

## Technique Preparation of Woman's Xhoke: An Important Element of Albanian Folk Costumes

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### Abstract

Folk costumes are an important aspect of the Albanian cultural heritage. Seeing the garment as one of the brightest manifestations of the material and spiritual Albanian culture, this paper through its structure undertakes to explore, document and discuss in detail the techniques and process of the xhoke preparation, as a very important element of folk costumes, both for the function and the aesthetic role it plays. Correlational research between textile material used (type and elaboration) and dress form (cutting and sewing process, and decoration techniques) in every xhoke, taken in this study, can show as similarities and differences between those used in the village and those used in the city. Xhokes, in the village dresses, appear varied as by form, which is also indicated by their cutting schemes as well as by the compositional scheme of decorations. They preserve the local aesthetic element very well, as well as the old craftsmanship of cloth making. Xhokes (xhybet), in the city dresses, appear with the same cutting scheme, which leads to their unified form. The compositional schemes of decoration on these xhokes are approximate, especially in those xhokes where their form is the same. In producing this popular costume it was very important the combination of the material with the cutting and sewing way, functionality and the final image created.

**Keywords:** xhoke (with sleeves or sleeveless jacket), folk costumes, technique preparation, textile materials, cutting schemes, sewing, decoration.

### Introduction

*Xhokes* are an important element of the Albanian feminine folk dress, both for the function and the aesthetic role they play. *Xhokes* are upper garments, open at the front and usually worn above the shirt. Zojzi (1966, f. 4) argues that the *xhoke* was "the most characteristic and determining part of the Balkan peoples' dress". This role is also confirmed by the fact that it's used in almost every season of the year. They appear varied in terms of form, length and decoration within the characteristics of the respective dress and similar for the function both in the city's dress also in the village. Their length varies from under the waist to the knee, sometimes with sleeves and sometimes without them (Gjergji, 2005). Traditional town and village clothes express a different economic, social and cultural level, which are reflected in the materials used, in the style of decoration, and in the technology used for their confection. *Xhokes*, as an important part of these clothings, help us understand the specific characteristics of clothing realization by the artisans of the city and those realized within the household. The xhoke has been widely used in traditional dresses, no matter the age and gender of the user. It was used in men's clothing (outlining the simple cutting and decoration), as well as in women's dresses (where it appears more decorated). Xhokes are used at every moment of life, by young people and elders, but the most beautiful and rich ones appear in groom and bride outfits (Zojzi, 1966). The main analysis, related to women's xhokes, is mainly based on the cutting techniques used, but part of this analysis will also be the fabric used, the sewing method and the decoration. During the analysis of the village and town xhokes, known by the term xhybe, we will answer these questions:

What is the material used in realizing village and town xhokes?

How does the quality and width of the fabric used, impact the forms of the xhokes?

How does the handmade fabric used, influence in the immutability of the shape of the xhoke?

How does the manufactured fabric affect the development of new cutting patterns?

What are the cutting techniques used to create the shape of these xhokes?

Which group presents a wide variety of shapes, that of the village or town xhokes (xhybe)?

What are the similarities and differences in pattern cutting, material used and decoration?

### **Methodology**

The paper "Technique Preparation of Woman's Xhoke" takes its journey starting from the investigation of various scientific studies, observations of the photographic materials and especially the detailed documentation of the clothing elements considered in this paper, which belong to the Textile Fund, at the Center of Albanological Studies. These clothing items date back from the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century and belong to different regions of Albania.

Descriptive research is directed at making careful observations and detailed documentation of the xhoke as one of the most distinctive elements of Albanian folk dress.

The correlational research addresses the relationships between the type of fabric and the form of dressing (the cutting process, the sewing process and the varied ornamentation patterns) followed step-by-step at each xhoke taken under analyses.

Experimental research is carried out through:

Deconstructing the cutting process occupies the main position in this study as the most important part of dress preparation technique. The technical sketches and cutting schemes are based on measurements, observation and photographic documentation;

Discovering some hand sewing techniques, which show that sewing not only joins the cut pieces into one whole, but often assumes importance in form creation of clothes;

This paper attempts to discover and analyze a series of interesting facts on technique preparation of woman's xhoke such as: relationships between the fabric and the cutting shape; the similarities and peculiarities of cutting into similar elements of different costumes; the dependence of the cutting on the limited width of the fabric to achieve the desired shape; changing cutting techniques to xhokes made by city artisans and those produced in household conditions; development of cutting technique in the xhoke element.

