

THE LITHUANIAN NATIONAL COSTUME: THE INTERPRETATIONS OF FOLK DRESS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Introduction

The national costume is one of the material objects whose symbolic meaning exceeds their practical function. The symbolic use requires that the costume be designed to favorably reflect the national culture. It is constructed as a type of dress for which aesthetic characteristics are obligatory, and its status as a work of art is pre-programmed. As a work of applied arts, the national costume symbolizes the nation and the state. As a person's outfit, it is also a symbol of personal identity: the connection between the national identity experienced individually and collectively.

The concept of the national dress represents a certain vision of the world according to which the humanity is “naturally” divided into nations – different historical and cultural communities. The national costume provides a visual affirmation of this division. It is understood to be a product of the national culture as well as to represent the worldview and the character of the nation, to witness the continuity and vitality of the historic culture. The concept of the national costume is based on the core ideological attitudes of nationalism that are characteristic of all the specific forms of the national culture, as well as tightly connected with the interpretations of history that are typical of nationalism.

The emergence of the national costume as a concept and as a material object is strongly related to the emergence of the nation and the nation-state itself. The idea of a national outfit arose synchronically at the same time in multiple countries, and spread throughout the world from Europe where it was born. The development of the culture of the national costume and of wearing one was a continuous process that first appeared in the early 19th century and became more prominent towards the mid-1800s. In the late 19th – early 20th century the national costume was already understood as one of the usual symbols of the nation, necessary to the culture of every country.

This study aims to identify the set of ideas that makes up the contents of the concept of the national costume, as well as the ways in which its form is constructed. These questions relevant to the history and theory of nationalism are currently analyzed in numerous European countries and globally. The goal is to identify the

universal trends in the development of the national costume and then use that as a framework to discuss the ways in which the Lithuanian models of the national costume reflect the general European trends and how they stand out. When the Lithuanian national costume was first created, the concept of such outfits was already established in Europe, therefore it is likely that the variation of its forms reflects both the general trends of the development of national cultures and their unique interpretations based on the specific history and cultural life of the 20th century Lithuania. The idea of the national costume, like many other phenomena characteristic of nationalism, was modal and frequently copied. New models were constructed in tune with the changes that took place in the global culture as well as the political and cultural life of the nation-states. The challenge of universal insights regarding the national costume is risky, but without accepting it, it is impossible to understand the process of the emergence of the national costume in a particular country sufficiently clearly, not to mention the evaluation of the results of this process.

The national costumes of Lithuania and other European countries maintain an obligatory connection to the folk dress, which is also ambiguous and complicated. As it emerged at the time when the traditional folk costumes were in decline or already out of use, the national costume was considered to be a means of appropriating the “natural” uniqueness of the folk dress, to maintain the continuity of its most significant details. The way the historical dress is interpreted, the emphasis on select details both reflects and shapes the nation’s relationship with the historic heritage. The case of the Lithuanian national costume is relevant for the analysis of the general problem of the relationships between the modern creations and the folk prototypes.

The national costumes remain an important object of the national cultures and their interrelationships and cultural exchange. Many countries are coming up with new models, and the older ones acquire the status of an autonomous cultural value. In the early 21st century, the topic of the national costume became even more relevant by the development of the internet technologies that spread the problematic throughout webpages and showed that wearing a national costume is inextricably related to studying it in the society.

The aim of this publication is to study the characteristics of the phenomenon of the Lithuanian national costume in the context of the European countries with regard to the general trends of the development of the national costume as well as the methods of interpreting folk dress. Therefore the Lithuanian national costume has been studied by identifying and analyzing the universal trends of the emergence of the concepts of national costume, the mechanism of constructing the theoretical

models, the conditions necessary to fulfill the models and the premises of their installation and vitality in the present-day culture. The objects of the study are the costumes, their projects and fixations. The latter include texts, photographs, drawings, video recordings. This is the first study to include almost all of the history of the Lithuanian national costume, except the most recent period.

THE MEANING AND FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL COSTUME

The Costume as a Symbol of the Locality, Region, Nation and Nation-State

The importance of the location to the concept of the national costume can be explained by the role of territory in defining the nation, and the significance of territory to the concept of the nation-state. The connection that a nation or an ethnic group has to their place of residence may be considered a primary expression of geographical power. Besides the rule over the plot of land and its resources, it is also a power to create various concepts of territory to reflect the needs and values of communities. The territory is the place where the specific culture of the community that lives there emerges, it exhibits historic continuity and defines the ethnic or national character of its individuals. The importance of territory becomes especially great and particular once the *national ideal* arises and is achieved in the creation of the nation-state. The achievement of the national ideal requires solidarity based in the rule of the land, and the nation-state establishes the nation in its own right. The territory of the nation-state became its main defining factor as opposed to being one of the dimensions that describe the nation.

