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**THE EVOLUTION OF VESTIMENTARY ART IN THE
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

651.01 – THEORY AND HISTORY OF FINE ARTS

**ABSTRACT
of the doctoral thesis in arts**

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

Relevance and Importance of the Research Topic. Vestimentary art, situated between functionality and artistic expressiveness, is a complex cultural manifestation that reflects the historical context, technological progress, and identity symbols of each era. As a branch of the decorative applied arts, it offers a fertile field of investigation and requires the formulation of new scientific directions adapted to contemporary visual culture. This art, being the closest to the human body, shapes the silhouette, asserts social status, and mediates relationships through a dynamic visual discourse. In the context of the social transformations of recent decades, researching its evolution within our cultural space becomes highly relevant, aiming to identify the models and principles that ensure both continuity and innovation.

The evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, influenced by successive stylistic and ideological currents, has become a central subject today. The rediscovery of the textile heritage and its integration into contemporary globalized design transform costume into a vector of identity and aesthetic resilience. New technologies, ecological materials, and innovative concepts create premises for sustainable and competitive development, capable of capitalizing on national uniqueness and positioning the Republic of Moldova on the map of international design.

Degree of Study of the Research Topic. Various aspects of vestimentary art practiced in the Republic of Moldova have attracted the attention of researchers and have been approached from historical, ethnographic, artistic, and technological perspectives. Existing contributions highlight the specific features of local clothing, regional diversity, and the transformations that have occurred under the influence of social, economic, and political changes.

The present doctoral project was conceived as a continuation—and more precisely, as a development—of the theoretical and applied works that have outlined the history of this field. Authors from Romania, such as A. Nanu¹, C. Oros², O. Horșia și P. Petrescu³, have analyzed the specific features and cultural codes of clothing. In the Republic of Moldova, researchers such as

¹ NANU, A. *Arta pe om. Look-ul si intelesul semnelor vestimentare*. București: Editura COMPANIA, 2001. 206 p.

² OROS, C. *Pagini din istoria costumului*. Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1998. 280 p.

³ HORȘIA, O., PETRESCU, P. *Artistic Handicrafts in Romania*. București: Uniunea Centrala a Cooperativelor Mestesugaresti. 1972, 200 p.

V. Buzilă⁴, C. Spînu⁵, L. Moisei⁶, A. Tocarciuc⁷, M. Cercașin⁸, T. Bujorean⁹ have explored the textile heritage, traditional ornamentation, and decorative arts, emphasizing their evolution in various historical and social contexts. The works of A. Curteza¹⁰ și C. Brustureanu¹¹ serve as theoretical landmarks for understanding contemporary fashion design. Building on the vision of E. Wilson¹² și J. Entwistle¹³ – who explore the cultural and identity dimension of fashion and the relationship between clothing, the body, and society – this research also draws on the semiotic and historical approaches to global fashion proposed by J. Craik¹⁴ și V. Steele¹⁵, R. Barth¹⁶. The concepts of researchers K. Fletcher¹⁷ și S. Black¹⁸ regarding sustainability and technological innovation in the field, focused on strategies to reduce the ecological impact of the textile industry, have also been taken into account.

The scientific results and specialized literature related to this field have been capitalized on in the present research in order to create a conceptual framework suitable for the analysis of the phenomenology of vestimentary art and the processes that govern it.

The aim of the thesis is to investigate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, the development path of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, to determine its specific features, scope, and creative driving forces, in order to highlight the trends that have shaped it and continue to project its evolution.

The objectives of the research were formulated to achieve the proposed aim. They are as follows:

⁴ BUZILĂ, V. *Costumul popular din Republica Moldova. Ghid practic*. Ch.: Reclama SA, 2011. 160 p. ș.a.

⁵ SPÎNU, C. *Arta decorativă din RSS Moldovenească: anii 1944-1991*. Ch.: Epigraf, 1999. 560 p.; SPÎNU, C. *Arta decorativă din Republica Moldova*. Ch.: Epigraf, 2023. 488 p.

⁶ MOISEI, L. *Ornamentul: fenomen artistico-estetic. (Viziuni ontologice și estetice asupra ornamenticii Țesăturilor tradiționale)*. Chișinău: Pontos, 2017, 271 p.

⁷ TOCARCIUC, Al. *Tradiții și inovații în arta textilelor din Moldova*. Teză de doctor în istorie, UTM, 2024. specialitatea 612.01 „Etnologie”, 325 p.

⁸ CERCAȘIN, M. *Ansamblul vestimentar nupțial din Basarabia și RSS Moldovenească: aspecte etno-istorice*. Teza de doctor. Chișinău, 2025. 232 p.

⁹ BUJOREAN, T. *Coordonate ale dezvoltării costumului popular din Basarabia și RSS Moldovenească*. Teză de doctor în istorie. Specialitatea 612. 01 – Etnologie. Chișinău, 2025. 252 p.

¹⁰ CURTEZA, A. *Design vestimentar: Noțiuni fundamentale*. Iași: Performantica, 2003. 272 p.

¹¹ BRUSTUREANU, C. *Repere estetice în vestimentație*. Iași: Artes. 2012. 145 p.

¹² WILSON, E. *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003. 328 p.

¹³ ENTWISTLE, J. *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015. 247 p.

¹⁴ CRAIK, J. *Fashion: The Key Concepts*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2009. 379 p.

¹⁵ STEELE, V. *Paris Fashion: A Cultural History*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1998. 327 p.

¹⁶ BARTHE, R. *The Fashion System*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990. 351 p.

¹⁷ FLETCHER, K. *Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys*. Second Edition. London: Routledge, 2014. 288 p.

¹⁸ BLACK, S. *The Sustainable Fashion Handbook*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2012. 352 p.

- to identify the evolutionary stages of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova through formal and stylistic evaluation of reference works and analysis of historical, cultural, economic, and social influences;
- to examine the role of educational institutions and innovation centers (AMTAP, UTM, ZIPHOUSE, etc.) in shaping new generations of creators;
- to highlight the contribution of leading designers, opinion leaders, and platforms (*Moldova Fashion Days (MFD)*, *Moldovan Brands Runway (MBR)*, *Art Podium*, *ARTCOR*, etc.) to the national and international recognition of local fashion;
- to reveal the influence of globalization, digitalization, and eco-friendly materials on creative processes and sustainable practices;
- to valorize the traditional vestimentary heritage as a source of inspiration and innovation in contemporary design;
- to analyze the processes of recontextualizing traditions in current collections as a means of cultural diversification and identity consolidation;
- to assess the role of exhibitions, workshops, *șezători* (traditional gatherings), and cultural platforms in rediscovering traditions, strengthening identity, and fostering interdisciplinary dialogue at both national and international levels.

Research Hypothesis. Vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova has emerged as an important cultural phenomenon and is evolving towards international recognition through the creative valorization of all artistic resources in innovative and sustainable forms – primarily the cultural heritage validated over time by collective experience – within processes catalyzed by globalization, emerging technologies, and cultural-educational frameworks. The traditions of the folk costume, reinterpreted in response to societal demands as a visual, ethical, and aesthetic foundation, become the pivot of a competitive local design supported by cultural institutions, mass media, and cultural platforms. This dynamic, which intertwines tradition with innovation and social responsibility, contributes simultaneously to the creation and strengthening of identity and to fostering intercultural dialogue at local, regional, and global levels.

Chronological and geographical scope of the research. The chronological and geographical limits of the research refer primarily to the three decades of the Republic of Moldova's existence, during which its vestimentary culture is examined in the full breadth of its phenomenological structure: heritage (continuity), modernity (adaptation of influences), and contemporaneity (valorization of national resources in relation to globalizing processes). However, the scope occasionally extends, when necessary, to earlier periods and broader geographical areas, in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of this richness.

Synthesis of the Research Methodology and Justification of the Chosen Methods.

