DOI: https://doi.org/10.28925/2025.68
UDC 7.053:746:7.012(4-11) ”16/18”

ОРНАМЕНТИКА КУНТУШЕВИХ ПОЯСІВ СХІДНОЇ ЄВРОПИ, ЯК ДЖЕРЕЛО НАТХНЕННЯ В СУЧАСНОМУ АРТДИЗАЙНІ

Махиня Людмила Миколаївна
Студентка ІІІ курсу «Образотворче мистецтво, декоративне мистецтво, реставрація»
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0002-0375-0547
lmmakhynia.fomd23@kubg.edu.ua

Школьна Ольга Володимирівна
Професор, завідувач кафедри образотворчого мистецтва,
доктор мистецтвознавства
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7245-6010
o.shkolna@kubg.edu.ua

EASTERN EUROPEAN KUNTUSH BELTS' ORNAMENTATION AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION IN CONTEMPORARY ART DESIGN

Makhinya Lyudmila Mykolayivna,
3rd-year student, Faculty of Fine Arts
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0002-0375-0547
lmmakhynia.fomd23@kubg.edu.ua
Shkolna Olga Volodymyrivna,
Doctor of Art Studies, Professor,
Head of the Department of Fine Arts
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7245-6010
o.shkolna@kubg.edu.ua

Анотація. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена зростаючим інтересом до вивчення візуальної спадщини Східної Європи та ролі декоративно-прикладного та побутового мистецтва у формуванні культурної ідентичності. Об'єктом дослідження є пояс кунтуш як історико-культурне явище. Предметом дослідження є орнаментація поясів, її походження, еволюція та трансформації в сучасному мистецтві. Кунтушевий пояс, що сформувався у XVII–XVIII ст. у середовищі східноєвропейської шляхти, є унікальним феноменом культурної спадщини Східної Європи. Його поява була зумовлена низкою історико-культурних факторів: запозиченням орієнтальних традицій (турецьких, перських, татарських поясів), розвитком місцевих ткацьких шкіл й прагненням шляхти до самовираження через костюм як символ статусу й ідентичності. Таким чином, вплив кунтушевого пояса на сучасне мистецтво є багатоплановим: від музейної реконструкції та історичних відтворень до модних тенденцій, сценографії й цифрового дизайну. Його орнамент і сьогодні залишається джерелом натхнення, доводячи, що декоративна культура минулого здатна жити новим життям у сучасних формах.

Ключові слова: орієнтальні традиції, кунтушевий пояс, Східна Європа, ткацькі школи, мистецтво, декоративна культура.

Abstract. The research's actuality is conditioned by the growing interest in studying Eastern Europe's visual heritage and the role of decorative and life arts in the formation of cultural identity. The object of the study is kuntush belt as a historical and cultural phenomenon. The subject of the study is belt ornamentation, its origin, evolution and transformations in contemporary art. The kuntush belt was formed in the 17th–18th centuries among the Eastern European nobility and

it is a unique phenomenon of the cultural heritage of Eastern Europe. Its emergence was due to a number of historical and cultural factors: the borrowing of oriental traditions (Turkish, Persian, Tatar belts), the development of local weaving schools and the nobility's desire for self-expression through costume as a symbol of status and identity. Thus, the influence of the kuntush belt on contemporary art is multifaceted: from museum reconstruction and historical reproductions to fashion trends, scenography and digital design. Its ornament remains a source of inspiration today and it proves that the decorative culture of the past is capable of living a new life in modern forms.

Keywords: oriental traditions, kuntush belt, Eastern Europe, weaving schools, art, decorative culture.

Introduction. The kuntush belt is one of the exquisite elements of traditional men's attire in Eastern Europe's noble culture of the 17–18th centuries. This textile product usually was made with expensive fabrics and it was decorated with complex ornamental compositions. It has acquired special significance not only as a cloth element but also as a symbol of social status, cultural affiliation and aesthetic preferences of its time. The kuntush belt's popularity spread to the territories of modern Ukraine and Poland – there were formed its local traditions, production techniques and decorative styles. The fashion's emergence for such a dress was due to the spread in the 16th century of the myth about the valiant families' origin of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth from ancient Sarmatians who had Iranian roots. Also at this time Ukrainian Turkish ties gained a great importance; they were associated with historical circumstances and changes in relations with the Crimean Tatars.

