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Viorica Cazac [α], Ursu Elena [σ], Adascalita Lucia [ρ] & Cîrja Jana [ω]

I. Introduction

The traditional shirt/blouse, submitted in the traditional costume patrimony, is one of the most important elements that is valued by artistic and symbolic valences attributed to the creators that told, and still tell, with the help of a single needle and thread, their life stories, aspirations, explaining the connection between people and nature, the divine.

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II. Aspects of the Genesis of Traditional Romanian Blouses

Analysis of sources, that give results of studies about the genesis of the traditional Romanian blouse [1-14] describes it as having come from the oldest of times, proven by images present on more than one object, ceramic figurines from the neolithic and the bronze age [12], classical antiquity monuments: Tropaeum Traiani from Adamclisi and the Column of Trajan (figure 1). The well-known teacher, archaeologist, folklore writer Alexandru Odobescu remarks the similarity of the Romanian folk costume as he knew from his trips across the country „the shirt with sleeves, gathered in the middle, cut on the lap on both sides: the ițarii and the opinci (flats) cover their legs....". The conclusions drawn from the numerous studies undertaken show the assumption of the direct descendants of the Romanian port in the Dacian and Illyrian port [2-4, 9, 12]. Nicolae Iorga [8] well-known scientist, a researcher of the Romanian space, who promoted and was concerned about ensuring the continuity of the popular art, firmly considers that the plenary of the traditional home comes from Thracians not from Romanians as identified in the writings of some foreign travelers.

The fundamental structure of the Dacic costume is found all over the country, the details of the cut, used materials, the decoration [9], referring to the Illyrian Thracian ancestry.



Figure 1: Dacian women on the 49th metope of the monument of Adamclisi (Tropaeum Traiani). The blouse is pleated at the collar, and the opening at the neck is made from the body of the blouse and sleeves, exactly like the Moldovan blouse [6].

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Mentions of the Romanian folk costume are made even more frequently, mentioned in the writings, the images dated with the medieval period, to which are added the performances of the numerous local plastic artists and travelers, representing the people's costume from various areas of the Romanian space (Figure 2-4).



Figure 2: Petru Verussi
Peasant women, 1895



Figure 3: Theodor Amann.
Union of the principals, 1857



Figure 4: Nicolae Grigorescu
Peasant woman, 1847

The fact is that the traditional Romanian costume, in which the most spectacular piece-shirt is found, has its roots in remote times, keeping its esthetic characteristics, form, fit, and decoration.

III. Influences on Defining Traditional Shirts/Blouses

The historical evolution of traditional Romanian blouses, for both women and men, has met various occidental and oriental influences.

Nicolae Iorga mentioned that „these numerous influences were exercised, at various historical dates, on the way to conceive and work these craftsmen, who continue in this field, by simple processes, of a multi-year civilization.

The traditional blouse, in its essence, represents an identity element of the traditional costume specific not only to the Romanian zone but the entire Balcanic space, being owned by people around the Black Sea, up to the Caucasus and Anatolia" [11].

Analysis of the reference bibliographic sources [11] suggests influences of the „geometric" art, the 'Byzantine art, the art of the German peoples, on the traditional Romanian costume.

Thus, the geometrical ornamental art prevail in the popular art of Romanian space makes the penetration of purple, gold, and silver as the Byzantine influence, replacing the existing discrete colors (the Argeș and Muscel costume), the penetration of Persia flowers in cheerful, triumphant and found themselves in camels, catrine, fouls, shoulders, birds, animals, human characters in age costumes determine the complex design of carpets. So, the geometric style of the decorative elements integrated into the predominant ornamental modular registers is complemented by the 'hypomorphic' and 'zoomorphic adornments.

From the art of the Germans, influences are marked in the form of large blue designs on the white base, representing leaf flowers, flowering tulips, later and animals, birds, deers, blackbirds, soldiers, church cakes.

Thus, in the traditional costume in the Republic of Moldova, the influence of Mycenaean geometrical art with a deep long-term impression, following the same trend of styling by geometrical of the assumed Persian and Byzantine ornamental elements. In the late period, there were various forced and latent influences on costume decoration, which can also be seen by ornamental reproduction techniques, etc.

