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VYSHYVANKA AS A MARKER OF THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF UKRAINIANS ABROAD

Анотація / Abstract

Статтю присвячено новій темі у вітчизняній та зарубіжній історіографії, а саме – висвітленню ролі та місця української вишиванки у визначенні національної ідентичності десятків мільйонів закордонних українців. На тлі формування й кристалізації глобального українського етнічного простору як результат масової еміграції мешканців України до 150 зарубіжних країн унаслідок повномасштабної фази російсько-української війни з його єдиним українським мовним всесвітом, логічно виникає і підвищений науковий інтерес до вивчення й висвітлення ролі української вишиванки у формуванні та збереженні національної ідентичності українців зарубіжжя, чим пояснюється актуальність пропонованого дослідження.

Досліджена особлива роль вишиванки як індикатора національної ідентичності закордонних українців – як для класичної діаспори, так і для сучасної, нової, хвилі емігрантів, спровокованої нинішньою російською військовою агресією проти України. Окремий наголос робиться на участі дітей закордонних українців у проведенні численних заходів, а саме: Всесвітнього дня вишиванки, Дня святого Миколая, Різдва, Великодня тощо. Отже, українську історію, культуру та свята наших співвітчизників за кордоном неможливо уявити без української вишиванки.

На основі аналізу різноманітного фактологічного матеріалу українського та зарубіжного походження зроблено висновок про те, що вишиванка для українців – глибинний символ національної ідентичності, ознака самовираження нашого народу, його етнічний бренд. Вишиванка – це національний символ, що об'єднує тих, хто серцем і душею вболіває за свою Батьківщину, поважає багаті традиції українського народу, прославляє безцінні культурні надбання на теренах нашої країни та далеко за її межами. Вона передає ці національні цінності від старших поколінь українців до молодих, чим забезпечується континуїтет українства в усьому світі.

Ключові слова: вишиванка, народна вишивка, українці зарубіжжя, символ, оберіг, дитяче вбрання, дитячий одяг, традиційний костюм, дитяча субкультура.

The article is dedicated to a new topic in Ukrainian and foreign historiography, namely, highlighting the significance and place of Ukrainian vyshyvanka in defining the national identity of tens of millions

of Ukrainians abroad. On the background of formation and crystallization of the global Ukrainian ethnic space as a result of the mass emigration of Ukrainian residents to 150 foreign countries because of the full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war with its single Ukrainian linguistic universe, there is logically an increased scientific interest in studying and highlighting the role of Ukrainian vyshyvanka in the formation and preservation of the national identity of Ukrainians abroad, which explains the relevance of submitted study.

The special importance of vyshyvanka as an indicator of the national identity of Ukrainians abroad is investigated both for the classic diaspora and for the modern, new, wave of emigrants provoked by the current Russian military aggression against Ukraine. Particular emphasis is placed on the participation of children of Ukrainians abroad in numerous events on the occasion of World Vyshyvanka Day and calendar holidays, such as St. Nicholas, Christmas, Easter, etc. So, Ukrainian history, culture and holidays of our compatriots abroad cannot be imagined without Ukrainian vyshyvanka.

It is concluded on the base of the analysis of various factual material of Ukrainian and foreign origin, that vyshyvanka is a deep symbol of national identity, a sign of self-expression of our people, its ethnic brand for Ukrainians. Vyshyvanka is a national symbol uniting those who support their Motherland with their hearts and souls, respect rich traditions of the Ukrainian people and glorify priceless cultural heritage on the territory of our country and far beyond its borders. It transmits these national values from the older generations of Ukrainians to the young. This phenomenon ensures the continuity of Ukrainianness throughout the world.

Keywords: vyshyvanka, folk embroidery, Ukrainians abroad, symbol, amulet, baby clothes, children's clothing, traditional costume, children's subculture.

The national identity as a model of the collective consciousness of the Ukrainian people comprises a unique system of specific symbols in its social space. Among them, a special place is occupied by the Ukrainian vyshyvanka (embroidered shirt) as a powerful indicator of national identity. However, a distinctive feature of the Ukrainian social and mental space is that it covers not only the geographical boundaries of Ukrainian state, but also the extremely wide area of ethnic Ukrainians around the world. This implies a special role for embroidered clothing in preserving and further consolidating the national consciousness of the multimillion Ukrainians abroad as well as in strengthening the ties of Ukrainians abroad with their historical Homeland.