The research's actuality is conditioned by the growing interest in studying Eastern Europe's visual heritage and the

role of decorative and life arts in the formation of cultural identity. At the current historical stage there was a revival of national clothing, ornamentation and stylization in fashion and art so the study of the kuntush belt's origin and symbolism has not only historical and cultural context, but also in a practical one – as a kind of a source of inspiration for artists, designers, reenactors and researchers of visible culture.

The object of the study is kuntush belt as a historical and cultural phenomenon. **The subject of the study** is belt ornamentation, its origin, evolution and transformations in contemporary art.

The aim of the work is to determine the origins of kuntush belt, the features of its ornamental decoration and to understand the influence of these artistic traditions on modern art design.

Research objectives: to analyze the historical circumstances of the kuntush belt's emergence and spreading; to explore the artistic, aesthetic and technological features of ornaments; to identify modern manifestations and options for using kuntush ornamentation in contemporary art, fashion and design.

Kuntush's outfit is a traditional outerwear of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth's noble class, it was worn in Poland and on the territories of modern Ukraine and Belarus in the 17–18th centuries [10, ст. 236]. This outfit was worn over a zhupan, it had wide sleeves and an open front part and it was often complemented by a special decorative belt – a kuntush belt. This belt did not perform a purely utilitarian function like ordinary belts, but it was an important element of the representation of status, wealth and aesthetic taste.

In the noble men's costume the kuntush belt played the role of both a decorative and semiotic accessory: it not only emphasized the posture but also reflected the owner's status and origin, his belonging to the elite and also respect for

traditions. So it is no wander that the belt, like the kuntush, became a symbol of the nobility's national attire – the so-called Sarmatian fashion which combined elements of Eastern and European costume and formed a specific visual code of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth (рис. 1-2).



Рис. 1. Vaclav Revusky in a suit with a belt 18th century.



Рис. 2. Tadeusz Bogdanovich, portrait from 1891, by Vikenty Slendzinski.

Over time kuntush belt firmly took its place in the Ukrainian elite's costumes [13, ст.129] and belt's simpler and cheaper versions were liked by Cossacks. With the beginning of the manufactories' development which produced this type of costume, belts became more accessible to a wider circle of connoisseurs. Kuntush belt can be seen in many images and full-length portraits of hetmans, foremen and ordinary Cossacks, for example, in the portrait of Yarema Vyshnevetsky (portrait by Tomasz Leśniowski in the Vyshnivts Palace) (рис. 3).



Рис. 3. Yarema Wyszniewiecki. Portrait by Tomasz Leśniowski in the Wyszniewiecki Palace 18th century.

The first information about the Cossacks' clothing is found in the notes of the Austrian diplomat Erich Lasota and in the work of Guillaume-Levasser de Beauplan "Description of Ukraine" [5, ст. 37]. At that time victorious military campaigns

against the Turks and Tatars allowed the Cossacks to dress in expensive trophy items. L. Shapoval noted that the Cossacks' festive clothing was luxurious: a white shirt, harem pants decorated with wide gold edging along the side seams, a belt, a Circassian coat, a cloth half-skirt, a caftan, a zhupan made of coarse cloth, a fur hat made of black foxes, a hat with a brim ending in a gold tassel and boots [9, ст. 162].

The kuntush belt's appearance is associated with the formation of a special type of noble class clothing, it arose in the second half of the 17th century and was based on military costume and influences from Eastern fashion. There was formed the Sarmatian knight's image in the noble environment after numerous wars with the Ottoman Empire, Tatar khanates and alliances with the Persians. According to that image Sarmatian knight had not only a military lifestyle but also he preferred clothing with decorative, rich elements of the oriental type.

Many historians (also D. Yavornytsky) note that numerous goods were transported from the East to the West, including works of high artistic value. A significant part of the Eastern exports remained in place and was in demand with the local population. After gaining popularity on the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth's eastern borders the goods of Persian and Turkish merchants (including precious artistic fabrics) captured the nobility's imagination to such an extent that they began to be used for sewing and be added as decoration to the most solemn costumes.

Kuntush belts gained great popularity and occupied a prominent place in the nobility costume. During this period, they began to be made of expensive silks with the addition of gold and silver threads. "The length of such a belt reached from 2 to 5 meters. Such an artwork contained up to 200 or more grams of real gold or silver and it cost as much as 2–3 villages" [8, ст. 130].