Being one of the distinctive pieces of the traditional costume by the visibility of the ornamental character, shirt, it is distinguished from area to area by its fit, constituent elements, ornamental reasons, prevailing color, sewing techniques, materials involved in ornamentation, dimensional characteristics of constituent elements, terminal processing technologies, assembly techniques for landmarks, etc.

The terms consecrated to this distinguished piece of the traditional Romanian costume, supported

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on the shoulders, are presented below "linguistically, Romanians inherited the term "i.e." derived from the Latin *tunica lineae* (thin coat-worn tunic) for the female shirt, as well as a term borrowed from the Celtic background, The Camsilia, certified in Romanian in the 4th century, from which the Romanian term *camassia* comes. While the term shirt-shirt is generically assigned to the part the term, *i.e.,* applies only to the femoral camels [12].

IV. Types of Traditional Blouses

The traditional Romanian costume, with some distinctive zoned features, has elements of unity: *Raw material, fit, color, decor, structural construction of the costume.* They are intertwined and inter-conditioned in a unitary style that gives the Romanian folk the construction of life and art fact [12].

Traditional shirt (term preserved from Latin) is an important morphological, structural element of the traditional costume by the extent of the concentration of ornamental elements and their assigned meaning.

One of the benchmarks that make it necessary to distinguish traditional homes is the one determined by *sex, age*, and *social status*, with semiotic connotations expressed by ornamentation and color.

Thus, traditional camels according to *sex* are distinctive in:

- traditional male shirts;
- traditional women's blouses.

By *age* and *social state*, traditional] women's blouses are identified as:

- traditional foetal blouses,
- traditional unmarried young women blouses,
- the traditional blouses for married women,
- traditional widows' blouses (women, spouses who have died in certain circumstances).

Traditional male shirts are structured about *age* and *social status in*:

- traditional shirt for the boys;
- traditional shirts for young people;
- traditional shirts for married men.

Another criterion about the identity of traditional blouses is the geographical zone of reference, from where the costume is. In the context of separating traditional Romanian blouses by their origin zone, we have from:

- blouses specific to the Northern part of the Republic of Moldova;
- blouses specific to the central part of the Republic of Moldova;
- blouses specific to the South part of the Republic of Moldova.

Period of year in which the costumes are worn:

- cold period of the year;
- warm period of the year.

By the occasion the blouses are being worn on:

- celebration blouses;
- blouses for daily wear.

V. Constructive Diversity of Traditional Romanian Blouses by their Cut

The morphological structure of the traditional chambermaids, identified in the museum heritage of the country and the reference bibliographic sources, was determined by the dimensional characteristics of the house fabric from which the shirt was made, the reference marks representing regular geometrical forms; rectangles and squares. The dimensional delimitation of the house web was determined by the possibilities of the tissue war in which the house canvas was woven under domestic conditions.

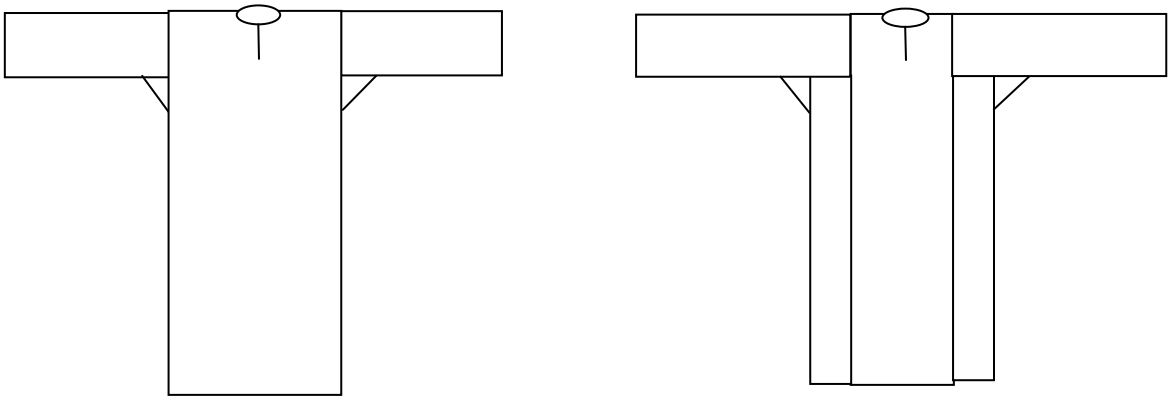
Analysis of *the construction solutions* of traditional shirts has made it possible to establish the existence of the following types:

