

### III. FOLK STUDIES AND OTHER DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH IN POLISH ETHNOLOGY

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#### THE STUDY OF FOLK CLOTHES AND COSTUMES IN POLAND

Poland is one of the few European countries whose extensive ethnographic literature does not contain any monograph or even an album devoted to regional costumes. Folders with colorful largescale photographs, published in 1841, 1855, and 1954 (Zieńkiewicz, 1841; Gerson, 1855; Manugiewicz, 1954) as limited editions are almost inaccessible nowadays. At present, one often finds that no papers on this topic appear at all, and even the volumes of *Atlas Polskich Strojów Ludowych* [Atlas of Polish Folk Costumes] are not published any more (Kantor, 1982, p. 26). This gap may be filled by papers that have been written and are currently in press (Karwicka, Gadomski, Bazielićh), yet the editing process each year becomes longer and longer. It would be, therefore, a mistake to think that the question of peasants' clothing, (commonly called a folk costume or a regional costume)<sup>1</sup>, is no longer the subject of inquiry and dissertations. Among those interested in this subject are not only ethnographers, but also historians (Rosen-Przeworska, 1953; 1954; Turnau, 1991), historians of material culture (Kowecka, 1978), art historians (Bartkiewicz, 1979; Żygulski, 1974), costumologists and teatrologists (Tyrowicz, 1957; *Kostiumy teatralne...* [Theatre Costumes...], 1952) as well as folklorists<sup>2</sup>. While some of these discipline treat peasants' clothing in a marginal way, others, in particular historians and historians of material culture, view it as a binding element in the national culture. For many reasons, therefore, it is of great importance to acknowledge such publicatins as well as studies written by historians of art on fashion and the history of clothing, even though the

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<sup>1</sup> Further in the paper such expressions as folk costume, peasant's costume, or regional clothing will be used interchangeably, yet always to designate a decorative, festive type of wear in opposition to clothing understood as commonplace, everyday clothes. Here, we do not aim at defining these terms, as it is not the subject of this paper. An attemptat definition was given by Irena Turnau, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> As an example, we can give a series of publications about the folklore of particular regions, published by Centralny Ośrodek Metodyki Upowszechniania Kultury [Central Institute of Methodology of Dissemination of Culture] in Warsaw. They cover songs, dance, customs, and costumes.

mentioned publications are completely ignored by ethnographers and folk specialists writing about folk costumes. Even though the achievement of the folk culture scholars does not include any concise monograph, album or a synthesis of this period, many of them have written and published articles about costumes, as this subject is always valid and popular.

In Poland folk costume has been arousing scholarly interest for over two hundred years, and with changing, yet always increasing intensity. There are also many negative evaluations of Polish scholarship of this subject and some regret that so far neither theory nor appropriate research methods have been developed (Kantor, 1982). However when we take into account the points of view of various academic disciplines as well as the time period and stages in the development of the interest in folk clothing, such severe criticism would seem unjustified.

The existing literature of folk costume not only describes the forms and ornamentation of costumes, the ways of making them, the materials, functions, genesis, history, archaisms, regional variations, and specific character, changes in time and long-term duration as well as the problem of fashion and conditions, but also discusses the question of iconography and tries to grasp the influence of the clothing of noblemen and townsmen on the Polish folk costume. These issues are discussed in papers published either in journals<sup>3</sup> or popular magazines<sup>4</sup>, or — in the case of characteristics of specific folk costumes — in monographs of some regions (*Kultura ludowa Wielkopolski* [Folk Culture of Wielkopolska], 1960; *Nad rzeką Ropą* [On the Ropa River], 1965; *Ziemia Myślenicka* [The Region of Myślenice], 1971), as separate publications (Świeży, 1954; Cholewa, 1946; Grodecka 1986; Bazielić, 1988) or chapters in papers concerning folk culture and art (Fischer, 1926; 1934; Reinfuss, Świdorski, 1960; Hermanowicz-Nowak, 1976; Grabowski, 1977; Fryś-Pietraszkowa, Kunczyńska, Pokropek, 1988) of which, due their numbers we can mention only a few.