Belts were woven on special looms or were brought from the East. They became an indicator of noble wealth and honour. Wearing an expensive belt was tantamount to demonstrating a coat of arms – a symbol of personal dignity. Thus, the kuntush belt gradually acquired a ritual significance in representative attire (рис. 4).



Рис. 4 A type of kuntush belt with heraldic symbols of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth 18th century.

It is worth noting that the artistic and stylistic features of typological groups of gold-woven products were made in the workshops of Galicia in the 18th century had the significantly difference from similar products from other regions of Eastern Europe. If the nature of decorative fabrics was dominated by Western European stylistic features (Baroque and Rococo) then the compositions of clothing fabrics are marked by a

significant influence of Muslim stylistics – Persian and Turkish art.

The so-called Persian belts (pasy perskie) were very popular and they became a model for further European production. This is no coincidence as Turkish and Persian weaving traditions were well known to the Polish Lithuanian community, especially among diplomats, military personnel and merchants who were actively in contact with the Islamic world. Not only the manufacturing techniques came from there but also the typical ornamental motifs: stylized floral patterns, rosettes, medallions and complex symmetrical compositions. The colour palette with a predominance of red, gold, garnet and dark green was also borrowed.

The Persian weaving workshop in town Stanislaviv was the most significant in the development of the weaving art in the lands of ethnic Ukraine, it reflected the interaction of Eastern and Western traditions of gold ornamental products. It arose around the 1740s, when a weaver of Armenian origin, Dominik Misierovych, settled in the city. It is no coincidence that O. Shkolna considers 1744 to be the beginning of the heyday of the Stanislaviv Persian weaving industry [10, ст. 238]. Belts were entrusted for making to men because it was quite a hard physical job that required continuous, all-day work. Unfortunately not a single signature product has survived from this manufactory. However, O. Shkolna points out that belts of another manufacturer from ethnic Ukraine have survived – with the brand “Buchach” and the image of a horse [10, ст. 238] (рис. 5).







Рис. 5. Marks of Buchach kuntush belts based on materials from the MNW collection 18th century [10, cm. 132].

In Eastern Europe kuntush belts were developed in the form of separate local weaving schools. The most famous of them was the Slutsk Manufactory, it was founded in the middle of the 18th century. This factory products were distinguished by high quality, complexity of ornaments and richness of materials. They were exported throughout the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth and even to Western Europe. The Slutsk silk belt manufactory annually produced goods worth up to 10 thousand zlotys [8, ст. 130].

There was a fashion for imported gold-woven fabrics among the Galicia nobility and burghers and its high cost contributed to the establishment of the local silk-weaving and gold-weaving crafts. The first attempts to establish local gold weaving are associated with the gold and silver weaving production by the Greek Manuel Korfinsky in Brody at the end of the 17th century and the continuation of the tradition of making decorative gold-woven fabrics in the 18th century [12].

Weaving workshops (Persian weaving mills) were

organized on the territories of Eastern Galicia due to its geographical location for the activities of emigrant weavers from the East. Among the first Persian weaving mills were workshops in Stanislaviv, Buchach, Brody, Olesk, Kutkor, and Unev.

The first of such a such workshop in Brody was based on the experience of the owner, Stanisław Koniecpolski, who spent four years in Ottoman captivity. Being an educated man with a lively mind, "he studied well the traditions of this region and brought to his Persian workshop Western (from Polish Gdansk and weavers from Flanders) as well as Eastern (most likely Armenians from Turkey) masters, whom he took care of in every way" [10, ст. 237]. Later, Turkish weavers were engaged in the production of gold-woven items here and it is worth to associate the sources of inspiration for domestic kuntush belts with them [2, ст. 34-37].

With the beginnings of the gold weaving emergence in Western Ukrainian lands there were introduced into production the complex multi-system weaving technologies and the use of tools characteristic only of Eastern weaving, as well as technological achievements of Western European weaving. But later (especially in small Persian workshops) gold weaving was based on traditional Ukrainian weaving techniques (various variants of plain weave in single-core fabrics) using a bust [12].

