

SIGN-SYMBOLIC NATURE OF FOLK COSTUME (ON EXAMPLE OF A BELT)

Purpose of Research. The purpose of the article is to research and generalize the role of the transformational processes of ceremonies of the life cycle of the Ukrainians by the studying such a component of clothing as a belt and the determination of its significance for culture. **Methodology.** The methodology of the research includes the systematic, historical and integrated approaches to the study of socio-historical, ethnographic and cultural-artistic phenomena. **Scientific Novelty.** The scientific novelty consists in analysing the belt as the key element of man and woman costumes of various historical periods of Ukraine and important symbol of Ukrainian folk culture, its role in the system of rituals, customs and traditions. **Conclusions.** Thus, the belt as one of the types of decorative folk art was the household instrument as well as the ornament and the symbol of the belonging to Christianity. The material and technique of creation of belts, showed the social status, class affiliation, material condition and gender peculiarities. The belt with its unique sign and symbolic system played the important role in the customs of the Ukrainians (maternity, wedding, ceremonial). It helped people to move in their lives.

Key words: belt, folk garments, men's costume, women's costume, ritual, symbol of Ukrainian culture.

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Метою статті є дослідження та узагальнення інформації щодо трансформаційних процесів у обрядах життєвого циклу українців через таку складову одягу, як пояс; з'ясування його значення для культуротворчості. **Методологія** дослідження включає принципи системності та історизму, комплексний підхід до вивчення соціально-історичних, етнографічних та культурно-мистецьких явищ. **Наукова новизна** полягає в аналізі поясу не лише як знакового елемента вбрання чоловічого та жіночого строю різних історичних періодів України, а й насамперед як важливого символу української народної культури, та в з'ясуванні його ролі у системі обрядів, звичаїв та традицій. **Висновки.** Пояс, як один із видів декоративного народного мистецтва, виконував не тільки побутове призначення, а й був прикрасою і елементом приналежності до християнства; матеріал, техніка створення поясів і способи підперізування мали значні регіональні відмінності та свідчили про соціальний статус, класову приналежність, матеріальний стан та гендерні особливості; пояс, з його унікальною знаково-символічною системою, відіграв важливу роль в обрядовості українського народу (наприклад, родильній, весільній, обрядовій) як важливий елемент, що допомагав людині переходити з одного життєвого етапу на інший.

Ключові слова: пояс, народне вбрання, чоловічий костюм, жіночий костюм, обрядовість.

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Целью статьи является исследование и обобщение информации о трансформационных процессах в ритуалах жизненного цикла украинцев через такую составляющую одежды, как пояс; определение его значения для культурообразования. **Методология** работы включает принципы системности и историчности, комплексный подход к изучению социально-исторических, этнографических и культурных явлений. **Научная новизна** статьи заключается в анализе пояса не только как знакового элемента одежды мужского и женского строя различных исторических периодов Украины, а в первую очередь как важного символа украинской народной культуры, и в определении его роли в системе обрядов, обычаев и традиций. **Выводы.** Пояс, как один из видов декоративного народного искусства, выполнял не только бытовые функции, но и служил украшением, а также элементом принадлежности к христианству; материал, техника создания, способы опоясывания имели значительные региональные различия и свидетельствовали о социальном статусе, классовой принадлежности, материальном положении и гендерных особенностях; пояс, с его уникальной знаково-символической системой, играл важную роль в обрядах украинского народа (например, родильном, свадебном) как важный элемент помощи людям перейти из одной жизненной фазы в другую.

Ключевые слова: пояс, народные костюмы, мужской костюм, женский костюм, обрядность.

Formulation of Problem. The process of studying a national costume and its evolution is impossible without the analysis of the following components: shirts, trousers, skirts etc. A belt is one of the most beautiful elements among them. In our opinion, the belt should be studied more properly. It allows us to analyse its development, the chronology and its regional division.