The methodology applied in this thesis follows an interdisciplinary approach designed to highlight the evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova from the country's independence (1991) to the present. The structure of the field is defined through three main vectors: (1) *oriented towards international challenges* – a dynamic segment connected to global trends; (2) *oriented towards the ethno-style symbiosis* – integrating local refinement into international standards; (3) *anchored in the valorization of traditional models* – promoted by representatives of the national school and independent creators. These directions generate creations addressed to various social segments, positioned simultaneously within both national and international cultural horizons.

Given the complexity of the subject, the scientific approach is based on a hierarchy of methods organized according to the stages proposed by E. Panofsky¹⁹ and adapted to the specific features of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, complemented by the theoretical and applied structure formulated by V. Rocaciuc²⁰. The historical analysis (pre-iconographic level) enabled the reconstruction of evolutionary stages and their contextualization in relation to European and international trends. The ethnographic method (iconographic level), supported by semi-structured interviews with designers, artists, and folk craftsmen, facilitated the interpretation of symbolic codes and cultural patterns. Case studies on selected designers and brands enabled an iconological reading of contemporary creations, approached as expressions of the collective mentality and of a specific cultural vision²¹.

Content analysis of monographs, scientific articles, catalogues, and online sources was complemented by participatory observation at professional events and educational platforms, which made it possible to capture current trends and their social impact. The integration of historical and comparative methods, interviews, ethnographic research, case studies, and iconographic and semiotic analyses provides a complex and rigorous perspective on how vestimentary art asserts itself as a distinct field, continuously adapted and reinterpreted, thereby strengthening both sustainable cultural identity and international visibility.

Summary of the thesis structure. The thesis consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusions and recommendations, annotations in two languages, a glossary of terms specific to vestimentary art, a bibliography comprising 610 titles, and seven annexes that include 238 figures

¹⁹ PANOFSKY, E. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983. 384 p.

²⁰ ROCACIUC, V. *Metode de bază și aplicarea lor în cercetarea artelor plastice (1940-1990)*. In: Anuar științific: muzică, teatru, arte plastice, 2009, nr. 1-2(8-9), p. 163-166.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 165.

and 10 tables. The total volume of the thesis is 397 pages, of which 159 pages represent the main text.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

The introduction presents the relevance of the topic, establishes the chronological and geographical scope, the aim and objectives of the research, as well as the theoretical and methodological framework applied. It also outlines the theoretical significance, the practical value, and the possible directions for implementing the scientific results.

Chapter 1, *Theoretical Framework of the Thesis: Theories, Concepts, and Ideas Applied in the Research of Vestimentary Art*, examines and systematizes, in accordance with the object and the problem of the research, the ideas, concepts, principles, and theories regarding vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, as well as the theoretical foundations and the degree of investigation of the field. This chapter provides the theoretical grounding of the research by systematizing the relevant concepts, theories, and principles from the field of vestimentary art.

The approach is based on an interdisciplinary framework at the intersection of ethnography, anthropology, art history, semiotics, and cultural studies. Key notions such as *art, clothing, fashion design, fashion, style, costume, folk costume, symbol, ornament, and chromatics* are clarified in order to build a rigorous scientific vocabulary applicable to the study of the vestimentary phenomenon.

The subchapter 1.1. *Theoretical background and degree of investigation of the field* presents the theoretical foundation and the sources of the research. The study is based on an extensive and interdisciplinary bibliographic corpus, which includes the fundamental works of fashion and semiotics theorists (R. Barthes²², E. Wilson²³, V. Steele²⁴, L. Svendsen²⁵, C. Breward, C. Evans²⁶ ș.a.), as well as contributions from researchers in the Republic of Moldova (A. M. Zevina, Kir D. Rodnin²⁷, V. Zelenciuc, N. Kalașnikova²⁸, V. Buzilă²⁹, E. Postolachi³⁰, M.

²² BARTHES, Roland. *The Fashion System*. 351 p.

²³ WILSON, E. *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003. 328 p.

²⁴ STEELE, V. *The Berg Companion to Fashion*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010, 814 p.

²⁵ SVENDSEN, L. *Fashion: A Philosophy*. Publisher: Reaktion Books, 2006. 188 p.

²⁶ BREWARD, C., EVANS, C. *Fashion and Modernity*. Oxford: Berg, 2005. 232 p.

²⁷ ЗЕВИНА, А., РОДНИН К. *Изобразительное искусство Молдавии*. Кишинёв: Картя молдовеняскэ, 1965. 217 с.

²⁸ ZELENCIUC, V., KALAȘNIKOVA, N. *Vestimentația populației orășenești din Moldova /sec. XV-XIX/. Ch.: Știința, 1993. 126 p.*

²⁹ BUZILĂ, V. *Creatori, purtători și admiratori ai costumului tradițional în secolul al XXI-lea*. Chișinău: Epigraf, 2023, p. 109, 145, 177.

³⁰ POSTOLACHI, E. *Țesutul popular moldovenesc (sec. XIX – înc. sec. XX)*. Chișinău: Știința, 1987. 207 p.

Ciocanu³¹, L. Condraticova³², N. Procop, V. Negru, L. Sârbu, M. Cercașin³³, E. Reabenchî,³⁴ ș.a.) și spațiul românesc (A. Nanu³⁵, G. Onoiu³⁶, M. Bâtcă³⁷, S. Ciubotaru, I. H. Ciubotaru³⁸ ș.a.). These sources represent a broad set of essential references for analyzing the evolution of vestimentary art, traditional symbols and chromatics, as well as for understanding the transformations generated by globalization and new technologies. The documentary materials also include normative acts, museum archives, exhibition catalogues, and private collections, which together form a solid basis for an interdisciplinary interpretation of the vestimentary phenomenon in the Republic of Moldova.

1.2. Methodology of researching the evolution of vestimentary art. The study applies a complex and interdisciplinary approach that combines *historical, axiological, iconographic and iconological, imagological, typological, hermeneutic, semiological, and narratological* methods, complemented by *historical-comparative, formal-stylistic, synthesis, and systematization analyses*. The research is based on the interpretation of documentary sources – archives, museum catalogues, theoretical works, and period press – as well as on data obtained through interviews with visual artists, designers, and specialists in the field of clothing. *Participatory observation* and *empirical research* made it possible to directly investigate contemporary clothing collections, folk costume pieces, and creative processes, complemented by *interview methods* and *participatory experiments*.

Historical and analytical methods enabled the reconstruction of the evolutionary stages of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, from traditional forms to contemporary expressions,

³¹ CIOCANU, M. *Portul popular – meșteșug și artă*. În: Cartea etnografului. Colecții muzeale, obiceiuri și tradiții populare. Chișinău: Cartdidact, 2019, p. 154-220.

³² CONDRATICOVA, L. *Arta metalelor: portrete de creație ale bijutierilor și meșterilor de artă decorativă (a doua jumătate a secolului al XX-lea – începutul secolului al XXI-lea)*. Iași: Doxologia, 2021. 286 p. 319 p. CONDRATICOVA, L. *Școala autohtonă de giuvaiergerie: nume necunoscute și pe nedrept pierdute*. In: Chișinău: Cultura promovării imaginii orașului, Chișinău: 2023, pp. 332-339.

³³ PROCOP, N., NEGRU, V., SÂRBU, L., CERCAȘIN, M. *Terminologia vestimentară. Dicționar ilustrat roman-englez*. Chișinău: IPC, 2019 140 p.

³⁴ REABENCHI, E. *Influența tehnologiilor moderne asupra creării formei costumului istoric stilizat*. Chișinău: CEP UPSC, 2025. 40 p. REABENCHI, E. *Ilustrația de modă în Republica Moldova*. Chișinău: Cartier, 2025. 111 p.

³⁵ NANU, A. *Arta pe om. Look-ul și înțelesul semnelor vestimentare*. București: Editura COMPANIA, 2001. 206 p.