In the modern state, the land must be “claimed” not only in the administrative terms, but also culturally. That is achieved by assigning meaning to the local nature, folklore and traditions, by local, i. e. national architecture, monuments and other visual markers that include the dress of the residents. In this way, the costume, related to the territory that the nation or ethnic group considers its own in a legitimate way, becomes a symbol of the nation.

The connections between the national costume and the territory of the nation or the nation-state have been reviewed and refreshed or re-constructed based on the needs of the moments. The connections between the costume and the territory have been re-constructed in several different ways. Depending on the realities of the period of the nation or ethnic group, two possible options of how to “claim” the national territory by using the national costume have been applied: one costume

common to the whole nation or the whole territory is used or the costumes of the separate locations within the national territory become used as national costumes. The emergence of the national costume that symbolizes a certain locality or region expresses the claim to the land as an integral part of the nation-state.

National Costume as the Symbol of Unity and Equality of the Nation

Since the late 18th century, mostly thanks to the German intellectuals, the image of the peasant as someone who is simple and moral, as well as of the peasantry, a harmonious community that keeps the natural ethnic values has been formed. The ethnic values were considered to be not created by the peasantry, but kept by it, as the other estates “forgot” the significant ancient (pre-historic, medieval) national cultures. In the 19th century, the folk costume was admired because of its newly-ascribed aesthetic value, but the higher estates accepted it primarily as a symbol. The important thing was that the national costumes reflected the worldview of the community, and that was related to one of the national ideals – the primacy of the communal interests and the community’s willingly accepted commitments and subordination. Such an attitude towards the relationship of the estate culture allowed the peasant costume with some ascribed “super-estate” features to acquire the meaning of a national symbol.

After WWI, as the nation-state became the legitimate international norm, and the social exclusion by estate of the residents of the European states was greatly reduced, the national costume became the norm of egalitarian dress. On the other hand, as the equality of the citizens could no longer be questioned, this characteristic of the costume gradually lost its former relevance and social significance.

Resurrected Time: Reconstruction or Vision?

Once the folk costume was chosen as the prototype for the national one, it became necessary to express the treatment of historical time as appropriate for the symbol of the nation. The folk dress could be considered to be fashion that changes slowly and maintains a lot of archaic elements, and at first this feature was typically greatly exaggerated.

Today, as we see the national costumes of the European nation created almost without exception based on the examples of the 19th century folk dress, it seems like this was the only option that allowed to maintain the national ethnic differences in clothing. However, from the perspective of the late 19th – early 20th century, the contemporary or recent period could be considered a “golden age” only by some nations, like France and the united Germany. Most of the nations and ethnic groups were only

aspiring to a nation-state, or at least a reconstruction of the national culture, and they searched for proof of autonomy in the history of the past, sometimes quite distant.

Representing Glorious Past or Modern Present?

The national costume is a special kind of outfit, entirely ideological one, that keeps certain historical national qualities. Contemporary rather than imitational its character is constantly emphasized by its symbolic meaning and the traditional functions that have remained relevant, by creating contemporary models of the national costume, by categorizing its prototype, the folk costume, as works of art, by the characteristics of the meaning and form of the costume that are appropriate to the contemporary dress of significant and honorary functions.

Sooner or later the national costume had to be accepted as dress that is unrelated or only partially related to the development of contemporary fashion. Therefore the artistic value of the national costume became over time more and more firmly associated with the artistic value of the folk dress, its prototype. Accepted as a work of art, the national costume acquired the status that gives meaning to its reiterations and interpretations. Beginning with the 1920s – 1930s, the “contemporary” character of the national costume models is understood to have less to do with the closeness of the costume’s forms to contemporary fashion, and more with the contemporary concept of the national costume itself as well as the related interpretation of the folk costume.

Adapting the national costume to the present-day needs was an important condition for the survival on the national dress. Occasions were found and circumstances created to allow wearing it, new functions for such outfits emerged. The national costume is the dress of the national celebrations and special mass events and processions; the costumes of folk music and dance performers; the celebratory outfits of the members of the patriotic public organizations; the special adaptations for the uniforms of the military units. The national costume is accepted as compatible with the black tie and white tie dress codes.

