

European Folklore And Costume

Folklore is a symbolic and artistic area of culture, which includes traditional beliefs, art and crafts, customs, and stories of a community, passed through the generations. Folklore is syncretised and unconsolidated.

Term "Folklore" has been introduced by an English writer William Thomas in 1846. He used the term to describe the oldest components of culture, that hasn't been proved by any historic documentation¹. Over time the term "folklore" has been popularized all over the world, especially in Europe, when current glorification of Romanticism, has set peoples mind. Only in the thirties of the XX century, thanks to the distinguished scholars folkloristic became an independent academic discipline whose subject of knowledge is folklore. In the XX century folklore contributed to the growth of national consciousness and became the basis of ethnic identity of European nations, was also a component of political ideologies such as socialism.

The inclusion of folk culture as part of a nationwide culture, designated not so much in the direction of its development but creating, arranging, inspire and use as part of the political game. Examples of the first groupings emerging during the 19th century were joining together fans of folk and its activities, including bringing to the life regional museums and heritage parks. Because of that, the first ethnographic collections were established. Turn of the centuries was flourishing for the folk culture, but also the beginning of the end for the isolated world, ruled by its own rights, consistent and sensual.

There is a popular way of dividing folklore in to two categories; the "traditional folklore" and the "modern folklore"².

The first proposal relates to the present phenomena in processed form, which gives the effect of apparent authenticity. This takes the representative form, often for commercial and mass events, without attempting to understand the mechanisms that led to the creation of such, and not another form. Referring generally to the rusticity and strongly enriches the whole incredibly complex phenomenon, which was a folk culture. An example might be one of the tourist attractions in Kashubia so called "upside down house". A cottage that has been build in the Szymbark, Kashubian village. It attracts tourists because of its uniqueness. The house is placed on the roof, so all the visitors have to move along the ceiling and over their heads there are furniture attached to the floor. The rusticity of the place was enhanced with a bit of an absurd and entertainment of course. Popularity of the folk culture is also visible at fairs and festivals, during which the compulsory element of decoration are very vibrant colours, and the adjective "traditional", which appears to include in the names of the craft work or even dishes, becomes the guarantor of the closer approach to rural life.

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The second suggestion is to look at folk culture as an alternative offer to the convention, stereotype and its lack of involvement in mass culture. It is an appeal to the widest possible elements of folklore, detached from time, environment and social stratus. Apart from a group of people who knowingly chooses to return to the sources and moves to the countryside, leading organic live style, it is also a more widely available and increasingly popular way of spending time, such as holidays. There are many farm-like resorts, which apart from living in the countryside also offer entertainment and many different activities like: traditional bread making methods, hunting, lace-making, fishing or exploring the surrounding area.

Changes in history of Polish costume.

To many people, Polish folklore clothing is associated with head scarves and colourful costumes worn by folk dance troops. Such familiar Polish highly ornamented, 'folk costumes' became a 19th Century creation, caused by national freedom and better economic conditions. In the 18th century 'National Dress', became a symbol of independence from foreign domination. Garments zupan and kontusz became the foundation of the "National Dress". However the "National Dress" has been much modified since then³.

Polish Fashion and folklore were influenced by direct and indirect factors like; seasonally changing climate, or by the other cultures that came across; German, Czech, Russian, Lithuanian, Hungarian, and many others. Those influences are visible in each regions traditional dress. Thanks to these various influences all regions of Poland have their own local dresses. There are around 60 unique costumes assigned to the different areas in Poland,.

Fashion in Poland developed in the late 15th Century. Medieval garments were worn all over east Europe. jopula for example was influenced by Turkish and Hungarian costumes. Those were in turn created by affecting the by central Asian fashion and Byzantine court dress. Connections with Hungary were significant for the creation of a separate style of dress that was worn in Poland and in Lithuania. Those connections were strengthened by dynastic arrangements within the royal families of both countries. In the early 16th Century, the well known caftan-like 'look' with long flowing robes was still new to Polish fashion, its popularity has been strengthened by the election of the King Stephan Bathory of Transylvania. King Stephan Bathory alongside King Jan III Sobieski, gained the greatest respect and popularity among the nobles, as they were famous not only for their bravery but also, significantly, for their preference for dressing in Polish style. Which, at the time they referred to as "Sarmatian dress". The style became a way of manifesting the gentry's ideology. It was a symbol of the republic tradition and the nobles' liberty that was valued the most in Poland. West European male attire with its laces and ribbons, accompanied by a curly wig, was regarded as a creation of an absolute monarchy and a token of effeminacy. Kings dressed in such a "ladylike" manner were treated with distrust. Just like the last King of Poland; Stanislaw August Poniatowski, who refused to wear a Sarmatian dress on the day of his