Ukrainian belts were often distinguished by more laconic shapes and stylized geometric ornaments derived from folk art. Polish ones had luxurious compositions inspired by Persian symmetry. Belarusian belts, except for Slutsk, had a specific floristic style with characteristic vertical ornamental fields.

Today, the ornamentation of kuntush belts is not well known due to the lack of surviving objects from the Baroque period. The products of other Ukrainian Persian factories,

mostly later ones, reflected the main developments of their predecessors, leading industries in the field of gold weaving, and are little known. Instead, the previous era's achievements (including the ornamentation) are better reflected in samples from collections that have survived mostly in ethnic Poland. Since these products were created by the same master who initiated the production of the belts' specified segment on our lands, so it can be partially traced to this fact the kinship and genetic heredity of J. Mazharsky's belts' ornamentation on the ethnic lands of Ukraine and Belarus (later Poland) [10, ст. 240].

For the nobility the kuntush belt was not just a part of clothing but an expression of belonging to a special ethos – Sarmatism which combined military dignity, religiosity, family honor and worship of tradition. Due to its exquisite ornamentation and cultural significance the kuntush belt became a symbolic visual code of noble identity which was demonstrated by the wearer through public attire.

As it was noted the Persian weaving workshop (founded around the 1740s) in Stanislav (now Ivano-Frankivsk) was the most significant for the history of the weaving art's development on the lands of ethnic Ukraine. This was the first workshop, and its opening was accompanied by great difficulties because the Ottoman Empire prohibited the export of weaving looms under penalty of death. The manufactory master was Jan Madzharsky (real name Hovhannes Madzharians). However, there was known only a description of several silk belts from literary sources regarding the products of Stanislav production of the middle - second half of the 18th century which belong to the Istanbul type [6, ст. 130].

The Stanislav Manufactory employed Turkish Armenians and Persians who were masters of silk work. They wove double-faced belts for various ceremonies such as weddings and funerals. Therefore, Jan Mazharsky was considered by

Michal Kazimierz Radziwiłł Rybońka to be a specialist in the production of Persian, Turkish and even Chinese fabrics, carpets, belts and makats [6, ст. 130-131].

Since the Lviv MEHP collection the contains one gold-woven, semi-cast belt by Jan Mazharsky (made in Stanislav) we can draw conclusions about the time of the appearance and development of his author's style [6, ст. 133]. His style is distinguished by the contrast of colours and floral motifs in the carnations form. As researchers note, some of this enterprise's belts under Jan Mazharsky were executed on a red background with the addition of gold and silver thread. Regarding the marking of kuntush belts, initially Jan Mazharski either did not sign them or marked them with the stamp 'Ioannes Madzarski' [6, ст. 133].

Important regional centres of kuntush belt production were Lviv, Brody, Buchach, as well as several private workshops in the Volyn and Podolsk regions. The Lviv weaving school was distinguished by its deep connection with Byzantine-Ukrainian ornamental traditions and the Baroque era decorative and applied arts.

O. Shkolna points out that the picturesque mulberry garden around Brody Castle and the manufactory are praised in the panegyric in honor of Alexander Koniecpolsky (first owner's son), written by Stanislav Zyznovsky in 1659 [10, ст. 237]. This literary monument also mentions that workers woven fabrics in the Persian style and the range of production.

As I. Tsymbala notes, modern studies by Polish art historians of gold weaving on the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth territory are mostly focused on the "Polish belts" of the 18th century in the complex of the bourgeoisie and magnates' clothing's studies. Such close attention to "Persianism" on the part of Polish scholars is "hard to overestimate." After all, they undoubtedly consider all the famous silk belts produced in the

workshops of Kutkor (рис. 6), Lahodov, Brody, Buchach and other towns in Galicia to be the achievements of Polish art [12, ст. 23].