DESIGNING THE MODELS OF THE NATIONAL COSTUME

Interpreting the Connection Between Folk and National Costumes: the Problem of the Development of the National Costume

The national costume must have a programmatic connection to its prototype, the folk dress. The need to demonstrate the connection was one of the reasons to refer to both types of outfits in the same way and to have mixed publications dedicated to them.

However, as the different models of national costume emerged, the definition of their connection to the folk costume became significant, capable of influencing further development of the national costume. *Can the national costume be considered a continuation of the folk costume, or is it a new type of outfit with its own trends of development?* That became an important question. It must be acknowledged that the spontaneous development of the “local” costume can only take place like it did in the 19th century – by overtaking and interpreting the modern forms of elite fashion. Besides, the process is speeding up, because less and less factors remain that used to define the uniqueness of the local interpretations. Today the remaining costumes in the national communities that are based on an uninterrupted “local” ethnic tradition tend to be referred to as folk costumes as opposed to national ones. Their natural and spontaneous development remains up for debate, because it takes place under the circumstances where those who continue the tradition are encouraged to do so by special means, and their costumes function as national ones among the national dress created by other methods.

The national costume does not spontaneously and fluently grow out of the “local” dress, but instead it is a following and / or interpretation of the latter. The development of the national costume – that is, first and foremost, the development of its concept, which depends not only on the available information about the “local” dress, but also on the general development of international and national culture and their shifting attitudes towards the historic folk culture heritage. Each model of the national costume should be considered a separate interpretation of the historic authentic folk clothing, even though it is possible that there exists a certain exchange among them, as well as development within the framework of an individual model. This way, the pattern of the development of the national costume resembles not so much a consistent chain, but a sequence of rays emanating from the same object in the center (the folk costume) and not necessarily interconnected directly.

The Problems of Accepting the Heritage: the Selection and Correction of the Prototypes

The ideal historic prototype is the traditional costume that could serve as a basis for an attractive image of the nation. However, the creators of the costume have not always been lucky enough to find such a prototype in the real heritage. The historic dress reconstructed based on available sources and therefore difficult to deny has sometimes been a great disappointment.

There has always been the aspiration that the person in a national costume representing the nation should look aesthetically pleasing judging by the contemporary standards. This aspiration has been partly disguised, as the national costume has been constructed after the examples of past fashions. However, it is expressed, e. g., in matching the piece of clothing to the concept of the beautiful body as understood in the present. The form that is alien to the contemporary culture may become acceptable, if the costume is associated with pieces of clothing, historical figures, events, past cultures, mythological or literary characters, etc. that are recognized and favored by the society.

The associations – favorable or unfavorable ones – based on which the heritage is selected are mindfully created or spontaneously emerging. Nationalism is very selective about employing former historic cultures of the past and often radically transforms its heritage. Typically, unfavorable associations more often emerge spontaneously and are generally expressed by rejecting certain details of the dress, because wearing them is associated with an unattractive fashion or with a less-respected group of residents, whereas the favorable associations are often mindfully created through real or fictional connections, through newly invented traditions. Typically, the designers and wearers of the national costume maintain that the national dress does not necessarily have to be exactly what used to be worn in the past, but rather, an outfit that reflects how the nation wants to see and show itself.

The Methods of Designing the National Costume: Copy and Free Interpretation

The methods of designing the models of the national costume can be classified into copying the folk costumes and free interpretation. Both methods have been applied ever since the emergence of the earliest national costumes. Recording and collecting the “local” costumes in the country coincided with the beginning of their copies. More or less free interpretations began once the groups of residents that did not belong to the rural communities started making the earliest national costumes. Depending on the methods, different models of the national costume were developed, and their requirements differ as well. In the most general terms, the national costumes may be classified into copy costumes, which repeat the forms of the folk costumes, and stylized costumes, freer creative interpretations of the folk dress. Both copies and free interpretations may be further graded according to the attitudes of the designers of the models and their results.

The copy costumes have been considered an exceptionally valuable category of the national costume, necessary for maintaining the tradition and serving as the basis for the freer interpretations.

The models that copy the folk costume are not matched to the contemporary aesthetic attitudes and forms, so they are supposed to be timeless. However, the experience is that the copy costumes also have their signs of time and authorship. The interpretation happened through the selection of costumes and clothes, through the level of ethnographic knowledge available at the time, through the distinction between the essential and the accidental traits of folk clothing, through the differences in techniques and materials that leave their traces. Therefore the copy of the folk costume should also be considered one of the possible interpretations in defining its relationship to the authentic folk dress.

