

REINTERPRETATION OF MOTIFS FROM THE IE IN CONTEMPORARY WOOD SCULPTURE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The ornamental motifs of the Romanian traditional blouse (ia) constitute an important system of cultural signs, carrying identity, symbolic, and aesthetic values. In the context of contemporary art in the Republic of Moldova, these traditional motifs transcend their original decorative function and become sources of inspiration for new forms of artistic expression. This study examines the ways in which the ornamental motifs specific to the ia are reinterpreted in contemporary wood sculpture, highlighting the process of transferring textile symbols into the three-dimensional language of sculpture.

The research is based on a comparative analysis of traditional ornaments found on the ia such as the rhombus, the cross, the Tree of Life, the spiral, solar motifs, and phytomorphic elements and the manner in which they are employed in the works of contemporary Moldovan sculptors. The study investigates the formal and semantic transformations of these motifs, their adaptation to the specific properties of wood as a material, and their integration into decorative, monumental, or conceptual sculptural compositions.

The findings demonstrate that the reinterpretation of motifs from the ia contributes to the revitalization of traditional cultural heritage through contemporary artistic practices. Wood, a material deeply connected to folk culture and traditional craftsmanship, facilitates a dialogue between past and present, linking the intangible heritage embodied in the ornamentation of the ia with the tangible heritage of sculpture. As a result, traditional motifs are recontextualized and acquire new expressive meanings, becoming active elements of contemporary artistic discourse. This phenomenon highlights the continuity of cultural values and the capacity of art to preserve and renew identity symbols within the framework of modern society. The tendency to revalorize traditional motifs in contemporary arts in the Republic of Moldova confirms the importance of the relationship between tradition and innovation in shaping contemporary cultural identity.

Keywords: Romanian blouse (ia), ornamental motifs, contemporary sculpture, wood, cultural heritage, cultural identity, traditional symbolism, Republic of Moldova.

In recent decades, interest in the valorization of cultural heritage within contemporary art has generated numerous approaches to reinterpreting traditional symbols and motifs in new artistic contexts. In the Republic of Moldova, this phenomenon is manifested through the integration of elements specific to folk art into various fields of visual creation, including contemporary wood sculpture. Within this process, the traditional ie occupies a central place, being recognized not only as a representative garment of Romanian culture but also as a medium carrying a complex system of signs and symbols that express identity values, beliefs, and conceptions about the world.²

Decorative objects are characterized by the presence on their surfaces of phytomorphic, zoomorphic, and cosmomorphic representations, together with stylized motifs and geometric ornamental compositions. At the same time, wood craftsmen paid particular attention to the artistic and aesthetic valorization of wood as a creative material. This concern contributed to the development of folk ornamentation, distinguished by the continuous use of geometric

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² BUZILĂ V., *Costumul popular din Republica Moldova*, Știința, Chișinău, 2011, p. 57.

motifs such as *wavy, broken, or curved lines, the rhombus, circle, star, rosette, serrated patterns, as well as motifs inspired by nature*, including the serpent and the leaf.

The ornamentation of the ie constitutes a genuine visual language, built upon geometric, phytomorphic, cosmic, and anthropomorphic motifs, organized according to rigorous principles of rhythm, symmetry, and compositional balance. Researchers in folk art have demonstrated that motifs such as the rhombus, the cross, the Tree of Life, the star, and the spiral go beyond a purely decorative function, carrying symbolic meanings associated with fertility, protection, the continuity of life, and the relationship between human beings and the universe.³ The persistence of these symbols in collective cultural memory explains their continued presence in the works of contemporary artists engaged in the recovery and reinterpretation of traditional heritage.

Artistic wood processing is one of the oldest crafts in the cultural history of our people. Since ancient times, wood craftsmen—considered the inheritors of the traditions of their Dacian ancestors—decorated houses and the objects they created with a variety of ornamental elements. Evidence of this practice can be found in the sculptural representations on Trajan’s Column in Rome, erected in the 1st century AD. Alongside historical and battle scenes, the reliefs depict details of wooden architecture, including cornices, decorative roof ridges, and friezes carved with rhombic motifs (Figure 1). They also portray Dacian settlements enclosed by wooden fences and featuring massive central gates.