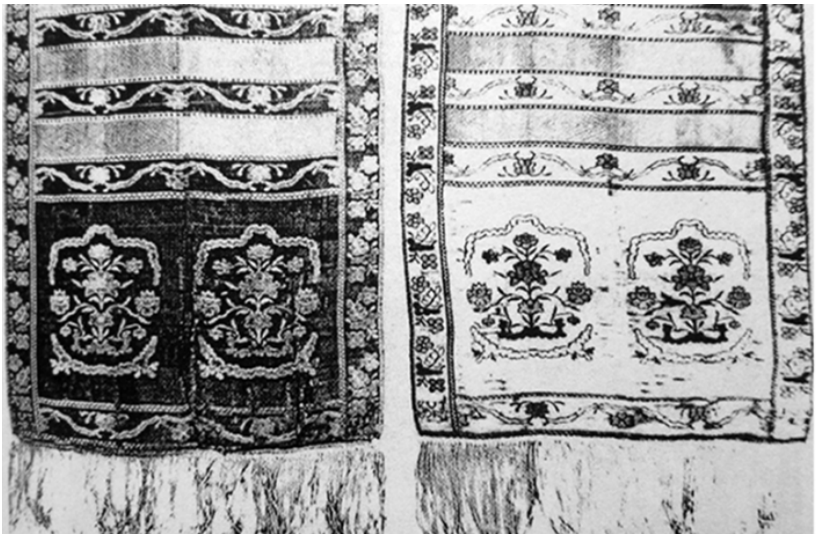


Рис. 6. Kuntush belt made by Kutkor (Ukraine) from the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw 17th-18th century. The ornamental pattern of the ends looks like a flowering bush with a hint of a stump.

The most famous centre of Eastern Europe kuntush belt production was the Slutsk Manufactory (founded 1758) with the support of Prince Mykhailo Casimir Radziwiłł. Jan Madzharsky introduced his most daring and creative innovation: he developed new ornaments based on the decor of Armenian, Turkish and Persian fabrics. Thanks to the recognizable patterns of "carnation", "seedling", "Chinese cloud", "cornflower", "bouquet", "flowering stumps", "wreath-medallion" – belts from Slutsk turned into the famous "Slutsk belts" [8, ст. 130] (рис. 7-10). The factory was established on the initiative of a magnate family and it became an unique phenomenon in the textile industry of that time – and the



Puc.7. Double-sided kuntush belt with «cloud» motifs. Stanisław Radziwiłł Manufactory, master Jan Madzharski, 1776-1780. National Museum in Warsaw.



Puc. 8. Flowering stumps, dragon-shaped hieroglyph. Shchepan Filsyan's factory (Kobylka; belt factory; 1787-1794).



Рис. 9. Kuntush belt, double-sided. Unknown author, second half of the 18th century, National Museum in Warsaw.



Рис. 10. Belt with ends' ornamental elements of the "wreath-medallion type", with the image of carnations. Slutsk Radziwill Manufactory. 1767–1780. Collection of the National Museum of Lithuania (Vilnius).

According to researchers, belts from the Slutsk manufactory with heads decorated in the form of flower bouquets (рис. 11) made up a significant part of the Persian production.

The definition of «bouquet» in relation to the belts' main composition is rather arbitrary. It is based on the similarity of two floral images which were constructed with a clear vertical axis of symmetry – it could be interpreted as a stem or sprout growing from a cut tree or the ground [4, ст. 109-110].



Рис. 11 Kuntush belt with «Bouquet» ornament, unknown author, second half of the 18th century.

There were workshops in Grodno that also produced belts of a similar type – they were less expensive than those from Slutsk but were valued for the originality of the ornaments and folk stylization. In particular, woolen threads and a linen base were used more often here which made the products more affordable but at the same time it gave the belts a local flavor.

In Poland there were also known individual weavers and small workshops which produced belts based on patterns from oriental fabrics, particularly those were brought from the Ottoman Empire. Those belts were used not only for kuntush but also as everyday life's decorative elements – altar ribbons, girding vestments, etc.

The materials for making kuntush belts were expensive and mostly imported. The main ones are silk (natural, dyed in

bright colors); gold and silver metallized thread is a silk thread wrapped with very thin silver or gold wire. Yellow or white silk was used to enhance the metallic lustre of gold or silver [12, ст. 28-29]. Wool was also used as a cheaper analogue of silk and linen for the base.

So, depending on the product and the manufactory's capabilities, there were used the following methods:

broaching – an exquisite method of weaving with an ornamental thread over the base;

jacquard weaving – hand weaving with a variable palette;

gold weaving – silk fabric with the addition of a metal thread which can cover or in some places leave uncovered the silk-coloured background of the fabric;

gilding – the background of silk fabric is completely woven with gold or silver threads.

