

CONTENT:

INTRODUCTION	4
Chapter I. VESTIMENTATION – EXPRESSION OF HUMAN IMAGE.....	8
I.1. Image and Beauty.....	10
I.2. Beauty, the ideal of human look.....	14
I.3. Expressions of beauty in images.....	16
I.4. Human Beauty within the social context.....	20
I.5. Fashions and Models.....	23
Chapter II. AESTHETIC MARKS IN VESTIMENTATION.....	31
II.1. General Aesthetic Considerations in vestimentation.....	32
II.2. The Kitsch in vestimentation	40
II.3. The Art in vestimentation	44
II.4. Vestimentation as Art	63
II.5. Vestimentary style – The art of investment	67
Chapter III. CONTEMPORARY MAN AND HIS VESTIMENTATION	73
III.1. <i>Vestimentary Culture</i>	74
III.1.a. National Character of raiment	75
III.1.b. Universal Character of raiment.....	77
III.1.c. Street Fashion.....	79
III.2. <i>Urban Culture – Vestimentary sub-culture</i>	85
III.2.a. Music Trends vs. Vestimentary Trends.....	87
III.2.b. Other sub-cultures.....	100
Chapter IV. VESTIMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION	110
IV.1. <i>Hypostasis of communication through raiment</i>	111
IV.2. <i>Vestimentary Code, mean of communication</i>	114
IV.2.a. Present Vestimentary Codes	116
IV.2.b. Original Vestimentary Behaviours.....	117
IV.3. <i>Vestimentation in Publicity, expression and symbol</i>	118
IV.2.a. Fashion Magazine.....	120
IV.2.b. Fashion Picture	128
IV.2.c. Fashion Publicity Poster	136
IV.2.d. Advertise Vestimentation	138
IV.2.e. TV and Radio broadcasting Vestimentation.....	139
IV.2.f. New forms of Vestimentation promotion	144

Chapter V. VESTIMENTATION BETWEEN CREATION AND EXECUTION	146
V.1. <i>The relationship between art and industry in fashion</i>	149
V.2. <i>Contemporary Vestimentary Design</i>	154
Chapter VI. VESTIMENTATION IN ROMANIA	156
VI.1. <i>Romanian Fashion between 1945 and 1989</i>	157
VI.2. <i>Romanian Vestimentation in the Contemporary Romanian Space</i>	161
Chapter VII. PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN VESTIMENTATION AND DECORATIVE ART.....	169
VII.1. <i>The Artistic Activity</i>	171
VII.2. <i>Creative Explorations in Vestimentation</i>	174
VII.3. <i>Decorative Art Works</i>	178
VII.4. <i>List of Works</i>	182
FINAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	183
SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY	186
WEB BIBLIOGRPHY	190
PICTURES SOURCE	192
ANNEX I	193
ANNEX II	195
1. List of Pictures	195
SUMMARY.....	204

INTRODUCTION

The present work entitled „Vestimentation – Expression of the Contemporary Human Image“ is mainly a possible alternative of knowledge but also a method of understanding the vestimentary object and its role in the construction of the human image. The chosen research topic started from the premises that vestimentation itself is a way of illustrating the manner of cohabitation, thinking and subordination to the natural and social environment, but it is an extension of our ego as well, consisting of character, preconceived ideas, and restrictions. During the entire human species evolution process, a not negligible reason for which people went on considering the raiment as a necessary and valued object was also its quality of making them legible in the quotidian space. The confluence between „individual“ and „collective“ is reflected through vestimentation, which this way becomes a social representation. This work had in view to follow up the aforesaid aspects within the contemporary context, namely the relationships existing between the raiment dressed by the individual (as an extension through himself/herself of the image about himself/herself) and the fundamental phenomena within the quotidian perimeter. The study of vestimentation focused mainly on research of the contemporary period, less investigated in the dedicated bibliographic materials, due also to the fact that being a moment in course of development, its essential features are more difficult to be identified.