- *Straight shirts* are also found under the terms „cămăşoi" [2, 3, 7, 12], „cămaşă bătrânească" [2, 3, 7, 12], „ cămaşă tip „tunică" [2], type „Poncio" [7]" They preceded the chambers with an altar/camels stuck to the neck. The right shirt had its face and back made from an undamaged mark, with the mark of the neckline, to which the main lock marks were assembled (Figure 5 a). In the sub-axillary part of the hand, the shirt was filled with the tree that ensured freedom of hand movements in a square shape. If the house cloth was very narrow, the back and face of the camel could be filled to the side with *clowns* (Figure 5 b) and the wreckage. Some bibliographic sources refer to the variation of these straight-line plains according to their length, specifying that the camels worn in plains are lagoons and long and those worn in mountainous areas are short [8]. About the destination of the campuses by the sex of the ground-party, the result of the participatory observation by the museum is, the men's camels being most often of straight fit with, and for, wear such as, for each day, were long up to or just after the hip line, possibly motivated by the need to ensure freedom of movement in the course of everyday fieldwork. Instead, the men's holiday hostels were much longer, reaching or passing the knee. The straight women's camels were often long-length, up to the knee, mid-ankle, or "cranberry" (lateral malleolus);
- *Blouses with altiţă,* also called „Carpatic" types by some authors [7], start from the hypothesis that they were found in the Romanian zone, especially in the Carpatic ones. The oldest term used in relation to this type of blouse is„cămaşa încreţită la gât", în spaţiul din dreapta Prutului, a fost utilizat termenul

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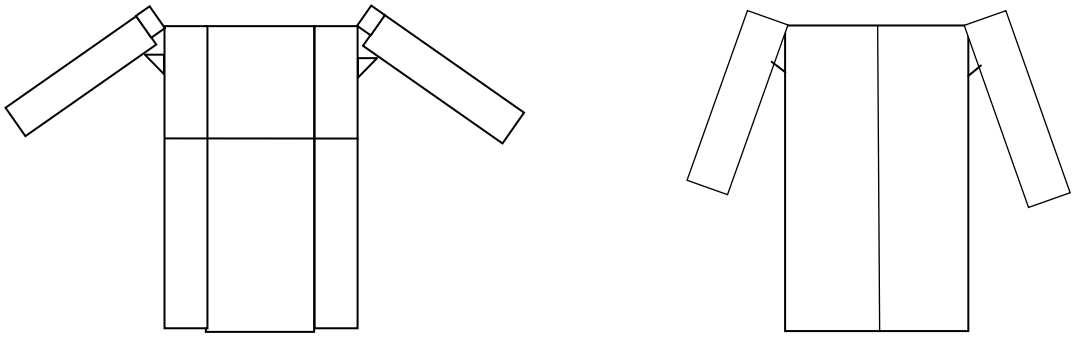
„blouse/cămașă for celebrations" [2]. Blouses with altiță/pleated at the neck could be altița tailored separately (figure 6a) or altița tailored together with the sleeve (figure 6b). This type of cut is met only in blouses for women. In modern terms in the clothing-making field, this cut is called the„raglan" type. Altița, sewn separately, was named, in some Romanian zones, „shoulder", from its distinct positioning, being supported on the shoulder of the wearer [12]. Blouses with altiță also used patches, initially square-shaped, after triangular. Apart from these two variations of the blouse, sewn integrally of separately, in the Romanian space were identified and a third variation, that being *blouse with chiruşcă* [12] (figure 7) that has a trapezoid-shaped altiță, explained by trying to reduce creases on the shoulder (finding this in the north of Vrancea and Cașin). Blouse with altiță and creased sleeve (figure 8) is another structural solution, characterized by the presence of an altiță of rectangular shape that is combined with a triangular-shaped sleeve elongated with its sharp angle up to the termination of the sleeve. Lateral sides being very long are combined, and being worn are curled on the hand to be closed on the right size(found in eastern Făgăraş, Ţara Bîrsei, Covasna, over the Carpaţi, Vrancea);