coronation. The long Hungarian coat, *mentlik*, found its important role as the Slovakian national dress. In the 17th Century Polish dress has also been worn by the Ukrainians, Cossacks, Lithuanians, and most White Ruthuanins⁴. Because of all the fast changes, it was difficult and often confusing for foreigners to tell the difference between some eastern European outfits, especially in times of battles. For example: a Pole could always find a Hungarian in a crowd, but westerners weren't able to recognise Turks from Poles and Hungarians. In the second half of the 17th Century, thanks to two queens consort who came from France; Maria Ludwika Gonzaga and Maria Kazimiera Sobieska. Polish woman's wear followed the western European fashion trends. Women left behind dark coloured, rather humble and rigorous remembrances of Eastern culture. However this foreign style came across a strong disapproval from the traditionalists. They were afraid of the immoral influence of French court on Polish women. Jan Pasek is mentioning the changes in his memoirs: "How many continuously changing styles I remember in frocks, caps, boots, swords, harness, and in every other kind of military garment and household utensils, as well as in hair styles, gestures, walking and greeting habits! Oh Almighty God! One could not manage to list them on ten ox skins!. The outfits which I bought abroad would have lasted me a whole lifetime - even my children would have profited by them - had they not gone out of fashion and become unstylish in a year or less. These outfits had to be taken apart and restyled, or else had to be sold in a second hand market. (If one did not purchase new ones) people would rush at you like sparrows at an owl: 'look look!' they would point their fingers at you. They would say that the outfit reminded them of the days of the Deluge ('Potop', 1650s). About the ladies and their fancies I shall say nothing because I could fill an entire book"⁵.

In Poland the beginning of folk culture is usually associated with class divisions in society. As a result of social, economic, political, and historical factors, three distinct groups emerged: the peasants, middle class and nobility. Dress symbolised the different value systems of various social groups and reflected the economic differences between them. There were also distinctions between the dress of richer and poorer members within each group. That resulted with making few laws, to stop peasants from copying dresses of the richer classes. In addition to grains flax were grown and were used for making yarn, which was then woven into linen or hemp cloth. Stockbreeding provided a source of wool and leather. Country dwellers were self-sufficient in producing clothes, which for a long time had been their distinguishing mark. Producing clothes was an important part of village women's work.

The heyday of creativity in dress occurred between 1850 and 1890. It was a time of sudden industrialization, which led to new materials and techniques appearing in the villages. At first the festive dress had been modest and devoid of complicated ornamentation. But after the granting of freehold, developments were made in the use of new cuts, colours and accessories. More elements were factory made. In this period, folk dress was still worn and had great symbolic and aesthetic value, but the slow progress of its vanishing had begun, especially in northern parts of the country. This

process of decline was slowed by the higher classes declaring an interest in folk culture. Like artists, that used folklore as their inspiration for new creations.

Another category of variation in dress was occasional outfit, which was distinctive in its colouring, richness of adornments, and accessories. Particularly by the wedding attire, that was worn by the bride, groom and his best man. During the wedding ceremony – according to region- bride's hair was unpleated, and the married woman's headdress was put on. Married women usually wore headdresses made of batiste, linen, tulle or velvet always highly decorated, because of the social requirement to cover the hair. Sign of virginity was an uncovered head, but young girls often wore colourful head scarves, or pleated ribbons in to their hair. The groom and his best man were distinguished by a decoration attached to their hats and/or lapels. Social norms also regulated mourning attire and the clothes put on the deceased. As for more casual occasions, women wore aprons over their knee-length skirts. Colours of the aprons were carefully chosen to match the skirt. It used to be strictly decorative accessory, often beautifully decorated with laces and beads. As for jewellery, the most popular were strings of coral beads, but also less common amber and plastic beads. Even the number of strands that women wore on their necks suggested her wealth.