### **Xhokes Used in Folk Costumes of the Village Women**

The xhokes of the village clothing were mainly made with felt, which had a limited width ranging from 20 to 30 cm. This limited width also affected the cutting of the xhokes, which are made up of many pieces of felt. This woolen fabric was produced within the household and the clothing was made by women, or by craftsmen (xhoke-workers) who went from village to village where they found work (Gjergji, 2005). Their sewing was realized by hand with threads of wool, linen or cotton. Where parts come together, usually accompanied by strips of braids to reinforce and hide the sewing and simultaneously, decorating the xhoke. Mainly, they are under the natural color of wool, in other cases they are black or dark blue color, and rarely in red color.

The xhokes used in the villages under analyses are: Dollama used by the girls of Malesi e Madhe; Dollama (xhupja) of Mirdita women's dress, Short xhoke used in the province of Shpat (Elbasan), Dollama (sharkëla) of the Zagoria, Dollama (koreti) used in the villages of Zadrime, Guna with Rrëke of Myzeqe. As we can see, the names of these xhokes are varied and each variant is presented in different terms. Some of the names of this dress' elements are: gunë, zhgun, dollamë, dolloma, xhupetë, xhupe, cibun etc., (Zojzi, 1966) or the same xhoke was used with different names in different areas such as: jakucë, xhuli, xhëlli, xhupe, xhurdi, gujë, herkë etc., (Gjergji, 2005).

### **Dollama of the Girls of Malesia e Madhe (dress with xhubletë) (fig. 2, 3)**

Felt, used in this *dollama*, is locally produced which is demonstrated by its quality, while the red, blue and green pieces of fabrics used for decoration are manufactured (fig. 4). The black strips, formed with braids, accompany each *dollama* sewing, to reinforce it, but at the same time to decorate it. The *dollama* decoration has a very harmonious compositional scheme

(fig. 2, 3). *Dollama* is 109 cm long. The cutting scheme clearly shows the use of many felt pieces, about 36 of them (fig. 1). The maximum width of the woven felt is 30 cm. As a result of this small width of the felt comes the use of a large number of pieces to achieve the desired shape. The *dollama* cutting scheme clearly shows old cutting techniques, such as: the straight shape (without waist); the presence of many pieces of felt and wisely use of them to create the desired form; lack of slope on the shoulder; missing the arch of the neck both in the back and in front; armhole is angular and not curved; the use of an additional piece of felt below the armpit, which allows the free movement of the arm; the sleeve is tight and, to get the shape of the arm, a triangular felt supplement is placed at the length of the sleeve.

Sewing (fig. 5) is made by hand and with the same technique we see in all the felt dresses. The thread used for joining felt parts as well as setting braids and general decoration is white linen. Also, the sewing technique is an important part of creating a *dollama* form. An example of this is precisely the placement on a sloping line of scales that are created on the cutting of the ribbons at the front (fig. 1). Like the village's *xhokes* in general, lining is not used here either.

### 3.2 Dollamë (xhupe) of Mirdita Women's Dress (fig. 7, 8)

This *dollama*, unlike the *dollama* of the girls of Malësia e Madhe, has no sleeves. Felt, used in this *dollama*, is produced locally, and reaches a maximum width of 30 cm.

Referring to the cutting scheme, *dollama* has a length of 95 cm (fig. 6). In this case we have a new cutting development compared to the above *dollama*, which we see: in the reduced number of felt pieces (only 9 pieces of felt); establishing the waist shape in this *dollama*; the creation of the arc in the neck area, but only in the back. These types of *xhokes* do not close at the front and point out the chest and the lower front part of the dress, creating a special aesthetic.

The embroidery on the waist (fig. 9) and back area are made on a piece of black and red felt with braids of cotton thread of many colors like: white, black, orange, pink, brown, green, blue, yellow, featuring twisted yarns forming linear shape and filling technique. These types of decorations were worked in "series" and placed on these *dollamas* after joining all of its component parts (even today, such decorative pieces of this outfit are sold in the fair markets). Black strips are also present in this *dollama* and play the same function. The decoration scheme is focused on the chest, the back and on the waist. Woolen thread is used for joining the pieces of felt, while for sewing the strap braids for decoration, is used cotton thread with different colors, according to the colors of the braids used (fig. 10). Also, in this *xhoke* lining is not used.