³⁶ NANU, A. *Vezi? Comunicarea prin imagine*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 2011. 327 p.

³⁷ ONOIU, G. *Istorie și modernitate în portul popular din Moldova și Țara Românească*. Craiova: Editura universitară, 2011. 300 p.

³⁸ BÂTCĂ, M. *Însemn și simbolul în vestimentația țărănească*. București: Nemira Publishing House, 1997. 176 p.

³⁹ CIUBOTARU, S., CIUBOTARU, I. H. *Portul popular din Moldova*. Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2023. 607 p. CIUBOTARU, S., CIUBOTARU, I. H. *Țesături și broderii decorative din Moldova*. Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2024.

while *iconographic* and *iconological analysis*³⁹, theorized by A. Warburg⁴⁰ și E. Panofsky⁴¹, was essential for deciphering the symbols and identity values of the folk costume, as also highlighted in the studies of N. Dunăre⁴², S. Șaranuța⁴³, L. Moisei⁴⁴, and others.

The research also integrates anthropological dimensions – cultural, linguistic, physical, and archaeological – based on the classical theories of Cl. Lévi-Strauss⁴⁵ și T. Parsons⁴⁶, which explain the interdependence between social change and the evolution of vestimentary art. This anthropological perspective is complemented by the sociology of fashion (P. Aspers, Fr. Godart⁴⁷), which addresses the vestimentary phenomenon as a social and cultural system. Comparative and intercultural analysis, as used by J. Peacock⁴⁸ in his studies, allows the vestimentary heritage of the Republic of Moldova to be placed in a European and global context, identifying similarities and differences in relation to other traditions.

Iconographic and *ethnographic methods* were applied directly during șezători (traditional gatherings) and creative workshops (for example, *Șezătoarea Basarabia*), documenting embroidery techniques, chromatic symbols, and community-based processes of transmitting traditions. *Action research*, with an emphasis on experimenting with traditional techniques in contemporary design, facilitated the reconstruction of folk costume pieces and the evaluation of their impact in exhibition and educational contexts.

The entire methodological approach was supported by theoretical and scientific principles – *functionalism, structuralism, objectivity, humanism, and social and cultural evolutionism* – which ensured the coherence of interpreting the vestimentary phenomenon and allowed the typological classification of traditional and historical pieces from the Republic of Moldova. This complex strategy provided an overall perspective on the evolution of vestimentary art, valorizing cultural heritage as a resource for contemporary creation and for strengthening national visual identity in the international context.

³⁹ ROCACIUC, V. *Artele plastice din Republica Moldova în contextul sociocultural al anilor 1940-2000*. Chișinău: Bons Offices SRL, 2011, p. 163.

⁴⁰ WARBURG, A. *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999. 873 p.

⁴¹ PANOFSKY, E. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. 384 p.

⁴² DUNĂRE, N., *Ornamentica tradițională comparată*. București: Editura Meridiane, 1979. 159 p.

⁴³ ȘARANUȚA, S. *Ornamente populare moldovenești*. Ch.: Timpul, 1985. 231 p.

⁴⁴ MOISEI, L. *Ornamentul: fenomen artistico-estetic. (Viziuni ontologice și estetice asupra ornamenticii țesăturilor tradiționale)*. Chișinău: Pontos, 2017, 271 p.

⁴⁵ LEVI-STRAUSS, Cl. *Le regard éloigné/ Privirea îndepărtată*. Paris: PLON, 1983. 398 p.

⁴⁶ PARSONS, T. *The Theory of Human Behavior in its Individual and Social Aspects*. In: *The American Sociologist*, 1996, vol. 27, nr. 4, p. 13–23.

⁴⁷ ASPERS, P., GODART, Fr. *Sociology of Fashion: Order and Change*. In: *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 39, Palo Alto (CA): Annual Reviews, 2013, pp. 171–192.

⁴⁸ PEACOCK, J. *The Chronicle of Western Costume: From the Ancient World to the Late Twentieth Century*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2003. 224 p.

Conclusions to Chapter 1. The theoretical and methodological foundations were developed by building on existing contributions and aligning them with the research objectives. Vestimentary art is approached in its full complexity – as an artistic, cultural, and identity-based expression – within an interdisciplinary framework combining historical, social, ethnographic, aesthetic, and technological perspectives. Clothing is viewed as both functional and as a system of signs and values shaping individual and collective identity.

The methodology combined historical and comparative analysis (pre-iconographic level) with ethnographic, iconological, and semiotic approaches, enabling the reconstruction of evolutionary stages and the interpretation of traditional costume as an expression of collective mentality re-signified through contemporary design.

This theoretical framework revealed both established scientific priorities and research gaps – especially on the recontextualization of tradition and the impact of new artistic and technological trends – thus justifying the relevance of an integrated perspective where past, present, and future are connected in a creative, critical dialogue.

Chapter 2 – *The development of vestimentary art*, analyzes the historical evolution of clothing in the Republic of Moldova through a complex set of scientific methods – axiological, typological, hermeneutic, semiotic, historical-comparative, and empirical – grounded in documentary sources, interviews, and direct observation. This methodological basis supports Subchapter 2.1. ***Cultural heritage between tradition and cultural alluvia: from the foundation of moldova to the independence of the Republic of Moldova***, which explores the stylistic evolution and cultural influences on costume in the Prut–Dniester area, emphasizing the interdependence between social, economic, and political changes and the artistic and symbolic expressions of clothing.

Within this framework, the evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova is interpreted through a coherent periodization—from the formation of the Moldovan state, through various cultural alluvia, the aesthetic impact of the Soviet regime, and up to the opening towards international trends.

The earliest clothing forms in the Prut–Dniester space, influenced by Byzantium and later by Ottoman and Western contacts, became during the Middle Ages a means of political and social assertion, bearing both status and identity symbols. In the 17th–18th centuries, costume reflected a dual aesthetic, where rural tradition intertwined with the refinement of urban elites exposed to Oriental and Western influences. After 1830, fashion increasingly aligned with European standards, while in the modern and interwar periods, clothing reflected the sobriety shaped by wartime, followed by the suppleness and comfort brought by Western modernity.

After the Second World War, the Soviet regime imposed control over cultural life, including in the sphere of clothing, steering it towards uniformization and ideological conformity. However, in the 1950s, vestimentary art in the Moldavian SSR oscillated between official directives and subtle echoes of Western elegance. The founding of the Chişinău Fashion House (1954) marked a central stage in disseminating trends and shaping aesthetic taste, contributing to the formation of a distinctive yet controlled aesthetic. The expansion of mass production coexisted with tailoring workshops and milliners who closely followed Soviet magazines and European models.

The 1960s brought simpler and more functional cuts, influenced by the *Khrushchev Thaw* and by trends filtered through Soviet aesthetics, while in the 1970s fashion oscillated between uniformization and international openness, visible in modern prints and textile arts, where creators such as M. Saka-Răcilă and L. Boico-Ceban incorporated folk traditions. In the 1980s, political stagnation generated creative tension, encouraging syntheses between traditional symbols and the aesthetics of socialist realism. The activity of this generation of artists supported the strengthening of textile arts departments and the preparation of a new vestimentary identity.

With *perestroika*, vestimentary art in the Moldavian SSR entered a process of redefinition, oriented towards professionalization and alignment with international trends. The *Union of Fine Artists (UAP)* reaffirmed its role as a cultural bridge, fostering exhibitions and facilitating dialogue with the European space. In this context, the establishment of the *Union of Designers of the Republic of Moldova* on February 20, 1988, marked a defining moment for consolidating the clothing industry and for promoting young creators.

The subchapter 2.2. ***Trends defining vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova: creativity, identity reconstruction, modernization, and artistic innovation***, analyzes the period following the proclamation of the Independence of the Republic of Moldova on August 27, 1991, which marked the beginning of an extensive process of identity reconstruction and transformation of visual culture. The national revival movement of the 1980s, characterized by the return to the Latin script and the valorization of local cultural heritage, prepared the ground for the emergence of a new aesthetic paradigm. In this context, vestimentary art, previously dominated by the canons of socialist realism, reoriented itself towards the exploration of traditional art and its integration into a contemporary visual language.