Over time, the tradition of decorating wood was preserved and transmitted across generations, and many of the motifs used in the past continue to appear in contemporary folk art. Among these are the rosette, symbolically associated with the cult of the Sun, as well as motifs such as the serpent and the rooster.

In the Republic Moldova, decorative wood carving experienced a more significant development beginning in the 17th century, compared to earlier periods. Carved ornamental elements were also incorporated into architecture, a representative example being the Church of the Three Hierarchs in Iași, founded by Prince Vasile Lupu. Until the 19th century, flat relief carving and bas-relief remained the dominant techniques, while fully rounded sculpture did not have favorable conditions for development.

At the same time, contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova is undergoing a process of redefinition, in which contemporary sculptors explore new ways of

³ ZELENCIUC V., *Portul popular moldovenesc*, Cartea Moldovenească, Chișinău, 1985, p. 112.

employing these motifs, transforming ornament into an autonomous conceptual and plastic element.⁴

The process of transposing textile ornament into wood sculpture involves a series of aesthetic and technical transformations. Embroidered motifs are reinterpreted through reliefs, incisions, perforations, or volumetric structures, preserving in many cases their symbolic meaning while simultaneously acquiring new artistic functions. This adaptation demonstrates the ability of traditional ornamental language to integrate into the discourse of contemporary art without losing its cultural identity.⁵

The research aims to identify the main ornamental motifs from the traditional blouse (ie) that are adopted in contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova, to analyze the ways in which the decorative textile language is adapted to the specific characteristics of wood as a material, and to highlight current trends in the valorization of traditional heritage within contemporary sculptural creation. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which traditional cultural symbols are recontextualized and transformed into sources of inspiration for contemporary art, strengthening the dialogue between memory, identity, and artistic innovation.

I. Ornamental motifs on the traditional blouse ie - origin, symbolism, and identity value

The ie represents one of the most complex expressions of Romanian cultural heritage, being an object in which practical function intertwines with symbolic and identity-related dimensions. Its ornamentation does not constitute mere decoration, but rather a system of signs transmitted across generations, capable of reflecting conceptions of the universe, religious beliefs, social status, and community belonging. In the region between the Prut and Dniester rivers, the motifs embroidered on the ie have preserved numerous archaic elements, becoming true markers of collective cultural memory.⁶

The origin of ornamental motifs on the ie is closely connected to the pre-Christian symbols of the agrarian civilizations of Southeastern Europe. Most of these motifs were associated with the cult of fertility, the cycles of nature, and protection against malevolent forces. With the spread of Christianity, their original meanings did not disappear but were

⁴ POSTOLACHI E., *Arta populară din Republica Moldova*, Arc, Chișinău, 2015, p.184

⁵ UNGUREANU T., *Simboluri și motive ornamentale în arta populară românească*, Etnologică, București, 2008, p.136

⁶ BUZILĂ V., *Costumul popular din Republica Moldova*, Știința, Chișinău, 2011, 2011, p.8

adapted to new spiritual values, generating a complex visual language in which tradition and religion coexist harmoniously.⁷

Among the most widespread motifs is the *rhombus*, considered one of the oldest symbols in Romanian folk ornamentation. In ethnological interpretations, it is associated with fertility, fertile land, and the continuity of life. Through its rhythmic repetition on the *altiță*, decorative bands, or gathered embroidery, the rhombus suggests the idea of order and cosmic balance⁸. In contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova, this motif is frequently translated into geometric incisions or repeated relief patterns, preserving its role as an organizing structure within the composition.