Among all those publications we should distinguish *Atlas Polskich Strojów Ludowych* [Atlas of Polish Folk Costumes] prepared by different authors and published by Polskie Towarzystwo Ludoznawcze [The Polish Ethnological Society] in separate volumes as monographs of regional variations of the costumes. Since 1949 there have appeared 32 fascicles<sup>5</sup>, the last of which was

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<sup>3</sup> "Wisła", "Lud", "Polska Sztuka Ludowa", "Etnografia Polska", "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej", "Kwartalnik Historyczny", "Pamiętnik Słowiański", "Łódzkie Studia Etnograficzne", "Prace i Materiały Antropologiczno-Archeologiczne i Etnograficzne", "Prace i Materiały Etnograficzne", "Literatura Ludowa", annual sets issued by some museums.

<sup>4</sup> "Orli Lot", "Wierchy", "Ziemia", "Zaranie Śląskie", "Wiedza i Życie", "Turysta", *Kalendarz Ilustrowany Kuryera Codziennego*, and others.

<sup>5</sup> Subsequent volumes of *Atlas Polskich Strojów Ludowych* are devoted to: costumes of the Szczawnica mountaineers, of the Lower Silesia (Pogórze), regions of Rzeszów, Szamotuły, and

submitted for publication in 1994<sup>6</sup>. Each fascicle, in addition to detailed data on the history, distribution, and the forms of particular pieces of ladies' and men's dress, also contains data about the ornamentation of clothing, fabrics, and makers. Although in a sense the last three topics constitute separate sections of literature and because of their specific subject matter are discussed in separate publications (*Haft i zdobienie stroju ludowego* [Embroidery and Ornamentation of Folk Costume], 1955; Reinfuss, 1953; *Strój i tkanina ludowa Mazowska Płockiego* [Folk Costume and Fabric of the Płock Mazovia], 1972), they are directly related to costume and thus should be taken into account.

A review of all publications can be found in bibliographies published both before and after World War II (Gawełek, 1914; Bystroń, 1922; Jackowski, Jarnuszkiewiczowa, 1962) and in references in some publications (Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa, 1964). Bibliography has been continuously updated by a branch of the Polish Ethnological Society — Ośrodek Informacji i Dokumentacji Etnograficznej [The Center of Ethnographic Information and Documentation] in Łódź<sup>7</sup>. It should be emphasized that in the postwar years the number of publications about folk dress and costumes has considerably increased and is still growing. In this respect much credit should go to the workers of museums, in particular to ethnographic museums who have not only collected, stored, conserved and documented this type of articles, but also have conducted research, published the results of their investigations, put up exhibitions, and have written folders and guide-books for the exhibitions and catalogues of their collections<sup>8</sup>. Almost every museum that has been collecting folk costumes has engaged in some scholarly work of this kind (Lipiarz, 1978; Bazielić, 1973; 1982; Grodecka, 1986; Rostworowska, in press). These achievements, however, have in general been ignored by authors who try to summarize the current research on folk costume in Poland, thus the picture they present is usually incomplete and inaccurate. This, in turn, often leads some scholars complain about the ineffectiveness of scholarship, in particular of Polish ethnography, in this specific field of folk culture. There have been several attempts evaluating

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Krzczonowo Region, the Kurpie district (Puszcza Biała), regions of Łowicz, Dzierżacki, Kujawy, Spisz, Piotrków, Pszczyna, Pyrzyce, Łañcut, Opoczno, Lubusz, Silesian Highlands, Zagórze, Sandomierz, Biłgoraj–Tarnogród region, Podlesie, Kashubian, Sieradz, Warmia, West Cracovians, Puszcza Zielona of Kurpie, Świętokrzyskie Mountains, Orawa, Silesian Lachs, Kołbiel, Kielce, and Limanowa Lachs.

<sup>6</sup> Costumes of the Łąck mountaineers — in press.

<sup>7</sup> Bibliography of the Center of Ethnographic Information and Documentation of the Polish Ethnological Society in Łódź.