An original item of the study is assigning the term „image“ to the human figure. Its selection (to the detriment of the term „look“) represented, in the context of the theme chosen for the study, a mean of distinction of the current context, wherein the social „appearance“ implies previous creation of it. Unlike in the past when vestimentation was stable, nowadays the clothes we dress with become in most part the result of our own options. This fact allows a larger interpretation of the person depending on its vestimentary style, and at the same time it facilitates, from this point of view, the social comparison. In the bright of these ideas, the subject needed the extension of investigation area, the coordinates of the human look exceeding the limits of the visual expression, including also the attitudes, gestures and hypostases. The „image“ term, otherwise a complex term through its meaning, was analysed as well from the perspective of its substitution to a larger concept, the whole building of the human look being understood in this case as a coherent and entirely assumed approach. The „image“ of a person, of an individual, in the contemporary social conjuncture, remains a form of non-verbal expression, but it becomes a mean of impressing, affirmation and individual presentation. Nowadays, beside other adornment means, the vestimentation is the main way of identity manifestation.

Elucidation and identification of contemporary human „image“ was a major objective of the work, resulted from awareness of the existence of certain emblematic representations whereat our memory appeals to whenever necessary, or refers to the past.

During the entire work content, consisting of seven (7) chapters, bibliography and annexes, one analysed the framework elements of human expression that influence directly the dressing manner, the aspects of human behaviour and evolution particularities of the vestimentary manifestation.

Chapter I.

VESTIMENTATION – EXPRESSION OF HUMAN IMAGE

Chapter I, entitled *Vestimentation – expression of human image*, is first of all an introduction into the general context of the theme, and it starts from the analyse of the term “image” as a stand-alone element, but also in correspondence with beauty. Briefly, one explained the mechanism of visual perception in the process of image formation, and the functions assumed to senses in their subsequent memorisation. Due to its plurivalence, within the context of this work, the word „image“ imposed a peculiar analyse of its signification. The scope of this work was to point out the main hypostases of the „image“, respectively of object reproduction, plastic representation of the look of a human being or of life scenes, but also the representation/reflection of surrounding reality into the human conscience.

The beauty, this desideratum and factor that generates the multitude of social behaviours, including the vestimentary ones, was analysed from the light of term integration into Aesthetics area of study, but also from the perspective of understanding the meaning acquired by it in the social environment.

The Principle Analyse of the human body beauty necessitated a clear delimitation between the physical aspect of a person, its harmony, and the moral and ethical beauty of the individual. The look’s canons evolution are reflected the most convincing by image, both the artistic and advertising productions expressing diachronically the mentalities. The images referential value is determined by the preponderance of the expression within their content, of the beauty ideals that existed at one time or at some intervals of time.

Noticing the close connection between image and beauty, the analytical approach from the end of this chapter directed towards emphasising the main ways of interaction of those two notions in the vestimentary fashion. Fashion phenomenon constituted throughout the time the subject of many analyses, the mechanism imposed in the society by raiment causing long disputes, each of them proposing a new vision regarding its influence on individuals. Fashion is considered to be a manifestation of „expression“, a dominant feature at one time within the society of its members, which may be caused by one or several factors, whose sophisticated nature is extremely diversified. The possibility of intervening on the own look, available now for the individual through make-up and vestimentation, is a manner accepted in the society. Simultaneously, for people this also

represents a good occasion of „rediscovery“, fact which seems to be also the reason that is the ground for fashion launching.

Interdisciplinary study of the subject in this first chapter was caused by the multiple aspects and their importance in building of the exterior image of a person, this being the result both a certain personal preferences and of the social confluences. Change of the general conception on beauty entails also the change of people as such. Throughout the time, this aesthetic desideratum of the human body related to various classifications and directions in the fashion system, each stage being familiar with a domination of one or several features or expressions of it. The raiment owns a statute of intermediary between ideal and real, its contribution to the build of human image being primordially, the psychological, economical, social and political determinations, the mentalities existing within a geographic area, being reflected first of all through vestimentation.

Chapter II. AESTHETIC MARKS IN VESTIMENTATION

In the second chapter of the work, entitled *Aesthetic marks in vestimentation*, one mentions priorly the manner of their use in building the vestimentation object. Transposing an idea into the visual plan by getting a fair ratio between form and its functionality, proper use of plastic language elements in full concordance and cohesion, are the main factors that confers aesthetical qualities to the vestimentation product.