The cross constitutes another defining element of ornamentation on the *ie*. Although today it is perceived primarily as a Christian symbol, specialized research demonstrates the existence of cruciform forms dating back to periods preceding Christianity, when they represented the connection between the four cardinal points and the harmony of the universe⁹. In the works of contemporary sculptors, the cross is often reinterpreted through abstract geometric compositions and integrated into decorative panels, artistic furniture, or sculptural objects with symbolic value.

A special place is occupied by the Tree of Life motif, present both in textile ornamentation and in wood art. This motif expresses the relationship between the earthly and the spiritual worlds, suggesting the continuity of generations and the perpetual regeneration of nature¹⁰. In the case of contemporary sculpture, the Tree of Life often extends beyond its traditional form and is reinterpreted through vertical structures, stylized branching, or symbolic compositions that evoke the ideas of growth and transformation.

The solar motif also occupies an important position in the decorative repertoire of the *ie*. Represented through circles, rosettes, or star-shaped forms, it symbolizes light, vital energy, and cosmic order¹¹. Its persistence in contemporary sculpture demonstrates the capacity of traditional symbols to adapt to new artistic contexts. Rosettes carved in wood, found on gates, wayside crosses, furniture, or contemporary decorative works, constitute a natural continuation of this ancestral visual language.

In addition to geometric and cosmic symbols, the ornamentation of the *ie* includes numerous vegetal motifs. The leaf, the ear of wheat, the grapevine, and the flower are

⁷ FOCȘA, M., *Arta populară românească*, Meridiane, București, 1970, p.42

⁸ COMAN, M., *Mitologie populară românească*, Minerva, București, 1986, p.118

⁹ EVSEEV, I., *Dicționar de simboluri și arhetipuri culturale*, Amarcord, Timișoara, 2001, p. 63

¹⁰ VULCĂNESCU, R., *Mitologie română*, Editura Academiei Române, București, 1987, p. 91

¹¹ GHINOIU, I., *Dicționar de simboluri și credințe tradiționale românești*, Elion, București, 2005, p.137

associated with fertility, prosperity, and the relationship between humans and nature ¹². These elements are also frequently found in contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova, where they are reinterpreted through formal simplification and geometric stylization. Sculptors do not seek to reproduce the textile model faithfully; rather, they emphasize its symbolic essence through volume and the texture specific to wood.

From the perspective of the transfer between the two artistic fields, it can be observed that the ornamental motifs shared by the *ie* and contemporary sculpture are predominantly geometric: the rhombus, zigzag, spiral, rosette, and cross. This preference can be explained by their capacity to be easily adapted to wood-processing techniques and by their universal character, which facilitates their integration into contemporary artistic language. At the same time, these motifs preserve a strong identity-related significance, transforming sculptural objects into carriers of traditional cultural memory ¹³.

Thus, the ornamental motifs found on the *ie* do not represent relics of a distant past, but rather living elements of cultural heritage, capable of generating new forms of artistic expression. Their reinterpretation in contemporary wood sculpture demonstrates the continuity of traditional values and their relevance within the context of contemporary art. By translating textile symbols into sculptural structures, artists contribute to the preservation and renewal of cultural identity, allowing tradition to engage in dialogue with the present.

II. Contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova-between tradition and contemporary artistic expression

In recent decades, contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova has undergone significant development, characterized by a continuous dialogue between traditional heritage and new directions of artistic expression. Whereas in the past carved ornamentation was primarily associated with utilitarian objects or folk architecture, today it has become an instrument for reflecting on cultural identity and a means of exploring the relationship between memory and contemporaneity. In this context, ornamental motifs borrowed from the visual universe of the *ie* occupy a special place, offering artists a rich symbolic repertoire.

The interest in the valorization of textile heritage in contemporary sculpture does not represent a simple return to traditional forms, but rather a creative reinterpretation of them. The motifs embroidered on the *ie* are extracted from their original context and transferred into a

¹² BĂNĂȚEANU, T., *Arta populară românească*, Minerva, București, 1985, p.154

¹³ POSTOLACHI, V., *Arta lemnului în Republica Moldova*, Grafema Libris, Chișinău, 2018, p. 72

new visual language adapted to the particular characteristics of wood. Thus, ornament no longer functions exclusively as decoration but becomes a structural element of the sculptural composition, contributing to the construction of the artwork's artistic meaning ¹⁴[2, p. 81].

