

Designing a sustainable luxury fashion collection with elements of the Bulgarian national costume

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Abstract — The report presents the initial stage of the design process of a contemporary collection of sustainable luxury clothing in a national style. The created collection combines contemporary fashion trends with traditional national elements, preserving their aesthetic and cultural value. The main source of inspiration is Bulgarian embroidery, which is transformed into the models through original and artistic decorative elements. The assortment line includes a variety of semi-fitted and fitted silhouettes that emphasize femininity and provide an elegant and sophisticated look. The design solutions are aimed at combining smooth lines with functionality and freedom of movement. The patterns are created by applying basic artistic means of expression, such as symmetry, asymmetry, rhythm, similarity, contrast. The collection consists of dresses of various lengths, bustiers, shirts, pants and jumpsuits, with each garment bringing a sense of luxury and sophistication. The models in the collection are made from natural fabrics such as cotton, wool and silk, which guarantees sustainable characteristics and comfort when worn. Each model is decorated with machine-made ornaments inspired by traditional Bulgarian embroidery. The main goal of the created collection is the revival of traditional Bulgarian embroidery ornaments, which are adapted into contemporary fashion in the "luxury brand" category, affirming the Bulgarian cultural identity through an innovative design approach.

Keywords — author's collection, clothing, national style, sustainable design, Bulgarian embroidery.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the world of fast fashion and mass production, the problem of environmental pollution and overconsumption of resources is becoming increasingly apparent [1]. The fashion industry is faced with the challenge of finding a balance between aesthetics, functionality and sustainability. In response to these environmental and social issues, more and more designers are turning their attention to the principles of sustainable fashion, striving to reduce waste and create long-lasting, ethical, and environmentally friendly garments [3].

Sustainable fashion is an approach to the design, production, and consumption of clothing and accessories that reduces harmful environmental impacts and social injustice. The goal is to create ethical, environmentally friendly and long-lasting clothing.

The main principles of sustainable fashion are:

- Use of ecological materials – organic cotton, linen, hemp, recycled fibers, etc.
- Waste reduction – minimizing textile waste through recycling and reuse.
- Ethical production – ensuring fair working conditions and pay.
- Longevity of clothing – encouraging longer wear through quality workmanship and design.

Circular textiles are part of the circular economy concept and refer to textiles that are designed, used and managed so that they can be recycled, repaired or reused instead of being thrown away. The goal is to create a closed loop in which materials are returned to use without being lost or polluting the environment.

To break out of the vicious circle of fast fashion, efforts must be made in areas such as eco-design, fiber development, innovative textile production.

The European Union's Sustainable and Circular Textiles Plan proposes an approach that combines design solutions and the use of undersized and leftover fabric, as well as fabrics with defects that have been discarded from production. The fabrics used for the collection were taken from residual production small batches. These are natural fabrics such as cotton, wool and silk, which guarantees sustainable characteristics and comfort when worn.

The article examines how traditional folk costume can be adapted to the modern luxury women's wardrobe by creating a sustainable designer collection of contemporary clothing.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

When developing a contemporary collection of luxury clothing in a national style, the following approaches can be applied:

- Research and perception of cultural elements;
- Combining traditional techniques with innovation;
- Using authentic but adapted materials;
- Modernization of silhouettes and shapes [6, 7];
- Ecological and sustainable concept;
- Preserving the symbolic and spiritual meaning of the ornaments;
- Personalization and luxury;
- A fresh look at modern trends;
- Technology and innovation in design and production;
- Marketing and visualization of the collection.

The key factor for success in creating a luxury collection in a national style is the precise balance between the authenticity of traditional elements and innovative approaches that not only respond to modern fashion trends, but also promote sustainability and personalized consumption.

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Based on a study conducted under a research project on the topic "Investigating the possibilities for designing sustainable innovative clothing models in the national

style", the interrelationships between the different types of embroidery ornaments and their location in authentic women's shirts were established. Through systematic research and analysis of ethnographic materials, a database was built containing visual and semantic characteristics of traditional ornaments. On this basis, a concept was formulated for creating a contemporary luxury collection, in which traditional elements are not mechanically transferred, but are interpreted with the aim of preserving their symbolic meaning and cultural identity [4, 5].

A comparative study of design solutions in contemporary Bulgarian fashion collections that integrate elements of folk costume was also conducted [2]. This analysis allowed us to define current trends in the transformation of traditional motifs in the context of contemporary luxury fashion design.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An author's collection of contemporary innovative clothing models with sustainable design has been designed in the luxury brand category, bearing the name "**Tradition and Elegance**". The collection is the fruit of the collaborative work of a team that innovatively revives authentic Bulgarian ornaments and embroideries, integrating them into the contemporary fashion world.