The first post-Soviet decade is characterized by a rupture from the models imposed during the Soviet period and by an intense search for authentic identity expressions. Visual artists and fashion designers explored traditional elements, integrating them into minimalist silhouettes and

modern cuts. Exhibitions organized by the Union of Fine Artists during the 1990s reflect this tendency toward hybridization between tradition and innovation.

During this period, *artistic education* gained momentum: AMTAP, UTM, ULIM, and UPS “Ion Creangă” established and developed programs in fashion design and textile arts, forming the first generation of local creators with interdisciplinary training. Among them, figures such as Ecaterina Ajder, Angela Doina-Bezutchi, Violeta Dodon-Buga, and Ala Lupu-Leancă emerged, working simultaneously as designers and educators and outlining the first coherent directions in author fashion design.

The aesthetics of the 1990s gradually aligned with global trends – *grunge*, *boho*, *sportswear influences*, and *minimalism* – filtered through local realities. The lack of industrial infrastructure and distribution networks led to an atelier-based fashion culture, with unique handmade pieces. Western magazines (*Vogue*, *L’Officiel*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Cosmopolitan*, etc.) and the appearance of cable television enabled contact with the *international fashion* phenomenon. The 2000s marked the maturation of the local fashion scene and the consolidation of educational and exhibition infrastructure. The UAP and the „Constantin Brâncuși” Exhibition Center organized biennials, salons, and competition-exhibitions that legitimized fashion design as a form of decorative art. At the same time, independent ateliers and designer brands founded by graduates of the new university programs emerged, developing conceptual and thematic collections. Participation in international events (*Art Podium*, *Black Sea Latex*, *creative camps*) created bridges with fashion design in Central and Eastern Europe.

The 2010–2020 decade brought an explosion of stylistic pluralism and the consolidation of fashion design as an interdisciplinary art form. *UAP exhibitions*, the *Moldova Salons*, and the *International Biennials of Decorative Art* offered spaces for artistic validation, while platforms such as *Moldova Fashion Days*, *Moldova Fashion Expo*, and *Moldovan Brands Runway* promoted local design nationally and internationally.

A defining element of this period is the rise of *sustainable design* and ethical production. Projects such as *InnSpirECO* demonstrate the activist potential of fashion in addressing the ecological crisis. At the same time, brands specialized in artisanal accessories – *Pearl Code*, *Marin Elle*, *Saşa Sesame* – emerged, valorizing local craftsmanship in contemporary forms.

Digitalization has radically transformed the way collections are created and presented: social media, online portfolios, and hybrid events allow rapid access to international audiences and democratize the visibility of local designers. The most recent years, marked by the pandemic, geopolitical crises, and accelerated digitalization, have led to a profound reconfiguration of vestimentary art. Priorities have shifted toward comfort, functionality, and *ecological*

responsibility: biodegradable materials, layering, capsule collections with an extended lifespan, and so on.

Creative platforms such as *ARTCOR*, *ZIPHOUSE*, *MFD*, and *MBR* act as talent incubators, connecting local design to European and international circuits. At the same time, initiatives like *dininima.md* support local production and facilitate the export of domestic brands.

Subchapter 2.3. *The role of education and cultural platforms in the training of designers*, presents the evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova after 1991, which is inseparable from the development of educational institutions and cultural platforms that supported the training of designers. Starting from the 1990s, the emergence of programs dedicated to fashion design in higher and vocational education created the premises for the professionalization of the field and its integration into the international circuit. The introduction, in 1993, of the *Fashion Design specialization* in the *National Register of Higher Education Specializations* marked a decisive moment in establishing this discipline as an autonomous field with both aesthetic and economic impact.

Institutions such as the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts (AMTAP), the Technical University of Moldova (UTM), the Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University (UPS), the Free International University of Moldova (ULIM), the “A. Plămădeală” College of Arts, and the Technological College of Chişinău have trained specialists in textile and fashion arts, who later became integrated into the creative industries.

In the Republic of Moldova, fashion design education began at the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts with the establishment (1993–1994) of the Department of Fashion Design under the leadership of Ecaterina Pavlovschi, later becoming part of the Department of Design (2017). Professors such as Nadejda Barbăroşie, Valentina Armaş, Ludmila Pleşco, and Svetlana Sudacevschi trained the first generations of creators recognized internationally. Shortly after, in 1995, the Technical University of Moldova created the Department of Industrial Fashion Design, focused on garment technology, which expanded with Master’s programs (1999) and textile specializations (2009).

In 1999, the Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University launched the *Fashion Design specialization*, and in 2005 the Free International University of Moldova introduced programs in interior and fashion design.

ZIPHOUSE (2017) and ARTCOR (2019) strengthened this ecosystem by linking education with innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship. Platforms such as *Art Podium*, *Moldova Fashion Days (MFD)*, and *Moldovan Brands Runway (MBR)* promote local brands, while events

like *Pecherski Kashtany*, *Feeric Fashion Week*, *Transilvania Fashion Festival*, and *Univer Art Fashion* integrated Moldovan design into European circuits.

In the past two decades, Moldovan designers have entered major international events – *Paris, Strasbourg, and Dubai fashion weeks* – thanks to the synergy of academic education, cultural platforms, and institutional support, which fostered a dynamic scene connected to global trends yet rooted in local values.

Research confirms that these institutions and platforms have professionalized the field, trained competitive creators, and promoted young talents, giving them access to international markets and enabling innovative reinterpretations of the traditional costume.

Subchapter 2.4. *The impact of globalization and development perspectives in local fashion design*, highlights how globalization has reshaped vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova in aesthetic, symbolic, and media terms, shifting from the Soviet ideological canon to a creative freedom capable of engaging in dialogue with the international languages of fashion. After 1991, cultural-technological openness and new media amplified the transnational circulation of images and concepts, allowing local vestimentary art to redefine its visual identity and gain visibility on global stages and platforms (*Vie Fashion Week*, *Vie International Awards*, *Emirates Fashion Week*, *Dare Social Fashion Show*, *Tiffany's Fashion Week Paris*, *Paris Fashion Week*, *Romanian Design Week*, *Feeric Fashion Week*, etc.).

To illustrate how media developments have influenced the perception and promotion of vestimentary art in the context of globalization, an analysis was conducted on the transition from traditional mass media to new media and on the connections between fashion design and the audiovisual arts. The decisive transformation began in the 1990s, but the emergence of new media such as *YouTube* (2005) and social networks like *Facebook* and *Instagram* democratized promotion and enabled direct communication between creators and audiences. Media convergence has led to collaborations between fashion design and the audiovisual arts. In this context, clothing has become a narrative and symbolic vehicle, capable of conveying identity and ideological messages. Fashion thus aligns with the concept formulated by sociologists such as Patrik Aspers and Frédéric Godart, who define it as an “unplanned process of recurring change”⁴⁹, flexible and receptive to global influences.

Access to the international market has generated a phenomenon of aesthetic hybridization: Moldovan designers and brands *oriented toward (1) international challenges in the dynamic segment connected to global trends* – such as *Evgheni Hudorojcov*, *Altezza by L. Storojuc*, *Barbara*

⁴⁹ ASPERS, P., GODART, Fr., *Sociology of Fashion: Order and Change*, pp. 171–192;

Collection, O'Blanc, Diosa, Nicole Storm, Sekana, Lilia Ceaicovschi, and Șotropa – illustrate this synthesis, combining minimalist cuts and sustainable practices. In parallel, established creators such as *Kasandruța, Valentina Vidrașcu, Alina Bradu, Etnopera, Florii, Rodica Nicov, and Irina Madan*, following the (2) vector oriented toward the symbiosis of the ethno style and the integration of local refinement into international standards, promote the reinterpretation of traditional elements in international contexts. Analysis of collections has shown that in some cases designers shift between these vectors, as seen in *EHO* by *Evgheni Hudorjcov* in the *INITIO* collection, where local and international influences are strategically combined to emphasize a fashion identity with deep roots yet open to the world.