### 3.3 Short Xhoke, Used in the Province of Shpat (Elbasan) (fig. 12, 13)

The length of this *xhoke* is 75 cm, and it is made from tough felt, locally produced. This *xhoke* was worn above the shirt and the vest, and wrapped up in the body through belt (Shkurti, 2004). In this *xhoke*'s cutting scheme is noticeable: the use of felt strips to obtain the desired shape (fig. 11); waist is not reflected in the cutting scheme, but is created only by sewing on its inner side; we do not understand where the armhole is located. The armhole is formed in joining the front with the back side of the *xhoke*, leaving the armhole without sewing. This is an old way of realizing the armhole, which has been mainly used in shirts of folk clothing; missing the arch of the neck both in the back and front. The *xhoke* is decorated with a reddish-colored strip, only on the side edges, but does not accompany all the sewing parts (fig. 14). Like all felt *xhokes*, there is no liner, and the regular sewing technique used, shows that it was accomplished by craftsmen (*xhoke*-workers) (fig. 15). For this we refer to the study of Prof. Dr. Spiro Shkurti, who emphasizes that the dressing of this area "was worked within the household, except of the *xhoke*" (Shkurti, 2004).

### 3.4 Dollama (sharkëla) of the Zagoria Women's Dress (fig. 17, 18)

*Sharkëla* was worn above the long dress, and was realized in two colors: dark blue and black (Shkurti, 2004). Like other *xhokes*, *sharkëla* is made from felt locally produced with a width of 20-22 cm. *Sharkëla* has a length of 113 cm. The cutting scheme appears very interesting and advanced, compared to the *xhokes*' cutting schemes that we have analyzed above (fig. 16). Let's look at the new cutting elements: in the back and the side of it, is cut to the waist; shoulder slope; the neckline is curved, both in the back and front; the formation of the *pince* (dart) on the waist area on both sides is a very important innovation (such a practical solution shows the impact of the most advanced cutting method); the armhole is created by joining the curved front part with the corner back part.

*Sharkëla* is decorated with strips of braids, dominated by blue and reddish color, and somewhere green and yellow intertwined with gold thread. Braids are made of bright twisted cotton thread. The colors and the brightness of the threads contrast with the black felt. At the end of each strip, on the back, the free braids create fringes (fig. 18). Sewing is made of

cotton yarn, such as joining the felt parts with each other, and in sewing the braids on the felt (fig. 19). *Sharkëla* does not have lining either. The use of the cotton tape on the inside edge is a novelty in the aesthetics of sewing.

### 3.5 Koreti of Zadrime (fig. 21, 22)

*Koreti of Zadrime* is classified by researcher Andromaqi Gjergji in the group of *Xhoka* cut from the bottom part and this element is used only in brides costumes (Gjergji, 2005). *Koreti* is worn over the shirt and is composed of two main parts, the part of the vest and the bottom part with wrinkles in the back. In all parts of the cut edging it is associated with the beautification of manufactured straps in red and yellowish-brown colors. In *Koreti* that we have taken to analysis, the material used is felt which is locally produced. The part of the vest is totally made of red color felt. The lower part is divided in two parts, the front and the back part. The upper part is made of black felt, while the lower part is made of red fabric. The part of the vest is uncut at the shoulders and open at the collar below the waist (fig. 20, a). *Koreti* length which reaches to the knee and the front part is flat (fig. 20, a). The reverse side is formed with deep waves, that when opened they create nearly a half circle. The waves at the waist are formed with 28 pieces of felt of trapezoid shape, where a trapezoid of a width of 18 cm forms a pair (fig. 20, b). This way of creating waves is due to the limited width of the material (20 cm - 30 cm). This is a smart technical solution, in both sewing and cutting to get the desired result. Using the trapezoid for forming the wrinkles (waves) enables sewing them at the upper part of the dress (fig. 20, b). The red part below the waves consists of three pieces of manufactured fabric, with a width of 127 cm each. Sewing is carried out within the household, all with hand stitching, which seems quite clear on the inside part of the garment, as well as the placement of decorative braids sewing parts proves this, as a characteristic of all clothing in villages. On the inside part, the wrinkles are sewed with one another with a full thread to fix them and get the desired shape (fig. 23). *Koreti* does not have lining.

### 3.6 Guna with Rrëke of Myzeqe Women's Dress (fig. 25, 26)

The material used is felt produced under household conditions. Referring to the cutting scheme the reverse part is created by two half circles that make a full circle, but always put on the two sides by joining the back of a straight strip of felt (fig. 24). The back part is formed by three strips where the middle one is extended until the end of the *Guna*, joining from the waist down the both parts of the circle. A semi-circle is formed by 14 white felt strips. What we observe at the "*Guna with Rrëke*", in terms of form, is the similarity with the *xhokes* used in the cities, both in the circle and in the back parts. In these dresses, the circle cutting techniques are resolved through the lines that follow the shape of a half circle. The new cutting elements in this garment are: the use and ways of implementation of circle; shoulder slope; curved of the front part of the armhole; waist cutting on the back; the use of the pocket element. Sewing is done very carefully by craftsmen (*xhoke-workers*). All the straps are joined by reddish brown color strips of knitted wool, prepared by women themselves with twisted wool yarns (Mitrushi, 1976). These strips hide the seam in the upper part, but at the same time adorn the *guna* (fig. 27). The thread used for sewing is cotton. The distribution of these strips creates the idea of streams (diagonal lines that appear to flow) in the area of the circle.