However the division between winter and summer clothes was not always very obvious. During winter, people wore several layers of summer clothes, and during summer, sheepskin coats were still worn as a mark of wealth. It is highly interesting how little has changed if it comes to the sociological aspect of fashion, for example; ways of showing the material and marital status. Nowadays people are still expressing themselves by clothing, whether it's by affiliation to certain subcultures or a manifest of their views and ideologies.

Previously mentioned "kontusz" and "zupan", were one of the most striking components of Polish dress. In the 1530s, "zupan" began to be used as a word describing an outer garment, that usually was lined with fur. there was also a padded military version of this garment, worn under the armour. delia was a similar outer coat, except it didn't have a collar and was looser below the waist. Throughout the time there was few other similar choices of coats, but none of them lasted very long. However, zupan was substituted with kontusz in the 1640. Most often it was folded in half and wrapped around the waist few times. "kontusz" first appeared in the 1630s, and has quickly become a substitute for most coats and other outer wear. The token of the "kontusz" was a one-piece long narrow strip of fabric, where a side skirt panels on both sides were attached. There were also cuts in the inside arms "wyloty style", which allowed both sleeves to be thrown to the back, "kontusz" became very universal and practical around 1650s. Even the material of lining in kontusz depended on season, it could be unlined with soft wool in summer, and fur in winter, in cold or bad weather, it could also be accompanied by shorter overcoats or capes, called; oponcza, burka, and bekiesza.

Folklore in Romanticism

Romanticism defines an era in the history of European art from 1822 to 1863. It was seen as Europe's current literary and artistic ideology, which developed primarily in Western Europe and manifested mostly in poetry, painting and music. The driving force of romanticism was longing for the heavenly world, searched outside of the boring everyday life, a sense of decadence, and a specific alienation from the crowd of "grey, ordinary people", striving to meet, or even a never ending search for ideals, especially the ideal love. Typical characters in romantic literature are linked to misty valleys, forests, ruins of medieval monasteries, ancient myths and fairy tales, distant and exotic lands, such as the Far East. Romanticism was the wave of European liberation movements, which are referred to the ideals of the French Revolution. In England, romanticism was accompanied by the Chartist movement, in Russia by the Decembrist uprising.

Name of romanticism emerged in the mid-nineteenth century and was created from previously used adjective -romantic, which meant something unlike the reality, extremely beautiful, that acted on the feelings, exciting for the imagination, something fantastic. However, adjective -romantic was formed from the noun "love affair", "romant", meaning the medieval adventure tales and full of fantasy. The name was created as a result of the evolution of the word "Romanus"⁶.

Romantic fascination with folklore shows acceptance of the Enlightenment opposition to the civilization - nature. The view of civilization destroying the sensitivity and the ability to perceive the world, was shared by both ideologies. They believed that folk retained the ability to learn the secrets of nature and to feel the strangeness of the world. Awareness of terror, spiritual understanding and that it recognizes good. Therefore, many folk artists adapted new moral categories like seeing the world and the sense of existence. Manifestation of folklore in romanticism was shown in; municipal-language, communal song-recitals, linguistic styling-elements (elements of folk chants.). But also the growing interest in; folk-heroes and folk categories of thinking about the world, nature,

The main source of national identity Romanticism saw in the common people and despise of the Enlightenment, regarded to as superstition, spiritual culture. Characteristic to folk culture is that it has a spiritualistic nature, original, native. So far in the culture of folklore Romantics gave "margin", "province", "district" a nationwide rank. They also adopted the popular conception of the world, based on the "secret knowledge" that provides an unbreakable link between man and nature, spirit world, the supernatural forces with the whole cosmos. They wanted to identify with the common people's understanding of the world and adopt their ways to learn about: belief, feeling, spells, etc. Romantics wanted to absorb folk's knowledge of herbs, animals, the "world's spirit" as a natural knowledge, they had a great resistance to abstract, rationalist science. For romantics, people became the highest and decisive value, both in art and view of the world, as well as in social life. Therefore, romantics used to tie the problem of independence to the social liberation of the peasant. Thanks to Romantics, folklore became a regular part of the national literature and culture. Romanticism has given new

meaning to the concept of folklore, however, it was not anything new in art of literature or music. Folk themes appeared frequently in the enlightenment, but they'd serve a different purpose. According to the nationalist of the ideology and utilitarian nature of the eighteenth century, those themes were supposed to show the misery and poverty of common people. There was no search of moral values in the folk art. Romantics had the assumption of different thinking about the world. Characters from rural stories became heroes in their works.