- *Cămaşe cu platcă,* in the case of Bessarabia, due to foreign influences, is called the popular 'cămașă cu petic- Chamberland with a petal' [2]. It is considered to be derived from the straight shirt with a horizontal cut-out of the upper with shoulder support of the shirt in the so-called 'stani' and the lower part of the shirt called 'poale'.



a) b)

Figure 5: Straight blouse/cămăşoi/tunic type/olds shirt



a) b)

Figure 6: Blouse with *altiţa* fully tailored in the sleeve (a) and separated (b)/pleated at neckline

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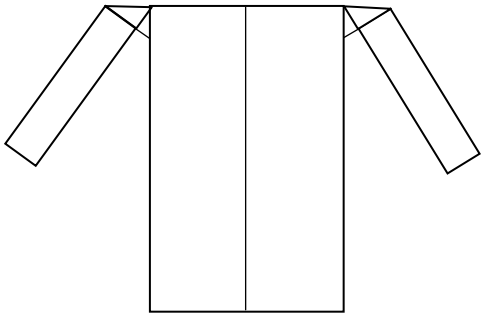


Figure 7: Blouse with chiruşcă altiţă sewed separately with a triangular form

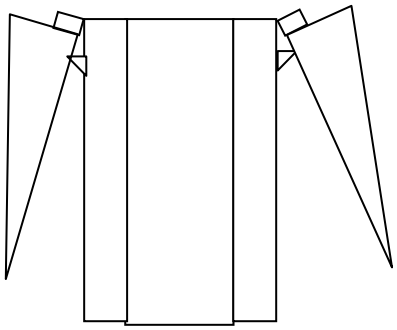


Figure 8: Blouse with separated altiță/pleated at the collar and curled sleeve

a) Diversity of Traditional Romanian Blouses by Material

Traditional shirts were made, initially, from flax and hemp, the terms being inherited from Latin. From XVI to XVIII, cotton entered the entire Romanian territory and is widely used except for Bukovina and the mountain areas of Moldova. Silk was still costly, and a luxury not everyone could afford was rarely used at the end of the 19th century.

Ornamentation through embroidery made with the needle (the word „ac/needle" comes from Latin) was initially frequently made with wool threads obtained by spinning with the fork or spindle, after being completed by cotton and silk yarn. Based on the materials used, the most dedicated and old Romanian embroidery is the Bucovina one, which does not allow cotton and silk yarn, hence the character of the ornamental areas. Metal sequins were also not used (small round discs with a hole in the middle through which they are sewn on the embroidery, called butterflies), with which peasant costumes of Valahi were frequently decorated [8].

b) Diversity of Traditional Romanian Blouses by Color

Chromatic solution of traditional blouses has known a big diversity in all of Romanian space, varying by the materials used for ornamentation, but also by the means used for dying threads.

Some bibliographical sources [12] tell about the initial use of just red and black in ornamentation. After, dyeing with various extracts from nature in home conditions allowed the obtaining of many new colors: white, black, gray, brown, yellow, not a lot of them.

We can see, according to source [8], that the chromatic variation from traditional blouses decoration was determined by a lot of influences. Thus, oriental influences are seen in the bold use of gold and silver in large quantities in the zone of Banat. Golden and bright red represent colors widely used in Argeş and Muscel. With how Făgăraş was at the foot of mountains and they didn't have a lot of gold, sparkling red was used everywhere. In the east, this courageous use of colors is nowhere to be seen, paler palettes being more popular. Plain areas, on the other hand, were not to be characterized by polychromy at all.