### Xhoke (Xhybe) Used in the Folk Costumes of the City Women

The *xhoke* was a common element in all outfits. The fabrics used for the production of these *xhokes*, were of a good quality, also the use of the gold thread embroidery was a distinctive feature of these coatings, and often these decorations covered almost the entire surface of the coating. Initially, the *xhokes* as other parts of the dresses, came readily from big city centers of the Orient, and were used by the rich strata of the city, but with the spread of this fashion, the other social strata in the city started to use them and these garments began to be produced by local craftsmen." Gervers, (1982, p. 12) argues that "because of the Turkish expansion and occupation of the Balkans and a continuing Turkish presence even in the territories to the north, oriental fashions were as popular from the 14th to the early 20th century among the aristocracy and nobility as among the inhabitants of towns and villages". The increased demand from other strata of society, "around half of the eighteenth century", brought the need to use less costly materials, thus increasing the number of artisans in this sector. In general, *xhokes* were imitations coming from major city centers, along with them came also the accessories and clothes needed for their decoration. This "soft invasion" of Oriental fashion led to a kind of unification of dresses not only between religious divisions within ethnicity, but also a form of fashion unification within the cities of the Ottoman Empire. Gervers,

(1982, p. 17) argues that “the styles of jackets and coats, the most representative garments, often became symbols of national identity”. In Albania, as in other Balkan countries – “they remained part of royal garb and gala costume for state receptions until quite recently”. The *Xhokes* used in the City and taken into consideration are: *Pirpiri* of Leskovik Women Dress, *Xhoka (dollama)* of Pogradec Women Dress, *Xhybe* of the Catholic Women in Shkoder, *Xhybe* with sleeves used in Leskovik.

#### 4.1 *Pirpiri* of Leskovik Women's Dress (fig. 31, 32)

The material used in this *xhoke* is manufactured fabric in blue color. This dress was worn above a long shirt or, in the case of the Muslim population, over the *tumans* (turkish trousers). We find similar models in the city of Përmet (Albanian Folk Costumes, 2001) and that of Gjirokastra (Albanian Folk Costumes, 1999). The *pirpiri* cutting scheme appears very different from the village *xhokes* cutting schemes we have discussed above, excluding the case of a *guna* with *rreke*. This similarity is related to the presence of the circle element, but realized in a completely different way (fig. 30). In the cutting scheme we observe the utilization of the entire width of the fabric, about 90 cm - 100 cm, for making half of the *pirpiria*. Add here also the fact that circle cutting requires a lot of fabric to be realized. In this way we can easily calculate the amount of fabric used for the *pirpiria*. If we take the width of the fabric about 100 cm, the length would be twice the length of the cutting scheme of the two main parts, i.e., 145 cm + 145 cm = 290 cm (i.e., about 300 cm). While the back was made with fabric fragments remained. Each side of the dress, apart from the side  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the circle has also the part of the wrinkles, that is constitutes in the middle part and that joints the back part. Also the front of *pirpiri* is uncut with the circle cutting part in the back. Two additional fabric pieces join the back with the chest parts, thus taking part in creating the armpit arc. Such cutting details as: sloping shoulders, armpit arc in all constituent parts, the neck arch and collar, and the way of circle cutting, shows new forms of cutting, compared to those of the village *xhokes*. The decoration is made with braids and twisted cotton lines. Other color of the decoration creates a contrast with the blue color of the fabric. The compositional spreading of the decoration is very harmonious and strips of curved sides, frame the *xhoke* as in the front and back parts (fig. 31, 32). The side edges are decorated with wavy strips of braids. Both, the twisted thread and the braided one are sewed according to the pattern of decoration.

The sewing technique is accomplished with great skill, but very interesting is how the joining of parts is realized. By observing and analyzing the cutting scheme, we understand that the open part below the armpit is also the place where the front part is joined with the back, after first joining the three constituent parts of the back. On the inside part it is accompanied with the liner fabric, a craft technology characteristic of the dresses in the cities.