Romantics accepted the people's cosmology, which combined the Church teachings with the eternal pagan traditions, to determine moral standards. Beliefs based on the existence of never ending and unchanging moral laws, which apply to all - rich and poor, lords and peasants. And those who would violate them always meet a fair punishment. Folk believed that human being's place was under the divine, spirit, and the relationships between them occurred inseparable. Punishment reaches people after death; human actions were affecting his fate.

Fashion designers and artists, influenced by folklore throughout the centuries.

Exotic, unusual and primitive cultures were most often the source of fashion's inspiration. Decades of foreign colonisations, made the fashion trends move very fast all over the world. The love and fascination of Oriental fashion began in the 18th and continued to the 19th Century. Exoticism was extremely charming for rich westerners. Especially Turkish cashmere shawls, kimonos, feathers and fez caps, which were then rapidly imported to America and Europe in huge quantities. The more significant and one of first initiators of oriental fashion was Paul Poiret, the Parisian couturier, who was best known for freeing women from corsets. He designed garments inspired by Asian and Middle Eastern traditional outfits, like; lampshade tunics, hobble skirts and harem trousers, but also accessorising them with exotic turbans. A huge impact on Poiret's break-through was Ballet Russes, in the first decade of the 20th Century. His work was also determined by regional dresses and antique. The manifest was not only related to the inspiration of new cultures, but it was also shown in the manufacture and pattern making. He rejected traditional methods and tailoring to concentrated on draping, rectangular constructions and straight lines, "The structural simplicity of his clothing represented a "key moment in the emergence of modernism". Shortly, his style gained a new bunch of followers, who aimed to present their political and cultural views by fashion. After 1910 year, bohemian New York City's Greenwich Village gathered all sorts of leftist activists. Writers, politics and painters embraced the peasant look, embroidered blouses and farmer's smocks became very recognisable for Greenwich Village. The rest of New York's fashion soon picked up on the trend, a bit later, all the garment previously available to buy only in small Russian or Hungarian shops, were suddenly possible to buy in big department stores like Bonwit Teller.

Fashion is known for "stealing" inspiration from the past, and it's not only particular garments that are moving back and forth from the catwalk. Throughout the history, there were many random key situations that determined trends and garments worn up till

today. One of them is the story behind the invention of the tie, men's beloved accessory. "Croat" means tie in many languages, and it's also the name of country "Croatia" where it originated from. Legend says that few centuries ago women were binding (tying like ties) scarves on the necks of their beloved ones, who were departing for war to remind them of home and family, to give them comfort and to maintain morale in the difficult times of war. These scarves also symbolized fidelity by men against their wives. In the 17th century, during the Thirty Years' War, Croatian soldiers were well known as great warriors, which in turn contributed to creation of an elite military branch "La Royal Croat" in Paris. "La Royal Croat" included only Croatian soldiers, stationed in France, Croats conquered Europe with their decoration, which they called "podgutnica" or "podgutnjak" themselves. Soon the whole world has started to wear an accessory called "tie"⁷. Like most inventions, creation of the tie is directly related to military operations. In 1660, during the celebration of victory over the Turks regiment of Croatian soldiers visited Paris. To be introduced to the King Louis XIV. The French king was known for his attention to fashion. So he noticed the colourful ties round Croats necks straight away. Louis XIV was so fascinated with those ties, that he created a separate regiment named 'Royal Cravattes'. So the word -tie comes directly from the word Croat. Later the King of 'The Sun' employed a special 'cravatier', a person whose task was only to take care of his 'cravates'. Soon the custom of wearing a tie also came to England and other parts of Europe. Since then, no gentlemen could consider themselves well dressed if they had not have something around their necks, the more decorative the better.