One belt was made over several weeks or even months. That was a collective work: there were composition designers (often educated artists), weavers, dyers and quality inspectors involved in the production. The system of workshop control was of great importance, ensuring the continuity of tradition and technical skill.

The kuntush belts' ornamentation is an exceptional example of the synthesis of Eastern decorative traditions and local aesthetic preferences. The main artistic principles that shaped the ornament included rhythm, symmetry, modularity and saturation. The compositions were often reversible (рис. 7) that allowed the belt to be worn on both sides. There are also belts divided by two colours on each side which allows the wearer (if it necessary) to fold them in order to form four different belts according to the occasion (рис. 12).



Рис. 12 Multi-sided Kuntush belt. Manufactory of K. Stanisław Radziwiłł, Jan Mazharsky, 1767-1780.

Ornamental elements had a vertical or horizontal organization that maintained compositional balance. The main plane, the belt's head, was filled with medallions, rosettes, floral garlands, stylized foliage, flowerpots, and less often, figured motifs. Great attention was paid to detail, richness of texture and the visual effect of luxury, that achieved by combining gold or silver thread with coloured silks.

The bouquet motif was more successful in artistic terms, as it allowed for the formation of smooth, complete compositions of belt heads, the use of a wide variety of options in the natural form's stylization and the inclusion of multi-scale images of not only flowers, but also buds, leaves and branches in the decoration [4, ст. 110].

The head drawing of the "wreath-medallion" type Slutsk belt can be divided into several parts. The middle part of the medallions was formed by motifs of flowers and leaves they

were also grouped in the form of ovals. By their mass, they formed dominant and clearly visible openwork spots – dark on a light background or light on dark. Their outer contours are rather large images of multi-petaled flowers with «hearts» and dot centers, were woven through the indentation to the outside of the belt heads and placed along the line of the oval on the horizontal and vertical axes of symmetry.

The most common kuntush belts' ornamentation is floral motifs – mainly tulips, pomegranates, palmettes, grapevines and flower buds. The tulip was especially often used in Slutsk belts and had symbolic significance in Persian culture as an image of beauty and nobility. In the context of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth it acquired the status of an elitist symbol. Pomegranate as a symbol of fertility and eternal life is also present in many belts, especially those were made under the influence of Turkish fabrics. A flower pot is interpreted as an allegory of home, prosperity and harmony which reinforces the connection between the ornament and the owner's social status. Geometric motifs (rhombuses, stars, wavy, broken lines, weaving) are reminiscent of traditional patterns of Ukrainian and Belarusian folk weaving which indicates local adaptations of oriental patterns [3, ст. 111 – 112].

The colour palette of kuntush belts was extremely rich. Depending on the order and regional influence were combined:

deep blue, garnet, dark green, burgundy – symbols of wealth, honour, stability;

gold and silver – signs of high status, luxury, sometimes sacredness;

lighter pastel tones – appeared later, with the involvement of European fashion of the late 18th century.

The combination of colours often depended on the belt's functional purpose: bright and contrasting patterns were chosen for ceremonial events and more restrained ones for

everyday use. There were also «mourning» versions of belts in dark colors.

This interweaving of cultural codes allows us to speak about the formation of a hybrid visual language characteristic of the Eastern Europe's noble environment.

The kuntush belt has a rich symbolism and decorative motifs so today it serves not only as a historical monument but also as a source of creative rethinking. Once ornamentation symbolized status and belonging to the nobility but now it serves as the basis for new artistic practices. It retains its sacredness and aesthetic expressiveness but at the same time it acquires modern forms: from interpretations in fashion and design to digital artistic experiments.

In the 21st century the kuntush belt is increasingly attracting attention not only as a historical artifact but also as a source of inspiration for modern culture. Leading museums in Poland and Ukraine (the National Museum in Krakow, the National Museum of the History of Ukraine) actively represent collections of belts in their exhibitions, illustrating the wealth of material culture of the 17th–18th centuries.

Museums not only preserve these artifacts but also actively promote them through exhibition projects, interactive displays and digital catalogues. This contributes to the formation of a new understanding of belts in society – as a cultural code that unites different eras, peoples and traditions.

According to historical reconstructions of kuntush belts they were an integral part of the image of Cossack and noble culture of the 17th–18th centuries. Historical experts in Ukraine and Poland recreate not only the appearance of the belts but also the weaving technology which enhances the scientific and cultural value of these projects.