A relevant example is the use of the rhombus, one of the most frequent motifs in the ornamentation of the ie. In contemporary sculptural works, it is translated into repetitive geometric volumes, rhythmic incisions, or modular reliefs that organize the wooden surface. While in embroidery the rhombus is perceived through color and line, in sculpture it acquires depth and materiality, generating plays of light and shadow that enhance the expressiveness of the composition¹⁵. Its transformation from an embroidered sign into sculpted volume demonstrates the ability of traditional symbols to adapt to different artistic contexts without losing their original meaning.

A similar approach can be observed in the reinterpretation of the solar motif. Rosettes and radial structures, frequently present on ie blouses from the Bessarabian region, are integrated by contemporary sculptors into decorative panels, environmental objects, and monumental works. In this process, the solar motif is no longer perceived merely as ornament, but as a generating element of the entire compositional structure. The volume, texture, and direction of the wood grain contribute to enhancing the symbolic values associated with light, energy, and regeneration ¹⁶.

Particularly relevant is the adaptation of the Tree of Life motif, one of the fundamental images of traditional Romanian culture. While on the ie it is represented through lines and stylized forms, contemporary sculpture gives it a complex spatial presence. The branches are transformed into volumetric structures, and the relationships between the compositional elements suggest the ideas of growth, continuity, and the transmission of cultural values across generations. Through this reinterpretation, contemporary sculptors succeed in preserving the relevance of an ancestral symbol and integrating it into contemporary artistic discourse ¹⁷.

The transfer of textile motifs into sculpture is also visible in the case of repetitive geometric ornaments such as the zigzag, spiral, or broken line. These elements are frequently encountered both in the decoration of the ie and in contemporary artistic sculpture, where they are used to animate surfaces and suggest movement. Their adaptation to the language of wood

¹⁴ SIMAC, A., *Arta contemporană din Republica Moldova*, ARC, Chișinău, 2016., p.81

¹⁵ COMAN, M., *Mitologie populară românească*, Minerva, București, 1986, p.117

¹⁶ GHINOIU, I., *Dicționar de simboluri și credințe tradiționale românești*, Elion, București, 2005, p.136

¹⁷ VULCĂNESCU, R., *Mitologie română*, Editura Academiei Române, București, 1987, p.92

involves simplification and formal essentialization, a process through which the traditional symbol acquires a contemporary expression without losing its cultural identity¹⁸.

In the Republic of Moldova, numerous artists of recent generations have drawn on these traditional sources in decorative works, interior sculptures, monumental compositions, and artistic design objects. Rather than literally reproducing the motifs found on the ie, they extract its ornamental principles of organization and symbolic meanings, integrating them into a contemporary visual language. This phenomenon reflects the tendency of contemporary art to build bridges between heritage and innovation, between cultural memory and present-day experience¹⁹.

Currently, in the Republic of Moldova, there are many wood craftsmen who create a wide range of works that both delight the eye and serve practical functions. Their creations are also appreciated and sought after beyond the country's borders. Among these skilled craftsmen are *Dumitru Muruzuc, Mihai Chicot, Vasile Adam, Ion Podaru, Pavel Țăranu, Nicolae Teișanu, Victor Pelin, Dumitru Constandachi, Alexandru Vlagu, Ion Gurschi, Valentin Luncă, Gabriel Adam, Mihail Caraulan*, and others. Many of these wood artisans have established workshops in which they train younger generations of enthusiasts of wooden materials, sharing with them the techniques and artistic practices of wood processing. In recent years, the art of wood craftsmanship has become increasingly visible in guesthouses and leisure venues across Moldova, which are visited and appreciated both by local residents and by tourists from abroad.