In designing the national costume which is a free interpretation of the folk costume, only select traits of the folk costume are followed. However, this freedom is limited by the necessity of likeness and recognizability, and in many countries, also by the requirements that have developed over time and sometimes even become formalized. Among the freely interpreted, i. e. stylized costumes, two groups of outfits designed by different methods may be recognized. The first contains the models of the national costume that emerge through the generalization and relatively free reiteration without aiming for precision of the data about the folk dress. Most of them have emerged in the circle of like-minded people and are created collectively, i. e., in the late 1800s – early 1900s. The second group of the stylized costumes contains the work of individual authors. Unlike the costumes in the first group, the latter are finished and detailed by a single author.

Controlled and Spontaneous Processes

The idea of the national costume has been accompanied by the founding of institutions and organizations committed to taking care of the matters of their design and distribution. The energetic activities of separate individuals in the history of national costumes has been accompanied by the assistance provided by the public movements and organizations to which they belonged, which they founded or which supported their ideas.

The processes of designing and producing the models of the national costume may become controlled because of two reasons. One is the goal to establish particular concepts and models of the national costume according to particular scholarly, artistic or political trends. The second important reason is that in order to maintain this artificially constructed type of outfit alive, it is also necessary to protect the “umbilical cord” that is the essence of the national costume, i. e., the created and constantly restored connection with the historic folk clothing. The interpretation

and reconstruction of folk dress in the 20th century required more and more special knowledge. The heritage was reconstructed and “returned” to the culture using modern methods: special databases were created, specialized schools and trainings run that provided not just knowledge about the heritage but also its interpretations. The proliferation of institutions that cover individual questions isolated the separate aspects of the task at hand, therefore the need for coordination grew.

In the majority of countries, a system for oversight and regulation of the national costumes emerged, which typically delegates the three major tasks – designing the models (the study of the folk costume and the construction of the form of the national costume), production and approval (formalization, acknowledgment according to the norms) to appropriate organizations and institutions, like national museums, costume councils, organizations for folk music and dance, certified costume producers.

On the other hand, the practice of modeling the national costume indicates that even the toughest systems for controlling and regulating the creation of the national costume do not maintain full control of the process: as a living cultural phenomenon, the national costume changes by obeying some “streetwise” interpretations of meaning and the influences of contemporary cosmopolitan fashions.

The Problematic of the Production of Models of the National Costume

The development of the traditional folk crafts as businesses, which emerged thanks to the arts and crafts movement, faced a triple task: in order for the business to stay afloat, to increase the productivity of labor, the traditional tools needed to be modernized, the technologies rationalized, the marketing organized. All of that had to be done, while at the same time maintaining a certain (partly optional) level of authenticity of the forms and technologies of the products. The production of the works of folk art intended for sale moved from individual rural farms to specially founded craft shops under the watch of educated specialists and business people. In many countries, the folk craft business was developed with the aid of public organizations that focus on the national culture and rural (agricultural) economy.

The development of the folk and national crafts, the creation of methods for training the craftsmen, the adaptation of the traditional tools and technologies for present-day needs were the problems that were not only solved locally, within the borders of the individual countries of Europe’s nation-states of the 20th century. The results of other nations and states were introduced in the more or less specialized international shows that took place quite frequently. The founders of national

organizations, their leaders and specialists began their activities by introducing themselves to comparable practices in other countries.

The organizations of folk crafts usually are in close collaboration with the organizations that regulate the national costume, as they consult and certify projects and products. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the business of the national costume should be considered single-handedly useful to both the national culture and the national economics.

COLLECTIVELY CREATED MODELS OF THE “LITHUANIAN” NATIONAL COSTUME

The emergence of the creation of the Lithuanian national costume is related to the activity of the national revival in the late 1800s – early 1900s. In the ethnic Lithuanian territory, which was divided between the Prussian and the Russian Empires, the favorable conditions for the emergence of the national costume first emerged in Lithuania Minor which was annexed by Germany. The Germans were the first to write about the traditional Lithuanian clothes and to collect them.

On the 3rd of September, 1900, the women from the Lithuanian choir and patriotic fellowship called “*Lietuviškoji giedojimo draugystė*” (“The Lithuanian Fellowship of Singing”) in Tilsit first appeared in their newly made national costumes in public – the date is considered to be the first demonstration of the national costume by Lithuanians themselves, the full-fledged manifestation of the national consciousness. The earlier cases of demonstrating the Lithuanian costume in Lithuania Minor may be considered a prequel, as those were not the symbolic national costumes, but rather, authentic folk clothing demonstrated by the initiative of the German administration of the country.