<sup>8</sup> Among the museums are: the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw, Ethnographic Museum in Cracow, Ethnographic Museum in Toruń, Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum in Łódź, Regional Museum in Rzeszów, Museum of the Upper Silesia in Bytom, the Silesian Museum in Katowice, Ethnographic Museum-Section of the National Museum in Poznań.

the achievements of studies on folk costume in Poland (Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa, 1964; Hermanowicz-Nowak, 1977; Kantor, 1982). Such papers always contained a list of important publications, were often quite critical of existing scholarship and, what is especially important, put the question of folk costume, questions of methodology and the importance and meaning of this walk of the life at the forefront of folk culture (Kantor, 1982). Along with bibliographies, these articles provide valuable information and materials necessary in researching and studying problems related to folk dress and costumes. Another source of and inspiration for new concepts of research and studies are previously published papers that include geographic information, photographs, drawings, archival document extracts, and dictionaries with names and descriptions of pieces of clothing. Some information is also drawn from field studies, questionnaires, and inquiries conducted with makers and users of folk costumes as well as from the preserved original pieces of traditional dress and costumes. Moreover, this is an area where museum collections, either those stored in storage rooms or displayed in exhibitions, etc. are also important scholarly resources. Contemporary researchers have at their disposal a great number of opportunities to comprehensively study the subject of their interest, including many helpful technical means. They also may, by following foreign publications, get insight into the complicated issues relating to various factors, that for centuries, and on vast territories, have had a bearing on the role and development of folk dress and costumes. They may thus become aware of the subsidiary role of other related academic disciplines, such as linguistics, the history of economy, politics, as well as demography, sociology, geography, aesthetics, the history of art, etc.

At the time when the interest in folk dress and costumes only started to emerge — which took place, as was already said, over 200 years ago — the results of such interest were manifested quite differently. It should be remembered however, that, in comparison with other European countries, Polish papers devoted to the topic of clothing appeared relatively late. Łukasz Gołębiowski (1773 - 1849) was the pioneer whose first paper was issued twice in the 19th century (Gołębiowski, 1831; 1861). This would seem to indicate some demand for this kind of publication. The same author expended folk costumes then modest bibliography with a small book containing information about traditional Polish dress (Gołębiowski, 1863). This period witnessed also the appearance of valuable works of other authors, i.e. Jędrzej Kitowicz who devoted the last chapter of his book to folk customs and clothing (Kitowicz, 1840), Jan Matejko, who undertook an inquiry to study the issue of historic garments and did not disregard the peasants' dress (Matejko, 1860), and Walery Eliasz Radzikowski whose work — as the previous ones (except for Kitowicz's) also containing illustrations of folks costumes — and which had many editions (Radzikowski, 1879 - 1899). Wojciech Gerson was

artist who published costumes of Polish folk (Gerson, 1885). Among the works published in the mid-19th c., the multi-volume editions of the works of Oskar Kolberg (Kolberg, 1865-1910) and Wincenty Pol (1807-1872) constitute a separate category, where the ethnographic descriptions also included information about folk costumes (Pol, 1966). Also at this time a folder of drawings prepared by Leon Zieńkiewicz (Zieńkiewicz, 1841) appeared. Among later publications containing materials on dress and costume, of notice are also old Polish encyclopedias by Zygmunt Głogier and Aleksander Brückner (Głogier, 1900; Brückner, 1937-1939) and the book by Władysław Łoziński, where in the 3rd chapter "Ubiory i splendor" [Dress and Splendor] the issue of folk costume is also discussed (Łoziński, 1907).

The above publications point to two other issues relating to the question of folk costume. First, that illustrations, i.e. black-and-white or tinted engravings, and colorful full-page illustrations that are more or less accurate documents play an important role in the literature of this subject; and second, that both the descriptive and pictorial information about folk dress and costumes is interwoven with data concerning higher social classes. This latter fact was primarily recognized by folklore specialists, but was then ignored, until the second half of the 20th century.

As far as the deliberate documentation of the phenomena observed in the country, and not pure artistic creation is concerned, it is worth mentioning that the first attempts at describing and showing the appearance of peasants and their dress were already taken in the 18th century, a fact which was discussed in a detailed and critical way in a number of papers (Bystron, 1934; Jacher-Tyszkowa, 1975; Ruszel, 1976; Jaśkiewicz, 1976; Głowczewska, 1955; Turnau, 1968). This is not a uniquely Polish phenomenon; the value of old iconography as a source of information was also noticed by different authors in other European countries (Noss, 1970; 1973; 1981; Dolouche, 1985). As regards pictorial documents, what comes to the fore is the form of dress, the composition of its particular elements, its colors, ornaments, and even the kinds of fabric, provided that the artist was able to capture all of these elements. Other important factors are: composition of the whole dress and its length, its fullness or slimness, differences in the appearance relative to sex, sometimes also to age, and the circumstances, i.e. whether the wearers were old or young, married or single, if they participated in a wedding or took part in festivals. Illustrations very rarely depicted other situations, such as baptisms, funerals, particular religious holidays, or community events, though some pictures of such events can also be found<sup>9</sup>. These pictures sometimes show archaic manners of wearing some clothes or an older method of matching particular pieces. These traditions are totally obscure today and are often not