Kitsch Phenomenon, which is also studied within this chapter, is a distinctive aspect of vestimentary manifestation. This, placed in aesthetic treaties as part of „ugly“ category and generalized due to the confusion existing on the whole plan and due to alteration of aesthetic sensitivity and people incapacity to identify authentic art from non-authentic product, presents peculiar features in vestimentary fashion. Out of the multitude of messages released by the individual in the communication process, one of the most expressive mean is vestimentation, the aesthetic distortion produced through it becoming in this case more visible and conclusive.

Vestimentation is a cultural product, and as any other product of this kind, it falls within the same aesthetic coordinates representative at one time. Art's influence is reflected directly in vestimentation through its form, but also indirectly by subordination through fashion to the social conjuncture, the same conjuncture wherein the artistic manifestation forms itself too. To supporting these ideas, definite aspects of the influence of the main artistic movements throughout the time on the vestimentary fashion are enumerated, this presentation ending with analyse of the new relationship between art and vestimentation, concluding with an enunciation of its present features.

In arts, vestimentary objects have changed their statute of subject “painted” in exhibit. Their position of „object of representation“ revealed in arts starting with Duchamp

period. The number of artist, whose artistic production is related to cloths is great, their masterpiece proving that by changing its function and initial mean, this customary object can get unbelievable visual-semantic valences. The analyse of vestimentation hypostases in visual arts has limited to the contemporary context, this presentation emphasizing also the idea that choosing for this subject in their representations the artists make nothing than pointing out once again the social value of the raiment. In the end of Chapter II the vestimentary style is analysed as mean of affirmation for a nation, community or as an expression of individual conceptions.

Chapter III.

CONTEMPORARY MAN AND HIS VESTIMENTATION

In the third chapter, entitled *Contemporary man and his vestimentation*, aspects of the contemporary man vestimentation are presented in detail. Their description is reported to the present economical and social context, what implies a specific consume and implicitly other vestimentary behaviour, different from that in the past. Analyse of the notion of „vestimentation culture“ was related to the intention of discovering the existence of certain features and raiment particularities within a nation. Eventually, one found out that now the expression has lost its meaning, presently being substituted to the idea of representation of an assembly of cultural manifestations, where through certain generations are characterised of at one time.

The national character of vestimentation is pointed out by stating the way of reflection of some economical and social features in clothing manifestations of a nation, but also by detailing the specific elements that visually favor the acknowledgement of its particular features. The state of universal product presently conferred to certain vestimentation pieces is both a result of their perception, as well as of their ways of confectioning, many of them reaching to perpetuate in fashion but their capacity to represent a fashion trend within it.

The street, as a continuously changing public space, variously and completely illustrates an entire pleiad of domains, from the psychological, social, political, administrative ones to the esthetical one. The street fashion is an essential element in order to identify the prevailing esthetical concepts within the society in a given moment, its analysis contributing to the human image identification. Besides, difficult to render, in this chapter we tried to present the particular features of vestimentation that differentiate the big cities. Starting with the idea that big metropolises, even by their ambient, provoke a vestimentary avantgardism, more obvious than in smaller cities, these places reaching by their atmosphere to impress an impulse activating and generating new styles, in our approach we tried to show out their role in general orientation towards a style of vestimentary manifestation.

The sub-cultures represent sub-divisions of national culture and are characterized by combining various specific factors of a social group, a tendency of a subjacent manifestation of an elementary culture, but also a culture of a social group or sub-group in an ethnic community. Permanent or ephemeral, determined by a social or historical background, through these sub-cultures, the consciousness of the younger generation can be identified this kind of organizing being more specific to them. Being aware of their influence on the general vestimentation aspect, in the final part of the 3rd chapter, it was approached a detailed analysis on the most obvious manifestations of this genre and their projection in social level.

Chapter IV.

VESTIMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The fourth chapter includes a foray into the communication strategies by vestimentation as well as a selective pointing of persuasive handling ways of an image related to the consuming manifest, a demonstration of the message importance as well as the disposal to dialogue of an individual. Vestimentation is surveyed in view of facilitating the communication both between the community and society members, as well as between members of a nation.

The aspects of vestimentation „emergence“ in mass-media is approached as well, its rediscovery force within the mass-media shows its information and symbolic quality. The transformation from an idea to a fact of the image in advertising requires the selection of their convincing elements for a numerous and varied public. The most efficient means in specialists' opinion are considered those aiming to the consumer as a personality and not as an individual among other ones. Cultural and social reference items, the clothes give a meaning to the visual-imaginary context meant to be expressed by image, confer to its content a peculiar aspect, and reflect attitudes, individual conducts and identity models.