#### 4.2 *Xhoka (dollama)* of Pogradec Women's Dress (fig. 34, 35)

The *Xhoke* of feminine dresses of Pogradec is listed in the cuttings of  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the circle because it is composed of two parts from  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the circle (fig. 33). The circle cutting pattern is focused on the back part, a main characteristic of the city's *xhokes*. The fabric used is red velvet. The ways of cutting create a chic style, something we see at the material used and at the embroidery (quite dominant). An interesting technical and aesthetic point of cutting, which emphasizes the elegance, is part of the waist, especially how the  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the circle emphasizes its cutting along with the straps of braids. This is especially obvious at the part where the back part joins the front part, which comes down to down-belly part, emphasizing the waist lines and ends in the internal pocket (fig. 36). In terms of cutting, we have here a typology that generally accompanies all types of *xhokes* but with variations in the cutting and also in the embroidery and ornaments. In the scheme of cutting, we notice that the length of the circle cutting is kept the same (the radius of the circle) with more precision from the back side as well. For cutting, it is used the width of the fabric without distracting the development of the circle cutting from the front to the back. Although, in the front of the *xhoke*, there is no *pince* (dart), it moves on to the back part, which is indicated by the waist width at 10 cm, in the lower back. This gives plenty of charm and elegance to the feminine figure. The slope on the shoulders, the arch of the armpit and the arch of the neckline are part of this *xhoke*'s cutting scheme. In all parts of its *bordure*, the *xhoke* is framed with tape made with black braids and gold thread. Even embroidery is done with gold thread and black thread twisted. The embroidery part is known for its great finesse, visible in all *xhokes* used in the city (fig. 34, 35). The part of embroidery is accompanied with cardboard, on the inner side, which guarantees the quality of embroidery and stability. In front, in the chest part, buttons (*sumbulla*) are put on both sides (about 15 on each side) coated with gold thread and black thread. In the interior part, the *xhoke* is accompanied by an internal cotton line.

### 4.3 Xhybe of the Catholic Women in Shkoder (fig. 38)

The fabric used in this *xhybe* is red velvet drapery. In comparison with the other two *xhokes*, this is shorter and covered completely with decorations and stripes with black braids. *Xhybe's* length is around 66 cm, and dressed on the body emphasizes the bloated form of Turkish trousers.

Regarding the cutting scheme, it appears the same as the other two *xhokes*. The front part cut along with the  $\frac{1}{4}$  circle, and both parts together form the  $\frac{1}{2}$  circle (fig. 37). For cutting the  $\frac{1}{2}$  circle, it is used the sufficient width of the fabric. Both cut parts are sewed in the down part and in the middle part thus creating the needed width to form the back part. Also, the shoulders, arch of the armpits and the arch of the neck are the same as those of the other two city *xhokes*.

In the three cutting schemes we notice that the front part is not disconnected at the waist and it is united with the part of the circle cutting. Sewing is accomplished with such a craftsmanship, that the *xhoke* seems to be molded into a single body. The liner fabric is also placed very carefully. The technique of decoration is a perfect realization and creates a very interesting texture relief (fig. 38). The relief decoration and the cardboard placed below the fabric, to keep the burden that creates decoration, make this *xhybe* appear as frozen. The pattern decoration consists in the small form of two leaves, which rhythmically spread across the surface of the *xhybe*. These small patterns were all worked in series and then placed through sewing over the *xhybe*. The side edges are decorated with wavy strips of braids.

### 4.4 Xhybe with Sleeves used in Leskovik (fig. 40, 41)

This *xhybe* with sleeves is made by the artisans of the city, like other *Xhokes*. This is observed: in the material used, which is black wool fabric; in the manner of cutting, typical for city *xhokes*, as well as in sewing and decorating. The length of *xhybe* is 113 cm, and the cutting scheme is similar to the other *xhoke's* scheme we analyzed, but it is more similar to the *pirpiri* of Leskovik (fig. 39). Embroidery is made with braids, with gold thread and spread almost all over the *xhybe*, creating concentrations in certain areas and a beautiful contrast to the black color of the fabric.

The decoration patterns are floral and embroidered with great skill (fig. 40, 41).

### Comparative overview and conclusions

In the cutting patterns analysis, the fabric used the way of embellishment and the way of sewing, the similarities and differences between the city and the village *xhokes* are clearly seen. In terms of similarities, they have to do with aesthetic of *xhoke's* function in different clothes. In both cases, as in the city and in the village, *xhokes* are a very visible element in clothing and play an important role in shaping their silhouette and in general they are quite fancy. Even decoration techniques have similarities, both from the use of braiding strips and the embroidery. One of the main differences is the material used for the realization of these *xhokes*, felt produced within the household for the village *xhokes* and the manufactured fabric for the city *xhokes*. In the cutting schemes, the difference between city and village *xhokes* is clear, as well as the various level of influence of civic fashion in the village *xhokes*. In order to make a comparison between them, we carefully observe the characteristics of the village and city *xhokes*.