The formation of a global Ukrainian ethnic space because of large-scale forced emigration processes provoked by Russia's aggression against Ukraine becomes an unprecedented phenomenon in the context of the current Russian-Ukrainian war. In this context we have introduced a new definition into scientific circulation for the first time. It is called "the fifth wave of mass emigration from Ukraine as a direct consequence of Putin's Russia full-scale war of aggression against peaceful, sovereign and independent Ukraine, started on February 24, 2022". Today, as never before, it is becoming clear that the massive, forced exodus of millions

of Ukrainians from the territory of Ukraine since the beginning of the current great war has, for the first time in the history of the Ukrainian ethnic group, balanced the population inside the country and the number of ethnic Ukrainians outside it – approximately 30 million people on both sides of the state border. As a result, phenomena unique in the history of the Ukrainian people are occurring, such as interference, complementarity, interpenetration, addendum and mutual enrichment of its domestic and foreign components. The accelerated overcoming of the previous linguistic, cultural and mental differences between the classical diaspora and the current residents of Ukraine are considered as their results. The verifiable fact that the Ukrainian language is acquiring obvious signs of a global, world language, spoken not only by representatives of different generations of Ukrainian immigrants who currently officially reside in more than 150 countries, but also by a growing number of foreign diplomats, politicians, journalists, businessmen, writers, cultural figures, and military personnel, is an important indicator of this space. Undoubtedly, there is a logical increase of scientific interest in studying and highlighting the role of Ukrainian vyshyvanka in the formation and preservation of the national identity of Ukrainians abroad on the background of the formation and crystallization of a single

global Ukrainian ethnic space. It explains the relevance of this study.

The insufficient presence of this important topic in the works of Ukrainian and foreign scientists is an additional argument in this regard. A significant contribution to the study of this issue is made by T. Kara-Vasyliieva [5], a Doctor of Art Studies, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Arts of Ukraine, a chief research fellow at M. Rylskiy Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (hereinafter – IASFE). Her work in organizing exhibitions of folk art in Ukraine and abroad is particularly valuable. However, most of her works, especially the fundamental monograph *Decorative Arts of Ukraine of the Twentieth Century. In Search of a "Great Style"*, published in 2005, covers various aspects of artistic life in Ukraine, such as changes in trends and styles, the mutual influence of folk and professional arts, the creation of new ideas – from the avant-garde at the beginning of the century to the search for style by contemporary artists, and also describes the peculiarities of the search for new forms of folk art and artistic crafts in the 1930s–1950s, etc [10].

It is pleasant to note that the events held abroad with the use of Ukrainian vyshyvanka are closely followed and described in their own research by the representatives of a new generation of scientists at M. Rylskiy IASFE of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. Maryna Oliynyk, a research fellow of *Ukrainian Ethnological Center* Department, should be mentioned among them. She distinguishes an identification factor that relates to the conscious use of nationally labeled clothing, most often an embroidered shirt [14, p. 87, 181, 204], in her monograph on the development of Ukrainian dress in the city. The scientist has also taken an active part in educational and awareness-raising campaigns to popularize scientific knowledge about Ukrainian vyshyvanka abroad during the forced evacuation because of war [2; 4].

The published work of the IASFE, submitting the realities of culture and life of Ukrainians abroad, is a valuable source for the topic under study. The solid corpus of ethnographic records also contains reflections on the Ukrainian embroidered shirt [5, p. 7, 66, 149].

In our opinion, Kh. Nahorniak has made a successful first attempt to analyse the works of Ukrainian scholars, ethnographers and amateurs who have studied folk costume outside Ukraine and made a significant contribution to Ukrainian ethnography abroad, in the article *History of the Study of Ukrainian Costume on the Pages of Ukrainian Foreign Published Works*, edited in the 17th–18th issues of the *Bulletin of the Ciscarpathian University. Art Studies* in 2009–2010. The authoress is emphasizing reasonably: «The analysis of the degree of research on the topic gives us the right to assert that there is still no generalizing work in Ukrainian Art Studies that would present diaspora studies in chronological order» [13, pp. 59–63].