Chapter V.

VESTIMENTATION BETWEEN CREATION AND EXECUTION

Vestimentation, **in the fifth chapter** entitled *Vestimentation between creation and execution* is firstly surveyed in relation to its constituting way, beginning with the intention stated in the idea draft, till execution and implicitly the object. The journey if a vestimentary item starting from the creation workshop, production, selling shop and finally the wardrobe of a wearer, represents a permanently changing dynamic process. On the course of the entire creation and execution process, the designer carries out many actions

involving both fugitive or detailed drawing of a model and interventions on the course of prototype execution, or even its complete work out. Vestimentation is part of the designer's activity but they create only trends and not fashions, they genuinely combine materials, colors etc. In this industry, their role is to anticipate the new expression of the body, and to confer to the object, similar to other fields, a competitive value, the aesthetic factor becoming relevant in economic level.

Within our approach, the premises of vestimentary design emergence, the existing relationship between art and industry in the fashion system was also a surveying matter. The clothing industry development was connected to the production means and forces that started at the same time with invention of the mechanical spinning-mill in 1764, of the first sewing machine in 1846 and its first patent by Singer in 1851. The contemporary aspect of clothes, their division and their structuring in actual component elements, was materialized following a long creation and execution course. Integrated within the contemporary visual artistic context, the vestimentary design emerged as a necessity, presently it responds to the need of change, expresses into an idea the direct and complex image of reality where the social, political and cultural elements are completed, in a whole transposing in fact that mood the fashion is inducing.

Chapter VI. VESTIMENTATION IN ROMANIA

Vestimentation in Romania is presented in **sixth chapter** of the work. Besides a short history of vestimentation in Romania, mostly the contemporary one, this chapter also presents a brief presentation of the Romanian manufacturers, of the industry in the field and its particular features. During the history of vestimentation in Romania it is obvious the fact that, ethnically and socially, the people conduct is closely related to vestimentation their costume, to their habits. On the other hand, the clothes have imposed hereto, as a demand to show the social hierarchy, as well as the human individuality. In the course of time, vestimentation in Romania had various cultural influences; the researchers of the phenomenon detailed their characteristics.

Chapter VII. PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN VESTIMENTATION AND DECORATIVE ART

The personal contributions in vestimentation and decorative art are mentioned in the last chapter of the present work. The entire analysis is concluded by presentation of

theoretical, practical and personal art creation interests, directly or tangentially referring to the field. The themes approached so far in personal creation show constant concerns related to vestimentation, the carried out research activity having also the role of discerning some non-cleared up aspects of this kind of artistic approach. Possibilities of exploring these ways of plastic language, the ways of designing of some vestimentary objects represent a part of the actions carried out so far at creative level. These concerns manifested on two distinct directions, the first one aimed at identification of symbolic elements of the clothing and their interpretation in the art field, and the second one was directed to the fulfillment of plastic knowledge in the field of industrial production of vestimentation.

Generally, the personal artistic creation assumes a permanent search of new plastic solutions, environments and brand new expressing materials. Within plastic activities, both two dimensional and three dimensional aspects are exploited, as well as the large use of technical means specific to the textile field.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The conclusion of aesthetic incursion in the world of clothing represents the pointing out of the main defining elements that outlines its position of sign in the social environment. In daily life, a certain social correspondence is imposed to the individual, resulting from the fulfilment of some undesirable or ideal characteristics. Human beauty and its perception as an ideal directly reflects the social context, its reaching assumes, besides the permanent estimation of the aesthetic values, also a correlation with social manifestations. The way we look influences the impression of the others, the chosen vestimentation sets up a communication plan; our look by itself is part of a meta-communication and becomes an image. The real identity of the human image is harder to be discovered as its extension in the social field is ample and assumes not only the understanding of cultural codes but an analysis of various aspects of the human nature.

In our approach, an element of novelty and authenticity is the approach from a new perspective in the field based on the reconstitution of the general human image and on the analysis of the clothing phenomenon in the contemporary cultural field and its understanding in the context of the new trends and directions in art, fashion and consuming industry.

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