In Moldova, unlikely combinations like nuances of blue, pale and dark green, orange, purple, brown, pale yellow were likely. Their mix created a symphony of unbloomed flowers, a melancholic feeling that doesn't allow any color to jump out of the scene, where everything sits still in harmony similar to a traditional melody [12].

c) Diversity of traditional Romanian blouses by decor

Elements that determine used ornaments on traditional blouses are directed towards the making of:

- Geometric motifs being [8]: simple and double diamond-shaped, angles opened inside, the star, zig-zag lines, x shaped, lines of dots, squares, stars, the cross, circles, triangles, meanders, hooks, complex angles, serpentines.
- Phytomorphic, avimorph, anthropomorphic motifs used with geometric lines. As phytomorphic elements, we have leaves, trees, but not the "tree of life", symbolic in Islam art, mentioned by Nicolae Iorga [5], not rarer than wheat ears as a symbol of crowning hard agriculture work. The flower is widely imitated in Moldova, Bucovina, and Banat in such similarity, as we could easily notice the lily, rose, field bells, poppies, and other flowers. The reproduction of these elements with brutality indicates foreign influences, as we could see in Basarabean, Moldovan and Bucovinean works.

Representations of birds, animals, anthropometric figures indicate influences from Turks from the south.

Emilia Pavel mentioned some motifs, once used by the Carpato-Dunăreni and even Scandinavian people, by Europeans and Asiatics: the tree, tree of life, the column of heaven, life-bird, the sun and moon, life beings around the house. There is a mythology of symbols surrounding the social-cosmic universe and the pastoral agronomic one, caught in the eternal spinning rhythm of passing life: birth-death/rebirth [9-11].

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d) *Diversity of traditional Romanian blouses by the structural constitution of its elements*

Traditional blouses for women, as well as for men, by their structure, are distinguished by their ornaments. In traditional men blouses, those are:

- relies on the lines of the shirt's opens in the area of the line of symmetry of the faction;
- ornaments on the face and back of the sleeve;
- ornaments on the bottom of the sleeve;
- ornaments on the bottom of the blouse;
- ornamenting bracelets;
- ornamenting the collar.

Traditional blouses for women are distinguished by more complex decoration, compared to blouses for men, by the occupied surface, the complexity of used techniques of ornamenting: sewn or woven, or thanks to structural elements that define its macro cosmos. The sleeve was the element of the costume where all aspirations of the wearer were written; it is structured in altiţă, pleats, and rivers (figure 9).

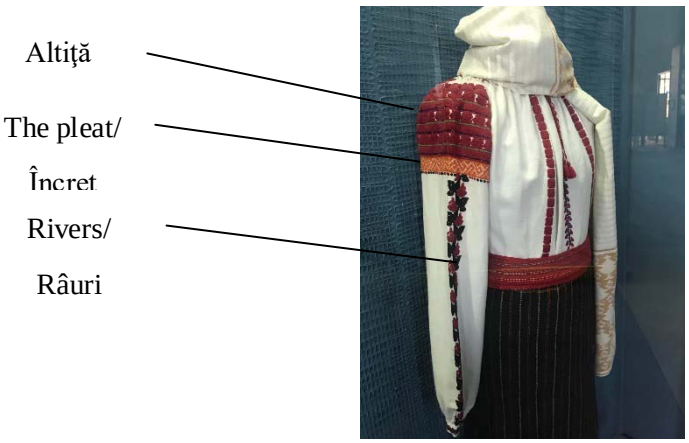


Figure 9: Structural construction of the sleeve with „altiță" (MNEIN collection)

Altiţa is the divine element of the traditional blouse that is not repeated on any other surface of it [12], representing the Sky of the macro cosmos [2, 13]. It is represented by the repetition of horizontal ornamental markings (3-9). Canonical is the positioning of the last ornamental mark of the altiță in the superior part of it (closest to the cut of the neck) through a white space distinctly named "separator" that made the separation between the markings of the altiță. Canonical is also considered framing the ornamental registers of the height in a frame that surrounds them trilaterally, forming an element called "scrânciobel". Ornamental motifs of the altiță are the most elaborate, not just aesthetic considerations but also many meanings, aspirations, and formulas of protection. The separated altiță had an essential role distinct even from the beginnings, unsewn when the blouse was cleaned or exchanged when the wearer found it necessary.