Exhibitions such as *Fashion and Lifestyle in the 20th Century* (MNIM, 2023), along with *MBR* and *MFD* runway shows, demonstrate how vestimentary heritage has become a current source of inspiration. Against the backdrop of global trends, sustainability emerges as a key principle: emerging brands such as *Sasha Sesame* and *Dori Lys* emphasize natural fibers, creative recycling, and *upcycling*, turning local fashion into both an aesthetic and ethical manifesto.

The study shows that future development relies on four converging axes: strengthening cultural heritage, digitalizing processes, integrating sustainability, and creating smart international connections via regional networks, curatorial platforms, and educational partnerships. These can position Moldovan fashion as culturally rooted, ethically produced, aesthetically coherent, and globally relevant.

Conclusions to Chapter 2. The interdisciplinary approach has enabled the periodization of the evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova – from the medieval Byzantine and Oriental influences, through the Westernization of the 19th century and the uniformizing Soviet aesthetics, to the opening towards international trends after 1991. This multi-layered heritage has laid the foundation for a renewed vestimentary identity, visible in the changes in silhouettes, materials, and aesthetic principles.

After the proclamation of independence, the cultural revival stimulated the emergence of specialized institutions and cultural platforms, which trained new generations of designers and created spaces for interdisciplinary dialogue. Globalization and new media, forming a *digital ecosystem*, have reshaped the creative process by democratizing promotion and fostering the integration of sustainable practices. Local fashion has matured through the integration of digitalization, international collaborations, and sustainability, asserting itself on the global stage.

Future development depends on consolidating an artistic elite, adopting technological innovations, and promoting sustainability within a constant dialogue between tradition and modernity. The reinterpretation of traditional symbols in a contemporary language, supported by

educational and cultural institutions, ensures the formation of a competitive local visual identity at the international level. In this context, the dynamic vector oriented towards global challenges dominates the scene, yet it is complemented by ethno-contemporary reinterpretation and the valorization of traditional heritage, which provide the field with authenticity and continuity.

Chapter 3, *Traditional clothing heritage as a source of inspiration: artistic values and contemporary reinterpretations*, begins with *Subchapter 3.1*, dedicated to ***analyzing the synergy between tradition and innovation in modern vestimentary art***. The second vector (ethno) and the third (traditional) emphasize the originality of national vestimentary art through a form of cultural conservatism that guarantees authenticity and identity within diversity. From the archaic forms of the folk costume to contemporary creations, this art is defined as a diachronic process shaped by historical, social, and aesthetic contexts.

The folk costume, the nucleus of this evolution, is not merely an expression of past eras but a complex system of patterns, ornamental structures, symbols, and social functions that have ensured the continuity and stylistic adaptability of local clothing. Traditional Romanian vestimentary art, valued for its visual strength and symbolism, has inspired both major painters and fashion designers – from Henri Matisse (*La blouse roumaine*, 1940) to *Yves Saint Laurent*, *Jean Paul Gaultier*, *Kenzo*, *Max Mara*, and others – becoming a universal heritage reference.

The *cămașa cu altiță* (traditional embroidered blouse), at the center of the synthesis between tradition and innovation and inscribed on the UNESCO Heritage List in 2022, has been propelled by festivals and ethnographic research, while its digital visibility has transformed it into a living symbol of identity and an inexhaustible source for contemporary fashion design. The evolution of traditional blouses is presented in the thesis through the changes in shape, cut lines, and decoration.

Alongside the blouse, pieces such as the *fota*, *catrința*, and *various head coverings* enrich the complexity of the traditional costume, offering valuable typological models for contemporary design. The study of traditional crafts – *weaving*, *needlework*, *crochet*, *leatherworking* – provides technical and aesthetic resources for current creations, fostering a dialogue between archaic heritage and international trends.

The traditional men's costume from the Prut–Dniester region, with its Thracian-Illyrian roots, stands out through the continuity of its austere yet symbolically charged cut. The *white shirt*, *ițari*, *bundițe*, *pieptare*, and *cojoace* form an archaic vestimentary code, attested since Antiquity, which combines functionality with profound aesthetics. The structural simplicity and symbolism of these pieces offer contemporary designers an authentic visual vocabulary easily adaptable to sustainable materials and current architectural lines.

Women's head coverings developed as layered structures during the Middle Ages. Men's headwear – including hoods, *căciulă de cârlan* (karakul hats), *straw hats*, and *felt hats* – had utilitarian, identity-based, and ceremonial roles and have recently been revalorized in conceptual collections and stage costumes. Their symbolism, correlated with social status and the rhythms of community life, offers contemporary designers a rich repertoire of forms and materials for stylistic reinterpretations.

The traditional ensemble also includes accessories – *brâu*, *chimir*, *traiste*, *desagi*, *năfrămițe* – and ornaments such as *wreaths*, *earrings*, *coin necklaces*, *bracelets*, and *zgărdițe*, which indicated age or status and had decorative and apotropaic functions. Ethnographic and archaeological research confirms both their formal diversity and symbolic roles.

Traditional footwear, especially *opinci*, illustrates the refined simplicity of archaic design and continuity of identity from Antiquity to today. Traditional manufacturing techniques provide valuable sources for contemporary reinterpretations, offering ergonomic and symbolic solutions adaptable from prêt-à-porter to conceptual collections.

The research highlights the artistic potential of Moldova's clothing heritage as a rich source for contemporary art and fashion, enabling the preservation of cultural identity while merging authenticity with innovation into a recognizable aesthetic language, supporting heritage preservation and boosting the international visibility of Moldovan vestimentary art.

The subchapter 3.2. *The artistic foundations of reinterpreting the folk costume*, demonstrates how the artistic reinterpretation of the folk costume from the Republic of Moldova begins with understanding it as a coherent system in which *functionality*, *durability*, and *beauty* – the *Vitruvian triad* – exist in an organic balance. Transferring this paradigm from architecture and design to the field of fashion allows for a multidimensional reading of the traditional costume: utility guides the choice of materials and cut, durability integrates archaic structures into contemporary technologies, and beauty grants artistic legitimacy and symbolic value to folk ornamentation.

The folk costume is no longer regarded solely as a museum artifact, but as living heritage capable of inspiring innovative fashion creations and regenerating cultural identity in a global context. Its artistic reinterpretation relies on three fundamental directions: *formal contextualization* – maintaining canonical proportions and layering; *adapting materials and cuts* to contemporary ergonomic and aesthetic requirements; *reconfiguring decorative motifs* through modern technologies while preserving their symbolic significance. These directions transform the traditional costume into a contemporary aesthetic alphabet, able to respond to sustainability demands and current visual sensibilities.

In contemporary vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, the valorization of heritage does not involve directly reproducing archaic forms, but creatively reinterpreting them. The *cămașa cu altiță*, *fota*, *brâu*, or *căciula* are transfigured into updated silhouettes and materials, while retaining their compositional logic and symbolic meaning.

Traditional ornamentation, composed of stylized geometric motifs, functions as a true visual alphabet with protective and identity-related values. In contemporary design, these motifs are reinterpreted through two complementary directions: the first involves graphic stylization and modular reconfiguration, adapting them to the visual rhythms of current aesthetics; the second aims to preserve their established symbolic balance, maintaining continuity with the meanings transmitted across generations. However, responsible reinterpretation requires a deep knowledge of symbolic codes to avoid decorative trivialization and drifting into kitsch, ensuring an authentic dialogue between heritage and modern creation.