In modern weaving and decorative arts, the kuntush belts' ornaments are finding a new life. Ukrainian masters reproduce

the motifs of geometric and floral compositions in tapestries and designer fabrics while in Poland experiments with combining traditional belt patterns with modern materials are widespread, they are forming the continuity of textile tradition where historical decor becomes the basis for innovative artistic searches.

Thus, in the field of ethnic design Ukrainian brands integrate geometric and floral motifs of belts into modern clothing collections. Polish designers interpret the belt as an accent belt in costumes and even as a separate art object. Artists are experimenting with digital replicas of Slutsk belts and they are creating fabric prints for use in the garment industry. They are developing souvenirs and interpreting them for modern products such as scarves, rugs, etc. [4].

Kuntush belt motifs are actively used in the scenography of historical plays, films and opera productions. In costume design artists use not only copies of authentic belts but also stylized versions that enhance the visual expressiveness of the stage image.

In theatrical art the kuntush belt is often used to create images of the nobility, Cossack foremen or bourgeoisie of the 17th–18th centuries. It not only completes the costume but also serves as a symbolic marker of the social status and inner characteristics of the character. Dramatic productions (particularly on themes from the history of Ukraine and Poland) use belts to outline the splendour, solemnity and aristocratic nature of the image. In cinema the belt can have a more stylized or even symbolic form, serving as a means of visual identification of the era. For example, Jerzy Hoffmann's famous film «With Fire and Sword» (stylistics of the era and costumes were sustained vividly in it) demonstrates the richness and diversity of ornaments, fabrics and styles (рис. 13).





Puc. 13 Frames from Jerzy Hoffmann's film «With Fire and Sword», 1999.

In the visual arts the kuntush belt's ornaments inspire the creation of decorative paintings, tapestries and graphic compositions. Some artists interpret the belt as a metaphor for cultural continuity, so they combine traditional motifs with modern abstract techniques.

In painting the kuntush belt often appears in the portrait genre of the 17th–18th centuries there it has a function of prestige and belonging to the elite. In contemporary fine art the kuntush belt's motifs are given a new conceptual interpretation as a symbol of historical memory and cultural continuity, as rhythmic patterns that are easily integrated into modern compositions, as an element of a reinterpreted textile tradition. Artists use the belt as a metaphor for the connection between generations: it becomes not just a decorative detail but an image of the cultural heritage's richness and at the same time a source of inspiration.

The digital representation of kuntush belts also has a significant impact. Thanks to 3D modelling, digital archives

and virtual museums, belt ornamentation is becoming accessible to a wide audience. This opens new opportunities for scientific analysis and popularization: researchers can track fabric details, ornament structure and weaving techniques without the risk of damaging the original.

In addition, graphic designers and illustrators actively use digital copies of belts to create modern posters, logos and identities. Thus, belt ornamentation has become a recognizable element in the visual culture of the 21st century.

Conclusions. The kuntush belt was formed in the 17th–18th centuries among the Eastern European nobility and it is a unique phenomenon of the cultural heritage of Eastern Europe. Its emergence was due to a number of historical and cultural factors: the borrowing of oriental traditions (Turkish, Persian, Tatar belts), the development of local weaving schools and the nobility's desire for self-expression through costume as a symbol of status and identity.

The belt in a noble costume performed not only a utilitarian but primarily a representative function. It was a sign of prestige and belonging to a certain social stratum, a means of visual communication and cultural differentiation. The kuntush belt's decorative motifs reflected a complex combination of cultural influences: from oriental ornaments to local Ukrainian, Polish and Belarusian traditions.

Today the kuntush belt is considered not only as a historical relic but also as a cultural marker of the Eastern European region. It embodies the multiculturalism of this space, where are combined Eastern and Western traditions, noble symbols, and folk aesthetics. In the modern context the belt serves as a symbol of identity and continuity, while remaining relevant in the artistic pursuits of artists.

Thus, the influence of the kuntush belt on contemporary art is multifaceted: from museum reconstruction and historical

reproductions to fashion trends, scenography and digital design. Its ornament remains a source of inspiration today and it proves that the decorative culture of the past is capable of living a new life in modern forms.

Sources:

1. Вовк Хв. Відмінні риси південно-руської орнаментики. Київ. 1878. С. 108–116.