The reinterpretation of textile motifs in contemporary sculpture goes beyond the aesthetic dimension and acquires an important identity-related function. In the context of globalization and cultural homogenization, the use of traditional symbols represents a way of affirming local specificity and strengthening collective memory. Motifs derived from the ornamentation of the ie thus become carriers of a profound cultural message, contributing to maintaining continuity between past and present²⁰[8, p. 67].

The value of these reinterpretations lies precisely in their ability to demonstrate that tradition is not a static heritage intended exclusively for museum preservation, but an active creative resource. By transforming textile ornaments into contemporary sculptural forms, artists in the Republic of Moldova offer new perspectives on cultural heritage and confirm the vitality of traditional symbols within the context of contemporary art. Thus, wood sculpture

¹⁸ BĂNĂȚEANU, T., *Arta populară românească*, Minerva, București, 1985, p.148

¹⁹ COLESNIC, I., *Enciclopedia artiștilor din Republica Moldova*, Museum, Chișinău, 2000, p.203

²⁰ BUZILĂ, Varvara, *Costumul popular din Republica Moldova*, Știința, Chișinău, 2011, p.67

becomes not only a space for artistic expression, but also an instrument for transmitting and renewing cultural identity.

III. Reinterpretation of motifs from the *ie* in contemporary wood sculpture - forms, meanings, and cultural perspectives

The relationship between tradition and contemporary creation cannot be understood as a simple adoption of decorative forms from the past. In the case of contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova, the reinterpretation of motifs from the *ie* represents a complex process of artistic transformation in which inherited symbols are adapted to new cultural and aesthetic contexts. This phenomenon demonstrates that traditional heritage is not a fixed reality limited to the preservation of established models, but an open system capable of generating new forms of expression and new cultural meanings.

In contemporary artistic practice, ornamental motifs from the *ie* are detached from their textile support and integrated into three-dimensional sculptural structures. This transfer involves a profound change of visual language. While in embroidery expressiveness is constructed through the rhythm of stitches, the relationship between color and ornament, and the organization of composition across the textile surface, in sculpture the same expressiveness is achieved through volume, relief, texture, and spatial relationships. The symbol preserves its semantic identity while acquiring new possibilities for artistic interpretation ²¹.

The process of reinterpretation is visible in the way contemporary sculptors employ motifs such as the rhombus, the Tree of Life, the solar rosette, and the cross. These no longer appear exclusively as decorative elements but become organizing structures of the composition. In numerous contemporary works, traditional ornament is amplified to the scale of a central visual concept, transforming from decorative detail into artistic message. Thus, the folk motif ceases to function as a simple cultural quotation and becomes an integral part of contemporary visual discourse ²².

An important characteristic of these reinterpretations lies in the tendency toward formal essentialization. Artists do not faithfully reproduce the embroidered patterns of the *ie*, but rather select their essential elements and adapt them to contemporary sensibilities. The geometrization of forms, simplification of compositions, and emphasis on the expressive

²¹ POSTOLACHI, V., *Arta lemnului în Republica Moldova*, Grafema Libris, Chișinău, 2018, p.89

²² BUZILĂ, Varvara, *Costumul popular din Republica Moldova*, Știința, Chișinău, 2011, p.112

qualities of the material lead to works that preserve the memory of traditional symbols while addressing contemporary audiences through an accessible and updated visual language.

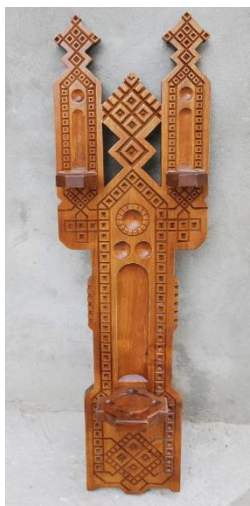
From this perspective, contemporary wood sculpture becomes a meeting space between heritage and innovation. Tradition is not perceived as a rigid model to be copied but as a source of inspiration and artistic reflection. It is precisely this capacity for reinterpretation that ensures the continuity of cultural values in contemporary society. Inherited symbols do not survive through mechanical repetition but through adaptation and reintegration into new cultural contexts ²³.