*The distinctive characteristics of the village xhokes:*

The village *xhokes* consist of many pieces of felt, due to the narrow width of the felt sheet, about 20-30 cm. In general, the *xhokes* are sleeveless, but also with sleeves (as in the case of *dollama* of *Malesia e Madhe*). In the case of long sleeves, they are narrow and take the shape of the arm through a triangular extension placed on the sleeve length. Additional parts are used in the armpits. The armhole is formed by straight cutting lines and corners (noted as in the sleeveless *xhoke*, as well as those with sleeves). Most of them lack the slope of the shoulder. The length of the village *xhokes* varies in different clothing, they are long and short. In forms, they appear varied, including the forms in circle cutting. The village *xhokes* are mostly uncut in the waist, but we also have cut variants to the waist (as in the case of the *koreti* or in the case of the *kraholi* of *Xhubleta* (Nini, 2013). Furthermore, part of the pattern cutting scheme are also those cut on the back waist. Such examples are *Guna* of *Myzeqe*, very similar in shape to the city's *xhoke* and *Sharkëla* of *Zagoria*. There are two ways to sew the village *xhokes*. One is when the pieces are joined through the braids strip (fig. 28) and the other when the braids strip is not used (fig. 29). All the village *xhokes* have no liner.



### *The distinctive characteristics of the city's xhokes:*

The manufactured fabric used in the city's *xhokes*, had a considerable width, which makes it possible to realize such sophisticated cutting, responding to the tastes of time, but giving the dress even a kind of elegance. The pattern cutting scheme is typical for civic *xhokes* in general, regardless of the regional origin it belongs to. The city *xhokes*, just like the ones in the village, are generally sleeveless, but also with sleeves (as in the case of *Leskovik xhybe*). The pattern sleeves are made without fabric additional pieces. The armhole, both in sleeveless and with sleeves *xhoke*, is with arch and very close to modern cutting. The sloping shoulders can be clearly observed in all the city *xhokes* cutting scheme. City *xhokes* are also cut only on the back waist. The differences from one scheme to the other are small details, such as: the addition of waves to the back part of the *Leskovik xhoke* (with sleeves or sleeveless), or tangential cutting in the part below the armpit that connects to the back side in the *xhoke* of Pogradec. But these details do not change the cutting scheme, which remains the same in all city *xhokes*.

As for sewing, it is more sophisticated than in the village outfits. On the inside, all seams are covered with liner and the area where the liner is joined with the side of *xhoke*, is sewed with great care. The purpose of the craftsman was to provide aesthetically pleasing outfits even on the inside, thus being closer to the modern concept, something that we don't see in the village *xhokes*. Also, the place where two parts are sewed together does not cover with braid strips intentionally as in the village *xhokes*, this is because:

*First*, the width of the fabric does not bring fragmentation of the dresses, as in the village outfits, due to the lack of fabric width (but not forgetting that in the garment of the village this thing is done with great wit) and

*Secondly*, the seam was made with a lot of refinement, as it was by hand, and by the sewing machine.

The decorative straps, in the city's *xhokes*, are mainly placed on the side edges and on the waistline. The embroidery is made with braids and various threads of gold, silk or cotton, according to the user's economic condition. In general, the decoration creates contrast to the color of the fabric used and the compositional scheme is unique to each type. The decorative rhythm harmoniously follows the cut, highlighting it in specific moments, such as on the waist. The patterns are floral and embroidered with care.

### **5.1 Circle cutting patterns comparative overview**

In analyzing the *xhokes* of the city's dresses we saw that the cutting scheme is similar. The cutting technique, in the four cases, is  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the circle. The circle is placed across the width of the fabric and uncut from the front part of the dress.

We have a totally different picture with the *xhoke* of the village. Every cutting scheme has a completely different situation and constitutes a separate technique. *Guna* with *Rreke* has the cutting technique of two semi-circles and each semi-circle is composed of 14 strips of felt. The circle cutting in the *Koreti* of Zadrime, is created by positioning the trapezoidal pieces in a very regular waiving. The part of circle in the *Kraholi* of *Xhubleta*, appears quite unique. Even though concentrated in the back part, and with regular waves, this part is a bit bigger than a full circle (Nini, 2013).

### **Conclusions**

In the analysis of the cutting schemes of women's city *xhokes* we noted that:

The city's *xhokes* are presented with the same cutting scheme, which leads to a unified form of them.

Compositional decoration schemes in city *xhokes* appear to be approximate, especially in those jackets where their shape is the same.