A thematic informative section on Ukrainian embroidery patterns exhibited at the Ukrainian Women's Union of Canada Museum, published in the *Ukrainian Voice Calendar* in 1953 [3, p. 120–123] is among the first materials devoted to the recording and study of vyshyvanka abroad. In the following decades, up to the beginning of the twenty-first century, Canadian ethnographers have researched thoroughly and published several important works on various aspects of Ukrainian embroidery and embroidery in general.

Concerning the study of children's embroidery patterns in Canada, two publications are worthy of note. The first is K. Antonovych's book *Ukrainian Folk Clothes*, published in 1964 in English in Winnipeg. It has been reviewed later by *Our Life* artistic and journalistic magazine of the Ukrainian Women's Union of America: "The description of the folk costume of Poltava region, published by the Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada ten years ago, has now appeared for the second time in a widespread edition. The authoress has added a description of children's costumes, prepared by her for the press... This is a famous textbook for directors and organizers of choirs and dance groups and all those who care about stylish folk costumes" ¹. The second one is I. Zelska's study *Ukrainian Embroidery...* [7], edited in 1981. It contains a separate part called *Children's Clothing* (pp. 61–63), which supplements successfully the previous sections, such as *Ukrainian Embroidery* (pp. 9–13); *Colors*

of *Ukrainian Embroidery* (pp. 13–15); *Shirts for Women and Girls* (pp. 39–49); *Shirts for Men and Boys* (pp. 49–55), etc.

As for the published works of the other countries, a special place is occupied by the album by M. Shandro, a Ukrainian researcher from Romania who has started the first in that country detailed study of the folk art of the Hutsulshchyna in the interwar period. At that time, she was directly familiarized with the customs and life of the Hutsuls. Since then, she has nurtured a deep and heartfelt sympathy for them and has been fascinated by the material and spiritual culture of the Verkhovyna people. The unique ethnographic materials about the everyday life of the Bukovyna Hutsuls that she has recorded in the 1930s – early 1940s are combined in a separate thematic collection of folk embroidery (over 1500 samples). Afterwards she has decided to prepare an album with patterns for publication so that the beautiful embroidery samples would not be lost. She has chosen the most typical geometric patterns, drawn them in color, placed them on separate tables, written an explanatory text, and on January 11, 1982, submitted the album to the Ukrainian branch of the *Criterion* Publishing House in Bucharest. However, it is impossible to publish it during the reign of Ceaușescu's totalitarian regime in Romania, when the Ukrainian ethnic group in that country is viewed by the authorities as an enemy element. Therefore, it is published only in 2005 with the assistance of the Embassy of Ukraine in Romania and the *Bukrek* Ukrainian Publishing House from Chernivtsi [20].

The author's own field materials collected during his almost thirty years of work in the diplomatic service of Ukraine, where he has been responsible for cooperation with the diaspora, information on the official websites of Ukrainian embassies in foreign countries and societies, associations and church communities of Ukrainian commonalties abroad, as well as relevant thematic publications of periodicals published by organizations of Ukrainians abroad, are worthy of attention and serve as an important basis for studying this issue.

Outlining the role and place of vyshyvanka in the consolidation of national identity, we believe it is appropriate to express the following basic considerations.

Firstly, it should be noted that vyshyvanka in all its diversity and at all times has been perceived and is still visualized today as a noticeable indicator of its wearers' belonging to the unified world of Ukrainians. The unity and diversity of the individual and collective historical experience of ethnic Ukrainians, including those living abroad are encoded in it. The understanding of the vyshyvanka importance as a marker of national identity is primarily linked to its unanimous interpretation as an ancient cultural heritage of the traditional Ukrainian family. Embroidered shirts have been decorated with patterns on the sleeves, collars, and hem so that the pattern touched the body. In ancient times, people believed that evil could come to them through these places where the clothes ceased to cover the body. Thus, vyshyvanka is the traditional clothing of Ukrainians, their ancient attribute, which has long had not only a practical purpose but also a sacred meaning, being a constant amulet for all our predecessors and continuing this special role for the current and future generations. After all, many symbols of strength, prosperity and beauty are encoded in ancient clothing.