The traditional chromatic palette – maintained or reconfigured through contemporary accents – offers designers a coherent expressive language that can be easily adapted to modern visual concepts. Numerous Moldovan designers illustrate these directions: Angela Doina Bezutchi (*Iarna Elegie, Tradiții Populare*), EHO by Evgheni Hudorjcov (*INITIO*, presented at *Paris Fashion Week*), Alina Bradu (*Loconic*), Coreli by Corina Hamureac (*Origini, Legend of Moldova*), Kasandruța, and Valentina Vidrașcu, who incorporate the structure and ornamentation of the folk costume into creations with international visibility. The trend is further supported by the emergence of ethno-contemporary brands (*Etno Accent, Etnopera, Florii*), which translate heritage into the prêt-à-porter and sustainable segments.

This orientation is also found in the approaches of designers from Romania and Ukraine – Lana Dumitru, Vita Kin, Lilia Poustovit – who confirm the regional relevance of the dialogue between tradition and modern design. The integration of archaic symbolism into collections presented at international events demonstrates the competitive potential of Eastern European textile heritage on the global market.

Traditional materials – linen, hemp, wool, and silk (*borangic*) – are being revitalized in the context of sustainable fashion. Natural fibers, with remarkable tactile and functional properties, allow the integration of traditional craft techniques (weaving, embroidery, crochet, felting, etc.) into modern creative processes. Combining these with innovative or recycled materials generates aesthetic contrasts and reaffirms the link between heritage and ecological responsibility.

This artistic vector has major cultural and social implications: pieces inspired by the folk costume become not only fashion objects, but also vehicles of collective memory, worn in urban or ceremonial contexts as statements of identity. Through exhibitions, festivals, contemporary

șezători (traditional gatherings), and collaborations between designers and folk artisans, clothing heritage gains visibility and returns to society.

The research results have shown the revalorization of traditional heritage in contemporary design through an artistic approach that preserves authenticity and translates it into a current language, supported by cultural initiatives, creative workshops, and educational platforms. However, only a part of local designers consistently explore the synthesis between tradition and innovation, indicating a potential still insufficiently harnessed for shaping a distinct artistic identity with real prospects for international recognition. Thus, the vestimentary heritage of the Republic of Moldova proves to be not only a witness of cultural history, but also a catalyst for innovation and sustainable design.

Subchapter 3.3. ***Modern Forms of Promoting Vestimentary Art (Exhibitions, Festivals, Creative Workshops, Contemporary Șezători, Cultural Platforms and Projects)***. In the context of the evolution of contemporary vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, exhibitions, creative workshops, contemporary șezători (traditional gatherings), and cultural platforms have become essential tools for aesthetic education and for the valorization of textile heritage.

Exhibition events of the past decade have outlined a historical and stylistic perspective on the development of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova. The exhibition *Fashion and Style in Chișinău and Bucharest in the 1930s* (MNIM, 2019) presented the cultural convergences between the two Romanian capitals during the interwar period, highlighting the refinement of forms and French and German influences. Later, the exhibition *Fashion and Lifestyle in the 20th Century* (MNIM, 2023) offered a chronological reading of the transformations of clothing, from Art Deco aesthetics to Soviet uniformization and post-Soviet plurality, providing designers with valuable references for contemporary reinterpretations.

Exhibitions dedicated to the *cămașa cu alțiță* (traditional embroidered blouse) – such as *Sister Blouses, Old and New Symbols* (MNEIN, 2023) and *The Cămașa cu Alțiță from the Republic of Moldova* (Museum of Art, Piatra Neamț, 2023) – have consolidated the role of this garment as a shared identity symbol of the Romanian–Moldovan cultural space. By integrating museum pieces alongside contemporary creations, these events demonstrated the vitality of traditional crafts and their capacity to adapt to current design. In the same vein, exhibitions such as *Promoters of National Identity and Values* (MNIM, 2022) and *Mărturie – A Testimony of Love for Folk Costume* (MNAM, 2025) offered visual dialogues between heritage, modern painting, and contemporary fashion creation. In recent decades, *contemporary șezători* have revitalized traditional vestimentary heritage in the Republic of Moldova, transforming the old communal format into an educational and creative framework adapted to modern society. They function as

spaces for collective work and participatory research, where traditional blouse models are reconstructed based on historical documents, museum objects, and oral testimonies, contributing to the safeguarding of intangible heritage of national value.

An emblematic example is *Şezătoarea Basarabia* (founded in 2016), which has produced dozens of *cămaşi cu altiţă* included in albums, books, and reference exhibitions, while involving participants in researching traditions from their native communities. Through interregional collaborations and events such as exhibitions dedicated to the Great Union (*100 Basarabian Blouses Saved in the Context of the Great Union*, March 2019; *Şezătoarea Unirii*, held on December 2, 2023, in Bucharest on Romania's National Day), *şezători* have created cultural bridges between Romania and the Republic of Moldova (*Şezătoarea Basarabia, Mândria Basarabiei, Şezătoare Bucureşti, Vatra Satului, Țara Făgăraşului, Boreşelor din Drăguş*, etc.), fostering exchange of experience and the transmission of values. These communities affirm themselves as sustainable forms of revitalizing tradition, connecting generations and offering sources of inspiration for contemporary fashion, contributing to the integration of vestimentary heritage into a current and European cultural discourse.

It is important to note that early initiation into the values of traditional art is an essential factor for the preservation and transmission of intangible cultural heritage. A relevant example is the *Gheorghe Ghimpu Theoretical Lyceum* in Coloniţa, where, under the author's guidance, the art of the traditional blouse has been integrated into Technological Education classes. Through this subject, students become familiar with the meaning of ornaments in traditional clothing decoration, authentic cuts, used materials, chromatic range, and specific working techniques.

University exhibitions have offered students the opportunity to experiment with the reinterpretation of traditional pieces and to contextualize them within current aesthetic discourses. Thematic masterclasses, such as *Sewing Techniques and Embroidered Symbols* (*Scientia* – 2022, ULIM) or *Making Ornaments from ECO Materials* (*Night of Museums*, MNEIN, 2022), have promoted sustainable approaches and encouraged interdisciplinary dialogue between *decorative arts* and *ecological education*.

Cultural projects such as *Măiestria* have been pivotal in popularizing the *cămaşa cu altiţă* internationally, organizing exhibitions at the ASTRA Museum (Sibiu), Romanian Peasant Museum (Bucharest), the UN (Vienna), and the Costume Museum (Lisbon), thus building bridges between communities in Romania, Moldova, and the diaspora. Events like *IA – Roots to Infinity* (Chişinău, 2024) introduced innovative concepts merging heritage with digital technologies.

Similarly, festivals such as *IA Mania*, the *International Day of the Romanian Blouse*, and the *National Day of the Folk Costume* have become cultural landmarks, fostering dialogue between

artisans, designers, and the public, encouraging creative reinterpretations of archaic symbols, and enhancing the international visibility of Moldovan vestimentary heritage.

The research results show that the evolution of vestimentary art is supported by exhibitions, contemporary *șezători*, and cultural platforms that facilitate the transmission of traditions and connect the folk costume to modern design. These initiatives have become reference points for the revalorization of textile heritage and have provided access to specialized resources and expertise, stimulating innovation and the visibility of local creations.

Conclusions to Chapter 3. In contemporary fashion creation, tradition and innovation meet through the recontextualization of heritage as both a plastic and conceptual resource. Elements such as rhythms, proportions, chromatics, and ornamentation are translated into modern languages, avoiding imitation and transforming into a visual grammar capable of supporting current narratives about identity and time. Digital technologies and ecological materials expand the creative field, enabling rapid prototyping and sustainable solutions, where the ethics of materials becomes part of the aesthetics.

The reinterpretation of the folk costume begins with a morphological and semantic analysis of its cut, structure, and symbols, transforming traditional motifs into compositional operators. Artistic responsibility entails the sustainable selection of materials and the valorization of traditional techniques as compositional methods, not merely as crafts. Within this framework, the folk costume becomes a flexible visual alphabet that can be integrated into diverse aesthetics – from minimalism to conceptual couture – offering rules rather than limits.