<sup>9</sup> For example, in the paintings of Axentowicz and Kotsis.

even to be found in museum collections. The same applies to some elements or ornamental motifs.

The effect of liberation movements and of the consequent changes in the structure and social position of the peasantry that gradually brought it personal freedom and enfranchisement is that other social classes took an interest in the life of the country inhabitants. From the turn of the 19th c., attention was focused on the way lived and dressed, on their customs and folklore, which was reflected in art and academic studies. By the same token, archetypes and features common to all Slavs were discerned, and in the era of Pan Slavism the search for commonalities found favorable conditions to develop and thus directed further inquiries and research, which deepened knowledge of folk dress and costumes. Romanticism, on the other hand, prompted a search in the country for heretofore unknown and mysterious themes manifested in rituals, lyrics, stories, beliefs, and various practices that were — as it turned out — closely associated with manners of dressing and the preparation of costumes and dress.

Already in 1802, in his project for folk studies Hugo Kołłątaj, inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment, recommended, among other things, that “we should learn of ... the difference in the garments (of the folk) not only as regards the cut, but even the color, not to overlook any sort of their clothing”, and this should cover all “provinces, voivodships, and districts”. On the basis of different aspects of folk culture, including that of garments in the first place, it can be said that gradually the objective of research was to capture the regional peculiarities and specific features characteristic of a given territory. The festive attire appeared to be a very distinct manifestation of these specific features which, on the one hand, are the expression of homeliness, and on the other, of differences relative to neighbours both near and far. In compliance with this trend, in his work, Kolberg provided no information about dress, though in some volumes he specified the names of the regions and described some details concerning “the dress” also (Burszta, 1974).

Fascination with regionalism, founded on the desire of scholars to search for one’s identity and to identify with particular place of origin or living can be detected even today. For a dozen of years it has triggered authors to write more or less comprehensive descriptions and even monographs on particular regions.

In the beginning such descriptions appeared, often with corresponding pictures, in the 19th or 20th c. magazines such as “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”, “Przegląd Tygodniowy”, “Wieś Ilustrowana”, “Kłosa”, and then in “Wisła” and “Lud”. The second half of the 19th c. witnessed also the appearance of monographs of the folk culture of particular regions or settlements in which much room was devoted to the issue of costumes (Mączyński, 1858; Malinowski, 1877; Hoff, 1888; Polaczek, 1892; Świątek, 1893). This kind of publication,

practiced until recently (Malicki, 1936, pp. 53-61; *Zabytki kultury ludowej* [Remains of Folk Culture], 1975, pp. 48-65), comprises mainly descriptions of festive, ritual, and ceremonial costumes and their particular pieces.

Such a perception of folk dress was not impacted by positivist slogans that focused attention of the man of labor and his everyday life in poverty. The development of more comprehensive studies of the question of everyday, occupational dress appears to have been inhibited, among other reasons, by ideas of the Young Poland that emphasized the stability, strength, colorfulness, and picturesqueness of the country and its people. A parallel "discovery" of folk art in which the festive was stressed gave a stimulus to new papers on the ornamentation of clothing: embroidery, jewelry, leatherware, lace, and weaving. Articles on these topics were published mainly in the aforementioned periodicals (Seweryn, 1929; Udziela, 1925; Stattlerówna, 1902). Although at the turn of the century and in the beginning of the 20th century different authors noticed other aspects related to clothing, for example, its makers – shoemakers and dressmakers (Kosiński, 1903; Goldstein, 1903; Pieniążek, 1934; Reinfuss, 1951), the problem of the maintenance of clothes (Gądzikiewicz, 1926) and fashion (Zborowski, 1930; Bazielić, 1967; 1968), these questions have constituted a very small percent against the number of descriptions of the costumes, still perceived in a static unchanging manner. In 1904 Bronisław Malewski wrote a critical analysis of the previously published accounts of folk clothing, indicating, among other problems that of "static presentation of the costumes and even unreliability of some of the used records", yet the critique did not provoke any major response. Scholars accepted standard paradigm, that the peasantries immobility its negative attitude to all changes and illiteracy were the causes of its obscurantism and conservatism, and at the same time for the unchangeability and long duration of some of the products of folk culture, including clothes, and in particular self-made ones.