The study of the earliest expressions of the Lithuanian national costume has revealed that it emerged thanks to the practice of the neighboring countries. In the early 20th century, the costume developed as a necessary part of the events of the national movement of the time. Its models were created in the fellowships of like-minded people, often in a hurry. The general pattern of the female folk costume was borrowed from the foreign examples in the minimal composition and filled with unexamined and unsystematized Lithuanian ethnographic materials.

The basis for the earliest Lithuanian female national costumes consisted of four obligatory parts: a shirt, a full pleated or flared skirt, an apron and a vest. The national character was expected to be added to the clothing by using local materials

and decorations. This model of the national costume, just like the German *dirndl*, is considered to be a collective creation. It was rather modestly stylized, matched the canons of the elite fashion well enough. It was worn almost exclusively at the specialized events as a symbolic outfit.

In the greater Lithuania, annexed by Russia, Lithuanian press and unsanctioned gatherings were prohibited in the late 19th century. The national costume only began to spread more broadly after 1905, when a limited freedom of cultural activity was restored. Soon defining the look of the national costume became relevant. The early models of the Lithuanian national costume were created under the circumstances that were not favorable to resurrecting or copying of the authentic clothing: the examples of the traditional folk dress were no longer worn in the rural areas, but not yet collected and studied. The development of the national costumes was tightly related to the other cultural tasks of the Lithuanian national revival in the early 20th century and was aimed more towards a modern expression of the constructed national identity rather than a precise reiteration of historic dress. Such position was defined by the objective needs and realistic possibilities of the society.

Attaching the costume to the locality and thus to the local forms of the folk dress was not relevant at the time, as the shape of the territory of the nation state was still unclear, imagined variously. Therefore the costume that was developed was simply “Lithuanian”, common to the whole nation that was being shaped, and it was rather an instinctive decision and not a clearly considered choice.

The basis of the costume was chosen to be the Lithuanian women’s choir costume that had recently started spreading in Lithuania Minor. Some traits were also reminiscent of the female Krakow costume that was widespread in Poland. The emergence of the “Lithuanian” costume model, its distinction from the authentic rural holiday fashions is well reflected in the photographs published in the press of 1905–1914. The conditions and ways of production of the costumes meant that some modern forms had to be used. In the early 20th century, Lithuanian women usually made their national costumes themselves, usually based on other roughly reconstructed national costumes, their photographs and descriptions in the press. The very fact of owning a costume, which spoke to the person’s national self-awareness, was more significant in the early 1900s than the true aesthetic or historic value of such clothing. Two of the most important areas of wearing national costumes were the movement of “Lithuanian evenings” and church processions.

However, after 1918, when the independent Lithuanian state was restored, the resemblance of the “Lithuanian” costume to the ethnographic examples and

its aesthetic characteristics became more and more important. There were more numerous and varied occasions for which a national costume was a suitable outfit. Public movements, fellowships, patriotic organizations were founded, and their members were attracted to the national costume. A characteristic of this period is the fact that the national costume came to be discussed not only as a patriotic, symbolic outfit, but also as an option of dressing up for major personal events, any solemnity, all the representative public events. The quality and “correctness” of the national costume became matters of national pride. The acquisition of national costumes was very much accelerated by the first Lithuanian nation-wide song festival, which took place in 1924, and the announcement that such festivals would take place regularly from then on.

Before the early 1930s, a large part of cultural figures expected that the women would be able to reconstruct the most valuable traits of the traditional dress based on the information gathered in villages and the craft skills typical of city dwellers. However, in the 1930s, the society came to believe that “correct” and aesthetically valuable national clothes should be designed and made by professionals.

AUTHORIAL INTERPRETATIONS: RECONSTRUCTION AND STYLIZATION

The first person to undertake the design of the Lithuanian national costume as a systematic work, compensated and supported by an interested institution, the House of Agriculture, a public organization encouraging the economic and social progress in rural areas, was Antanas Tamošaitis. He was trained as a graphic artist. He headed the Home Industry department of the House of Agriculture. He organized trainings for the country women to learn to make traditional materials using more modern looms, in more productive ways, to enable them to make some income as craftswomen who produce something of demand. More than 2000 weavers were trained at the House of Agriculture in 1931–1940 following Tamošaitis’ programs. They usually sold their production through the *Marginiai* cooperative founded in 1930. Tamošaitis enjoyed lifelong assistance of his wife Anastazija Tamošaitienė, who shared his ideas and his work.

