

Arrow belt

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Arrow belt with lightning motif, in multicolored wool. It has been cut in two: one half is sewn back together, the other is frayed. The two halves are not the same length. Its colors appear to be synthetic dyes. Its bangs are partially cut, and the wool is rather coarse. It has 11 corridors.

Accession Number 2021.07.14

Period 20th century

Materials fiber, wool

Technique braided

Historical context

With its bright, relatively recent colors, this belt was probably chemically dyed. Its wool, thicker than that of older pieces, gives us an idea of its age. In fact, during this period, the fine “Worsted” wool from England used to make belts in the 19th century was less widely used. Innovations in the manufacture of synthetic textiles and the growing demand for cheaper materials gradually relegated Worsted wool to a more restricted use. During this period, the most affordable wools were less twisted: the yarns were thinner, so belts were thicker.

Arrow belts are an important cultural element in Quebec. They were created by French Canadians in the second half of the 18th century. At the turn of the 20th century, they became essentially a cultural element. They were first adopted by snowshoers. When the sport lost popularity to field hockey and skiing, folk dancers and traditional musicians became the main users.

In the decades that followed, conservation and promotion initiatives were gradually set up by folklore researchers and a few darts enthusiasts.

Arrow belts reflect a multicultural identity. Although difficult to date, they provide us with information on the cultural history of several territories and the socio-economic relationships that bind them together.

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