Secondly, in the context of the ten-year Russian-Ukrainian war, the Ukrainian vyshyvanka acquires another significant meaning: it becomes a political symbol of Ukraine's invincibility, the unity of Ukrainian people, the freedom-loving Ukrainian spirit, and the faith of Ukrainians in Victory in their fair fight for freedom and independence. On May 21, 2015, the *Give a Vyshyvanka to a Defender* campaign has been launched aimed at raising a morale and fighting spirit of Ukrainian soldiers in the ATO zone. Vyshyvanky have been delivered to the front line with the help of volunteers. They should serve as amulets. The fact that Ukrainians from 50 countries have joined the campaign is a testament to the scale of the event and its international dimension. This is an incredibly powerful energy of unity. This is the path that Ukraine is following today – the path of establishing a united Ukrainian nation that has realized itself and is ready to fight the occupier for its identity and independence.

Thirdly, vyshyvanka becomes a symbol of free people and freedom, Ukrainian defiance with the beginning of the full-scale phase of the great war on February 24, 2022. It is

also considered as a modern cultural weapon against the Russian occupiers that unites Ukrainians from Ukraine and abroad. In particular, Vyshyvanka Day becomes another occasion to declare that Ukrainians are free people of an independent state, fighting desperately against an insidious invader. During the war, vyshyvanka has acquired an even deeper symbolism, which testifies to the continuation of Ukrainian culture in the face of the destruction of cultural heritage. Refugees take vyshyvanky with them abroad as a talisman. Thus, the unprovoked Russian-Ukrainian war has accelerated significantly such phenomena as the completion of the process of crystallization of the all-Ukrainian national idea, strengthening the sense of unity, increasing the level of pride of the state, faith in the Victory and optimism in the vision of the country's future.

Fourthly, at this stage, when the classical Ukrainian diaspora is rapidly merging with the representatives of the current fifth wave of mass emigration from Ukraine, vyshyvanka for all Ukrainians abroad is becoming a lever for establishing the peculiarity of Ukrainian culture in the world, a kind of business card of the historical homeland, a marker of a deep connection with the Ukrainian state and an indicator of solidarity with all Ukrainians abroad.

Fifthly, in today's difficult conditions for Ukraine, vyshyvanka, when worn by queens, leaders of leading countries and businessmen on different continents, has become an effective mechanism for creating a powerful movement of global solidarity with the Ukrainian people, shaping the positive image of our country abroad and rapidly increasing its authority on the international arena.

Thus, vyshyvanka for Ukrainians is a deep symbol of national identity, a sign of self-expression of our people, their ethnic brand, and it encodes sacred symbols that preserve their history and modern culture. Ukrainian history, culture, and life cannot be imagined without Ukrainian vyshyvanka.

The purpose of this study is to identify the role and place of vyshyvanka in the coordinate system of factors of manifestation of the national identity of Ukrainians abroad, regardless of whether they represent the classical diaspora or the modern, new wave of emigrants provoked by the current Russian

aggression against Ukraine. Particular emphasis is placed on the participation of children of Ukrainians abroad in numerous events, namely: World Vyshyvanka Day, St. Nicholas Day, Christmas, Easter, etc.

