. Probably the best-known example is the US Civil Rights era hymn that turned into a sort of litany against fear, 'We Shall Overcome'. The powerful connotations of the song with freedom and justice now belong to the world. The hymn was sung by Germans when the Berlin wall was falling and by Chinese protesters at Tiananmen Square (Milbrandt, 2010). It is global, it is universal in a sense of meaning, power, and context.

Milbrandt (2010) also argues that visual arts utilize codes and conventions of their time that communicate more than verbal text. During the time of social tension, the arts have power to set an emotional tone and move activist participants or their audiences from indifference to action, or from unrest to calm resolve. A great example for social transformation through art as a cultural form is 'The Liberation of Aunt Jemima' by Betye Saar.



Figure 4, 'The Liberation of Aunt Jemima' Betye Saar (1972)

Saar was able to transform a familiar, long exploited image of a subservient black woman, Aunt Jemima by juxtaposing it with an image including objects of empowerment. Aunt Jemima, the empowered one, holds a rifle in one hand and a grenade in the other. She is overlaid with an image of the Black Power fist. While Saar's image symbolizes the demands of the US Civil Rights movement for political, social, economic equity for African Americans, it at the same time acknowledges the historically close bond of the stereotypical 'mommy' figure by including a small photo of the aunt image with a White child. Another interpretation seems to reject the employment of Aunt Jemima as a popular commercial icon (Milbrandt, 2010). The artwork of Saar launched her career as an artist, but also, and more importantly for the idea of a transformative power of art, it portrayed a new vision of African American women late in the US Civil Rights movement.

Another example supporting the idea that art can bring social change are film and digital images use by Al Gore. Gore combined his presentation in Power Point about ecological disaster with images of melting glaciers and scenes of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina to express his concern about the environment in the documentary 'An Inconvenient Truth'. The impact of human systems on environment was presented as a convincing argument for changing individual as well as collective ecological footprint. Gore's work did not undertake any direct action influencing the environment, but it was very effective in curtailing industrial practices influencing global warming. In the past, he was frequently talking about the dangers of global warming, but the film seemed to have the best scope to convey the seriousness of the issue and moved people to action (Milbrandt, 2010).

It is important to explore the case of artworks created during protests in Poland through the filter of transformative power the art has to discover whether activism practiced there left any mark on the society. Looking at the transformative power of art helps us trace the process protest art undergoes, from emerging as a response to structural violence, through taking shape as protest art because of the context in which it appears and through gaining characteristic of activist art by functioning within a certain movement, to finally concluding with what it brings in effect, thus achieving its transformative power.

2.6. Summary

Whenever people are harmed, maimed, killed by poverty or by unjust social, economic, or political institutions, structures, or systems, we speak of structural violence. Structural violence, just like armed violence, either kills victims or harms people in different ways (Kohler et al., 1976). Structural violence also becomes an inspiration for various forms of art to arise and serve society as a unifying, uplifting, expressive and transformative power. Art gives society a voice and it is the voice of artists responding to the surrounding reality in the form they know the best. Whether intentionally or not, art reinforces activism and can convey political meaning.

Seeing how multidimensional and powerful a tool art can be, it is definitely worth exploring as an important element in social movements. When applied to the case of art in social movements in Poland, the above-described concepts of structural violence, protest art, activism, and the transformative power of art bring many interesting conclusions. They help enrich the so far little explored field of art's role and art's power in protests.

3. Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA)

The method chosen for my research is Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA). Thanks to its multidimensionality, MDA is applicable to analyze all kinds of data needed for the thesis such as music and visual arts in many forms. There are many approaches to MDA, thus the main strands are described in this chapter in order to explain the chosen approach for the data corpus of the thesis.

MDA is a paradigm emerging in discourse studies. The main point of MDA is an extension of the study of language itself to the study of language in combination with other sources, such as music and sound, action, gesture, images, scientific symbolism. It is a

relatively new field of study; thus, the terminology is currently used loosely as the concepts as well as approaches evolve constantly. As an example, MDA can serve language and other resources which integrate in order to create meaning in “multimodal” or “multisemiotic” phenomena (for example print materials, websites, videos, day-to-day events) variously called “modes”, “semiotic resources”, “modalities”. The terminology used to refer to the MDA itself consists of terms such as “multimodality”, “multimodal studies”, “multimodal analysis”, and also “multimodal semiotics” (O’Halloran et al., 2011).

MDA expanded rapidly in the mid 2000s onwards due to researchers’ interest in exploring the combination of language with other resources. An explicit acknowledgement emerged stating that communication is inherently multimodal, and literacy and language are not confined. The foundations for conducting multimodal research in the 1980s and 1990s were provided mainly by Michael O’Toole as well as Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen. However, the core of both is Michael Halliday’s social semiotic approach to model the meaning potential of words, images, sounds as sets of systems and structures that are inter-related (O’Halloran et al., 2011). Halliday’s approach opened the floodgates of further development of the MDA and let it evolve to the forms it has nowadays. Especially useful was Halliday’s systemic- functional grammar model applied by O’Toole (2010) to a semiotic analysis of displayed art, sculpture, painting, and architecture. On their part, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) explored visual design and images, which showed that analysis can be not only monomodal i.e., only linguistic, but multilayered, merging analysis of art, language, music, architecture etc. to obtain overall meaning.

In the first part of this chapter, I briefly review O’Toole’s and Kress and van Leeuwen’s approaches and explain why I have chosen Kress and van Leeuwen as the preferred approach for the thesis.

3.1. O’Toole’s grammatical approach

O’Toole (2010) develops a grammatical approach (understood as bottom-up) through working with specific “texts” such as sculptures, architecture works, paintings to obtain framework that can be applicable to other works. The models he applies from linguistics have been frequently and usefully applied mainly to mathematical and scientific images, cities, buildings, museums and displayed art. O’Toole focused on the Gestalt theory stating that images are composed of inter-related elements in the composition of the whole. He draws visual overlays of systemic choices on the image and tends to suggest a visually defined

grammar as a possible way forward (O'Halloran et al., 2011). The main problem with O'Toole's model of the MDA for this work is that it does not deal with music which is part of the data corpus for the present thesis. Moreover, his analysis seems to focus mainly on schemes, systems, and even if regards art it does not recognize emotion in the analysis process which would make it impossible to answer the research questions of this project as they point at reception and interpretation of pieces of art and music during events important for the society.

3.2. Kress and van Leeuwen's approach

It is a top-down, contextual approach with particular focus on ideology adopted by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in order to derive principles of visual design illustrated via text analysis. The research built upon presented above approaches (i.a., Halliday's, O'Toole's, Kress & van Leeuwen's) extended them into new domains. Contextual approaches were developed for i.e., scientific texts; hypermedia; speech, sound, and music; literacy; educational research. Grammatical approaches to mathematics, hypermedia, a range of other multimodal texts contributed to creation of an approach called systemic-functional multimodal discourse analysis (O'Halloran et al., 2011).

Due to the character of the thesis Kress and van Leeuwen's interpretation of the MDA seems to be the most appropriate method to apply for analyzing the collected data which belong to the group of visual arts and music. As they stated in *Multimodal Discourse*:

'[...] we move towards a view of multimodality in which common semiotic principles operate in and across different modes, and in which it is therefore quite possible for music to encode action, or images to encode emotion. This move comes, on our part, not because we think we had it all wrong before and have now suddenly seen the light. It is because we want to create a theory of semiotics appropriate to contemporary semiotic practice' (G. R. Kress et al., 2001).

The emphasis is on the connection between image-emotion as well as music-action which is relevant to the prospective goal of the impact of the art created during the protests in Poland. Chosen method drawing upon Kress and van Leeuwen's approach seems to provide answer to the question how the graphic artworks and songs used by protesters correspond to the artists' expressed intent and also if those pieces of art reflect the motivations, they were willing to express.

3.3. Operationalization

As explained above, MDA makes an explicit acknowledgement that communication is inherently multimodal and literacy is not confined to the language (O'Halloran et al., 2011). Since my thesis refers to different fields such as art and social science particularly emphasizing the dimension of peace and conflict transformation, it is linked to linguistics and communication. The chosen methodology emerges from linguistics, because data demand such a tool to be analyzed, and the research questions point at art understood as a form of expression used to manifest which is a form of communication, non-verbal in case of posters, and verbal referring to songs and their lyrics. It is a way of communication, however distant from the traditional one. Thus, my work is about communication understood in non-traditional way, between artists and receivers of the art without using language as the main tool to communicate and convey meaning in the context of difficult social situation triggered by political activity and decisions of the state's government applying structural violence towards the society. Classic linguistic methods of analysis would not bring the expected result and fulfill the research objectives of my thesis.

