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Essay

Differences in folk costumes.

Rulers come and go, nation remains, only the nation is immortal.

/Heine/

Every nation has its own sign of trade mark. A sign of national identity which highlights each nation amongst other nations. Food, dance, and song- it all makes each nation special and unique. National costume is one of the most important and brightest historical heritages, which reflects nation's temperament and peculiarities most accurately. But no nation is the same that is why national costumes are very different.

Latvian folk costume is not the same in all of the country; it reflects characteristics of every district. But in a way they are still very similar. Long wool skirt which symbolises virtue, linen blouse or a shirt for men, bodice with a brooch that has shimmering amber in the middle of it – the Latvian jewel and symbol of the whole Latvian nation. We must not forget about the belts which are decorated with Latvian national symbols. The most common are the sing on Mara, the sign of the Sun, Laima, Jumis and Usinsh.

The folk costume is like a historical heritage to everything through what the nation has gone through. It's like a reflection of the soul, which shows its' features of character. For example the Hungarian folk costume stands out with its' pomposity. It makes the hips wider by wearing several skirts one under another. Also the costume is different if there is a big celebration. The main feature is that the coats and boots are the same for men and women, which is opposite to Latvian folk costume where the gender difference if very noticeable.

Although Latvia and Estonia are „neighbours”, their folk costumes are not that similar. Estonians use various shades of blue that symbolise their northern souls and sobriety. At the same time, Latvians do not use the blue colour in their folk costumes at all.

In contrast to Latvian nation, Romanians in their folk costumes wear shirts made of cannabis, not linen. And the apron is a mandatory part of Romanian folk costume. It is worn

in front and the back. And even in modern Romanian costumes there are still noticeable some traditional folk features.

Since the Polish people is a Slavic nation, in their national costumes are recognizable some typical Slavic features. For example, bright flowers and different colourful embroidery that shows the diversity of the people and their bright temperament. While Latvians stick to modesty and simplicity, for Poles it is important that, when people look at their folk costume, it takes their breath away.

The complete opposite for the „quiet” Latvian folk costume is the exotic Turkish folk costume, in which even men wear a bright wreath. Unlike Latvians who prefer linen, Turks prefer soft and luxurious silk. Also, while Latvians do not use any make up in their national costume at all, Turks like to take advantage of all the benefits of make – up.

Bulgarians, just like Romanians also are a mountain nation. Their folk costume like Latvian has got linen, but embroidery is typical to Slavic nations - bright flowers, bright and colourful ornaments on both the pants and socks and blouses etc.

Latvian folk costume may be more modest than or not as flashy as in other nations, but it stands out with its simplicity and viscerality. It reflects Latvian mentality and internal calmness. There will never be two costumes that are completely the same. Every nation is one of a kind and so are the folk costumes. It’s amazing how different are the folk costumes, but the most important thing is that they are all beautiful.

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