

Prof. Afërdita ONUZI

## TRACES OF DIFFERENT CIVILIZATIONS IN THE ALBANIAN FOLK DRESSES

The history of the Southeastern Europe people is characterized not only by periods of wars, disputes and violent clashes, but also by periods of peace, during which there were established relations of exchange and contacts different kinds.

In this environment, because of their geographical position in the midst of east and west, the Albanian lands, since in antiquity turned into main roads where civilizations from both directions either clashed or exchanged. As a result, some common features in various fields of traditional cultures of different Balkan's people were shaped gradually. In the folk art and, in particular, in that of urban folk dresses, it was hard to tell the place and authorship of the product because of the mix of features they acquired with the passing of time. Up to the XIV- XV centuries, the fashion of Albanian urban folk dresses was full of elements of dresses of Byzantine fashion. Generally, the patterns that decorated these dresses were closely related to the Christian symbols.

After the XVI-XVII centuries and especially after the first half of the XVIII century, in the developed Albanian urban centers, dresses of the oriental style, known as "stambollie" entered into general use. Because of the aesthetical values, they spread almost all over the Balkan towns (including the Albanian ones). In the last quarter of the XIX century, in the main Albanian towns, dresses of the western fashion started to enter into use ever and ever.

Contacts with the Western Europe had increased already and its cultural influence started to be stronger.

In the beginning of the XX century, other dresses of the western fashion appeared by prevailing in all the strata of the urbane population and partially, in some developed rural regions.