The traditional linguistic account states that meaning is made once, so to speak. What makes this view on meaning different and even provides contrast is the Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) approach that multimodal resources available in a culture used to make meanings not once, but in every sign, at every level, as well as in any mode. Language defined by traditional linguistic had been defined as a system working through double articulation; a message was an articulation as both, a form, and a meaning. The crucial difference is that Kress and van Leeuwen acknowledge a multimodal aspect of the texts, they see them as making meaning in multiple articulations. They differentiate four domains of practice in which meanings are dominantly made. They are called "strata", to show a link to Halliday's functional linguistics in order to potentially find compatibility of description of different modes. However, they do not consider strata as being hierarchically ordered to avoid interpretations such as "one above the other" for instance. Four strata defined by Kress and van Leeuwen are discourse, design, production, and distribution (2001), and according to these four factors my data will be analyzed in multimodal way.

3.3.1. Discourse

Discourses are knowledges of reality (some aspects of) that are socially constructed. It means that they have been developed in specific social contexts, and in the ways accurate for the actors and their interest in these contexts (whether broad i.e., Eastern Europe, or not, for instance a particular family). They can be explicitly institutionalized for example in newspapers, or not at all while they refer to information exchanged during dinner-table conversation. It is possible to realize any discourse in different ways, the ethnic conflict discourse of war can be realized as part of a tv documentary, an airport thriller, a newspaper features etc. Thus, discourse is relatively independent of mode, genre, and somewhat less of design. Yet, discourses can be realized only in semiotic modes that developed the means for realization (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). In case of my research the way (mode) to realize the discourse is through art, more precisely posters and music together with lyrics and video. Discourse is realized as part of social event and answer to the government practices. Discourse understood in traditional linguistic field is the way of speaking and writing about a topic given. MDA provides the opportunity to see discourse within self-expression, and to assess it in communicative forms that are not only standard but also those visual, or audiovisual new forms. Thanks to this, MDA can be applied to the examination of the role of art and its meaning in the case of expressing opposition by both artists and the society to abortion rights restrictions.

3.3.2. Design

Next step in MDA is to determine strata called design which stands halfway between content and expression. To make it more comprehensible and settle the strata of discourse and design realized through art it is possible to present an example of these two in the context of construction of the house. An architect is the one who designs (not builds) the house, the discourse provides a certain view of how the houses are lived in, how many people live there, what they do there, and arguments that critique as well as defend these ways of life. The design of the house is conceptualizing how to give a shape to this discourse in the form of a house (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). To refer to the topic of this dissertation, our architect is the artist who creates art in the most appropriate form (according to own judgement) whether it is poster, or video, or a song to give shape to the discourse which is the society's response to anti-abortion legal provisions, in this case, the society expresses opposition. But also, this example is only illustrative and enables to understand strata of discourse and design in the context of social event such as anti-abortion rights protests and the role of art (and artist) in it. However, it cannot

be treated directly the same way as artist's motivation to create art does not necessarily have to be the will to give a shape to the discourse created by the society, which is its way of communication in the context of particular social event. Perhaps it is created just to express own feelings and emotions, so give a shape to discourse created by the artist not necessarily corresponding with the one influenced by the society. This case is much more complex, and indeed constitutes the main issue of the thesis, but it is going to be analyzed in detail in the following analytical chapter to draw conclusions allowing to answer the research questions. Nevertheless, for the time being for the purpose of understanding the mechanism of discourse and design it was worth it to juxtapose with the architect's case.

Before moving to the next strata which is production, it is important to cast light on a few more aspects linked to design since there is a high probability that in the context of fine arts analysis, design can cause some issues as its application from analytical point of view is not as clear as in the case of i.e., discourse. Thus, it is crucial to introduce more details regarding these particular strata to make the prospective troubles understandable. Referring again to Kress and van Leeuwen and *Multimodal Discourse* (2001), and what is already known thanks to the example with the architect, design is the organization of what is to be articulated into a blueprint for production. Designer's task is seen as "architectural", it is shaping of resources that are available into a framework that can act as a plan to produce the final effect (object, event, entity). However, ideally, the designer should not be the builder who leads to production, rather someone who fully reads and is able to understand the plans and needs no assistance in building from these blueprints without a change. This could be problematic (but if really is, it will turn out while analyzing process) for the analysis for two reasons, first, the border between designer and producer is a blurry one assuming that producer and designer are not the same person, which is the second issue that can emerge. Nevertheless, as this thesis deals with art, the assumption of the monomodal communicational world is that the step from design to production is simply realization and a design is believed to be specific to such extent that no decision needs to be made by the producer, does not correspond with the creative process (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). However, multimodality gives a chance to analyze art thanks to acknowledging broader perspective, hence there is a probability that also for this design-production issue, analytical solution will be found.

3.3.3. Production

Proceeding to production, from the point of view of the authors of MDA version that is the leading methodology for this dissertation, it is the communicative use of media and of material resources. The medium means the body and the voice as well as tools that enable the extension of bodily expression and communication such as musical instruments, or outfit and castanets in a dance like flamenco, Also, the tools and materials used to produce artefacts, paint and canvas, pen, and paper, etc. The key point is that production has an independently variable semiotic role in communication and cannot be limited to mere realization of the designs. It is possible thanks to the fact that a voice reading what has been already written (designed) or sings what has been designed as a song the singer's or speaker's bodily articulates and thus, communicates directly adding meanings not pre-designed but appearing as natural subproducts of the process (G. R. Kress et al., 2001).

Production is claimed to be always physical work, whether performed by humans or machines, it is a physical job of text articulation. Also, the interpretation of production is considered physical work, a use of body, its sensory organs. Clearly, what is understood as meaning does not only reside in discourse, and design, but in production as well. It is a result of human engagement with the world and the resources used in articulating and interpreting meaning include both, semiotic modes, and media. Semioticians and linguists in general have considered production as the realization of the design, thus not adding any meaning, or if adding, just an element of expressiveness to bring the design to life. But this semiotics could only apply the same analysis to a photograph, a sculpture, a painting, all identical for the purposes of linguistic analysis (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). This analysis was monodimensional and did not give possibility for multivariate interpretation and analysis of the whole set of strata and what they represent and what kind of meaning they bring combined together. Semiotics treating matter as distinct from meaning would leave art to be analyzed by the expert able to assess the age and authenticity of artworks. However, the same design with a different material production does not have to mean the same thing. Neon light signs do not mean the same thing as signs on a wooden board painted by hand (G. R. Kress et al., 2001).

Data corpus of this thesis has plenty of small details that make a difference in what they are supposed to communicate or mean. MDA created an opportunity to link analysis of meaning and matter and bring a new, fresh perspective not only to linguistics but also art, social science and leaving more space and freedom for interpretation and treating what is inaudible as loud as what is written or said. In other words, it let art be understood as the way of communication equal to traditional one, thus providing possibility for my research to succeed in answering all the questions asked.

3.3.4. Distribution

The last element needed to complete the layers of theoretical outline of multimodal analysis of this project's data is distribution. That is simply the way that certain effect of production is distributed, how, in what form it is conveyed. To illustrate it, an example of musical performance can be used, the performers might need the technicians to record music on tape for the purpose of preservation and distribution. Distribution tends to be seen as not semiotic, not enriching meaning anyhow, just facilitating the pragmatic functions mentioned above. However, distribution produced enormous gains in accessibility, first of the written, printed text, then of music, art, drama, all that nowadays it is possible to buy and take home as reproductions and recordings. Nevertheless, in all that many receivers experienced a loss felt as a loss of presence, embodiment, atmosphere. It has been also described as a loss of attachment, loss of ties with a specific moment, place in time that can never be repeated (G. R. Kress et al., 2001).

Notwithstanding, the layer of distribution seems to be the least not to affirm necessary, but the least advantageous filter through which gathered data will be analyzed. As a part of the multimodal discourse analysis by Kress and van Leeuwen it needs to be acknowledged and given assigned meaning as a one of four strata, but the distribution part does not really assure the provision of conclusions needed to construct fulfillment of the research objectives. However, as the MDA states, in the analytical process opposite to the one of traditional linguistics, there is no superiority of one mode, method or medium over another thus also with four strata this attitude should be applied, and the actual effect of analysis not theoretical description and assumptions will reveal how relevant and beneficial the fourth stratum is for this research.

