

Ethnostyle in Modern Urban Space

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The modern urbanization processes in the Ukraine cover not only city, but also the rural environment. Now they penetrate into all spheres of our everyday life (home, food, clothes).

Eating traditions are less subject to any changes. As far as the national dress is concerned it is completely excluded from everyday use. However due to its great symbolic meaning nowadays it functions mainly as a ritual (wedding) dress, as well as some other national elements (embroidered skirts, woven belts, ornaments), which are used as accessories in a modern dress. Significant social changes resulted in global changes in the fashion. Today the political situation of the Ukraine is quite favourable for propaganda and creative development of the national traditions.

The so-called "orange" revolution provided the spread of the Ukrainian national motives in clothes. The traditional national dress is quite significant especially when talking about fashionable ethnic motives.

The modern fashion increasingly tends towards the historical heritage of the past. The most vivid example of the use of the national traditions is the so-called "ethnic" style. It is characterized by an abundant use of colours, ornamental motives in fabrics (embroideries, weaving, batik, applications, etc.), a number of dress elements and accessories (headdress, scarfs, ornaments, etc.), a simple cut.

The "ethnostyle" as a rule does not depend on the primary source that inspires the designer, be it the Indian, African, Turkish or the traditional Ukrainian national dress. The current tendency of the European designers (Roberto Cavalli, Dolce&Gabbana, Gianfranco Ferre, Jean-Paul Gaultier) towards Indian and African motifs presented in the collections "springsummer 2005" also encourages our designers to follow the "ethno" theme.

The last sixteen "The Fashion Seasons" autumn winter 2006 (Kiev, March 17-20) which have presented 27 collections of the Ukrainian designers prove that idea.

Among numerous new names the collection of the youngest participant of "The Seasons" Peter Nesterenko was highly appreciated. In his collection of modern avant-garde youth clothes he demonstrated not only deep knowledge of the historical forms of the Ukrainian national dress of the XVII-XIX centuries but also a brilliant interpretation of its forms. The "ethnostyle" leading designer Lilia Pustovit sang the so-called emotional hymn to the Ukrainian culture having used the ethno hairstyle plaits. The last "Seasons" undoubtedly have raised the prestige of the Ukrainian national style.

A vivid example of ethnic self-expression was the image of Ruslana Lezhichko, the winner of the "Eurovision 2004" competition. Her desire to avoid the "Global European dress", to use the "wild" originality determined her choice of the archaic huzul musical rhythms and the corresponding "Medieval Ukrainian" style.

The "ethnostyle", quite actual in the recent years, has become a so-called counterbalance to the processes of globalization of the world ethnic cultures. The spread of the pro-American ideas together with its historical and cultural traditions (jeans, shorts, T-shirts, caps and trainers) prove the idea. America suggested to use the "disposable" principle in clothes and household goods. This tendency is opposed by the use of expensive silk and linen fabrics, handwork, embroidery, weaving, batik, laces, etc. The so-called "Eastern" and "Slavic" motifs contain all these "ethnostyle" elements. Therefore it's obvious that "granzh" style, a combination of "globalization" shabby jeans, negligent scarfs with satin, silk fabrics, expensive wool ultrafashionable accessories comes back. The desire to mix everything, to put one thing on another, having belted the third, is the so-called challenge to the strict, businesses city rhythm. Nowadays the "granzh" style is not a protest, it's an alternative to the passion for golden and satin luxury of the past. Thus, the "ethnostyle" in modern urban space is necessary and claimed.