In the 1930s, the House of Agriculture published a series of publications under the general title *Sodžiaus menas* about the various products of folk art. As the collections of folk dress in the Lithuanian museums were very limited, Tamošaitis himself went to collect the surviving ancient clothing in the villages in 1935–38.

In 1939, Volume I of *Lietuvių moterų tautiniai drabužiai* (*Lithuanian Female Folk Dress*) was finally published. The book first classified the female costumes by region and provided quite detailed descriptions and illustrations – mostly drawings by Tamošaitis himself and photographs of costumes made according to his designs.

Tamošaitis presented his designs with very categorical claims of exact reconstructions. However, he applied a debatable principle to the selection of examples, as he rejected some of the authentic clothing found in the villages as “foreign” due to industrial materials or to likeness to city fashions, clothing of other nations, etc. He replaced the industrial materials and haberdashery with homemade textiles, sometimes his own inventions. In order to compensate for the decorative materials, he increased the number of ornaments woven in the clothing. Among the creators of the 1930s, the artist represented the conservative wing of the concept of the national style. Tamošaitis was particularly conservative in his attitude towards the Lithuanian folk ornamentation, making him more akin to the beginning of the century, as he considered it to be unique and therefore irreplaceable in increasing the national uniqueness of the products. Due to such prejudiced interpretation of the originals the costumes he design often crossed the line between a reconstructed and a stylized costume.

The model of the national costume created by Tamošaitis became prestigious and soon spread through the network of the weavers that he trained and the *Marginiai* cooperative that he ran. After WWII, Tamošaitis and his wife moved to the West and settled in Canada, where they became the most influential in the use and production of the national costume among the Lithuanian diaspora.

Another creator of the Lithuanian national costume from the same period was Mikalina Glemžaitė, who remained in Antanas Tamošaitis’ shadow throughout the 1930s and was influenced by the program that he developed. However, her own relationship with the ethnographic material was closer, therefore her interpretations differed as well. Glemžaitė was more successful as a resolute collector of data and consistently tried to combine the costume model designed by Tamošaitis with the ethnographic data that sometimes contradicted it. In 1939, Glemžaitė published a booklet called *Lietuvių moterų tautiniai drabužiai* (*Lithuanian Female Folk Dress*) which included practical advice on making regional national costumes and was intended for the organization of Lithuanian Riflemen’s Union. Having remained in the occupied Lithuania after the war, she published another book in 1955, titled *Lietuvių tautinis kostiumas* (*Lithuanian National Costume*), which revealed major

differences between the ethnographic materials available at the time and the stylized costumes designed by Vytautas Palaima, the most famous post-war costume artist.

NATIONAL COSTUME FOR THE STAGE

The model of the national costume that came to be called “stage national costume” in the 1980s, emerged and developed in Lithuania throughout the three post-war decades.

In the Soviet Union, the national costume was funded by the state and only intended for the song and dance collectives of various types. The amateur artists’ costumes were owned not by the participants, but by the organizations and institutions that the collective was registered with. The appearance of the costumes was controlled and censored just like the repertoire of the amateur artists, albeit with some variation in strictness over time. The private use of the costume was discouraged and gradually almost disappeared. The largest mass events of the amateur artists from the interwar in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – the song festivals – remained, even though their repertoire was greatly altered. A large part of the national costumes were made specially for the program of each of the republic-wide song festival. The costumes were designed by the stage designers based on the ideas and requests of the directors and choreographers of the festivals and concerts. Mass dancing in stadiums is a special genre based on the motion of a large number of dancers in the specially planned field. The individual appearance of each costume soon became less important, while the characteristics of group appearances were prioritized. The costumes were always stylized. In extreme cases their connection to ethnographic material became hard to trace at all, even though a generalized and simplified variation of a regional costume was more usual.

In the Soviet years, only a small number of craftsmen were involved in the design of national costumes. The majority of the costumes were made by special companies according to designs of the artists – the *Dailė* combines, often replacing traditional technologies with simpler ones, and the expensive materials with cheap substitutes. Mass production of poor quality costumes chipped away the prestige of the national costume. The image of conditional, fake outfits was defined by the production of the song festival costumes in textile factories that took place periodically from 1950 to 1985. The practice was unique to Lithuania, never applied in other European countries nor republics of the USSR.

During the occupation, when the national costumes were worn almost exclusively on stage, the outfits produced this way naturally prevailed. The national

costumes as stage props for a while – especially in the 1950s–70s – developed in sync with the directorial trends of the stylized folklore genres and mass events. New interpretations of the ethnic culture, results of ethnographic research in the creation of the Lithuanian national costume were reflected weakly and with great delays.