Încreţul/The pleat is the register found under the altiță, representing Earth [2]. Initially, it had the functional role of configuring the sleeve on the hand, thanks to its pleatings. Once with starting to sew the sleeve with integrated altiță, the functional role of the crinkle has transformed into a decorative one, giving up on pleating anymore in that part of the blouse.

Râurile/Rivers are elements with the form of vertical lines, rarely oblique ones [11] (1-2-3-5) that come from the pleat up to the termination of the sleeve, representing the water as the vigor of life [2]. Ornamental motifs from the rivers relate stylistically with the pines from the altiță, but different somehow.

The front of the blouse is decorated with 1-2 rows of decorative elements that vary in width from the thinnest in the zone of Moldova to the thickest, present in blouses of Muscel, Valcea, Argeș, Mehedinți.

The back of the blouse has reduced ornamentation when referring to the Rivers, or a lack of decorative techniques of combining markings with keys.

The neckline, the collar is decorated with small ornamental motifs proportional to the dimensional characteristics of the markings.

Terminations of the blouses can be decorated with thin markings of ornamental elements.

e) *Creativity and Canons in the Making of Traditional Blouses*

Various aesthetics of traditional blouses are results of creativity noted by:

- used ornamental motif: geometric, vegetate, zoomorphic, avimorph, anthropomorphic, divine, social, skeuomorphic ones;
- dimensional variety of the elements on blouses for women: of the "rivers", altiță, pleats;
- diversity of the technological mix of different marks, specific spots;
- variety of used natural materials: hemp, flax, the skin of lamb, sheep, veal and mixing them in different pieces of the costume;

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- technological variety in processing the terminations of the costumes;
- variety of technologies of decorating/ornamenting used to create the costume;
- diversity of ornamenting the work color-wise: monochrome or polychrome; variety of forming the costume from different pieces.

Canons noticed in the traditional costume:

- the cut of traditional blouses;
- structural solutions of dividing markings;
- geometric contours of the markings that form vestimentary pieces from the costume;
- compositional structure in blouses for men- placement of markings in the closing system, superior and inferior termination of the sleeves, termination of the hem, the contour of the collar and neckline; in women's blouses: structural composition of the decor of the sleeves, prevalent from altiță, pleat, and rivers on horizontal and oblique positioning;
- motifs that form ornamental markings of the costume;
- geometrization of used motifs;
- traditions connected to the preparation activities up to the starting, making, and finishing the traditional costume;
- resonance with the activity of making the costume, ornamentation elements with sacral texts, folkloric texts with motifs used in home textiles, rugs, etc.;
- the use of decoration with divine and anthropic characteristics: beads (1-16), rings, bracelets, earrings that protect different vulnerable parts of the human body in the perspective of completing the image of the traditional costume.

VI. Conclusions

- The traditional costume is truly a "temple of its owner", and enough care towards it will contribute to the divine keeping, its conservation and continuing traditions connected with it, authentic meaning, no changes of its concept, aesthetics, construction, or technology of its making.
- The traditional costume is more than an ensemble of beautifully decorated vestimentary parts; it represents a "cosmologic narration, a mini-recapitulation of the entire cosmos" [13].
- Conceptual-aesthetic diversity of traditional costumes, traditional blouses represent the results of every maker's creativity, presenting the microcosmos of existence essences.
- Creativity freedom in traditional costumes is marked by chromatic solutions in authentic models, structural, proportional, symmetrical, static, dynamic, and compositional aspects, mixing all the aspects to create something. The personalization of these costume pieces, based on the entropy morphologic characteristics of the wearer, is also a result of the creator's creativity.
- The diversity of traditional blouses is determined by: *materials, cut, colors, decor, the structure of the costume* completed by *techniques of reproduction, divine elements*, and *anthropic attributes*.

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