Analysis of Recent Researches and Publications. The analysis of the scientific sources proves that many researchers have devoted their works to the belt as the element of the national garments whereas they have not made any general conclusions. The works of K. Mateyko, T. Nikolayeva, O. Kosmina, M. Bilan, G. Stelmashchuk deal with the folk costume. Many researchers such as Y. Smolii, V. Zaichenko, L. Tchaikovsky and O. Schkolna analyse various types of the belts, which are used in different regions of Ukraine. The belt as a part of the rites, devoted to the life cycle has been studied by the famous Ukrainian scholars (P. Chubinsky, H. Vovk) and modern scientists (M. Maerchik, Z. Bosik, E. Denysenko). In addition, O. Levkivska and M. Drahomanov showed the belt as the sign of the protection.

Purpose of Research. The purpose of the article is to research and generalize the role of the transformational processes of ceremonies of the life cycle of the Ukrainians by the studying such a component of clothing as a belt and the determination of its significance for culture.

Main Part. First of all, we should note about the various archaeological sources, which point out that the belt has been the integral part of the men's garment. For example, we can see the belt as the important element of the man's clothes on the Kernosiv idol of the Eneolithic period [3], on silver figures of the Martynivsk treasure with the illustrations of the Eastern Slavs of VI – VII centuries [18, 348] and the Scythians on numerous archaeological finds [5, 8]. The scientists found the belts mostly in the Old Slavic men's burial places. There were the remnants of the leather belts, which were narrow and had copper or silver buckles, tips and bronze plates [15, 64-65].

The absence of archaeological evidence of the existence of women's belts allowed the researchers to assert that only men used the belts. In his work "Industry of the Ancient Russ" M. Aristov writes – "The golden and silver belts belonged to the expensive accessories of the riches of ancient Russ. Men only had belts. They were silk, leather with forged metal plates, tips and other embellishments". In addition, the author also tells about the significance of the belt in the rite of the sacrament: "the man should be tightened and without the coat" [14, 141-143]. The belt as the important element of clothing is mentioned in the Bible. This fact explains the role of the belt in religious Christian ceremonies. The Lord, ordering Moses to create garment for his brother Aaron and his sons, told also about the belt. Moses should put on the garment for their glory and beauty. Then he should anoint and sanctify them (Exodus 28). The Ipatiev Chronicles described how Prince Volodymyr's ambassadors had not liked the Muslims because they had prayed without belts [14, 142].

In the XIII-XV centuries, the belt continued to be an important social characteristic, the confirmation of feudal dignity, the ornament of clothes of nobles. Gold or gilded, decorated with pearls and cornelian belts were the expensive heritage. They were often listed in the descriptions of the estates [15, 64-65]. The Ipatiev Chronicles retained the story about Volodymyr Vasilkovich, the Prince of Volyn, who got ill and delivered his property "...his father's gold and silver belts and his own ones" to the poor people [6, 903-938].

In the period of the development of the feudal political system, clothing began gaining the specific national features and characteristics that were manifested in the materials, styles, colours, embellishment and their using. It was caused by the formation of the ethnic group and new production opportunities, living conditions, trade development and fashion. The latter was under the influence of the ideological and aesthetic tastes of the elite social groups.

In the XVI century, a kuntush, the men's and women's coats, were in fashion. They should be girded. Therefore, they became the separate artistic element and got the name "kuntush belts". The most part of them was from China, Turkey and Persia. In the first half of the XVII century, the so-called "persian workshop" produced the belts in Ukrainian territories. The first belt workshop appeared in Brody in the middle of the XVII century. At that period the belt manufacture was opened in Stanislav. It got its popularity by the production of the belts of the "Istanbul" type, which were woven two-sided for burial and wedding ceremonies. The belt workshop also was opened in Slutsk. Its belts have been known as the "Slutsk belts" [20, 21].