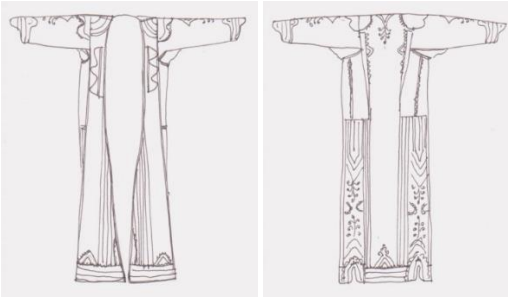
The circle cutting scheme is similar in city *xhokes*. The reasons for this result are:

Considerable latitude of the manufactured fabrics made it possible the simplification of the techniques used to create the circle cutting, making it more practical, and brought its mass application.

The first fashion station of that time that comes from major centers are cities and therefore we see the influence of oriental aesthetics, which is reflected much more in the *xhokes* used in the cities. We see this effect in the material used, cutting techniques of sewing and decoration.







**Figure 2.** Technical sketch, Front view

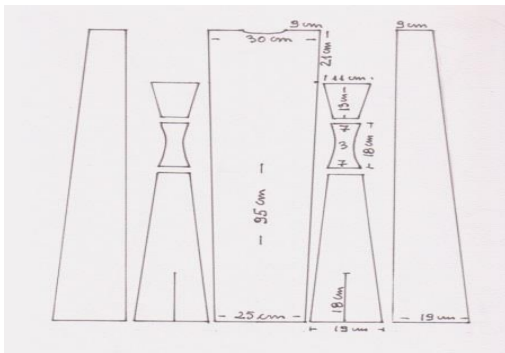
**Figure 3.** Technical sketch, Back view



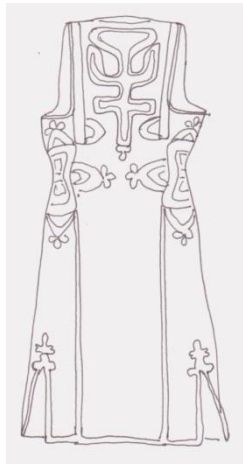
**Figure 4.** Decoration detail



**Figure 5.** Sewing detail



**Figure 6.** Cutting scheme, *Dollama* (xhupe) of Mirdita Women's Dress



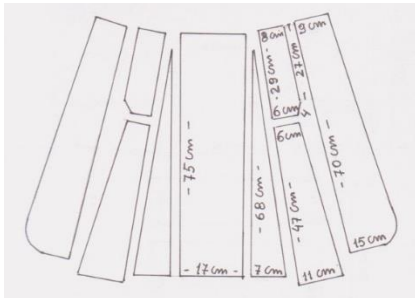
**Figure 7.** Technical sketch, Front view

**Figure 8.** Technical sketch, Back view



**Figure 9.** Decoration detail

**Figure 10.** Sewing detail



**Figure 11.** Cutting scheme, Short *Xhoke*, Used in the Province of Shpat (Elbasan)



Figure 12. Technical sketch, Front view

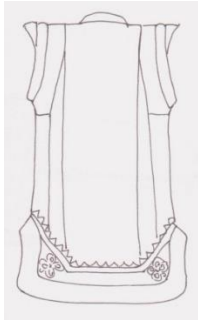


Figure 13. Technical sketch, Back view



Figure 14. Decoration detail



Figure 15. Sewing detail

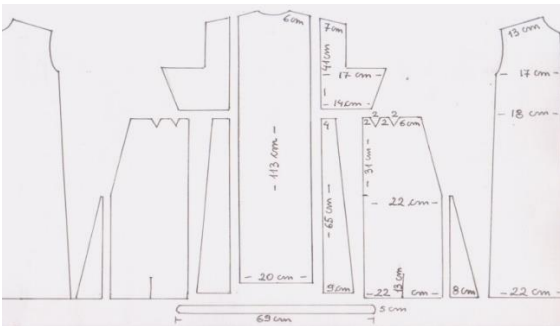


Figure 16. Cutting scheme, Dollama (sharkëla) of the Zagoria Women's Dress



Figure 17. Front view



Figure 18. Back view



Figure 19. Sewing detail

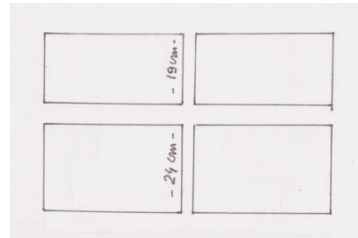
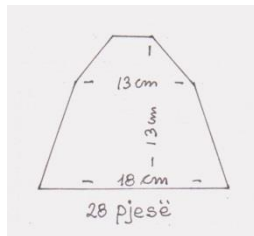
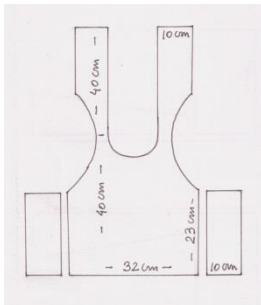