THE RECONSTRUCTIONS OF THE FOLK COSTUME IN THE 2ND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Halina Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniene was an art scholar who studied the Lithuanian historic dress in the 1930s–1960s, aiming to produce reconstructions of the Lithuanian historic dress that were based on scholarly research and served as alternatives to the models of Antanas Tamošaitis and Mikalina Glemžaitė. She was the first in Lithuania to study the historical development of the authentic folk *costume*, as in, the whole outfit of clothing and accessories worn at a time, as a phenomenon of historical fashion that changes over time and has its own criteria of style and artistry. However, the ambitious book remained unfinished, and the manuscripts as well as drawings reconstructing the costumes were archived after Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniene's death. Their only influence to the further development of the Lithuanian national costume was only in terms of general concept expressed in a couple of published articles.

In the late 1960s–early 1970s many European countries saw the emergence of the phenomenon called the *folklore movement*. At the time, the ethnological research in Lithuania formed the object of *ethnic culture*, which was immediately adopted by the neoromantic movements in the society for a new iteration of the national identity. Unlike the national revivals of the late 19th and early 20th century, the methods applied by the folklorists divided the common ethnic identity, the goal of the beginning of the century, into multiple tiny and individual fragments, small local communities. The folklore movement and the emerging groups of authentic folklore were tolerated in the USSR, but received little support compared to the stylized genres.

The folklorists did not accept the stylized national costumes and wanted the performers of authentic folklore to wear authentic folk dress or exact copies thereof. But the scholarly research of the Lithuanian folk dress published by the early 1970s were yet incapable of answering numerous questions that arose in the practice of reconstruction. The sets of authentic folk dress were spread out over three national and numerous regional museums. Therefore the national costumes that copied the traditional folk dress remained something rare and hard to accomplish until the end of the 20th century.

The earliest examples could be the costumes that the artist Dalia Mataitienė created for the Lithuanian folklore theatre, a unique troupe of professional performers that presented authentic folklore in its shows. However, these costumes became a special case rather than an example that would be easy to follow for other folklore groups.

Once the scholarly research, the collaboration between an ethnographer and an artist came to be acknowledged as necessary for creating costume copies, it also became clear that the production can not be fitted into the production system intended for the stylized costumes. In the early 1980s, there were only two folklore groups in Lithuania who thanks to the resolve of their leaders had acquired costumes copying authentic folk dress based on the scholarly research available. Rather eloquently, one of them was established at the Vilnius University, and the other at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences.

Only after 1990, as Lithuania again regained independence, exact reconstructions of costumes became more widely distributed. In the 1990s, the concept of the copy costume became widespread and well-established alongside the authorial stylization, and sometimes even as a superior model necessary for preserving the tradition. On a larger scale, the production of such costumes became more widespread only in the 21st century.

CONCLUSIONS

The process of creating the national costume took place in the European countries in the late 1800s – early 1900s. The national costume has been understood as an element of the national culture that emerged based on the traits of the form and function of the traditional folk clothing. The folk clothing tends to be narrowly localized, contain traits of ethnic group and estate, be conservative in form, and these aspects were applied to create the national costume that symbolizes the territory of the nation and its state, the unity of the nation, the continuity of its history, the establishment of specific national values in the modern culture. Traditions for wearing the national costume as a particular kind of outfit developed.

The emergence of the national costume was assisted by nationalism and the trends of developing national cultures, therefore like they, the national costume is universal and modal. The interpretations of folk dress, the emerging concept of the national costume and the methods of designing it in one country were reiterated and varied by creators from other countries with some adjustments to their own needs.

The experience was transferred the more easily thanks to the widespread use of the costume in international events and the copying of the processes of the control and production of the costume.

The national costume is designed as a work of art (costume design), by interpreting folk holiday clothing especially typical of a particular region. It is distinct from other forms of dress with ethnic features, because the national costume must be demonstrated, actually or virtually recognizable. The nature of the interpretation is defined by the available information about the traditional costume chosen as the prototype, the selection of attractive and representative features, the combination of the historic forms with contemporary aesthetic attitudes and the methods of adapting to contemporary functions. The change and development of the models of the national costume depend on the concept of cultural heritage and the ways in which it manifests in the modern culture.

Historically, two groups of methods for creating the national costume have developed: copying of folk dress and free interpretation, and respectively the models can be copied or stylized. The results achieved by both types of methods become unsatisfactory to the users after a while, thus creating the premises for the need and design of new models of the national costume.