The Slutsk belt is a piece product, which is a polychrome cloth, hand-woven with silk or golden threads. Its dimensions vary between thirty – forty centimeters in width and two – four and a half meters in length (very rarely, narrower or shorter ones) [20]. According to the compositional structure, the Slutsk belts are divided into three groups – one-sided (one-facial waistband without the division of the central axis), two-sided (two-facial waistband without the division of the central axis or with it) and four-sided (two-facial waistband with the division of the central axis on each sides).

The ornamental motifs of the Slutsk belts are mostly phytomorphic. They are characterized by the following elements of the Chinese-Persian-Turkish weaving: peonies, lotuses, cloves, narcissuses, tulips and peach flowers. The ornamental composition of the belts consisted of the middle part and the ends ("heads"), which had the specific ornaments. The narrow strips decorated the edges of the belt [20; 1, 23].

The folk clothing of XIX – early XX centuries is the significant page of the material and spiritual culture of the Ukrainians. It is characterized by the richness of forms, the beauty of artistic ornaments. Naturally, these features concern the belts, which have been the important components of the men's and women's garments.

At the end of XIX century, the home-made woollen belts were the most widespread. They were painted with red and green colours. At the beginning of XX century the manufactured belt replaced them, whereas they preserved the elements of ancient forms. For example, there was the belt production in Krolevets. The belts had transverse stripes of various bright colours, which looked like as the linen ("kalamaika") ones of the eastern origin with the fringe. Later, such "fringe" appeared in the Krolevets towels, which were used as the belts, mainly in the Chernihiv province. [10]. The people, who lived in towns, used the gold and silver belts. They consisted of the different sections, which were embellished with precious stones [7; 16, 47].

The local originality of the folk traditional belts of the late XIX – early XX centuries was determined by materials, sizes, techniques of their production, ornamentations and colours. The belts were wool, linen, hemp, cloth and leather. The riches also used raw silk of various colours, silver and gilt filaments [15, 66].

The home-made waistbands were woven without a weaving loom. People wove them using various techniques. One of the oldest techniques, preserved until XIX century, was the called "mesh". The belts were knitted with six or eight pieces of wool. They were the longest belts (more than 3 m. in length and 0.5 m in width). Dressing them, people had to twist them in the narrow strip. Sometimes, the belts were the combination of the weaving and knitting, which made the artistic effect [15, 66].

The "edges" (kraika) was one of the most popular types of belts in Ukraine. The rich ornaments characterized it. The simply ones had the longitudinally striped two-sided pattern, whereas the complex ones were accompanied by the diverse single-deck ornament (width 3-15 cm, length – approximately 3 m). The ends of the belts were embellished with pompons. Men's belts were wider than women's ones [16, 70-71, 116]. Polesia "edges" were woven with coloured woollen threads (mainly in red, yellow, green stripes) [12, 22-23].

The tchoomaks had their own special leather belt, which was entitled "chinkotora". It was the double belt with one (narrow) or two buckles (wide), which looked like a long bag. It contained the pockets for the money and tobacco. A knife or other tools for the road could be hung on it [16, 132-133].

In the Middle Dnieper region, the most widespread kinds of the home-made belts were "edges" (narrow) and "mesh" (wide) [15, 66]. They were red with large colorful pompons. In Poltava region, the belts were red and green with longitudinal stripes, various in width and colours with geometrised flora ornaments [11, 104-105].

In the Dnieper region, men dressed narrow leather belts, which were very long. Their parts were embellished with metal buttons and thin tin and brass plates [15, 68].

At the Cossack times, the imported Persian and linen (kalamaika) belts, ornamented with silk, prevailed among the fellows in Slobidska Ukraine. They were long with pompons. The man could tie up the belt around himself. Its ends were hidden in different way. It depended on the social class (Cossacks and peasants) of the man. It was the indispensable rule, and served as the sign of the Cossacks or peasantry [16, 132-133].