But King Louis XVI wasn't the only "king trend setter" at the time. King Edward VII - once upon a time, after using the toilet as a result of distraction or drunkenness, entered the room without buttoned the bottom button⁸. All people gathered at the gala took up the button solution in his honour. The trend of leave the bottom button undone, appointed by the monarch remains till today. Also thanks to King Edward VII, who loved to spend time in the countryside, the Burberry trench coats has appeared, and the characteristic for this brand check pattern, was Edwards favourite fabric.

In Paris after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, thanks to a big wave of aristocratic Russian émigrés, a similar and interesting peasant trend started to evolve. Some of the Russian émigrés in search for work started making embroideries of traditional peasant designs for Kitmir, which was founded by Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna, sister of Grand Duke Dmitri. Who was Gabrielle (Coco) Chanel's lover at the time. Chanel and Jean Patou were two major clients of the Kitmir Company. Both designers adapted Russian embroideries in many garments in their post-war collections. Simple waistcoats, tunics and blouses were full of geometric and Slavic motifs. Soon folklore and traditional costume inspired themes were appearing all over 20's fashion. Today many of those garments can be still seen in museums all over the world.

In the 1930's sportswear designers started looking in to Scandinavian or Mexican for patterns and new models. At the time sportswear was overcrowded with embroidered ponchos and traditional Scandinavian snow flake designs.

Shortly after the World War II, love for traditional dresses and interest in folklore has faded. Society turned away from colourful costumes. Instead people wanted elegant, sophisticated fashion, they paid more attention to the quality of fabrics and finishing. In the 1960's Balenciaga designed a collection of garments for a movie called "La Dolce Vita" directed by Federico Fellini. Some were in between this rich baldness, folk fashion lived along side anti war demonstrators which were refusing the new changes. This movement has soon transformed into a philosophy of life known as "flower power". The late 1960's were years of division and ongoing fights between current society and marginal Hippies. The ideology of "flower power" was to connect with nature by peace, sex, drugs and rock and roll. This social movement was also precursory to the ecology awareness. Hippie style was known for its messiness and disorder; full length, floaty skirts and tunics, beady jewellery, lots of embroidery, smocking and flowery prints, all influenced by ethnic currents, mainly South America and India. Later on in the 1970's hippie style blended in with peasant looks, what was a beginning of an extremely popular "folklore look". So called folkies were a "politer" version of hippies, they were more civilized and not as rebellious.

Zandra Rhodes a brilliant and eccentric British designer. Founder of the Fashion and Textile Museum in London. After graduating the Royal College of Art, she established her own retail outlet on Fulham Road. Specialized in textile design, is now one of the most recognizable artists in the world. "Her unique use of bold prints, fiercely feminine patterns and theatrical use of colour has given her garments a timeless quality that makes them unmistakably a Rhodes creation". Her inspirations were mainly nature and travelling all over the world. Some of those exciting travels she immortalized with details by writing a book "The Art of Zandra Rhodes". The book proves how strong impact had the intercourse with traditional folk costumes on Rhodes. Important statement in her work is with no doubt pattern cutting and garment construction. Huge amount of designers takes their inspiration from folklore look since the 1980s. Sometimes, some of the garments are created by deformation of the original outfits. Designers are mixing historical fashion with new generation textiles and innovative technologies, so then they can please demanding costumers. In order to do so, they often research specific; shapes, silhouettes, pattern cutting, colour palettes, print and embellishment. This concept of thinking has been previously interpreted by Jennifer Craik, as a bricolage⁷⁷⁷⁷. She explains that the foundation of new patterns and styles in fashion is being influenced from many different sources. "Mixing high fashion and everyday clothing is consistent with the postmodern, multicultural world that emerged in the 1980s. Rejects the assumption that fashion is unique to the culture of capitalism".

