

ABSTRACT

At the crossroads between everyday existence and the cosmogonical universe that governs it, the world of the traditional romanian village represented the fertile land where the object creation and the symbols associated with faith, ancestors spirits, tradition and the “other world” became, trough the ages, the foundation for a exceptional culture, where the practical and the esthetic are always intermingling, leaving legacy a fabulous civilization thesaurus and opening new roads for contemporary object creators.

The man has forever lived at the boundary between two worlds that were never conflicting: on one side the spiritual universe, marked by the surrounding nature, faith, rituals, customs, superstitions, myths and legends and on the other side the artificial universe, created by man to serve it's own existence, populated by objects and various technical devices, meant to insure one's life comfort. The romanian commoner created his objects and the material micro-universe in relationship with his family, community or personal needs. Therefore, utility was the main premise that stood at the foundation of the creating activity, the esthetic and symbolic being related to it only in the light of group mentality and by the capacity of the object to symbolize, communicate and signify primarily the faith and the tradition.

One of the main attributes of the traditional creation is the *anonymity*: the traditional creator accomplished his work under the auspices of two major Christian foundations: the ethics of faith and of the good order. In the village universe, where the spare time has different connotations than in the urban world, learning by doing represented a initiation act.

Between household activities and mass attendance, during a life governed by traditions and doctrines, the anonymous creator met his life needs trough objects, buildings and equipments, the aesthetic need coming almost by itself as a natural and defining propensity for any member of a civilized society.

The romanian traditional, conservative and often paradoxical village world left for posterity, besides the utilitarian objects with distinct applications, various principles: operation principles, technological execution principles, building principles and not least moral principles, that became major contemporary foundations for design creation. Above all, the village craftsman achieved invention: many of the traditional polytechnic creations were converted in precepts and norms which are highly valid even nowadays. The examples are overwhelming.

It is equally true that the object implies and includes the technology, but the technology itself is a path for object creation and this complementarity favors progress.

In the context of the above mentioned, we intend to relate the inherited romanian traditional culture with the contemporary design education and creation within the specific settings of the Cluj school, without minimizing the real contributions of the other institutions and design creators from the country.

The thesis is structured in seven chapters:

Chapter I. THE OBJECT WORLD IN ROMANIAN POPULAR TRADITION

with direct reference to secular architecture, religious architecture and traditional housing (dwellings and outbuildings)

Chapter II. ROMANIAN TRADITIONAL TOOLS, EQUIPMENTS AND CRAFTS

with 9 defining subchapters for the context:

II.1. Specialized crafts for food products processing

II.2. Specialized crafts for woodwork

II.3. Specialized crafts for stonework

II.4. Specialized crafts for pottery

II.5. Specialized crafts for fabrics finishing and clothing manufacture

II.6. Specialized crafts for leather processing

II.7. Specialized crafts for blacksmithing

II.8. Specialized crafts for gold extraction and processing

II.9 Other crafts

Chapter III. MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

III.1. Ground transportation

III.2. Shipping

Chapter IV. OBJECTS FOR ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING

with extended presentation of the history and evolution of lighting objects, related to technological breakthroughs

Chapter V. TOYS

as polysemantic objects serving for offering children with the possibilities for active and interactive actions, therefore expressing ideas and sentiments trough playful acts. There are presented the toys categories and their relevance as design objects.

Chapter VI. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

where the history, evolution and classification of these objects are shown in the context of new technologies development.

Chapter VII. DESIGN HIGHER EDUCATION WITHIN THE ART AND DESIGN UNIVERSITY IN CLUJ, AT THE CROSSROADS OF TRADITIONAL HERITAGE AND CONTEMPORARY CREATION THROUGH EDUCATION

With the subchapters:

VII.1. Timelines

VII.2. Furniture and ambient design

VII.3. Lighting devices design

VII.4. Household appliances design

VII.5. Industrial tools and equipments

VII.6. Transportation field design

VII.7. Toys

VII.8. Packaging design

where there is presented the design high education within the Art and Design University in Cluj, as a link between the cultural heritage of the romanian traditional crafts and contemporary design creation through education and performance, desiderata that become contact points between yesterday and today, between learning and doing, between research and creation.

A different, special section is constituted by a suite of 53 works from the personal artistic portfolio, united under the “**Antimemories**” section.

The thesis ends with the conclusions, bibliography and the source of illustrations.