The belts of Ekaterinoslav weaving were widespread among the women's clothing of the Southern regions of Ukraine. Being woven with coloured wool, they looked like a tightly knocked narrow long strip, embellished with geometric ornaments. They had the long multi-coloured fringe. Men wore the home-made or manufactured wide woollen belts of red, blue or green colours [11, 125, 130]. At the beginning of XX century, in the workers' regions, people began sewing shirts with dark satin. Such shirts were worn over narrow trousers and tied up with a narrow girdle, a silk red lace, or a military belt with a buckle [16, 145].

In Polesia and Podilia regions, the men's belts of the factory production were popular. Their colours were various tones of green and red, embellished by the stripes. The ends of these belts were ornamented by the fringe [12, 22; 11, 69].

In Polesia region, both men and women wore wide red belts with predominantly geometric ornaments and long stripes. In some villages of Zhytomyr Polesia, only men could wear black belts [12, 22, 46].

The men of Polesia and Volyn regions preferred the leather belts, fastened on a metal buckle and a thin strap, sewn on top of the opposite end of the buckle. It was embellished with embossed geometric ornamentation. Such belts were called "belt with wallet". The wallets were fixed on them. In addition, men hung a knife chain [16, 158, 173; 11, 30; 12, 22-23, 32].

In addition, the man's monochrome red and striped belts with blue linen and white cotton threads of home weaving were popular in Volyn region. They had fringes at the ends of the same threads (24 cm in width and 2.5 m in length). The man tied it up twice around himself and put the ends in the front. Women's belts ("edges") were mainly home-made weaving with longitudinal stripes of red, yellow, lilac, blue, green, brown woollen and white cotton threads [17, 298-299; 11, 30].

Analysing the Carpathian region (Boykivshchyna, Lemkivshchyna, Opillya, Pokuttia, Gutsulshchyna, Bukovina), we should note that a wide beautiful ornamented belt-cheres was the symbol of the men's power, beauty, will and the ancient hierarchic. It was the only element of clothing, which was embellished extremely magnificent, especially in Transcarpathia, Boykivshchyna, Pokuttia and the mountainous regions of Bukovina. There were incrustations, using of metal buckles and plates [16, 212, 284].

The Ornaments were embossed on the skin, decorated with buttons, simple and "decorated" plates. At Pokuttia, men used a "big strap" with five "cheprags" [12, p. 84]. Boikys tied up with a belt of black, rarely red colours with three buckles. The belt was fastened with a cloth or a handkerchief [16, 212, 225, 258].

There was a large belt in Pokuttia region. It was made of a folded double solid leather, which was used as a bag for a wallet and a knife [12, 84]. In addition, the men and women wore home-made colourful wide belts, ornamented with a large number of woollen fringe that emphasized the large white areas of the regional garments [16, 274].

In the Boykivshchyna, the accessory of women's clothing was a woven red narrow belt, sometimes with the addition of a green colours. The belts were made with long fringe at the ends. Fabric belts are mainly made with black and white threads [16, p. 213, 218].

The Hutsuls wove a non-wide belt. Multicoloured threads were used for the basis. Its pattern includes such motifs as diamonds, triangles, squares. The colours were typical for the traditional costume. Special belts-"edge" of the Kosiv region, woven from wool, were characterized by the geometric ornaments with accented white [16, 227, 237].

The Lemkos used to the narrow leather belt on the holidays. Moreover, they wore the "yugas", which was a wide, embossed pattern with a leather strap that fastened on two buckles. There were places for money, tobacco and matches [12, 96]. The women preferred the belts of the factory monochrome silk. They were an integral element of the skirt (zapaska), which was embroidered in the same way as the belt. The embroidery of flowers was carried out by coloured silk [16, 248].

In Bukovina, the wide woolen belt were popular. They usually had decorations the diamond-shaped design. [16, 258]. In Zacarpathians, men preferred a wide girdle with four buckles – yugas, whereas women used embroidered colored, cotton belts [16, 286, 290].

A specific feature of the men's garments of Lviv citizens was a tall leather girdle, fastened to four rows of buckles. Sometimes, the belt was so wide that it shaded the three lower rows of the hinges [16, 205].