John Galliano, who is well known for designing characteristic and vibrant collections for Dior. He works by mixing historical and cultural themes, like; Native American, Russian

or Mexican influences. Inspiration by themes of folklore cultures and costume is often a quality of collections from designers such as Anna Sui, MiuMiu and Marni,

Bill Gibb was a Scottish born fashion designer. Best known for his completely different approach to fashion in the 60's and 70's. "he was ahead of his time"¹⁰, notes Christopher Bailey. Gibb was strongly influenced by the traditional folklore costumes, of the Near East and Europe. He showed a great sentiment of an early historical age dresses. It cannot be denied that the designer's heritage played a strong influence on his work. "I had promised myself that, if I had the opportunity, I would use tartans"¹¹. Gibb proudly told a reporter from 'Aberdeen Press and Journal'. His work is often described as pieces of art. Historic themes would surface throughout Gibb's career, from Pre-Raphaelite and Elizabethan influences in the "lingerie looks for evening"¹² to his use of lining bride. The enduring vision of Bill Gibb (who sadly died prematurely in 1988) is of a designer who liked to fill every available space. Tartans, spots, florals, checks, stripes, knits and lace, print on print, patch worked together and then embellished with beading, embroidery and appliqué. As KaffeFassett, Gibb's long time collaborator and partner remembers: "He was building up a patina"¹³. "It was like a little theatrical event all in one dress"

A dress from his debut collection for A/W 1972, patterned with a dense woodland scene featuring furry animals hiding between the folds and loaded with country-fair streamers, beads and flowers epitomises this look. But beyond this rich tapestry and often overlooked in the hullabaloo of pattern, print and texture was the designer's forte for line and form. Gibb loved the juxtaposition of large and small. The designer's sense of drama is a given. John Galliano said, "British designers are story tellers and dreamers and I think this was really the essence behind the romance behind Bill Gibb"¹⁴.

With the help of KaffeFassett, who opened his eyes to a world of possibilities, Gibb introduced groundbreaking knitwear into his collections. "I'd give him a knitting design and he would turn it into things that no one did in knitting"¹⁵, says Fassett, "just bizarre and wonderful stuff"¹⁶, It must be remembered that when Gibb began producing his romantic designs, knitting meant plain A-line dresses in double-faced jersey and neat twin-sets. Gibb's enveloping kimono-style coats and jackets that drew inspiration from the East often patterned with eye-catching geometric designs that mingled Byzantine and Aztec imagery reflected the newly emerging cultural tourist.

His penchant for a little Orientalism belied another influence: The Victorian Pre-Raphaelite painters, whose exotic vision was embraced by many artists and designers looking for a little escapism in the early 1970s.

Fabric was often a starting point and one of Gibb's favourites was Qiana silk jersey, which he described as, "like pouring milk out of a jug"¹⁷, capturing the very essence of this remarkable period of revolution with utter conviction. Gibb's designs not only welcomed a new era, they also provided a template for the distant future that would

continue to resonate for decades to come. His work was a complex package made from numerous pattern-pieces and fabrics and as many disparate concepts and imagery,

Kenzo's 2009/2010 autumn/winter collection was a pure referral to Russian heritage and ethnic clothing. Russia is the richness of colours, fairy-tale themes, decorative interiors, craftsmanship art and lots of references to the deep-rooted memory of Orthodox religion art. It could have been a little ordinary, the shimmering gold threads, usage of bright colours, it might have even been - at least for some - primitive and kitschy, but it was still very magical. The combination of thick and thin stripes of leather, cotton and silk cloth decorated with delicate patterns, lots of embroidery and sequins. Who would have thought that sourcing inspiration from folk culture can contribute to make of something so exclusive. The Kenzo collection was also kind of a time machine, carrying us into the dark and cold times of the Middle Ages - because these clothes would not be found today on an ordinary Russian village. The basis for both female and male Kenzo's collections was inspiration by Russian folklore. In almost all of the female silhouettes, we could find similarities with the Matryoshka doll. Antonio Marras took care of every detail, thus providing a collection with an artistic character. The designer has combined functional knitwear with some very fashionable accessories; large, ethnic jewellery, with thick leather straps, fur purses, vests, characteristic male woollen hats, and soft earmuffs.