3.3.5. Stratal configuration

Discourse, design, production, and distribution may occur in different configurations. In order to show that even if one of strata does not appear in the multimodal analysis it does not mean that the given subject cannot be considered a multimodal text. Kress and van Leeuwen used the example of a picture of a room inhabited by a girl named Stephanie, which appeared in the magazine "House Beautiful" in the late 1990s. They used the discourse, design, and production of children's bedrooms to explain their approach.

Children's bedroom discourses are part of family life discourses, meaning socially constructed knowledges about everything that constitutes family life, who family members are, what their roles are, what they do together or separately etc. Of course, there are always many such discourses as there are many factors influencing their creation i.e., social class, ethnic groups belonging, deviant practices, or wrong ways of living (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). Nevertheless, discourse depicted in "House Beautiful" depicts the way of life and perception of family life through the means of child's bedroom popular in the late 90s of the twentieth century. Thanks to MDA it is possible to see that colors, text, interior design read as a unit not just analyzed separately, form a detailed image of the family life in the period given.



Figure 5 Stephanie in her room (House Beautiful, September 1996:162)

The pictures in magazines "House Beautiful" alike hardly ever show school-age children or teenagers' bedrooms. They focus mainly on smaller kids of three-four years old whose rooms are depicted and they are mentioned by name in the text. An article about the room in which lives three-year-old Stephanie contains some details regarding what young children actually do there. That is how we get to know that multicolored sofa provides the girl with somewhere to sit and read her books, handy pegs were attached to the bright, yellow dado present around the room to make it easy for Stephanie to hung up her coats and toys. The girl has also a miniature theatre in her room (Fig. 1) where, as she said, she danced and sang with her friends, the dressed up and played in their own plays having so much fun. Apart from the picture presenting Stephanie with her micro scale theatre, in the magazine there are other

pictures showing her drawing on a blackboard on the door of the wardrobe and sleeping in a bed with a colorful patchwork quilt.

As a social construction, Stephanie's room provides knowledge on how children live in what is considered "beautiful home". Discourses provide not only versions of who does what, where and when, but also complete that with interpretations, evaluations. Looking again at the Stephanie's room, a strong emphasis on color (both in the text and the pictures) is present, colors are called either "bright", "dramatic", "bold", or "cheerful", "sunny" etc. The article as a whole ends with enthusiasm that Stephanie thanks to so much inspiration in her room is full of ideas about what she wants to be when she grows up. Supposedly, she is considered to have plenty of practice being a mountain climber (reference to the pegs in her room fixed too high for her before redecoration), and also, she could easily add acting and interior design to her CV (G. R. Kress et al., 2001).

Clearly, the children's bedroom is a pedagogic tool, a medium of communication with a child through the language of interior design, the qualities, pleasures, duties, and kind of future her parents would want for her. This pedagogic discourse is just one of many possible children's bedroom discourses. It can be also realized in several ways, as an actual room through the multimodal language of interior design with meanings realized by spatial arrangements, by choice of furniture, by color schemes, etc. All these have to be conceptualized as "design" before it can go to the stage of "production", and it is without meaning whether parents both design as well as produce the redecoration or use a professional interior designer to do that.

Design in this case shows how secondary to picture is language. Pictures are much better to present how furniture and color looks like and that is why on three pages of "House Beautiful" there are 10 pictures. In spatial matters images work much better, however language in case of conveying pedagogic message of the room rooted in particular discourse is necessary as complementary semiotic mode (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). Still, it constitutes great argument in favor of MDA, text alone same as images alone would not have the same power of communication as both language and image given complementary specialists tasks and perceived as multi-layered unity.

3.4. Data Corpus

The thesis main objectives focus on art and its role in Women's Strike to promote social change independently from political aims and movement leaders' collective identities.

Secondly, on the way art was received by the audience and whether there is any correspondence between intent and interpretation of the art created, there is no doubt that it was important to choose the most known and popular pieces of art to depict the protests reality and also those which are rich enough in form and story behind their creation in order to make it possible to draw conclusions enabling answering the research questions after applying multimodal discourse analysis as a tool.

Therefore, there are six posters chosen for analysis to acknowledge the point of view of the artist and motivation to create them. As data source for that, certain articles published in Polish online newspapers and on websites including interviews with the artists were chosen. As additional source of information and as the way to include the feedback the artworks received by the audience, the information from social media, precisely Instagram platform will serve to complete the data for analysis.

Apart from visual art, a song together with videoclip composed of shots from the street protests where some of the posters or symbols from them appeared is going to be analyzed through MDA.

Data corpus for this research has been built to as clearly as possible provide expected answers for RQs after it will have gone through the filters of methodological tool chosen for the thesis. Methodology is considered useful for all kinds of data gathered such as music and visual arts. As one of a few methods it can provide systematic way of studying not only the language but also different semiotic modes such as images, graphics, photographs. According to Kress and van Leeuwen, discourse is multimodal if its meaning is realized through more than one semiotic code (Veltman, 1996). As visual media converge various communication forms together it needs to be analyzed with a multi-layered approach. For analyzing data presented above, this method is considered the most relevant and the best corresponding one with data, context, field of study, and research objectives.

3.5. Limitations

Even though MDA as a method fulfills the main analytical needs of the thesis, it presents some limitations:

Heterogeneity of data: the chosen method allows to combine all different types of art in one context as one piece for analysis, which is not an easy task.

Linearity: it cannot be forgotten that when dealing with emotions, human behavior, and art, not everything can be linear, and there is a risk that conclusions might be far-fetched. Thus, it is

important to be aware of that while analyzing data even if methodology matches certain events, behaviors etc. and seems to explain them well, it will still not capture the full complexity of artistic expression. It cannot be forgotten that methodology in this case should not become a top-down approach enclosing phenomena in schemes.

Self-reflectivity: Another factor that needs to be acknowledged results from the type of research. Qualitative research always brings subjectivity. No matter how I am devoted to providing the true versions of the events and interpretation there is always a factor influencing that, namely, my nationality. I am a person of Polish origin which from one point of view was extremely helpful with gathering data and understanding the meanings of texts in original language not after the process of translation when sometimes meaning can be changed or disturbed from what the original case was. From the other hand, no matter how distanced and objective I am towards the events in Poland, my way of understanding and interpreting them will always be influenced by my personal background. Therefore, I need to be even more aware to neither impose top-down clearly scholar approach in data analysis process, nor let my personal feelings and views distort the final effect of the thesis.

Mitigation measures: To minimize the effects of heterogeneity, linearity in analysis, and personal biases, the sources of information have been selected on the basis of verifiability. This verifiability is conceived as a presence in mass media until today even though it has been over two years from the first attempts to protest on the streets of Poland. The data corpus includes articles, posts, and online sources published only during the peak of protests to obtain the most accurate data not changed and influenced over the span of time. It is assumed that today artists' as well as participants' reactions would be significantly different than at the time of the protests, and it is not the purpose of this research to conduct a longitudinal analysis on this change.

3.6. Summary

Multimodal discourse analysis acknowledging coexistence of discourse, design, production, distribution has all the factors presented throughout this chapter to be claimed successful choice in terms of methodology for the thesis focusing on art's role in social movements understood as response to structural violence of the government. Referring to research questions, interpretation and intention seem to be the crucial points to pay attention to in order to find satisfying answers. Thus, there is no better choice than MDA which emphasizes both of them in analysis through the filter of 4 strata. All of them are believed to play role in interpretation even though a given interaction might be experienced differently, or given

discourse interpreted differently from the way it was intended (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). And this sentence juxtaposed with RQs of the thesis makes it hard to imagine a better match between methodology, data, and topic.

Obviously, current stage is just the theory and theoretical consideration on what can or cannot contribute to the research becoming as fruitful as expected. However, even considered presented and discussed prospective limitations, analyzing gathered data through MDA in the following chapter ought to ensure material to construct prospective response to explain motivation of the artist to create art as well as consistency of the use of art by the protester with the artists' intent which is the main goal of the thesis itself.