Fig. 1. shows the source of inspiration for creating the collection.

The collection includes women's clothing in the luxury brand category in a national style according to fashion trends for 2025. Fig. 2 presents the creative sketches of the models from the collection. The collection aims to restore and promote sustainable Bulgarian ornaments and embroideries by combining them in an elegant way into luxurious fashion creations.

The models are designed in a semi-fitted and fitted silhouette. The design solutions emphasize shapes that smoothly follow the lines of the female body, but at the same time provide freedom and comfort during movement. The collection consists of:

- three dresses of different lengths, with a horizontal cut along the waistline and a fitted bodice;
- set of airy shirt and pants;
- jumpsuit with a defined waist and a bustier bodice.

Each garment is designed to be functional and comfortable, while also conveying a sense of luxury and sophistication. The color scheme – white, golden palm, cappuccino, dark brown, black and dark blue – harmonizes with the stylized embroideries, thus creating a complete composition with an emotional charge. Fabrics are mainly made from natural fibers: wool, cotton and silk, as well as blended fabrics with sustainable characteristics. Contrasting colors and textures are used to highlight important details.

Each model is decorated with machine-made stylized embroidery (Fig. 3.).

The ornaments are placed to emphasize certain parts of the clothing. The embroidery is incorporated in a way that creates harmony between the modern and the traditional. The ornaments are arranged rhythmically, creating smooth movement and visual interest.

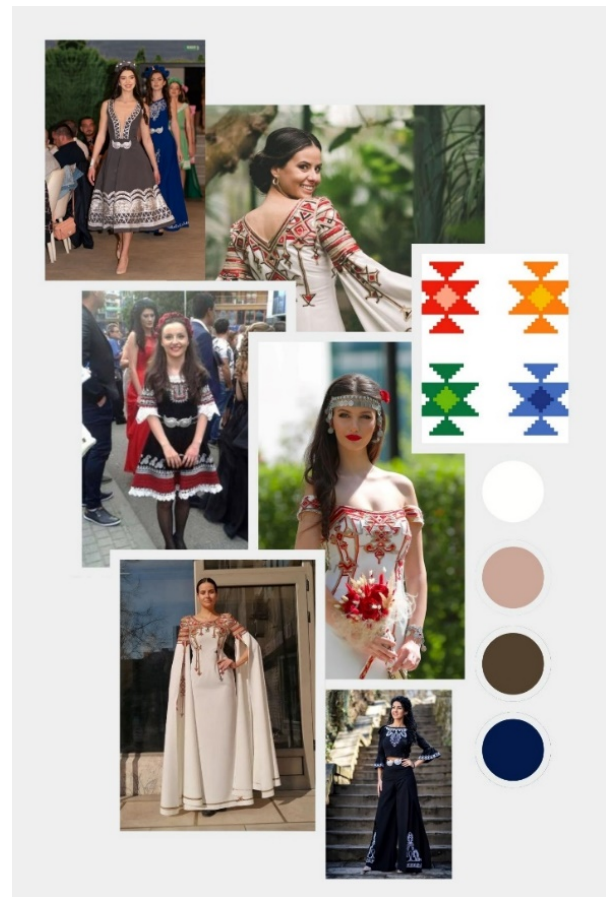


Fig. 1. Atmosphere - collection map.



Fig. 2. Creative sketches of the models from the collection.



Fig. 3. Machine-made embroidery ornaments.

The repetition of motifs gives the composition completeness. The embroideries carry a symbolic meaning that has been preserved and interpreted in a modern way. Thus, each model becomes a bearer of cultural heritage, combining authenticity with innovation.

For each model in the collection, presented through an artistic sketch (Fig. 4.), an artistic and technical description has been compiled, which forms the basis of the construction and technological documentation necessary for the production of the products in material.

Each model in the collection is inspired by Bulgarian folk traditions and characteristic embroideries, combining elements of cultural heritage with the aesthetics of contemporary luxury fashion. The silhouettes are designed in semi-fitted and fitted versions that accentuate the natural line of the body and provide both elegance and comfort.

A characteristic feature of the designs are the clearly expressed decorative components – handmade embroideries and embroidery motifs inspired by traditional Bulgarian symbolism. They are integrated into a contemporary context so as to preserve their cultural identity while meeting the aesthetic demands of the modern consumer.