The Lithuanian national costume was created late, beginning late 1800s – early 1900s, as the surrounding countries were already using this form of national self-expression, therefore the interpretation of the local folk dress was influenced by the examples of the neighboring nations.

The history of the Lithuanian national costume may be categorized into three groups of models:

1. Stylized “Lithuanian” costumes, created collectively. In 1900, the society accepted the female costumes from Lithuania Minor, influenced by the examples of German stylized costumes. After 1905, a unique version of this model spread into Greater Lithuania. Before the restoration of the independent nation-state the costumes were not associated with a particular location and often referred to as simply “Lithuanian”. In the 1920s and 30s, the costumes designed acquire distinct regional features, and the directions of copying and stylizing become more prominent.

2. Stylized national costumes as authorial creations. In the late 1930s, Antanas Tamošaitis categorized the collected material from the ethnographic regions of Lithuania and created the first regional models of the national costume. The costumes designed by Antanas Tamošaitis and his close follower Mikalina Glemžaitė tended to overemphasize the local materials and ornaments, as was typical among the crea-

tors of the “national style” in the early 20th century. The stylized national costumes prevailed in Lithuania throughout the occupation in the 1950s–80s. Professional stage and costume designers adapted them for the stage and the mass events of the song festivals. The stylized models of costumes remained the most widely used in Lithuania throughout the 20th century.

3. National costumes as reconstructions of the folk costume were first created by Halina Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniienė in the late 1940s, but her designs remained unpublished and unrealized. Thanks to the efforts of the enthusiasts of the folklore movement of the late 1960s as well as the ethnographers who assisted them, a theoretical model of a folk costume copy emerged in Lithuania, following the experience of Scandinavian countries, Germany, Estonia in the 2nd half of the 20th century. Such costumes spread slowly, but in the 1990s, the concept of the reconstructed costume was established in the culture and its value understood.

Before the 1930s, the national costumes made by the women themselves and of various quality prevailed in Lithuania. Since the mid-1930s, the amateur clothing was gradually replaced by the works of the craftswomen trained at the House of Agriculture. Like in many European countries, the production of national costumes in Lithuania became a business, and the costume acquired the status of an expensive, luxurious outfit besides being a national symbol.

The process of designing the Lithuanian national costume was managed loosely. The activities of separate individuals was sporadic. In the late 1930s, the House of Agriculture created a system of designing, producing and distributing national costumes, but it was commercial and lacked an authoritative institution to approve the models. During the Soviet occupation, only in the 1970s and 80s was the design of new costumes regulated by the Artistic Council for the National Costume, which limited the excesses of stylization and the lack of competence of the authors. As Lithuania regained independence, in the last decade of the 20th century, the design and production of the national costume again remained weakly regulated by no one else except for the commissioners and the consumers.

The Lithuanian national costumes have been rarely used as mass dress up attire or representative outfits for official parties. Such traditions began in the 1920s and 30s, but disappeared during the occupation, as the costumes came to be owned by the collective. The stage costumes of the 2nd half of the 20th century contained elements of stage props and could not be used for personal representation, therefore these functions of the national costume were weakly expressed in the 1990s as well, during the time of patriotic surge and regained independence.

The late sets of folk dress in the museums, containing separate pieces of clothing as opposed to surviving full costumes, and their study which only developed in the mid-1900s meant that the copying and reconstruction of the folk costume began in Lithuania later than in most European countries. In the 2nd half of the century, the reconstruction of the costumes based on scientific research of the folk dress took place away from the mainstream of the creation of the Lithuanian national costume. Its knowledge in the society and among the majority of the users of the national costume was limited.

In the context of the national costumes of the European nations, the Lithuanian national costume appears as a phenomenon of the late period of the process, created based on the international criteria of such outfits. Arguably all of the 20th century models of the Lithuanian folk costume were designed following their analogies in the surrounding countries. The changes in the costume models related to the scholarly research in ethnology and history as well as new interpretations of the ethnic culture in those countries was reflected in the design of the Lithuanian national costume with some delay.

The century of the history of the Lithuanian national costume demonstrated that this sort of outfit required directed efforts and consistent organizational activity in order to be established in the culture of the nation and the nation-state. In order for a particular model to be adopted, its designers and advocates had to offer not only a convincing interpretation of folk dress appropriate for the period, but also to take care of its practical fulfillment, to create a smooth system of production. This trend also had the opposite effect: once the models were established in the national culture with their assigned functions, a usual way of production and acquisition, they continued to thrive on their own, themselves becoming a tradition. In order to adjust or change them, a new program including the whole cycle of design, production and establishment was required.