In the current context of globalization, the role of contemporary art in preserving traditional heritage becomes particularly significant. Visual homogenization and global cultural influences may lead to diminished interest in local expressions of identity. Under these conditions, artists who draw upon traditional motifs contribute to maintaining the visibility of cultural heritage and transmitting it to new generations. Through contemporary creation, the symbols of the *ie* are removed from an exclusively ethnographic sphere and reintegrated into the current cultural circuit, where they may be received and reinterpreted by diverse audiences ²⁴.

Moreover, contemporary art is not limited to preserving heritage but actively participates in its revitalization. Preservation implies protecting and maintaining existing forms, whereas revitalization involves generating new ways of using and valuing heritage. In the case of contemporary wood sculpture, ornamental motifs from the *ie* acquire new aesthetic and conceptual functions, becoming instruments for exploring cultural identity in a world undergoing continuous transformation.

²³ COMAN, M., *Mitologie populară românească*, Minerva, București, 1986, p.68

²⁴ COLESNIC, I., *Enciclopedia artiștilor din Republica Moldova*, Museum, Chișinău, 2000, p.201



*Fig. 1. **Dumitru Constandachi**, folk craftsman, incense holder, hand-carved wood, Republic of Moldova.*



*Fig. 2. **Eremia Liuba**, folk craftswoman, motif from an ie with altiță, Republic of Moldova.*

I selected these two pieces, Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, because the continuity between textile ornament and sculptural decoration does not result from direct copying, but from the use of the same geometric principle for organizing the surface. The motif that appears most clearly in both works is the rhombus in its different variations: simple rhombus, inscribed rhombus, and repetitive rhomboidal composition.

Both the ie and the sculpture employ the same visual strategy: the reduction of decoration to essentialized forms. In the ie, ornament is constructed through embroidery and through the delimitation of clearly defined geometric fields. In sculpture, the same logic is transferred into wood through cuts and relief carving. The rhombus becomes a means of organizing decorative space rather than merely an isolated element.

In the ie, rhythm is created through: the constant repetition of the motif, the alternation between ornamented zones and open fields, and the continuity of decorative direction. In sculpture, rhythm emerges through: the repetition of rhomboidal modules, the alternation between relief and depth, and the recurrence of the same unit along the vertical axis. In both pieces, there is a perception of controlled visual flow, characteristic of traditional ornamentation.

Both objects are constructed through compartmentalization. This organization suggests that ornament has both a structural and a narrative function. In the ie, the rhombus is perceived frontally and linearly. In sculpture, the same motif acquires depth, a play of light and shadow, and an architectural character. Thus, ornament is not transferred literally but reinterpreted through sculptural means.

The comparison of these two pieces highlights that the rhombus represents a common core of the traditional ornamental language of the Republic of Moldova. In the *ie* with *altiță*, it organizes the surface through embroidery and geometric rhythm, while in wood sculpture it becomes an element of spatial construction. Continuity does not consist in perfect formal identity, but in preserving the same principles of modularity, rhythm, and organization into ornamental registers.

This revitalization is essential for maintaining the relevance of traditional heritage. A symbol that remains confined to its original context risks being perceived solely as a museum object. By contrast, when reinterpreted through contemporary artistic means, it continues to communicate and generate meaning. Wood sculpture provides an eloquent example of this process, demonstrating that traditional symbols can remain active and meaningful even within cultural contexts radically different from those in which they originated ²⁵.

Therefore, the reinterpretation of motifs from the *ie* in contemporary wood sculpture represents more than an artistic strategy. It constitutes a form of dialogue between past and present, between cultural memory and contemporary experience. By valorizing the ornamental heritage of the *ie*, sculptors from the Republic of Moldova contribute to strengthening cultural identity and transmitting symbolic values that define the specificity of the Romanian cultural space between the Prut and Dniester rivers. In this way, contemporary art becomes not only a field of aesthetic creation but also an important actor in the process of preserving, updating, and revitalizing cultural heritage.