4. Key Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents the key findings and analysis of selected artworks. The first part of the chapter is about explaining the theoretical background's relation to the actual subjects of analysis. Then, the multimodal discourse analysis model is applied. The MDA analysis is first applied to posters. In turn, the findings will help shed light on the reasons, manner, actual creation, and the overtone of other artwork formats such as music, lyrics, and videoclips.

4.1. Women on Strike as Response to Structural Violence

Having elaborated the concept of structural violence and protest art to oppose to the harmful deeds of the government, it is time to check if the concept is relevant to the events in Poland. Considering that the restriction of abortion rights was understood as a meaningful constraint of basic human rights and a threat to women's health and safety, the link between this regulation and structural violence is obvious. Following Galtung's definition of structural violence as being often indirect but becoming visible thanks to the reaction it provokes (Galtung, 2018), it is the social movement it triggered that made protest art emerge as a response to injustice and social resistance. The previously mentioned cases described in the theoretical chapter of calls for human rights, democratic and political freedom through art in Egypt, the UK or Palestine showed that art can be louder and more explicit than elaborated speeches. The question now is whether that was the case in Poland.

To answer this question, the first step is to investigate how it all started from the point of view of the artists and what was the trigger for them to create thematic protest art: did they

just want to express their stance, or rather wanted to emphasize that they identify themselves as real artists who fight for their socio-political beliefs with the tool they know the best, art?

Magdalena Pankiewicz, one of the graphic artists truly committed to the movement, admitted that she decided to do what she does the best to express her resistance, create art (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020). Together with all other artists creating *protest art* (as due to the incentives for its creation and the message it conveyed, we can honor it with this term), Magdalena decided to give access to their artworks to all the protesters for their own use. Graphics, animations, all that was created was shared with the public on social media platforms, printed out and used by the citizens as posters during the strikes. The streets were full of people carrying posters presenting artists’ graphics. Instagram and Facebook were full of publications shared repeatedly with illustrations created by Pankiewicz and her artist colleagues.

As it has been also already stated, art plays an important part in social movements. It is used for framing, to communicate information, to attract resources, to foster useful emotions and as a symbol of coherent identity, membership, and commitment to the movement (Adams, 2002). Investigating the case of the role of protest art in the face of structural violence from the perspective of the artist, it is worth checking if, indeed, artists put that much meaning and engagement in creation of the artworks during protests in Poland. Magdalena confessed (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020) that just after the verdict of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal regarding rigid abortion restriction rights, she felt absolutely hopeless, powerless, unsafe, as a woman but also as a citizen (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020). After the wave of sadness, she felt anger, as she found it particularly evil-minded of those in power to add fears and burdens like that during the incredibly hard period of time which was pandemics. She decided to take the action, to express her opposition towards all that the best she could, so through her art. She shared the poster she prepared for all the interested people for free. She wanted it to be taken by women to the streets, for the manifests, to be placed in their homes, in public places, everywhere possible, to become a background for women slogans and all personal stories (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020).



Figure 6 Magdalena Pankiewicz, 2020

In addition to the protest art created by her and also other artists, the fact that the artworks became viral and available for common use fulfilled one more function characteristic of protest art. Namely, protest art also prolongs the effect of the protest - it echoes it - thanks to art's diffusion into a broader culture (Adams, 2002). This is what constitutes the uniqueness of the protest art: even though the social movement fades away with time, it is the accompanying art that makes it not only last longer and reach global scope, but mainly preserves the memory of the events in the form of posters, photographs, or songs that shape cultural heritage of the societies.

The national protests in Poland against the restriction abortion rights came to an end after reaching its peak in October 2020, but it is indeed true that artworks left behind remind about that time in the Polish history and make the events more unforgettable than if the run of events was saved in written form only. How come? The answer to that question is provided in this chapter through multimodal discourse analysis, which shows that images enhanced by other artistic forms may affect us more than any written form.

Referring back to the incentives of Polish artists that contributed to the creation of protest art for Women's Strike 2020, Karolina Misior, graphic artist who created the poster placed below, confessed that she had never been politically or socially involved in what was happening in the surrounding her Polish reality ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020). This time, however, she felt struck by the thought and awareness of losing something important. Abortion can divide people, and everyone has their own opinions about it, but one cannot cross another person's personal borders and impose how to behave and what decision to make in such a sensitive case. Karolina said that she felt she had lost was years of attempts to feel freedom. The limiting of women's rights was understood by her as a beginning

of a strict state and dictatorship by one of the right-wing parties, a party that considers itself better than the rest because of the religion they believe in. In such a situation, what every citizen should do was to say ‘enough’ (in Polish “dość” = “enough”). (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020). Dość is also the word she placed on her poster in the middle, to emphasize the message she wanted to convey.

Similarly to Magdalena, Karolina decided to express her anger, opposition and disagreement to the decisions ‘from above’ as best as she could through artistic means. Clearly, she did not consider herself an activist before, but structural violence and its power reached her and caused a need to resist and to do it as effectively as she could. For her, the relevant weapon to fight structural injustice was art.



Figure 7 Karolina Misiar, 2020

Daga Skwarska, Polish artist and illustrator, but most importantly Polish woman, revealed that her reason to get involved into protests with the artistic means she created was obvious: she is a woman (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020). She could not imagine not showing resistance to what had happened due to her gender and given that government demeanor was pointed precisely at women. She was frustrated with how the government could demand from women to be heroic towards abortion without giving them any tools for this heroism. She did not imagine living in a country where one half suffers on behalf of the others’ fanaticism. Abortion cannot be treated as sport discipline, or fun for women who need entertainment, as for most of them, this is an upsetting, painful decision. The artist emphasized that it is atrocious to condemn them to double suffering, and to let someone else decide whether they can or cannot do an abortion instead of them (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020). To express her opinion, Daga prepared a poster with an

image that was considered powerful and brave and that, similarly to what happened with other artists' works, became viral and was seen on the streets during the protests.



Figure 8 Daga Skwarska, 2020

To emphasize that politics and art have much in common, the statement of Karolina Brzuszek, another Polish artist who contributed artistically to the strikes, should be discussed. Karolina is an example of a person who for years has been convinced that she has nothing in common with politics. She does not care; politics is just a group of loud men and there is no connection between them and her life. In October 2020 she realized she couldn't be more wrong. One day she woke up in a country where women are deprived of their basic right to freedom of choice and to decide about their body and future ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020). Surprisingly, her solution for this countenance of social injustice is very simple, and it is called empathy. According to Karolina, empathy is an amazing mechanism that helps seeing further than the top of one's nose. She would encourage all the politics and those 'in charge' to try it. The artist also admitted that she had never been good at speeches and expressing her opinions orally. That is why she always tried to use her talent and what she does the best, art. Her goal was to become one of the nonverbal but loud female voices, those female voices that in Poland are objectified, with women treated as second category citizens. All of this made Karolina react and protest in the way she found relevant for herself ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020). In the same way as her colleagues and artists, Karolina Brzuszek prepared a poster shared on social media platforms with a consent to be used by the protesters according to their needs.



Figure 9 Karolina Brzuszek, 2020

Ivo Adventures is an artist creating art with positive vibe on daily basis. She does not get involved in problematic and complicated topics, rather tries her best to make others' days better thanks to her art. However, the issue of women rights is of extreme importance for her. During the period of strikes in Poland also her art transformed from 'eye-pleasing exhilarant, cheerful messaging' into protest art, an art that was more serious and focused on what was happening in the surrounding reality at that time. Ivo Adventures changed the colors of her Instagram feed and started expressing her resistance to the injustice towards women. She wanted to emphasize the prevailing disregard of women's opinion about their own life and body, as well the idea that women need to always hold together in the face of structural violence towards them ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020). The image is accompanied by the words 'You are never alone'.



Figure 10 Ivo Adventures, 2020

Marta Frej is yet another artist who could not be omitted in this selection of artworks for the Women's Strike protests. Marta is a very well-known artist in Poland who created meaningful messages through her images always related to social matters regarding women. Her art radiates with feminism and sarcasm. For the protests in October 2020, she created many images seen later in printed-out form on the streets, carried by the protesters or shared on social media platforms.