Ethnographers and historians have not been able to determine the exact time when embroidered clothing starts to be made in Ukraine. Embroidery is used to decorate the clothes of the Sarmatians, who have lived on the territory of modern Ukraine for a long time. Embroidery is especially appreciated in Kyivan Rus. It has been used to decorate the vestments of priests and the church dñcor of those times. It is at that time that the first embroidery schools have appeared, founded by Yaroslav the Wise's sister Anna-Yanka. The woman is an organizer of a school in St. Andrew's Monastery where the girls have embroidered with gold and silver [9, p. 5]. In particular, in churches and monasteries, the girls have been taught to work with silk threads, to embroider with gold and silver on brocade and velvet, and to decorate items with pearls and precious stones. The 16th – 17th centuries are considered to be the period of Ukrainian Renaissance, which is the greatest flourishing of embroidery. In the 18th – 19th centuries artistic embroidery workshops are situated in almost all landowners and monasteries of Ukraine. Their products are not only used for their own needs but also sold partially. From the second half of the 19th century the art of embroidery has gone gradually beyond the limits of home crafts and sometimes takes on the form of a handicraft. An embroidered shirt has been a characteristic feature of every Ukrainian region and even every locality, and therefore it is easy to distinguish Poltava region embroidery from Podillia, Hutsulian from Polissian, Bukovynian from Slobozhanshchyna, etc. In Ukraine embroidery is practiced in all regions. Each oblast, even individual villages have their own unique embroidery techniques. Girls are taught to embroider from a very young age. Even men have practiced this craft in some regions. All these facts testify to the centuries-long history and wide geography of Ukrainian vyshyvanky. In the 19th century Ivan Franko, known as the classic of Ukrainian literature, has started to combine embroidery with contemporary European costumes, setting such a fashion among his circle. And in the early 20th century,

when the Ukrainian nation starts to fight for its political rights and independence, vyshyvanka is used as patriotic and cult clothing, a symbol of Ukrainian identity.

In addition, vyshyvanka can also influence the life options of certain foreign figures of non-Ukrainian ethnic origin. A convincing example of this is the unique life path of Vasyl Vyshyvanyi, a representative of the Austrian monarchical family, a politician and writer who has become a Ukrainian patriot, colonel of the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic and an active participant in the events of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921. Wilhelm von Habsburg is descended from an imperial family – he has been a third cousin nephew of the then time Emperor of Austria-Hungary Franz Joseph I. Once the young man has travelled to the Hutsul region by train and stayed for several days with a wealthy Hutsul, D. Donyk-Shekeryk. This is the beginning of his acquaintance with Ukrainian culture. After learning the Ukrainian language without difficulty, he has become interested in Ukrainian history and literature, reading M. Hrushevskiy's *History of Ukraine*, works by T. Shevchenko, Yu. Fedkovych, H. Hotkevych, I. Franko and V. Stefanyk. The young Wilhelm von Habsburg, like other members of the imperial family, has become a member of the Austrian parliament. He has met and collaborated with authoritative Ukrainian figures there, such as Ye. Petrushevych, K. Levytskyi and M. Vasylo. During World War I, Wilhelm von Habsburg has served as an officer in the Austrian army. One of his subordinate Ukrainians, coming from Zolochiv county of Lviv region, has presented him an embroidered shirt [15]. The Archduke has started to wear it often. Vyshyvanka has inspired an unexpected phenomenon: soon he has become known under the pseudonym Vasyl Vyshyvanyi among Ukrainian patriots. In the spring and until the fall of 1918, Vasyl Vyshyvanyi has been in various regions of Ukraine. He has commanded a military group of the Austrian army, included into the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen. However, the unsuccessful political and military situation that developed in November 1919 in the struggle of the Ukrainian People's Republic against the Bolsheviks and in relations with the White Guards and Poles has forced not only Vyshyvanyi but also Yevhen

Petrushevych, along with some members of the government of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic and military commanders, to leave Ukraine on November 21, 1919, and apply to the Romanian side for temporary political asylum. Under these circumstances, the UPR diplomatic mission in Bucharest, where Ye. Petrushevych and V. Vyshyvanyi have arrived, accompanied by 61 officers and ex-members of the WUPR government, participate actively in the settlement of the status of Ukrainian political and military refugees [18, f. 20; 14, f. 35, 159], providing them all with organized emigration through the then Czechoslovakia and Hungary to Vienna. V. Vyshyvanyi has established ties with the Ukrainian political emigration there and even tried his hand at fiction. But on August 26, 1947, he is kidnapped by the Soviet SMERSH intelligence officers at the central station in Vienna and sent for interrogation to Lukianivska prison in Kyiv, accused of contacts with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. He has died in prison on August 18, 1948. He is rehabilitated posthumously only on January 16, 1989 [1]. Unfortunately, the life of one of the brightest foreign supporters of Ukrainian culture has finished so tragically. A bronze memorial plaque to Archduke Wilhelm von Habsburg has been installed in Vienna in 2000 at the entrance to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of the Holy Great Martyr Barbara, and in 2021 his bust is installed in Kyiv. The monument is placed in Vasyl Vyshyvanyi Park at 39 Illienko Street, and every Kyivan or guest of the capital can contemplate it and appreciate properly the role of this famous personality, whose Ukrainian vyshyvanka has reoriented radically his life in favour of Ukraine, demonstrating true Ukrainian patriotism.