The first monographs of folk costumes in the form of separate volumes were published in the period of 1918-1939 (Udziela, 1930; 1932; Chmielińska, 1930; Dobrowolska Agnieszka, Dobrowolski Tadeusz, 1936). Some specifically concerned the ornamentation of folk costume (Seweryn, 1930; Matuszkówna, 1931; Udziela, 1936) and single pieces of clothing (Frankowski, 1928; Seweryn, 1929). The books appeared at the time similar publications on the history of clothing were published (Błotnicki, 1930; Gutkowska, 1932); in general, however, publications of folk costume missed information about peasants' dress. All the publications were richly illustrated with drawings, color tables, and photographs. In his work *Ludowe stroje krakowskie i ich krój* [Cracovian Folk Costumes and their Cuts], Seweryn Udziela also included patterns of the costumes, undeniably for practical purposes. Beside general introductory information about the people, their settlements, and abodes, on seven

illustrations *à la* Jan Matejko the author discussed Cracovian “men’s clothes for the last five centuries”, i.e. from 1400 to 1700, yet took no account of their form and any changes that might possibly have taken place in between. He rather focused on description of all pieces of the costume from the turn of the century first of men’s then of women’s clothes, taking into consideration their appearance, fabric ornaments, possible changes, and names. On the other hand, in the introduction to this next work, *Ubiory ludu polskiego* [Clothing of Polish Folk], devoted to “the clothing of the Beskid highlanders” he referred to the protocol issued in 1903 by Komisja Antropologiczna Akademii Umiejętności [Anthropological Committee of the Academy of Knowledge] which decided to direct attention to “the picturesque costumes of our people, which before our eyes are vanishing from day to day and yielding to trashy greyness” (Udziela, 1932) and consequently to publish papers covering *Ubiory ludu polskiego* [Clothing of Polish Folk]. An aftermath of the decision was the publication of two volumes that appeared in 1904 and 1909 (Tetmajer, 1904; 1909) which next to the text contained illustrations and color tables, which he edited. It is characteristic that it was just the “picturesqueness” of folk costume that was brought to the fore. In the beginning, similar publications were of the same character. Nonetheless, Udziela enriched his study on the clothing of the Beskidy highlanders with historical materials based on archival records. Thus he was able to take into account changes taking place in clothing as well as their makers, fabric, patterns, colors, ornamentations, the age of people wearing them, and, last but not least, the differences among particular groups of highlanders living in the Western Beskidy. This study was not just a search for and emphasis of picturesque ornamentation of clothing, but, in compliance with felt need to save things from oblivion, was an effort to – as faithfully as possible – make documentation of what has remained in the country and what human memory was able to convey. Thus it can be said that *Ubiory górali beskidowych*, enlivened with color postcards, well-done photographs and examples of some patterns, constitute one of the first exhaustive monographs of costumes of a given ethnic group mainly based on the authors own field studies.

Such studies had been earlier undertaken by Kazimierz Moszyński who in 1929 published the first volume of *Kultura ludowa Słowian* [Folk Culture of the Slavs], one chapter of which was devoted to clothing, giving a comprehensive comparative and genetic analysis of that subject (Moszyński, 1929). Taken up with Slavistic questions, he expanded the subject of his studies, both in terms of the territory and the topic itself. In his work he employed many different methods which for his later followers and students constituted a model they sought to imitate. Since ca. 1920, systematic research on the territory of the former Duchy of Łowicz was conducted by Aniela Chmielińska, a founder of the Museum of the Łowicz Region. Following the guidelines of Adam Fischer, in her book she presented the clothes of the inhabitants of the Łowicz region in

the perspective of historical changes and territorial and circumstantial conditions. Chmielińska discussed particular pieces of clothing, ornaments, preferences of the wearers, fashions, and makers (Chmielińska, 1930). In her book there is also some encouragement to observe traditional clothing.