In her short statement for Vogue Poland ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020) Marta said that her graphics had been telling the story of women living in a country with one of the strictest abortion rights for years. What was extraordinary was the fact that the government wanted to make it even more rigid. Her images were designed to present how the women could feel treated as people unable to be responsible, smart, stable enough to make decisions regarding own body. Also, she wanted to visualize an experience of thousands of Polish women who felt like incubators, vessels, objectified in the country deprived of sexual education, ignoring problems of violence by virtue of gender. She told the story about a Polish Hell in which there was not much chance for improvement. The powerful graphics created in October 2020 became incredibly popular not only in a form of posters, but also as a logo on T-shirts, or face masks (protests were taking place during the Covid-19 Pandemic).



Figure 11 Marta Frej, 2020

Visual art is not the only artistic form created as a response to abortion restrictions in Poland in 2020. Singer and songwriter Wojciech Baranowski, known as 'Baranovski', together with rapper Piotr Szmidt, called 'Ten Typ Mes', created the song 'Freedom' [org. 'Wolność']. This song became sort of anthem for the protests (BARANOVSKI, 2020). Apart from a very powerful text, it was enhanced by a videoclip presenting protesters on the streets of Warsaw

holding banners, posters and wearing the symbol of a lightning bolt attached to their clothes. Videos were captured on the 30th of October 2020 during one of the protests.

Asked about the incentives to create the song, Baranowski said that the text itself was another story and he started creating it during lockdown, inspired by the pandemic. In the meantime, the strikes started taking place, and the song got another meaning. However, the videoclip was meant to be a documentary about the events that at that time were taking place in Poland. The artists chose artistic means as a way to express their support in the fight for freedom for all of us (Baranowski i Ten Typ Mes w utworze "Wolność" - Polska Płyta / Polska Muzyka, 2020). Piotr Szmidt added that even though the text was created before the Women's Strike in 2020, the events influenced the final version of complete artwork of music, text, and image. They found the balance between the pessimism emerging from the lyrics and hope we were contaminated by anti-government crowds protesting on the streets (Szymańska, 2020). Below translation of the lyrics the song by Baranowski and Ten Typ Mes (Baranowski - Wolność (Feat. Ten Typ Mes) - Tekst Piosenki Na, n.d.).

'Freedom'

Lyrics: W. Baranowski, P. Szmidt

(Freedom) (Freedom)

I like to drive car at night

I like to hounding glove of neons lights

I like to fly above the exhausted city

In fact I am doing it only in dreams

To drink cheap wine by the Vistula river...

No, I am older so I can't as often I used to drink

I don't wanna touch a shotgun until the world will make me do this.

Because I love freedom, I love freedom

I like to smoke, even though I don't smoke anymore

I am ashamed in front of elderly people

I am wasting my time watching series

If I didn't I would have a few new albums

I do not believe anybody on TV

No, You don't wanna change , be ready to change

I wanna make myself warm in the shelter of my home

But I am not talking about a few empty walls.

(That's it, Freedom, I wonder they will play it, ey)

I don't like any religion any guru, any insignia

You are being irritated by my lack of faith and that I am gaining some pretty subsidy (what?!)

That your God isn't a fairytale for kids, okey?

And my atheizm is war inside of me, okey?

This is the freedom, this is its standard

Would, other side, deal with sarcasm, laughing? (Get by?)

I know somebody, I know somebody who are thinking like us (like us) we must live, we

must love and live ourselves, even we don't brake their's law (yes)

It begins earlier than cop's bat on head

They say I am exaggerating, and I prefer to agree with this

here we have others authorities

I hope I am mistaken

I do not stop criticizing anarchia

So how much freedom is needed?

I have had more freedom in live, that I need to

That's why I wanna sing with you, Wojtek

Because I love freedom,

I love freedom

Because I love freedom,

Freedom.

Analysis of artistic work is never easy, as the principle of art is immensity of interpretation. However, considering the creators' view on their art, time, overtone, and function it had during the protests, it is not an overstatement that events understood as structural violence triggered their creation and influenced the final form of the artwork. The issue of freedom brought in the protest song was very timely; it was even more meaningful in the

context of abortion restriction laws. The authors themselves wanted to express their support in the fight for freedom (Polityczny Odzew Artystów Zainspirowanych Ulicznymi Protestami, 2020).

Another important factor is the way the song was interpreted by Polish society. Here we would probably have as many interpretations as receivers (no need to repeat how broad and free the scope of interpretation can be). Nevertheless, among Polish citizens were those understanding the song as strictly socio-politically related as well as those who believed artistic expression had nothing to do with those spheres. Artur Leonowicz, a journalist from the agency *Spotlight* in Poland, is convinced that the artists do not support any politicians or parties through their art. They express their opinion regarding abortion, women's rights, and solidarize with their audiences or friends. They convey values that go beyond politics (Polityczny Odzew Artystów Zainspirowanych Ulicznymi Protestami, 2020). That is one interpretation, but there are also those convinced that it is clearly an act of engagement in political and social issues. Piotr Kędzierski, a journalist from *Newonce.radio*, claims that it is indeed great that Polish artists started addressing topics that are important and that is what is expected from them by their fans (Polityczny Odzew Artystów Zainspirowanych Ulicznymi Protestami, 2020). This example shows how different interpretations of one piece of art can be. These interpretations don't always correspond to the motivation of artists to create certain pieces of art. Nevertheless, that is the risk artists need to face and, in a way, also the advantage of artistic means. Art can help fulfil one's needs at a given time, whether it is encouragement to fight, help to go through hard times, or incentives to engage in social matters, even if interpretations can be endless.

What is important here is also the fact that the song was created by two men, even though theoretically the new laws hit women's rights. However, what can be understood from the lyrics is that it did not matter which form structural injustice took and towards whom it was directed. What was meaningful was that these were government practices that hurt citizens, took away human rights and applied indirect violence. Women are part of society and this time their rights were violated, yet violence can spread and next time it can hurt another social group. That is why the song emphasizes how important freedom is and encourages us to remember this, and if necessary, fight for it. There is no doubt why the song became the protest song of the strike in the moment when freedom was in danger.

The artworks and artists discussed above confirm that what happened in Poland in October 2020 is definitely understood by the society as an act of structural violence. Feeling powerless, categorized, facing regulation that came from those in charge taking decisions in the name of society does not leave any room for doubts whether the events should be described

with Galtung's term. There is also no doubt that the reaction of artists was a form of resistance. The art was not created for pleasure or just to commemorate events, but to express lack of consent for what was happening, to strengthen the protests, to serve people on strike to express their resistance as well and to call for what was threatened, human freedom.

4.2. Silent Artivism

Art created during and for the needs of protest in Poland has all the characteristics of protest art. Thus, an interesting issue is that of all the artists answering the question of what pushed them to create protest art, only Marta Frej openly admitted that she considers herself both an artist and an activist (Nowakowska, 2021). Following Diverlus' (2016) notion of artivism, it is not an overstatement to claim that term artivist can be used to describe all the artist who contributed to the Women's Strike 2020 through artistic means. Even though art does not have to include an explicit political message and leaves room for abstraction or personal art, when an artist lives in a certain social reality, this reality will always implicitly influence their work. The majority of Polish artists whose opinion we know do not consider themselves political activists. On the contrary, Karolina Misior has never been devoted to social issues and she did not care about society's problems. What happened in October 2020 did not make her an activist, it just made her express disagreement to the government's practice through art as she felt that was the only way she could do something meaningful for this case and for other women ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020). However, it was the reality that influenced her art, that constituted an incentive to create. Thus, from a theoretical point of view, her work for the protests can be considered a trace of artivism.

Similarly to Karolina Misior, Karolina Brzuszek, the author of another illustration created and shared with everyone interested in using her graphics for the protests, has always emphasized that she is beyond the reach of politics ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020). We do not know whether today, two years after the events regarding abortion restriction, she still does not get involved in politics. However, at that moment, her attitude was influenced by those events and transformed into one that can be considered artivism. She felt the need to resist and to help others resist through what she was best at, creating graphics. The principle was not to change the social order but to say 'no, we do not agree' and to call for human rights for women.