Ukrainians have experienced many fateful events and trials over the next century of history. A special place among them belongs to four waves of mass emigration from Ukraine. The first wave of labor emigration is originated in the last quarter of the 19th century and lasted until the outbreak of World War I in 1914. The next, military-political wave, has covered the twenty-year period between the two world wars in the 20th century. The political-military wave has started at the end of World War II and lasted until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The

so-called labour migration wave has started in the 1990s. In this context, it should be emphasized that its scientific study is at an early stage, since the process of organizing this diaspora community in chronological terms is a relatively "young" phenomenon and its structuring is just beginning. Thus, before the large-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, four waves of mass emigration have been documented historically. A unifying characteristic for all of them consists in the fact that the vast majority of emigrants from Ukraine have packed a few holy items in their departure suitcases: a Bible, a vyshyvanka, an embroidered towel and family amulets. Wherever Ukrainians are scattered by fate, they do not forget their roots. Representatives of the current, fifth wave of emigration say that when they pack their suitcase, they always put a Ukrainian vyshyvanka in it, because it is a great treasure. Thus, the vyshyvanka has emigrated with our compatriots leaving their homeland more than a hundred years ago and those who are forced to continue emigrating today because of Russia's attack on Ukraine. The unique phenomenon of transporting embroidery can be seen clearly in the example of the first Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, started in the 1890s. They have brought the features of their historical localities, primarily from western Ukraine, reflected in embroidered patterns of clothing, towels, etc. across the ocean. The first settlers have come to Canada, as a rule, wearing the usual woolen skirts, apron, shirts and headscarves decorated with embroidery, for example, habitual for women. Men have worn homespun clothes, long shirts, etc. An important indicator is that the brought folk clothes, especially festive ones, has remained an urgent necessity for the emigrants for a long time, as the embroidered shirt becomes an obligatory part of their life, in particular during matchmaking, weddings, christenings, burials, etc. Thus, at the initial stage of Ukrainians' stay abroad, in the absence of opportunities to establish quickly the production of folk costumes, the value of the embroidered clothes they have brought with them increases significantly. It has contributed essentially to the fact that wearing them, especially on holidays, becomes prestigious. Over time Ukrainian vyshyvanka has acquired the status of a

required attribute for participation in dance circles and folk dance schools, which made it possible to bring it to the public eye, not only among the national community of compatriots, but also for the local population and immigrants from other countries. That is why today, Ukrainian vyshyvanka and embroidery in general continue to be popular in the Canadian immigrant community. They are presented periodically at numerous exhibitions held during festivals, various community events, travelling exhibitions, national holidays, etc. It is noteworthy that over time, Ukrainian embroidery in Canada has achieved such a high level of appreciation that it becomes the subject of scientific research, as it is mentioned above. The work of M. Keivan, published in 1977, about the clothing of the first Ukrainian settlers in Canada, is an additional confirmation of this fact [11, pp. 13–15].

During the Soviet era, especially during the years of so-called "developed socialism" (1970–1980), virtually banned embroidered shirts have become a symbol of faith, first for Ukrainians in exile in camps, and later for dissidents and Ukrainians in general, passing on the idea of independence from generation to generation until 1991. A new period of vyshyvanka distribution has started in Ukraine with independence gaining, in the country free from previous Soviet restrictions. It is noteworthy that in recent years, Ukrainian vyshyvanka and embroidered items have become more popular than various fashion brands. This trend has not only swept across Ukraine, but also reaches far beyond its borders. Ukrainian and foreign celebrities, global fashion houses (Valentino, D&G, etc.) have made their choice in favour of Ukrainian ethnic clothing, and the popularity and relevance of embroidery has been confirmed by the authoritative American *Vogue* fashion magazine. It has named Ukrainian embroidery as one of the top trends. Thus, various modifications of the traditional classic Ukrainian outfit have been created, and in the stores of foreign countries one can see embroidered dresses, jackets, suits, shorts, etc. Ukrainian embroidery has flooded confidently the world market and it becomes very popular in the fashion industry. Even world stars have fallen in love with Ukrainian clothes. Johnny Depp, Milla Jovovich, Uma Thurman, Halle Berry,