Important elements of the collection were: wool, florals, checkered skirts in different lengths, superb elegant and everyday coats, long suit jackets for men, cardigans and shoes on special platforms, all that brought the silhouette to live as a perfect whole. Wearing Socks with slippers was no longer a novelty, but I must admit that it fitted great in the folklore climate. It was also interesting to see the folklore theme in men's fashion. Kenzo's collection has introduced fashionable colours such as blue, beige and red, with rich Russian patterns that were minimized comparing to the old costumes. Men silhouettes were original, elegant, and even though the concept of folklore was quite powerful, the silhouette didn't lose anything from its manhood. The strength of this collection was undoubtedly thanks to a successful and probably unusual combination of materials, like knitted fabrics, wool, silk, tulle and velvet. Knitwear and woollen sweaters seemed to be a bit retro, but they were charming with their details such as the asymmetric, long cardigans or trousers that were narrowing at the ankle.

Apart from characteristic old fashion Russian look that reminds us of Matryoshka. Antonio Marras presented a modern angle to the collection too: for example, the huge, nylon coat with a spectacular collar and an asymmetrical edge to it. Or the fur coat, which unusual cut, could indicate attempting to combine a cape with a mantel.

Conclusion.

Folklore inspired art is still a relatively strong trend, which can be seen in many aspects of design, like; product, fabrics, interior furnishings, clothing and jewellery. This type of design is a way of life in conjunction with the current ecological life and the "slow food" movement. Minimalism in trends in contemporary design is the result of inspiration not only by ready-made folk and rural creations, but is also the effect of deeper inspiration - the ideology of rural life as complying with the rhythm of the nature.

Every year, in various places all over the world, there are different events dedicated to folk culture, those can be; concerts, exhibitions, festivals, book or movie premiers. They are always very popular and crowded, like the international Folklore festival "interfolk"¹⁸. It is one of the major and most important events focused on folklore culture only. For five days a year Kolobrzeg in Poland is being transformed into the capital of world's most colourful folklore. At the time the city is beaming with music from all over the world, joined with traditional dance shows and singing competitions. The festival is a huge opportunity to see all the different ethnic garments, hand-made customs and also to try some unusual food. But most of all, the entire event is a true fun, with an unforgettable atmosphere. A different type of event is probably one of the most interesting exhibitions of the season. London's Victoria and Albert Museum on September 25 opened an exhibition dedicated to Sergei Diaghilev's Ballet Russes (1872-1929)¹⁹. This artistic phenomenon, which was his invention, had a significant impact not only on the ballet and the music of the twentieth century, which seems obvious, but also on fashion. Ballet Russes streamed on for twenty years (1909 - 1929), thanks to Diaghilev's extraordinary personality, he managed to persuade exceptional artists to cooperate with him - Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Giorgio de Chirico, Jean Cocteau-to mention only the biggest names.

This just proves that folklore is still being very important, and in many cases it shows an ongoing interest of the society. Historical costume at this time could be compared to an item of nationality awareness, and its lack in today's live.

There are workshops and training sessions held for designers all over the world, during which those who teach are the artisans and folk artists. It leads to a combination of two worlds -academic artists with folk artists. It's a kind of intergenerational transmission where both groups can share their knowledge. Usually the meetings of two different worlds will generate a new quality, based on traditional materials, designs and modern technological capabilities. The popularity of crafts among consumers has made the designers become more interest in traditional patterns, technologies and materials. This trend is also close to the principle of sustainable development (sustainable design), to which one of the fundamental assumptions is responding to the needs of the present time.

Folklore being part of a higher value, ecological or historical, doesn't need to completely adapt to all new groups of receivers. In some areas it must remain traditional, to not lose its special character. Design is the creation of functional objects. Responding to

specific human needs is the essence of design. There are of course examples of design solutions that are kind of manifestos, so called presentations of ideas, which after time, are perceived more as artistic expressions, and less as the functional products. Changing live realities, our behaviour and needs, are the reasons that designers want to protect the dying traditions (material, design and technology), changing its destination, the application ways, its size, material which is made off. This is kind of a compromise and necessity of the time, thanks to this refreshing, folk products are still viable in modern world. Commercialization of folklore is not the only way to update it. The folklore in certain environments can also be treated as a cultural reservoir, maybe even an antidote to the problems of modernity. Folklore can become an important exponent of the need to return to the past and bringing some components to the current life, in order to defend itself against uniformity, individuality destructive homogenization of cultures and personalities.