The classics of Ukrainian literature to trace their characters turned to the description of their clothes. The belt played a great role among them. Ivan Nechuy-Levytsky in his work "Kaidash family" wrote: "He is worn the simple clothes: <...> Only a bright red and beautiful Odessa belt makes him differ fishermen" [9].

Panas Myrnyi repeatedly took his characters in the linen (kalamaika) belts and wrote about it, emphasizing the higher social and material status of the heroes. For example, to show the readers how city men differ from the peasants, the author mentioned the words of his character of "Devil Has Made Me Confused": "And the young men in the city are better than in the village. ... all are worn with the linen (kalamaika) good belts..." [8].

At the considered periods, the belt was also the instrument to express aesthetic views. It has been the important functional and decorative element that has emphasized the festivity or spirituality of the complex and created a holistic artistic image.

According to folk customs, to appear on people without the belt meant to be ashamed [16, 213, 218]. In general, in the oral folk art of the Ukrainians, the absence of a belt testified to belonging to the "dark" world. Only demons and mermaids were not tied up [2]. The absence of the belt is fixed in the rites, concerned the cult of nature, its life cycles, for example, on the holiday of Ivan Kupala. The belt semantics was closely associated with the idea of fertility, sexual power and childbearing [11, 4].

Probably, we can meet this boundary value in the names of the working home –made belt – the edge, which means "border" or "end". The perception of it as a border manifested itself in the rites, associated with the first expulsion of cattle after winter. The ritual of passing the cattle through the belt had to ensure the return and unity of the livestock with housing and to protect it from the wild animals. In Slobidska Ukraine the cattle had to go through a locked chain or red belt. The synonymic semantics of the belt and keys is presented in the different carols: the golden belt with the golden keys are the attribute of the goddess of the Sun [11, 4].

In the triad of "birth-life-death", the belt occupies a mediocre position and has a welcoming, life semantics: the introduction of the child into life, inclusion in the society, the formation of marital relationships, fertilization, sexual numbers and etc. [11, 4].

M. Mayerchic describes the role of the belt in the birth of a child: "The belt was the "key" that locked or opened the child path. The belt / towel is often used in a maternity rituals during hard accouchement. Its stretching from door to table simulated the road and tried to make easier the birth" [4]. The fastening of the belt on the child was confirmed by her human, cultured status [11, 4].

During the burial, people had to take off the belt from the dead. The wedding red belts, which were tied up on top of the garment played the most important role. Such belts had a symbolic-protective meaning. The towel often could replace the belt. Its ornamentation symbolized the continuation of the genus (tree of life). Similar tracery we can see in the embroidery of the festive belts [11, 4].

The belt was the main element of the men's wedding garments in Ukraine. For example, in the Kyiv region the young wore a shirt with a woven red, yellow or green belt whereas in the Slobidska Ukraine, the men used the red one. The green or red belts with the fringe at the ends were widespread in the Zhytomyr region. In the eastern regions of Polesia we could meet the woven blue, green or red belts whereas in the south of Ukraine people traditionally used the red ones [16, 128, 140, 145, 165]. In the Western Podolia the bride wore a wide belt whereas she used the Krolevets towel in the southern regions of Poltava, Slobidska Ukraine and Chernihiv [16, 128, 140, 190].

Conclusions and Perspectives of Further Development. Thus, the belt as one of the types of decorative folk art was the household instrument as well as the ornament and the symbol of the belonging to Christianity. The material and technique of creation of belts, showed the social status, class affiliation, material condition and gender peculiarities. The belt with its unique sign and symbolic system played the important role in the customs of the Ukrainians (maternity, wedding, ceremonial). It helped people to move in their lives. In addition, the women's belts were always woven. It allows us to state that at the Aeneolithic and Scythian epochs, women also wore the woven belts, which have not saved to our times.

In our opinion, the belt as the key element of the Ukrainian folk culture should be analysed more properly in the context of its role in the Ukrainian customs and folk medical practices.

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Стаття надійшла до редакції 05.03.2018 р.