Fig. 3. Valentin Luncă, folk craftsman, candle holder, decorated with rosette motifs, rhombuses, and other geometric motifs, Republic of Moldova.



Fig. 4. Valentin Luncă, folk craftsman, carved vessel with decorative handle and rosette motif, Republic of Moldova.

²⁵ VULCĂNESCU, R., *Mitologie română*, Editura Academiei Române, București, 1987, p. 157

Another contemporary folk wood craftsman from the Republic of Moldova is *Valentin Luncă*. His works are true masterpieces that demonstrate the valorization of traditional decorative language in wood sculpture through the integration of motifs carrying symbolic significance. These two works were selected in order to observe representative examples of how traditional motifs are reinterpreted in contemporary wood sculpture through different yet complementary plastic and decorative solutions.

The first work (*Fig. 3*) is distinctive due to the presence of the rosette as the central ornamental element, integrated into an object with a utilitarian function. It illustrates how a traditional decorative motif, frequently encountered in folk art, is adapted to sculptural form and transformed into an element of compositional organization. Through the relationship between smooth surfaces and the ornamented area, the work demonstrates the ornament's capacity to move beyond a purely decorative role and actively contribute to defining the object's plastic expression.

The second work (*Fig. 4*) allows for the simultaneous analysis of the zoomorphic horse motif and the rosette motif, providing a relevant example of the association between traditional symbols and contemporary sculptural construction. In this composition, the horse is reinterpreted through a geometric and stylized visual language, while the rosettes complete the decorative structure by introducing visual rhythm and an additional symbolic dimension. The work highlights the way ornamental motifs are not reproduced literally but are adapted to the specific characteristics of wood as a material and to the requirements of contemporary artistic expression.

The analysis demonstrates that the ornamental motifs specific to the traditional continue to represent an important source of inspiration for contemporary wood sculpture in the Republic of Moldova. Elements such as the rhombus, the cross, the Tree of Life, the spiral, the star, and other geometric structures found in traditional ornamentation are adopted and reinterpreted by contemporary artists, becoming essential components of a visual language that combines cultural memory with contemporary artistic expression ²⁶.

The research highlights that the transfer of motifs from the traditional into the field of sculpture does not involve a simple reproduction of decorative patterns, but rather a complex process of adaptation to the particular characteristics of wood as a material. The specific nature of wood - characterized by volume, texture, and its capacity to generate dynamic relationships between light and shadow - transforms textile ornament into a three-dimensional structure with new

²⁶ BUZILĂ, Varvara, *Costumul popular din Republica Moldova*, Știința, Chișinău, 2011, p.124

aesthetic values. Through techniques such as relief carving, incision, perforation, and volumetric stylization, traditional motifs acquire sculptural expressiveness and artistic functions that extend beyond their original decorative framework ²⁷.

At the same time, the study confirms the existence of an increasingly evident tendency in contemporary Moldovan art to valorize cultural heritage through the creative reinterpretation of traditional symbols. Instead of faithfully reproducing folk patterns, many artists adopt conceptual and experimental approaches in which ornament becomes an instrument for reflecting on cultural identity, collective memory, and the continuity of traditional values within the context of contemporary society ²⁸.

Therefore, the reinterpretation of motifs from the ie in contemporary wood sculpture may be regarded as a form of dialogue between past and present, between heritage and contemporary artistic creation. This phenomenon demonstrates the ability of traditional symbols to generate new meanings and forms of expression, contributing to the preservation and renewal of cultural heritage within an artistic context undergoing continuous transformation. In this sense, contemporary wood sculpture not only recovers and valorizes the ornamental legacy of the ie, but also actively participates in redefining it for future generations.

²⁷ POSTOLACHI E., *Artă populară din Republica Moldova*, Arc, Chișinău, 2015, p. 86

²⁸ UNGUREANU T., *Simboluri și motive ornamentale în artă populară românească*, Etnologică, București, 2008, p. 142

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