As has been stated in the previous chapters, artivism is a phenomenon where artists do not necessarily need to have an explicit mission to change the world or to find world peace

(Diverlus, 2016). It can be enough to react to what happens through the means of art to get this title. Magdalena Pankiewicz who decided to show resistance the best she could through her creations can thus be considered an activist (“Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty,” 2020). Ivo Adventures, who was deeply touched by structural violence and turned her artistic expression upside down from positive, cheerful images to deeper, powerful messages of resistance, is also an activist. Even though on daily basis they are distant from political and social issues inflicting their art, when Karolina Misior, Daga Skwarska, Karolina Brzuszek contributed to the strike by creating protest art, we could consider them activists. Baranovski and Ten Typ Mes, authors of the song that became a hymn for the protesters on the streets, became activists because through their art they reacted to the surrounding reality and opposed structural violence. Although the artists involved in the protests based their identity on the creative process more than on the activist movement, the activist’s role to highlight injustices, propose alternatives and help people imagine a better reality, also to attract attention to structural violence through creating art (Diverlus, 2016) seems to be fulfilled, despite these artists’ original interest in creating art to express themselves, not necessarily to convey political messages.

What is also important is that among artists there is a disconnect between those who self-identify as activists and those who do not, even though they actively engage in what is considered activism (Diverlus, 2016). And here is the crucial point: to be an activist, one does not have to self-identify as such. The concept is broad and complex enough to include even those pieces of artistic work created by artists who will never associate themselves with an activist group. Out of all the artists whose work has been presented here and whose incentive to contribute to the protests in Poland through art we go to know, only one seems to probably give affirmative answer when asked whether would call herself activist and this person is Marta Frej. The rest seem to belong more to the group of ‘silent’ activism. As the term is broad and complex, we can call them this way, but also, they do not have to self-identify as part of activist stream.

However, in an interview about her artistic work, Marta Frej admits that she is the proudest of herself and feels the sense of achievement when her artworks appear during demonstrations, in the public sphere, on the placards during protests, or as profile pictures in social media as a sign of revolt, opposition and resistance. The will to change the order, rules and regulations running our life is her strongest identification and main goal in life (Nowakowska, 2021). Since she remembers, she has not accepted and agreed to the reality a social order and she has wished to trigger its change through the accessible for her manner,

which is art creation. She believes that art can influence the change, however, we need to be aware that art itself will not be enough to bring this change and make it happen (Nowakowska, 2021). Clearly, Marta is the pure example of artist and activist fully aware of the principles for creation. Here, the need to express emotions is surely present however, does not cover the main purpose she believes her art has, which is to encourage social change, raise awareness of the need to change the order and influence the laws and rules. Her explicit message and attitude could be described as activist creating for change and conveying social and political messages through art on purpose.

Artivism encapsulated in art is believed to have a transformative power and to be a valid tool for social change. The next section investigates the transformative power of the art created by Polish artists (those loud and silent in their activism) to gauge whether it was able to bring any social change.

4.3. Polish Arpilleras and Their Transformative Power

As discussed in the conceptual framework chapter of this dissertation, artists and scholars agree on that art alone does not have the power to change society, but art gives form and voice to individual and collective needs, which then motivate and sustain social movements. What is more, art is also useful for communicating issues and concepts important to the movement beyond the activist group (Milbrandt, 2010). What should be emphasized here is that protests have more power when enhanced by artworks. Protests are powerful tools with a strong driving force to challenge political order and social injustice. They often constitute departure points for many important changes and transformations. Supported by protest art, they have a chance to reach even larger audiences, for example, the Banksy's graffiti or protest art in the form of arpilleras from Chile (Adams, 2002). However, can we state that Polish artworks created for the Women Strike 2020 were equal in their transformative power with for example Chilean arpilleras?

As a reminder, one of the idealistic goals of Chilean arpilleras was being the medium of information for the rest of the world about the situation in the country. The workshop created bonds between women, increased their political and social awareness thanks to its educational module and also created unity and gave active members of the group the important tasks of providing income for them and profit for the whole society.

Thanks to export, protest art from shantytowns acquired a very important role: it was attracting attention of those untouched by the situation in Chile; it sent the message to the world

to raise awareness and present the problem. The majority of arpilleras were exported, the buyers included human rights organizations, nongovernmental organizations, Chilean exiles in North America and Europe (Adams, 2010).

Referring to the informative function of Polish protest art accompanying the Women Strike 2020, we know for a fact that from the artists' statements we cannot draw a conclusion that informing the rest of the world about the events through the art was the goal of the artworks. Asked about incentives to create, a majority of Polish artists whose artworks are the subject of analysis in this thesis claimed that it was the need of self-expression, showing resistance, raising the spirit of fight for freedom and human rights ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020). However, arpilleras raised awareness of the Chilean situation not only internationally, but also locally. The women's knowledge regarding political and social issues increased. It can be said about the artworks in Poland that they indeed contributed to increase of interest in politics and social issues. Artists themselves in the interview for Vogue Poland ("Strajk Kobiet: Artyści, Którzy Wspierają Protesty," 2020) emphasized that they created artworks in order to manifest that women need to hold together (Ivo Adventures), oppose towards human rights violations (Paulina Sadowska), and encourage society to show resistance (Magdalena Pankiewicz).

Protests against abortion restriction rights took place not only in Poland, but also for example in Norway (Høyer, 2020). However, it is not possible to credit the artworks prepared by Polish artists for that, as the incentive to organize protests came from Polish women living abroad and their need to resist and spread the news in the countries of their current residence. The graphics themselves did not raise awareness on what was happening in Poland at that time, but they were visible on the streets of foreign countries during the protests happening there. One example is the poster by Marta Frej (Figure 6), which was used during the protests in Norway and documented by a local newspaper (Aase, 2021).

Another important factor is the symbolism in protest art. Arpilleras became symbols of suffering in Chile, they marked membership in the movement (Adams, 2002). The lightning bolt will never stop being associated by Polish society with nothing else but Women Strike protests and act of structural violence towards women in Poland. It was placed on many posters also those presented in this chapter. Whoever supported the movement and wanted to show solidarity with Polish women used this symbol whether it was on the profile photo in the social media, on the pieces of clothing, on a face mask. Adams (2002) could not be more right here by saying that this is what constitutes the uniqueness of the protest art: even though the social movement fades away with time, it is the accompanying art that makes it not only last longer

and reach global scope, but mainly preserves the memory of the events in the form of posters, photographs, or songs that shape cultural heritage of the societies.

Referring to songs, music is less accessible than visual arts - with music and songs, there is a need for people to understand the language of the lyrics if they are to access the message. The language of visual arts might be more universally understood (Adams, 2002). As this thesis focuses on the motivations for artists to create during the protests and the way this art was used by the society during that time, the aspect of understanding the language is not really the issue. In general, it is assumed that the citizens of Poland do understand the language in which the lyrics were composed. Also, the posters have elements of text in Polish language. Although the language of visual arts might be better understood let us remember that the song that became a protest song in Poland is analyzed here as a total of music, lyrics, and visual art as the composition was enhanced by video clip consisting of videos from the protests as it was already mentioned before. Assuming that someone does not know the language, obviously has greater chance to understand the message of the visual art than audiovisual in this case. Nevertheless, in this dissertation we do not go beyond the borders of Poland in analyzing the meaning, message and usefulness of the protest art and its transformative power, hence for sure, song as naturally apart from melody contains of verbal text constitutes more demanding piece of art. It needs literal and symbolic understanding of lyrics and time to process them to find relevance and power as tools to strengthen a social movement. The fact that it became the protest song of the whole movement (Szymańska, 2020) and reached 1.6 million views on YouTube (BARANOVSKI, 2020) testifies that some efforts have been made by the Polish society to understand the meaning and its overtone.

After having discussed how powerful artworks that are part of the Women's Strike 2020 were, it is necessary to emphasize that the artworks contributed to the social change. It should be remembered that social change does not necessarily mean overtaking the government and protests leading to coup d'état. Social change is important as it is a change in human interactions and relationships that can further transform cultural and social institutions. These changes are long-term and occur overtime, but the crucial element is the change in the society, in people, paying attention and noticing social violence, reacting to it, opposing and the will to fight for the reality in which the society wants to function. The artists creating for the protests in Poland definitely contributed to this change through using their talent but also giving an example of those usually indifferent by political games getting involved in social case. As future of the society depends also on those not involved in socio-political matters on daily basis. Their artistic resistance conveyed clear message as the members of the society got

involved in the protests under the flags depicting graphics created by the artists accompanied by the melody of 'Freedom' (BARANOVSKI, 2020).