A different compendium of knowledge of folk costumes, this time of the Silesian region, is Agnieszka and Tadeusz Dobrowolski's work published in 1936, *Strój, haft i koronka w województwie śląskim* [Costume, Embroidery, and Lace in the Silesian Voivodship]. Divided into four chapters, their book covers the Silesian highlands, the region of Pszczyna, and the northern part of the voivodship. The fourth part is devoted to the Cieszyn laces. In this book the costumes and their ornaments were discussed in an unconventional manner, with many speculations on the origin, wide analogies, information about chronology as well as indications of some research methods, precisely identified with respect to embroidery (as for example analytical-comparative) yet not on the grounds of the diversity of motifs, but of applied technique, both in the historical and typological perspective. The research material includes data not only from the region of Silesia, but also from other regions of Poland, the territories inhabited by Western Slavs, Hungary, the Balkans, Russia, and Northern Europe, drawn from both folk and elite cultures. As far as embroidery is concerned, the analysis also involves related techniques, such as weaving and tapestry, which also permits establishing a certain chronology of origin and genesis of some types of wear. Such a comprehensive picture is completed with a dictionary of dialectal expressions (vernacularisms), sometimes with their etymology, a long list of weavers and lace makers according to place of residence, and numerous photographs and tables. The number of facts included in this publication, supplemented with appropriate references, is quite imposing. It is also worth emphasizing that this work was the first to indicate the relations between the folk costumes and the wear of other social groups and to take on the subject of the methods of work.

The works cited above indicated, that the years after Poland regained its independence were conducive to research and development of knowledge of folk culture which was also manifested in an increasing interest in clothes and regional costumes as well as in the desire to pursue and develop this subject. However, the approaches taken by different authors varied considerably. Some of the authors by illustrations and descriptions tried to produce documents of the observed forms of costumes attributed to a given region or a town, yet most often they took account of the differences generated by varied social situations, functions, changes, and fashions. Others concentrated rather on the archetypes, genesis, chronology, and historical conditioning. They all emphasized the aesthetic features, ornamentation, and picturesqueness of costume. Still other researchers attempted to discerning relationships with the past and the most remote history of the country, or were looking for common or different

elements that were indicative of either similarities or differences among the Slavs.

Detailed descriptions of the form or recognition of the whole dress of peasants paved the way for a typology of both particular pieces of clothing (Fischer, 1934) and whole costumes. Already in the 18th c. Jędrzej Kitowicz differentiated the costumes of Ruthenian, Cracow, or Mazovian peasants (Kitowicz, 1951, pp. 607-610), while in the interwar period, Adam Fischer singled out only two types of Polish costumes, i.e. Wielkopolska-Mazovia and Małopolska (Fischer, 1934). Stanisław Poniąkowski recognized four types, i.e. Wielkopolska-Mazovia, Małopolska, Podkarpacie, and Polesie-Belorussia. Also four types were differentiated by Kazimierz Moszyński: Pokucie-South-Podolia and Eastern Carpathians, Małopolska-Polesie, Silesia-Wielkopolska-Mazovia-Belorussia, and Pomerania with the adjacent part of the Poznań district (Moszyński, 1938).

As can easily be inferred, the objective for making the above and other typologies (Seweryn, 1974) was to distinguish properties characteristic of folk costumes of particular regions in Poland as well as to discern any possible relations with folk costumes of the neighboring countries and thus indicate a direction of borrowings and influences. It is really interesting that almost no attention was paid to references to historic costumes of the privileged classes, i.e. townsmen and courtiers, and to what was brought by European fashion. Folk costumes were treated as a unique way of dressing among one group of Poles who were thought to be isolated from the rest of society, much time was to elapse before the issue of the interrelationship between the dress of various strata of society was brought to light (Bogatyński, 1957; Turnau, 1972; 1966). This problematic was taken on by a historian, Irena Turnau, who relied on archival and iconographic records. This does not imply, however, that the role of records was not appreciated in the circles of folk researchers (Kotula, 1954; Błachowski, 1972), yet it was dominated by an increasing interest in social question after the war. The most urgent task was to record all the still existing manifestations of folk costumes and the signs of their functioning that folk memory could recall. This is understandable since the basic source of material for ethnographers are field studies. The immediate impetus to continue studies of folk costumes was provided by the Polish Ethnological Society which issued monographic volumes of *Atlas Polskich Strójów Ludowych* [Atlas of Polish Folk Costumes] and by the work of the Sekcja Sztuki Ludowej [Section of Folk Art] of Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk [Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences] in Warsaw, which sought to catalogue artworks all over the country. To conduct the above initiatives, guidelines and inquiry sheets (Reinfuss, 1950), methodology of a monographic publication on folk costumes (Gajek, 1954) and guidelines for the illustrations for *Atlas Polskich Strójów Ludowych* (Reinfuss, 1954, pp. 806-807) were developed.