The ecosystem formed by exhibitions, workshops, *șezători*, and cultural platforms ensures the circuit of research–production–presentation–validation–dissemination. Museums and alternative spaces serve as sources for documentation and experimentation, while the runway and the digital environment provide visibility and critical validation. Educational programs and contemporary *șezători* ensure intergenerational continuity, transforming heritage into a living source for current creation.

Thus, vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova evolves through a synthesis of tradition, globalization, and technology. Heritage offers symbols and formal grammar, cultural platforms create the context for validation, while material and digital innovation provide direction. From this convergence emerges an authentic, sustainable, and internationally competitive fashion discourse, where the ethno and traditional vectors complement the dynamics of local specificity.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the study of the evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova, approached in all its complexity, several research results were formulated, derived from the achievement of the proposed aim and objectives:

- The evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova has been interpreted through the establishment of a coherent periodization – from the formation of the Moldovan state, through various cultural alluvia and the aesthetic impact of the Soviet regime, to the opening towards international trends, with a particular focus on the last decades.
- The study highlighted the significant impact of educational institutions on the development of the fashion industry in the Republic of Moldova, by training competitive generations of creators and developing the technical and artistic skills necessary for the advancement of the field.
- The research underlined the importance of cultural and educational platforms in shaping and promoting young talents in fashion design. These initiatives have facilitated the access of local designers to international markets and created a space for the artistic and innovative reinterpretation of the traditional costume.
- The study demonstrated that globalization and international trends have reshaped fashion design in the Republic of Moldova, fostering the integration of modern concepts and advanced technologies, the emergence of creative directions that combine tradition with innovation, and the diversification of collections. Participation in international exhibitions and events has facilitated the exchange of ideas, access to new markets, and increased the visibility of local brands on the global stage.
- The analysis revealed the artistic potential of traditional vestimentary heritage, confirming its value as a source of inspiration for contemporary art and current fashion design. The reinterpretation of traditional elements allows the preservation of cultural identity, while their integration into international trends generates a recognizable aesthetic language that combines authenticity with innovation. This revalorization also supports the preservation of heritage and amplifies the international visibility of Moldovan vestimentary art.
- The revalorization of traditional heritage in contemporary design is carried out through an artistic approach that preserves authenticity and translates it into a current language, supported by cultural initiatives, creative workshops, and educational platforms. However, only part of the designers consistently explore the tradition–innovation synthesis, which shows a potential still insufficiently harnessed for defining a distinct identity. Heritage thus

proves to be not only a witness of cultural history, but also a catalyst for innovation and sustainable design.

- The research emphasizes the role of exhibitions, workshops, contemporary *șezători*, and cultural platforms in the revalorization and promotion of vestimentary heritage. These initiatives have contributed to preserving traditions, ensuring the intergenerational transmission of crafts, and creating bridges between folk costume and modern design, while also facilitating access to resources, innovation, and international visibility.

The *three main spheres of vestimentary art* in the Republic of Moldova are:

1. *The international vector* – the dynamic segment, promoted by most designers, which valorizes models and principles shared on the global fashion scene;
2. *The ethno vector* – oriented towards the symbiosis of traditional references and local refinement, adapted to international standards, promoted by a smaller group of creators;
3. *The traditional vector* – focused on the authentic valorization of the folk costume, supported by the national design school and independent creators.

Together, these directions define a field that is both connected to global trends and rooted in cultural identity, transforming tradition into a modern and sustainable visual discourse. They demonstrate the ability of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova to integrate global innovation, maintain a dialogue with tradition, and valorize community resources, establishing itself as an identity marker and as an artistic and economic resource with international visibility. Recommendations

The recommendations of this research aim to strengthen cultural identity, optimize creative processes, and stimulate innovation in fashion design:

- Develop a national strategy to support young designers and sustainable initiatives through mentorship, scholarships, partnerships, and incentives for upcycling, slow fashion, and ecological materials.
- Facilitate participation in international events to enhance experience exchange and the competitiveness of local brands.
- Digitize vestimentary heritage through a dedicated platform for archiving and documenting traditional garments.
- Stimulate research and education by integrating textile ethnography and fashion history into university curricula and through collaborations with museums and workshops.
- Create a National Center for Fashion Design and Innovation to coordinate initiatives and promote collections inspired by tradition.

- Implement educational projects to promote traditions through workshops and șezători for young people.
- Develop regional and international collaborations for best practice exchange and support local designers who valorize tradition through platforms, subsidies, and grants.

Based on these, **future research** should:

- Explore the impact of modern technologies and smart materials on local fashion design.
- Study the influence of new technologies on protecting and digitizing textile heritage.
- Analyze sustainability and upcycling trends in Moldovan fashion.
- Evaluate the potential for international market development for local brands.

This research solves the major scientific problem of determining the tripartite structure of vestimentary art in Moldova, identifying its main exponents, vectors, and contents, and outlining creative directions that can build a strong, competitive visual identity on the international scene.

The research results demonstrate that, although most local designers align their creations with international trends, there is an active core of creators who explore the artistic qualities of the folk costume and integrate them into current aesthetic concepts. They contribute both to preserving and revitalizing cultural identity and to increasing the international visibility of vestimentary art from the Republic of Moldova. The study also highlights the need for an interpretive framework and appropriate methodologies for adapting traditional elements to new aesthetic and technological paradigms. This framework supports a coherent artistic discourse based on authenticity, continuity, and innovation. An essential role in this process is played by art education institutions and cultural platforms, which provide theoretical support and practical training to new generations of designers. Educational programs and creative workshops facilitate the transmission of traditional crafts, the understanding of vestimentary symbolism, and their integration into contemporary fashion design. At the same time, the evolution of vestimentary art reflects the transition from Soviet paradigms to the reaffirmation of identity, supported by technologies and international exchanges. Events and platforms have strengthened local creativity and the internationalization of brands, demonstrating the need for a sustainable strategy that combines heritage with innovation in order to position the field on the global stage.

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ADNOTARE

la teza de doctor în arte „Evoluția artei vestimentare în Republica Moldova”,
autoare Bîzgu Tatiana,

Universitatea Liberă Internațională din Moldova, Chișinău, 2025.

Specialitatea: 651.01 – Teoria și istoria artelor plastice

Structura tezei. Lucrarea constă din introducere, trei capitole, adnotări în două limbi, concluzii și recomandări, bibliografie din 610 de titluri, glosar al termenilor utilizați în arta vestimentară, 7 anexe, 238 figuri, 10 tabele, 159 pagini text de bază. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 35 lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: arta vestimentară, patrimoniu vestimentar, costum, moda, design contemporan, creativitate, croi, simbolism, accesorii, podoabe, broderie.

Domeniul de studiu: arte vizuale (651.01 – Teoria și istoria artelor plastice).

Scopul lucrării constă în a investiga din perspectivă interdisciplinară parcursul dezvoltării artei vestimentare din Republica Moldova, a determina specificul, amploarea și resorturile ei creative, pentru a releva tendințele care au configurat-o și o proiectează în continuare.

Obiectivele prezentei cercetări reies din scopul asumat și constau în: periodizarea evoluției artei vestimentare pentru a stabili constantele și variabilele care i-au asigurat procesualitate în timp; evaluarea formal-stilistică a pieselor de referință, pentru a demonstra modalitățile și capacitatea artistică a creatorilor; analiza formelor consacrate și celor mai noi care stimulează promovarea creativității artistice, determinarea rolului instituțiilor și a organizațiilor de profil în monitorizarea proceselor artistice în domeniu, relevarea impactului factorilor socioculturali, tendințelor de globalizare și tehnologiilor în formarea, afirmarea și performantizarea creatorilor autohtoni; punerea în valoare a resurselor culturale prin care această artă capătă expresii artistice inconfundabile.