Referring to artworks motivating the social change, in the chapter introducing the theoretical framework, the example of Al Gore and his presentation about global warming was mentioned. What was emphasized there was the fact that PowerPoint presentation filled with text did not make an impression as strong as the images that enriched it. It was clearly stated that images can attract attention and convey message better than text. It was also claimed by Milbrandt (2010) that visual arts utilize codes and conventions of their time that communicate more than verbal text. To find an answer it is necessary to look into the artworks through the filter of multimodal discourse analysis.

4.4. Artworks' Message Through the Lenses of MDA

The analysis so far has presented the motivation of the authors of artworks, the aim the artists wanted to achieve, and how Polish society was eagerly using shared graphics, illustrations, and protesting to the rhythm of "Freedom" (BARANOVSKI, 2020) as well. Nevertheless, the issue of the way the artworks were used and whether it was corresponding to the intent of the artists is much more complicated, and the reason for this is subjectivity of interpretation. What for one person is a socio-political manifest, for another is understood as simple expression of anger, resistance, fury, and own opinion (Polityczny Odzew Artystów Zainspirowanych Ulicznymi Protestami, 2020). Therefore, protest art is a tool in the hands of not only artists, but also audiences. However they want to use it, that is the form protest art takes.

If we were to stop and ponder now whether it is possible to make use of protest art in a way that is absolutely opposite to the intention and message it is supposed to convey according to the artist, the conclusion could be surprising. Since there are always two sides of the same coin, it could be expected that the answer is yes. Yet, is it even possible to turn a meaning that is so strong and context-dependent and use it against the case it was created to fight for? That will be hopefully clarified thanks to MDA.

It has been already explained and proved that the concepts of social violence, activism, protest art, and the transformative power of art are relevant to the role of art in protests in Poland. Presented examples should have proved the link between these concepts and actual state of affairs. However, in this thesis there is a lot of mentions about message conveyed through art, meaning, expression, but the fact is that apart from the lyrics of the song and single

words on the posters, we do not get any message that is explicit and straight-forward. Thus, how does it work that in spite of no text they convey meaning?

What is groundbreaking for the field of linguistics in general, but in this particular case for this dissertation is an explicit acknowledgement that emerged and shaped MDA. It stated that communication is inherently multimodal, and literacy and language are not confined (O'Halloran et al., 2011). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) whose approach to MDA is adapted as the main methodology here, explored visual design and images in a way that showed that analysis cannot be only monomodal, but multilayered, merging analysing of art, language, music, architecture etc. to obtain overall meaning. The method emphasizing connections between images, emotions, music, action seems to provide more remarks on exploring here the topic of the artists' intent to create with message emerging through their art and the actual way of using them by the society coherent with the original message.

Definitely, the focus in this work is on communication understood in the non-traditional way. Starting from the violence itself, it is its structural type that is evinced through deeds, not through direct speech. Structural violence is indirect, in the same way that artists shared their messages with the rest of the society. Between artists and the receivers of the art (their audiences) there was basically no language used; art was considered the main tool to communicate and convey meaning. Even though it was possible to find verbal statements of the artists and cite them in this thesis, this did not constitute their regular policy. All the interviews are very short and essential in their scope. The statements of the artists creating for the Women's Strike protests could be probably enclosed in 3 pages of text altogether, the meaning and incentive were to be expressed beyond letters.

Four strata of discourse, design, production, and distribution are helpful to understand the uniqueness of the multimodal way of communication. Starting from the stratum called discourse, it is possible to claim that all six posters as well as the artwork composed of music, lyrics and videoclip were influenced by the same discourse. Discourses are knowledges of reality (some aspects of) that are socially constructed. It means that they have been developed in specific social contexts, and in the ways accurate for the actors and their interest in these contexts (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). Also, an important fact is that it is possible to realize any discourse in many different ways. The discourse in which the presented posters, song and video were created was formed by the spirit of expressing opposition by both artists and the society to abortion rights restrictions. The way (mode) to realize the discourse is through art, more precisely posters and music together with lyrics and video. Discourse is realized as part of social events and answers to the government practices. Thanks to analyzing previously the

artists' statements from the interviews, we know why they were creating and contributing this way to the strike. The same discourse influenced the art of all the artists whose work is analyzed in this thesis.

As a social construction, posters, music, video provide knowledge on what the oppressive behavior from the government refers to. The human body, more precisely women's body or feminine features are present on all the 6 posters. The artwork of M. Pankiewicz (Figure 1) presents a feminine face enriched by a lightning thunder, also mentioned before, as symbol of the protests. K. Misior (Figure 2) decided to use the image of a woman stepped by a foot a few times bigger in size than her that she is trying to hold and preventing from putting her to the ground. Also, Misior added power to her poster by using the classical linguistic expression, we can see in big letters 'dość' that in direct translation means 'enough'. Daga Skwarska (Figure 3) composed her illustration from the image resembling vagina in shape and a hand in front of it with middle finger raised up in a world-wide known symbolic gesture. K. Brzuszek (Figure 4) presented a composition of a feminine-like creature with a crown and symbol of lightning bolt in the area of intimate parts and 8 stars that symbolize lack of respect to the right-wing party governing in Poland and being responsible for the abortion restrictions. Ivo Adventures (Figure 5) presented women's hands holding each other and located words 'you are never alone' (org. 'nigdy nie jesteś sama') in the middle. The last graphics, the one of Marta Frej (Figure 6) shows a woman whose mouth is shut by being painted into colors of a Polish flag hand. Even without detailed explanations, the images seem to map quite precisely that they belong to a wave of resistance and relate to structural violence towards women. A discourse of resistance against injustice is a plausible reading of these artworks.

Analyzing the text of the song we can also understand the obvious lack of agreement to limiting freedom and human rights, of taking away women's right to choose. Here we have an example of the same meaning expressed by music, lyrics (so classic linguistic medium) and image. The video for the song (BARANOVSKI, 2020) is a vivid image of thousands of people protesting on the streets, holding posters, banners they did themselves, also using slogans and images of a lightning bolt, intimate parts of women bodies and a middle finger on them, or 8 stars. The discourse in which this artwork was created emerges from opposition to the structural injustice, lack of acceptance, call for social change and human rights. It constitutes a perfect example of multilayered approach to analyze the meaning as well. This is an example of a combination of linguistic modes together with those visual and with music. This makes the overall meaning much stronger and powerful than text, music or video alone. After analyzing text, we can argue that the authors oppose towards anyone who tries to take their freedom away.

The video presents people protesting and makes the context of these protests understandable. Protest itself means that the crowd shows resistance towards someone or something. Listening to the music only, we can state it is a vivid melody that definitely can be motivating to action, but without lyrics and images, it is hard to assume what kind of action it motivates us to. Music alone seems to have ability to be motivating to the same extent to physical exercises as well as to projects of socio-political character. What gives the full meaning and conveys complete message is the combination of these three in this case.

Once the stratum of discourse in which the artists have created their artworks is explained, the next step in MDA is to determine the stratum called *design*, which stands halfway between content and expression. In the methodological chapter the notion of design and its function within MDA was depicted using the example of an architect and a house. An architect is the one who designs (not builds) the house, the discourse provides a certain view of how the houses are lived in, how many people live there, what they do there etc. The design of the house is conceptualizing how to give a shape to this discourse in the form of a house (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). Now the question is how to refer it to the case of the artworks and their authors. Our architect is the artist who creates art in the most appropriate form (according to own judgement) whether it is a poster, or a video, or a song to give shape to the discourse which is the society's response to anti-abortion legal provisions, in this case, the society expresses opposition. Also worth mentioning, the artists are not separate from the social group individuals, but a part of it, therefore they give shape to the discourse they created as well.

But also, this example is only illustrative and enables to understand strata of discourse and design in the context of social event such as anti-abortion rights protests and the role of art (and artist) in it. However, the response to the research question on what the artist's motivation was to create art does not necessarily have to be the will to give a shape to the discourse created by the society, which is its way of communication in the context of particular social event. Perhaps it was created just to express own feelings and emotions, to give a shape to discourse created by the artist not necessarily corresponding with the one influenced by the society. Referring to the actual responses of the artists regarding what triggered them to create, it is possible to conclude that both the need of self-expression and also to shape the discourse through colors, forms, music were the reasons. The artists wanted to express opinion and resistance but also contribute to the protests, respond to the surrounding them reality and that is enclosed in the already explored concept of activism as well. Designing means shaping the resources that are available into a framework that can act as a plan to produce the final effect.

Resources in this case are all the means used such as colors, images, shapes, symbols, sounds, words.