Kate Moss, Anne Hathaway, Lana Del Rey, Mike Tyson, Adele, Reese Witherspoon, Nicole Kidman, Sandra Bullock, Jackie Chan, Dita Von Teese, and others have been noticed wearing embroidery.

Every year, on the third Thursday of May, Ukraine celebrates a unique national holiday – Vyshyvanka Day. It is original and not connected with any state or religious holiday. It is on this day that millions of Ukrainians take out their national costume, the vyshyvanka, and wear it to work, university, or school. And the *Born in Vyshyvanka* campaign inspired by this large-scale event has already become a tradition that is honored both in Ukraine and abroad. It is customary to give embroidered shirts to newborn Ukrainians, and they are dressed in folk costumes during baptism in church and registration at Ukrainian consular offices abroad. Children are given an embroidered shirt at birth to protect them from evil fate symbolically. For example, on Vyshyvanka Day, on May 18, 2023, the Embassy of Ukraine in Canada has initiated the *Born in Vyshyvanka* campaign, during which children registered at the consular posts of Ukraine in Ottawa, Toronto, and Edmonton receive their first vyshyvanka. The project is implemented in cooperation with the Congress of Ukrainians in Canada, *Vyshyvanka Association* and *Meest Canada*. Vyshyvanky are presented to children when their Ukrainian citizenship is registered by birth in Canada as a part of the initiative. Ukrainian consulates have handed over the vyshyvanky to parents when they receive a certificate of registration of their child as a Ukrainian citizen. It should be emphasized that the *Born in Vyshyvanka* initiative is not a one-time event, it is ongoing, and its participants have the opportunity to join a special loyalty program from *Meest Canada* campaign [16].

The World Vyshyvanka Day is celebrated annually on the same day. This is an international holiday that aims at preserving the ancient folk traditions of creating and wearing ethnic embroidered Ukrainian clothing. On this day, Ukrainians all over the world are united in one idea and demonstrate that they have their own self-identification and national code. This day reminds them of their national and civic position, cultural awareness and spiritual consciousness. The holiday is preceded by

the *World Vyshyvanka Day* campaign, initiated in 2006 by L. Voroniuk, a student of the Faculty of History, Political Science and International Relations at Yurii Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University. She is prompted to do so by her friend I. Zhytariuk, who has come to class wearing a vyshyvanka. L. Voroniuk has suggested that her classmates and other students choose one day and wear embroidered shirts together. At first, a small group of students and a few teachers have done so. The holiday has become an all-Ukrainian event, and the Ukrainian diaspora, as well as representatives of other nations who support Ukraine, start to join in. Since then, every year on this day the whole Ukraine and every corner of the planet where Ukrainians live turns into a unique phenomenon and fantastic beauty. The idea of Vyshyvanka Day is to preserve Ukrainian values and popularize them. The holiday does not involve other obligatory activities than wearing a vyshyvanka. Every conscious Ukrainian has an opportunity to perform a very simple act – to put a vyshyvanka on and go to work or school in it. At the same time, such an action has a deep context, as it is an expression of one's national and civic position, cultural awareness, and spiritual consciousness.

World Vyshyvanka Day is an international holiday aimed at preserving the ancient folk traditions of creating and wearing ethnic embroidered Ukrainian clothing. In 2018 a contest is announced for the best family photo in vyshyvanky as a part of the holiday. There are the summing up of the all-Ukrainian photo contest *My Family in Vyshyvanka* and the simultaneous performance of the national anthem by students in vyshyvanky throughout Ukraine among the most interesting events. The holiday has been taken up by eight countries, including such leading foreign countries as the USA, Canada, Germany, and France [16].