These guidelines were designed not only for the potential researchers, but also for the future authors of similar publications, and as a consequence has brought fruitful results. On the one hand, *Atlas Polskich Strojów Ludowych* in the subsequent fascicles provided a comprehensive picture of costumes of particular regions, this filling in the "gaps" on the map of Poland, while, on the other hand, in "Polska Sztuka Ludowa" ["Polish Folk Art"] numerous articles appeared, among the topics covered being costumes of various district, their elements, fabrics, embroidery, laces, and other decorative techniques as well as functions. Although *Atlas Polskich Strojów Ludowych* was criticized by some scholars (Rosen-Przeworska, 1958; Kantor, 1982; 1979), notwithstanding their opinions it should be emphasized that against the background of European literature on folk art this publication is one of a kind, except for the Lusatian publications considered also a type of an atlas, yet a completely different character and assumptions (Reinfuss, 1962; Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa, 1979). No single author of a collective monograph would be able to either collect or publish such an amount of materials as came out in the total number of 32 volumes of *Atlas Polskich Strojów Ludowych*. In their publications, authors respond either to social demand which quite often calls for practical hints about the look of costumes (Manugiewicz, 1951) and the possibility of their reconstruction, or to new questions and challenges set for them by the developing discipline. Thus, the scope of research expands, prompting them to cooperate with other disciplines: linguistics — as regards terminology, etymology, and genesis; history — as regards the confrontation of concrete examples and forms of costume with the period they were used and produced; history of art — as regards fashion and analogies to models as well as patterns characteristic of the elite and of the trend observed in art; sociology — as regards mechanisms and patterns dominant in the social structure; history of economy — as regards forms of economic relations and management of resources and consumption (Turnau, 1986); and geography — as regards local natural conditions. Thus expanded area of research furnishes newer and newer subjects (Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa, 1976), which, in turn, entail development — via related disciplines — of new methods of work. The choice of a method depends on the question under investigation and its objective. We can still see almost traditional description of phenomena, their analysis and comparisons, search for a model and standard, historical insight into the changes taking place in time and space (Turnau, 1974; 1991), identification of a regional, sometimes even national character and properties (Kowalska-Lewicka, 1976; Kamocki, 1976), of differences and similarities. Recently, the focus has been put on social conditioning and differentiation, on everyday, occupational dress (Turnau, 1994), the function of clothes and their role in culture (Kantor, 1982), symbols and a sign code as one of the ways of communication among the wearers of folk clothing and costumes (Kantor, 1979). It is also worth stressing that

the vision of the whole issue expands, now presented in the context of the dominant fashion and the manner of wearing observed by other social classes.

To sum up, against the background of other European countries, the achievements of Polish scholars, in particular of ethnologists, in the domain of folk clothing and costume does not seem to be inferior. The credit for that should go to different specialists of various interests, to "Polska Sztuka Ludowa", to museums setting up topical editions and exhibitions, as well as to other publications. For over two hundred years researchers have touched different problematic questions, and if they did not thoroughly study them, at least they indicated important issues. They even gained insight into neighboring countries and related ethnic groups (Dobrowolska, 1947; 1948; 1951; Bednarczuk, 1982) in order to learn of and popularize similar or different meanings associated with clothing. Although regional variants have not been perceived everywhere in Poland and still there is neither an album nor a synthetic description of the varieties, the above can be accounted for by the facts that not everywhere the regional specific character has evolved, and that not all possible sources have been explored as yet. Such a state of affairs merely prompts new goals and perspectives for the future as well as encourages new research and publications.

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