A step forward from the designer to producer is a moment when we arrive to the blurriest border according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), which is assuming that producer and designer are not the same person. Ideally, they should not be, but art is known for its unwillingness to be trapped in frames and tables and its refusal to follow fixed schemes.

Production is the communicative use of media and of material resources. The medium means the body and the voice as well as tools that enable the extension of bodily expression and communication such as musical instruments, or outfit and castanets in a dance like flamenco, also, the tools and materials used to produce artefacts, paint and canvas, pen, and paper, etc. The key point is that production has an independently variable semiotic role in communication and cannot be limited to mere realization of the designs. It is possible thanks to the fact that a voice reading what has been already written (designed) or sings what has been designed as a song the singer's or speaker's bodily articulates and thus, communicates directly adding meanings not pre-designed but appearing as natural subproducts of the process (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). Production is claimed to be always physical work, whether performed by humans or machines, it is a physical job of text articulation. Also, the interpretation of production is considered physical work, a use of body, its sensory organs. Clearly, what is understood as meaning does not only reside in discourse and design, but in production as well. It is a result of human engagement with the world and the resources used in articulating and interpreting meaning include both, semiotic modes and media.

Now, how can it be relevant to the Polish artists at first glance being discourse architects, designers, and producers at first glance. Actually, as it has been mentioned a few lines above, art does not like strict forms and rules and regulations. And what seems to be not fitting in the theoretical ideas of MDA, when analyzed more profoundly finds its place as Kress and van Leeuwen created the version of multimodal approach that enables to analyze even so independent and non-linear ways of communication as art. After closer look, it turns out that designer and producer are not the same person, even though artists prepared graphics on their own and singers were singing the song with their own voices as well. However, as art is always a step forward from what is considered common, and so is multimodal discourse analysis, it can be understood that producers are members of the society who actually used, or got inspired by the graphics, appearing on them symbols, lyrics of the song, or music. The key to understand it is to look at the production stratum as performed by the society that reflected the intent of the authors by applying the means they got from them according to own ideas. The image of a

gaged women created by Frej (Figure 6) had already strong meaning at the level of design, which we know from the author herself after getting familiar with her statement during the interview (Nowakowska, 2021). Thanks to sharing it for all interested people and using the graphics on their posters, face masks, Instagram feed etc., (Wczoraj spontanicznie sąsiadka @s.ink.up zrobiła mi tatuaże na niezwykle ważnych palcach środkowych. Będę teraz częściej okazywać serce 🇺🇦, 2020), it became more meaningful and actually applied according to the intent with which it had been created, to resist, to show disagreement, to protest against structural violence. The message is non-verbal and its production is not a job of physical articulation. However, it did not prevent art to have meaning, convey it and be understood and adapted by those who were just its receivers.

Regarding the production stage, in case of all the six posters presented and analyzed here, the mechanism worked in the same way. Somewhat different though is the case of the artwork composed of music, text and video. This is the compound artwork that became the protest anthem for thousands of Poles. It was not only listened to but also sung during the strikes. The fact that it became the soundtrack of the strikes means that also the message conveyed by the authors was received, understood and sent further. The reason of using it this way corresponded to what the artists wanted to express, as it was created within the discourse shaped by society, designed by those contributing to this shape, and produced by society in the context of resisting the structural violence act.

What if the same design with a different material production does not mean the same thing? (G. R. Kress et al., 2001). One could argue that it would be very hard to use for example the image of a woman stepped by huge shoe (Figure 3), or a depiction of vagina with middle finger flashing from it (Figure 2) in a way inconsistent with the artist's intent. The images are so firm, strong, powerful and simple in their message considering discourse in which they were created that it is even hard to think how they could be used to change the meaning. If someone decided to use the graphics, it would keep its meaning as being against structural violence, about wanting to resist. However, some of these issues go beyond the scope of this thesis.

After analyzing how the artworks were produced, it is time to proceed to the last stratum, called distribution. That is simply the way that certain effect of production is distributed, how, in what form it is conveyed. An example of musical performance was used to illustrate it: the performers might need the technicians to record music on tape for the purpose of preservation and distribution. Distribution tends to be seen as not semiotic, not enriching meaning anyhow, just facilitating the pragmatic functions mentioned above (G. R. Kress et al.,

2001). This part is quite simple as all of the artworks presented in the thesis could be found online even if the links had not been provided. The artists shared the graphics on their social media accounts and also that is how the people interested in using them were able to download the illustrations. Also, the song together with lyrics and video can be found on YouTube. For the distribution stratum the best summary is with the words ‘what was placed online once, will stay there forever’.

5. Conclusions

From the various concepts, methods, remarks, and analysis undertaken in this thesis, it is possible to state that art can be louder than speech. Messages, meanings, but also power, spirit and strength can be included in what we used to call picture, illustration, or video. Moreover, and as suggested through the MDA approach, the meaning is complete and stronger when art and linguistic forms are combined.

This research was aiming at providing an overview on how much art in the Women’s Strike had been used for promoting social change. It must be said that the thousands of citizens on the streets singing protest songs and waving with posters and graphics testify that art contributed to new social awareness. The artists themselves, who on a daily basis were indifferent to socio-political affairs, prepared weapons that helped the protests bloom. The social violence they faced made them maybe not politically engaged, but definitely reactive to their surrounding reality and woke up what was identified in this research as the activist within them. Art gave resistance a countenance that was quickly adapted by a civil society that eagerly showed up on the streets of Poland as well as abroad.

The fact that artworks were so commonly adapted by the citizens proves that the clear message they were conveying met their opinions and needs. As has been already discussed, it seems almost impossible to use the artworks in a way that is contrary to the message they sent, since they were created in the discourse of resentment towards a government using its power to violate the rights of the society – these artworks emerged from a clear need to express resistance. Therefore, whoever was eager to use the graphics or sing the protest song must have done so because the message conveyed was compatible to their opinions and feelings.

It is unclear whether the artists’ or the society’s attitude towards politics changed. What was acknowledged and thus counts as an answer to my research questions is that indeed, motivations of the artists were rather far away from any political leadership or from achieving any socio-political goals. They created because that was their way to express resistance, to

make people hold together and encourage to fight for their rights, but most importantly it was a way to express their support. For none of the artists whose statements were analyzed in this thesis did artworks constitute a part of a bigger, clearly political game. These artists did not encourage people to join any particular party, movement, or group with clear socio-political goals. To sum up, the artworks were created to express personal artists' statements and to give shape to the discourse of resistance, and within this discourse they were adapted by those who wanted to protest.

Hopefully, this research contributes to the field of Peace and Conflict Studies and opens more ways to give attention to art in a social studies context. Art definitely played a significant role in this social movement and shaped resistance to structural violence with colors, images, melody, and the power radiating from artworks. This thesis provided many examples on how art was expressing resistance, pain, harm, or injustice. It showed that it was bringing relief to the authors, but also society, that it was attracting local as well as global attention to what was problematic and what deserved to be fought against in a certain place.

My conclusion is that many times, art contributes not only to raise social awareness but also to give hope and to initiate social change. Now, moving away for a moment from the academic field, is it even possible to imagine social movements without art? My tentative answer is no. Moreover, I argue that art is as close to Peace and Conflict studies as structural violence, since the reaction to this phenomenon is resistance in many forms, the most common one being protests and strikes. So, if art is basically always present during social movements and constitutes almost their fixed element, why is it so understudied and/or underestimated? Art's transformative power is of great scope and therefore, it is intriguing why the intersection of art, social science, and politics is still so understudied and has not received due attentions and recognition yet. Is it because of its multidimensionality and intangibility? Or variety of interpretation and problem with framing clearly by fixed scholar expressions and existing theories? Or rather because of what also was expected to be limitation for this research, which is subjectivity of interpretation and the difficulty balance between personal and impersonal way of reading the messages art conveys?

Despite all the limitations and risks discussed at the beginning of the thesis, these did not seem to cause many issues and did not prevent from fulfilling the research objectives as well as providing links between theories, concepts, methodologies and explaining the role of art in the Women's Strike 2020. The analysis was conducted with consideration of all factors that might have influenced the research and seemed not to disturb in obtaining legitimate answers and conclusions. This research provided answers to its main questions, but also as

manifested above, can serve as springboard to new inquiries and considerations. Thus, my hope is that the thesis contributes to creating a richer tapestry of work on art and its interaction with socio-political matters.

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