World Vyshyvanka Day is an event that unites Ukrainians around the world. By wearing vyshyvanka, they demonstrate their nationality, connection to Ukraine, and most importantly, the events are always attended by children dressed in vyshyvanky. They adopt the latest traditions. Consequently, communities of Ukrainians abroad support actively and promote initiatives to popularize

Ukrainian traditional dress among children, and cooperate actively with local authorities and businesses. Vyshyvanka and other elements of traditional dress appear on young Ukrainians abroad primarily as a desire of their parents to strengthen the child's understanding of Ukrainian self-identity, memory of their origins, and reflection of the aesthetics and identity of Ukrainian culture. Over the past three decades, which coincide with the period of Ukraine's independence, vyshyvanka has become an indispensable attribute of all celebrations in Ukrainian Sunday schools abroad, whether on Ukrainian holidays or national holidays in the country where the children are, or on school events, theater performances, meetings with delegations from Ukraine, etc. This is an important indicator of the Ukrainian children's subculture. Children also wear vyshyvanky to celebrate religious holidays, especially Christmas. When appropriate events are organized, children in traditional Ukrainian costumes sing carols and organize a Christmas nativity scene. The unification of Ukrainian communities in Ukrainian Christian churches abroad also contributes to this.

Over time, the celebration of Vyshyvanka Day at the international level has taken on other, more diverse forms. For example, to confirm visually his position on supporting Ukraine in its war with Russia, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, whose family has immigrants from Ukraine, has announced in 2017 that he would impose sanctions on his own initiative against Russia for its aggression against the Ukrainian state. He has expressed his position wearing a vyshyvanka: «<...> I consider Ukraine as my second homeland. Therefore, I cannot watch calmly how Russia behaves in Crimea and Donbas» [12, p. 7–8]. And on May 23, 2019, the Ukrainian V. Kozubskyi has climbed the highest mountain on the Earth, Mount Everest. He has put on a vyshyvanka made by his aunt from the village of Buriakivka, Zalishchyky district, Ternopil region. The ornament of the vyshyvanka has repeated the family ornament of the shirt worn by Vitalii's grandfather. V. Kozubskyi has already visited the tops of four mountains – Kilimanjaro (5895 m), Aconcagua (6962 m), Elbrus (5642 m) and the highest mountain – Jomolungma (8848.43 m) in this shirt [6].

It is worth emphasizing the extremely positive role of our compatriots as wearers of Ukrainian vyshyvanka in creating the appropriate image of Ukraine in the world. In our opinion, there are serious reasons for a positive attitude toward externally displaced persons. Ukrainians have brought with them and are teaching willing foreign citizens to sew embroidered shirts, crosses-amulets, scarves-amulets and trident-amulets, which they send to the front along with humanitarian aid. Traditionally, such amulets are made at the beginning of the new month, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when they are believed to be filled with magical power, according to the generators of these beautiful traditions. This noble movement is increasingly gaining popularity abroad. For example, on the Day of Ukrainian Vyshyvanka (the day when the whole world, relatively speaking, wears embroidered shirts) in 2023 there are many times more vyshyvankas than in previous years. Besides Ukrainians, more and more foreigners abroad have been wearing vyshyvankas for a long time now as a sign of solidarity with Ukraine, which defends not only its independence but also European values. A striking example in this regard is the noble gesture made by the Queen of Spain and the Prime Minister of Canada, who wear Ukrainian embroidered shirts periodically. Here is another example: with the assistance of the Ukrainian community in South Africa, on Vyshyvanka Day 2020, the announcers of the country's central television channel have worn vyshyvanky. It has become a business card, an invitation and a call to the South African viewer to learn more about Ukraine and visit it.

Thus, national dress has demonstrated its ability to strengthen relations and improve socio-cultural cooperation between nations once again. Vyshyvanky are also used increasingly in everyday life, especially in families where Ukrainians are living abroad. Thus, vyshyvanka is not just a piece of clothing; for many people, it is a talisman, a national symbol that unites those who care about their homeland with all their hearts and souls, respect the rich traditions of the Ukrainian people, and glorify the priceless cultural heritage in our country and far beyond its borders.

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