Figure 20. a, b, c. Cutting scheme, Koreti of Zadrima



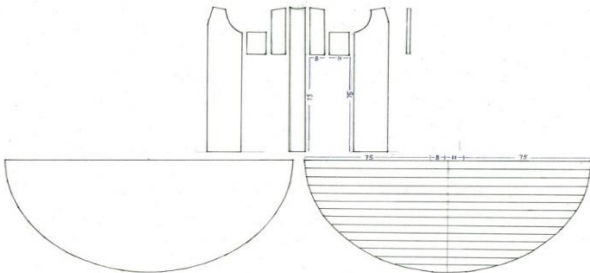
**Figure 21.** Front view



**Figure 22.** Back view



**Figure 23.** Sewing detail, Trapezoid forming the wrinkles (waves)



**Figure 24.** Cutting scheme, *Guna* with *Rrêke* of Myzeqe Women's Dress



Figure 25. Front view



Figure 26. Back view



Figure 27. Decoration detail

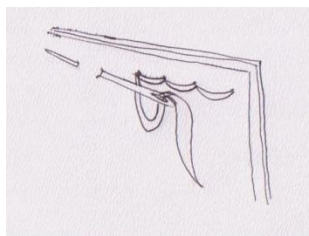
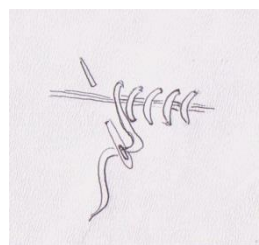


Figure 28. 29. Sewing techniques of village xhokes

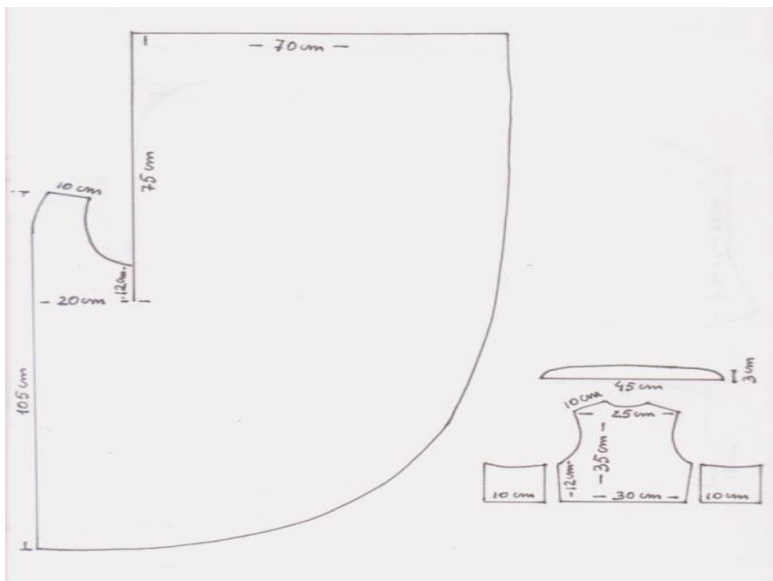


Figure 30. Cutting scheme, Pirpiri of Leskovik Women's Dress





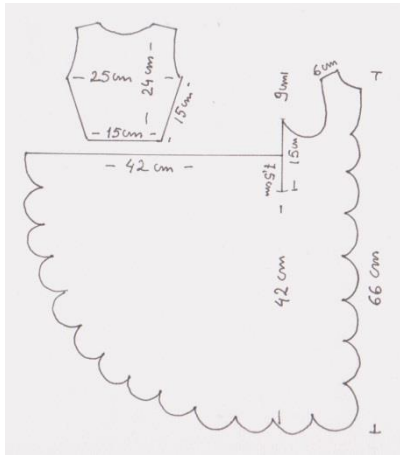


Figure 37. Cutting scheme, Xhybe of the Catholic Women in Shkoder



Figure 38. Xhybe of Shkoder

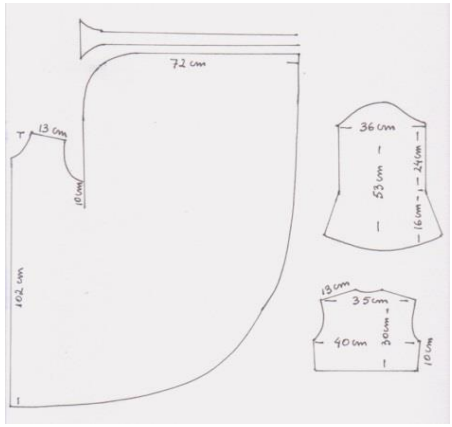


Figure 39. Cutting scheme, Xhybe with Sleeves used in Leskovik



Figure 40. Front view



Figure 41. Back view