Problema științifică importantă soluționată constă în determinarea structurii tripartite (internațional, etno și tradițional) a artei vestimentare din Republica Moldova, examinarea multiplană, în evoluție, a fenomenului ei, prin raportare la contextul designului vestimentar contemporan. Au fost identificați exponenții principali, vectorii și conținuturile fiecăreia. Au fost stabilite direcțiile de creație capabile să genereze o identitate vizuală vestimentară remarcabilă și competitivă pe scena artistică internațională.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică rezidă în elaborarea primei sinteze academice consacrate evoluției artei vestimentare din Republica Moldova, analizată din perspectivă interdisciplinară și amplu contextualizată cultural, pentru a putea cuprinde vastitatea domeniului examinat. Sunt relevate mijloacele specifice prin care arta vestimentară operează în sistemele culturii, afirmându-se ca o artă autonomă, mereu adecvată esteticii timpului.

Semnificația teoretică. Conceptul funcționării structurii tripartite a artei vestimentare, determinarea specificului fiecărui vector și interdependența acestora, a facilitat relevarea contribuțiilor la configurarea și îmbogățirea fenomenului artei vestimentare. Cercetarea își propune să consolideze fundamentul teoretic al domeniului prin utilizarea unei metodologii integrate cu resorturi estetice, istorice și socioculturale, împreună capabile să releve caracterul fenomenelor care alcătuiesc esența artei vestimentare, să coreleze evoluția artei locale aflate în dialog cu direcțiile contemporane ale designului internațional. Interpretarea etapelor de dezvoltare, performare, transformare artistică și stilistică a vestimentației din Republica Moldova a prilejuit identificarea strânselor relații între diverse genuri de artă, rolul mijloacelor artistice vizuale consacrate în patrimoniul vestimentar tradițional, ca sursă inepuizabilă de inspirație pentru practicile artistice contemporane. Studiul evidențiază, totodată, necesitatea elaborării unui cadru interpretativ și a unor metodologii adecvate pentru adaptarea elementelor tradiționale la noile paradigme estetice și tehnologice, susținând astfel un discurs artistic bazat pe autenticitate, continuitate și inovație.

Valoarea aplicativă. Rezultatele cercetării sunt utile procesului educațional din instituțiile de învățământ cu profil artistic – preuniversitar și universitar – și sprijină activitatea specialiștilor din domeniu: istorici și critici de artă, etnografi, designeri vestimentari, scenografi, muzeografi, creatori liberi și colecționari. Studiul oferă o bază documentar-ilustrativă consistentă pentru potențialii utilizatori, inclusiv pentru viitoarele cercetări în această direcție, pentru elaborarea proiectelor curatoriale și inițiative de creare, de dezvoltare, conservare și promovare a patrimoniului vestimentar național.

Rezultatele cercetării demonstrează plinătatea artistică a fenomenului vestimentar la configurarea căruia contribuie cei trei vectori: 1) orientat spre provocările internaționale; 2) orientat spre simbioza stilului etno; 3) ancorat în valorificarea modelelor tradiționale. În felul acesta, creațiile designerilor sunt adresate diferitor segmente de consumatori din societate. Relațiile interdependente dintre cei trei vectori consolidează identitatea culturală și sporește vizibilitatea internațională a artei vestimentare din Republica Moldova.

Implementarea rezultatelor științifice: Rezultatele cercetării au fost reflectate în 33 de publicații științifice și de popularizare a științei, publicate în diverse reviste de specialitate și materialele conferințelor din Republica Moldova, Ucraina, Estonia, Muntenegru, Japonia, SUA. Volumul total al publicațiilor depășește 12 coli de autor. Ele au fost valorificate sub formă de cursuri sau suporturi didactice inclusiv în procesul educațional universitar și preuniversitar.

ANNOTATION

To the thesis of Doctor in Arts „The evolution of vestimentary art in the Republic of Moldova” Bizgu Tatiana, Chişinău, 2025

Specialization: 651.01 – Theory and history of fine arts

Structure of the thesis. The thesis comprises an introduction, three chapters, abstracts in two languages, conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography of 610 titles, a glossary of vestimentary terms, seven appendices, 238 figures, ten tables, and 159 pages of core text. The results of the research are presented in 35 scientific publications.

Keywords: fashion art, clothing heritage, costume, fashion, contemporary design, creativity, cut, symbolism, accessories, ornaments, embroidery.

Field of research: visual arts (651.01 - Theory and History of Fine Arts).

Goal of the thesis is to investigate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, the developmental trajectory of clothing art in the Republic of Moldova, to determine its specificity, scope, and creative mechanisms, in order to reveal the trends that have shaped it and continue to project its evolution.

The objectives of this research are: to periodize the evolution of clothing art in order to identify constants and variables that ensured its processuality; to conduct a formal-stylistic evaluation of reference pieces to demonstrate artistic capacity; to analyze both established and new forms that stimulate creativity; to determine the role of institutions and professional organizations in monitoring artistic processes; to reveal the impact of sociocultural factors, globalization, and technologies in shaping and affirming local creators; and to valorize cultural resources through which this art acquires unique expressions.

The main scientific problem solved lies in determining the tripartite structure (international, ethnic, and traditional) of clothing art in Moldova and examining the phenomenon diachronically in relation to contemporary fashion design. The principal exponents, vectors, and their contents were identified, and creative directions capable of generating a distinctive and competitive visual clothing identity on the international stage were outlined.

Scientific novelty and originality consist in elaborating the first academic synthesis dedicated to the evolution of clothing art in Moldova, analyzed from an interdisciplinary and cultural perspective, encompassing the field in its entirety. The research highlights the specific means by which clothing art functions within cultural systems, affirming itself as an autonomous art, always relevant to the aesthetics of its time.

The theoretical significance. The concept of the tripartite structure of clothing art, with the specificity of each vector and their interdependence, revealed key contributions to the shaping and enrichment of the phenomenon. The research consolidates the theoretical foundation of the field through an integrated methodology with aesthetic, historical, and sociocultural dimensions, capable of revealing the essence of clothing art and correlating its local evolution with contemporary international design. Interpreting the stages of development and artistic-stylistic transformation of clothing in Moldova highlighted close relationships between art genres and the role of visual means from traditional heritage as an inexhaustible source of inspiration for contemporary practice. The study also stresses the need for frameworks and methodologies to adapt traditional elements to new aesthetic and technological paradigms, supporting a discourse of authenticity, continuity, and innovation.

The applicative value. The research results are useful in the educational process within artistic-profile institutions – pre-university and university – and support the activity of specialists in the field: art historians and critics, ethnographers, fashion designers, scenographers, museum curators, independent creators, and collectors. The study provides a consistent documentary and illustrative basis for potential users, including for future research in this direction, for the elaboration of curatorial projects, and for initiatives of creation, development, conservation, and promotion of the national clothing heritage.

The results of the research demonstrate the artistic fullness of the clothing phenomenon, shaped by three vectors: (1) oriented towards international challenges; (2) oriented towards the symbiosis of the ethno style; (3) anchored in the valorization of traditional models. In this way, designers' creations are addressed to different segments of society. The interdependent relationships among the three vectors consolidate cultural identity and enhance the international visibility of clothing art from the Republic of Moldova.

Implementation of scientific results. The research results have been reflected in 33 scientific and science-popularization publications, issued in various specialized journals and conference proceedings from the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Estonia, Montenegro, Japan, and the USA. The total volume of publications exceeds 12 author's sheets. They have also been capitalized on in the form of courses or teaching materials, including in the university and pre-university educational process.

BÎZGU TATIANA

**THE EVOLUTION OF VESTIMENTARY ART IN THE
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

651.01 – THEORY AND HISTORY OF VISUAL ARTS

**ABSTRACT
of the doctoral thesis in arts**

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