High-quality textile materials were used in the creation of the models, including satin cotton, organza, chiffon and corset constructions, which add structure and contribute to the feeling of luxury. This careful selection of materials reflects the pursuit of sustainability and quality.

The collection represents a synthesis between tradition and modernity, combining cultural significance, individual style and functionality. The designs are suitable for a variety of occasions and offer value through uniqueness, handcrafting and exclusivity. Through the application of sustainable practices, modern technologies and a careful approach to detail, harmony is achieved between the aesthetic, cultural and practical dimensions of fashion in the 21st century.

The presented author's collection is realized in material (Fig. 5.). Structurally, the shape of the models is solved through horizontal constructive cuts along the waist line,

which divides the products into two parts, cut-to-shape necklines, removal of the side seam on the trousers.

The development of the women's collection "**Tradition and Elegance**" demonstrates a successful symbiosis between cultural heritage and contemporary fashion design in the "luxury" class.



Fig. 4. Artistic sketches of the models from the collection.

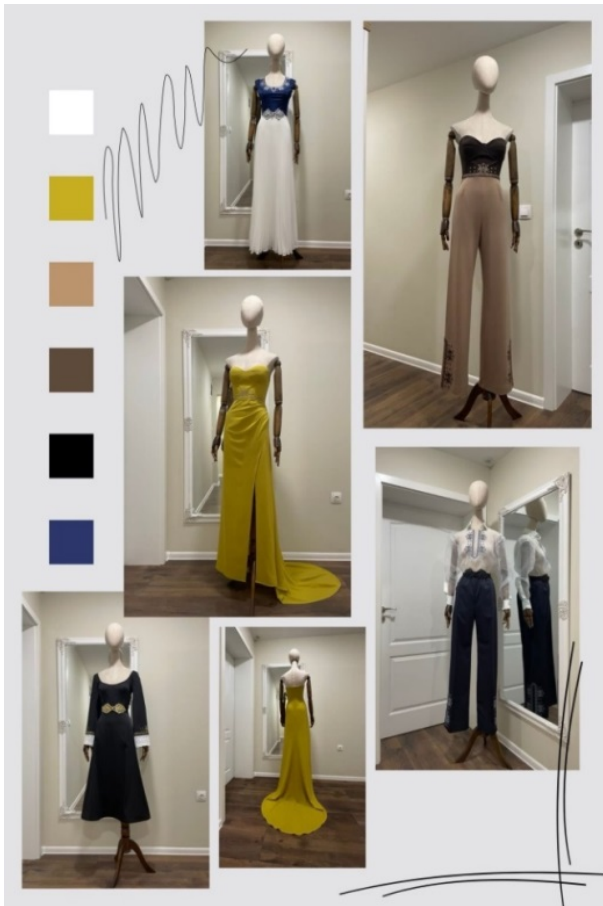


Fig. 5. A realized design collection in material.

Through innovative technological solutions and a conscious choice of sustainable materials from residual small production batches, the collection responds to the growing need for ethical and responsible fashion. The models from the collection with machine-embroidered stylized embroidery and constructions, executed using modern construction methods - embody the vision of design oriented towards both aesthetics and sustainable development. The interpretation of authentic motifs in a contemporary context not only emphasizes national identity, but also creates prerequisites for the competitiveness of the Bulgarian design product on the international fashion scene.

Each model carries a unique character, emphasizing femininity, grace and the connection with Bulgarian cultural heritage.

The collection was evaluated for the high aesthetic value of the models based on a review-exhibition (Fig. 6.), which was attended by guests, owners of companies from the fashion industry, managers, students and lecturers of the Faculty of Engineering and Pedagogy and Sliven College at the Technical University of Sofia.

The review exhibition was covered by several news media outlets and the assessment of this method of promoting the collection was expressed as having high aesthetic value.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In the context of the deepening ecological crisis caused by overproduction and the short life cycle of clothing in mass fashion, the creation of high-quality products inspired by the national costume emerges as a sustainable and

culturally significant alternative. Traditional Bulgarian embroidery techniques not only preserve the symbolism and identity of folk art, but also contribute to the durability, uniqueness and artistic value of contemporary fashion items.

Investing in garments created with craftsmanship, attention to detail, and the use of natural materials encourages a delayed consumption cycle and increases consumer responsibility. This achieves a synthesis between aesthetics, sustainability and cultural heritage – an approach that not only minimizes the negative impact on the environment, but also rethinks the role of fashion as a carrier of value, identity and a sustainable future.



Fig. 6. Revue – exhibition of the "Tradition and Elegance" collection.

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