2. Зайченко В. Старовинні коштовні пояси. Каталог Чернігівського історичного музею ім. В. В. Тарновського. 2005. С. 129–146.

3. Косач О. Український народний орнамент: вишивки, тканини, писанки. Київ. 1876. С.140.

4. Матейко К. Український народний одяг. АН УРСР, Музей етнографії та художнього промислу. Київ: Наукова думка. 1977. С. 223.

5. Прокопенко В. Щодо зав'язування поясів у Східній Європі XVI–XVII ст. Стрій. 2024. №6 С. 3–34.

6. Смолій Ю. Слуцькі пояси: Українське культурне поле. МІСТ: Мистецтво, історія, сучасність, теорія. 2010. Вип. 7. С. 360–374.

7. Шаповал Л. Традиційне верхнє вбрання козацтва Лівобережної України: збірка статей та матеріалів Четвертої наукової конференції. Київ; Полтава: АСМІ, 2020. С. 160–174.

8. Школьна О., Прядко С. Тапісярні та персіярні на теренах Речі Посполитої XVIII ст. Одеса. Молодий вчений, 2021. Вип. №11(99). С. 128–130.

9. Школьна О. Великосвітські мануфактури князів Радзивілів XVIII–XIX століть на теренах Східної Європи. Київ: Ліра-К, 2018. С. 123–165.

10. Школьна О. Походження орнаментики кунтушевих поясів України, Білорусі та Польщі XVII–XIX ст. Київ.

Художня культура, 2016. Вип. 12. С. 236–242.

11. Цимбала Л. Золототкацтво Галичини XVIII – першої третини XX ст. (Історія, типологія, художньо-стильові особливості). Дисертація на здобуття наукового ступеня кандидата мистецтвознавства, Львів. 2003. 192 с.

12. Taszycka M. (1985) Polskie pasy kontuszowe. Wyd. Literackie. Kraków, 111 p.

13. Mańkowski T. (1954) Polski tkaniny i hafty XVI–XVIII wieku. Wroclaw, 164 p.

14. Mańkowski T. (1935) Stuka islamu w Polsce w 17 i 18 wieku. Kraków, 126 p.

References:

1. Vovk, Kh. (1878). Distinctive features of South-Ruthenian ornamentation (pp. 108–116). Kyiv.

2. Zaichenko, V. (2005). Ancient precious belts. In Catalogue of the Chernihiv Historical Museum named after V. V. Tarnovskyi (pp. 129–146).

3. Kosach, O. (1876). Ukrainian folk ornament: Embroideries, textiles, pysanky (p. 140). Kyiv.

4. Mateiko, K. (1977). Ukrainian folk clothing. Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, Museum of Ethnography and Folk Arts. Naukova Dumka.

5. Prokopenko, V. (2024). On belt tying in Eastern Europe in the 16th–17th centuries. Strii, (6), 3–34.

6. Smolii, Yu. (2010). Slutsk belts: The Ukrainian cultural field. MIST: Art, History, Modernity, Theory, (7), 360–374.

7. Shapoval, L. (2020). Traditional outerwear of the Cossacks of Left-Bank Ukraine: Collection of articles and materials of the Fourth Academic Conference (pp. 160–174). ASMI.

8. Shkolna, O., & Priadko, S. (2021). Tapestries and Persian-style weavings in the territories of the Polish–

Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 18th century. Molodyi Vchenyi, 11(99), 128–130.

9. Shkolna, O. (2018). High-society manufactories of the Radziwiłł princes in the 18th–19th centuries in Eastern Europe (pp. 123–165). Lira-K.

10. Shkolna, O. (2016). The origin of ornamentation of kontusz belts of Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland in the 17th–19th centuries. Artistic Culture, 12, 236–242.

11. Tsymbala, L. (2003). Gold weaving in Galicia from the 18th to the first third of the 20th century (History, typology, artistic and stylistic features) (Doctoral dissertation). Lviv.

12. Taszycka, M. (1985). Polish kontusz belts. Wydawnictwo Literackie.

13. Mańkowski, T. (1954). Polish textiles and embroidery of the 16th–18th centuries. Wrocław.

14. Mańkowski, T. (1935). Islamic art in Poland in the 17th and 18th centuries. Kraków.