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# Traditional Dress Code of the Town Županja and its Surroundings

*Županjska Posavina is the area that covers the south-eastern part of Vukovar-Syrmian county. Traditional forms of clothing and hair-styling have been sparsely explored in this area. On the basis of field research and literature available to date, records of changes in traditional costumes of Županja and villages near to it were made in the period from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until today. There are two basic types of folk costume described – the older one, which came out of regular use at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; and a newer, festive one, which has developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and today is referred to as the folk costume of Županja (županjska narodna nošnja).*

Key words: traditional dress, clothing, Županja

## Introduction

The traditional dress code of the inhabitants of Županjska Posavina county has been sparsely explored. While some areas of Slavonia are described in great detail, data about dressing and hair-styling in the Županja area are quite rare in ethnological literature. The oldest data can be found in Lovretić's monograph "Otok", where there are several sketches describing costumes of certain villages in eastern Slavonia.<sup>1</sup> Except for several articles by author Janja Juzbašić,<sup>2</sup> a curator of County Museum "Stjepan Gruber" in Županja,

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<sup>1</sup> Lovretić, J. (1990) *Otok*, reprint from "Anthology of Folk Lifestyle and Customs of Southern Slavs", JAZU Zagreb, Book II-1897, III-1898, IV-1899, VII-1902, XXI-1916, and XXIII-1918.

<sup>2</sup> Juzbašić, J. (1994) From Ethnological Inheritance, in: *Županjski vijenac*, Županja, Croatian radio Županja, pp. 92-99.

this paper is based on field research, which I performed in December 2003, for the needs of Folk Costume Manufacturing and Renting Department in Zagreb.<sup>3</sup>

Županjska Posavina is situated in the southern and south-eastern part of Vukovar-Syrmian county. In the south it borders on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the east on Serbia and Montenegro. In a wider sense, this area used to refer to all localities of the former Županja county - Babina Greda, Bošnjaci, Cerna, Drenovci, Đurići, Gradište, Gunja, Posavski Podgajci, Račinovci, Rajevo selo, Soljani, Strošinci, Šiškovci, Štitar, Vrbanja, and Županja.

This part of Slavonia abounds in different kinds of folk costumes, so that almost every village has its specific marks and names for particular clothing elements. Since administrative borders rarely corresponded to certain traditional life determinations, the villages Cerna and Šiškovci distinguish themselves from the above mentioned group because their costume possesses features of Vinkovci style, as does Babina Greda, for it is characterised by the clothing and hairstyling of Slavonski Brod. Remaining localities are divided into two bigger groups – *Elferija* and *Cvelferija*,<sup>4</sup> with greater differences in clothing. In villages gravitating to Županja – Bošnjaci and Štitar (today an outlying housing development) – as well as in Županja itself, certain authors defined the costume as Borderer type of Županja style (*graničarski tip županjskog stila*) with smaller differences in clothing (Svirac, Juzbašić, 1994:160). Gradište can be placed in the same group with them, because of the shapes of its costumes and the way of decorating traditional clothing, although it also carries some characteristics of folk costumes from both Slavonski Brod and Vinkovci.<sup>5</sup> This article will deal with the folk costumes of these four localities, with an accent on Županja.

Local dress forms, as we know them today, were formed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This was the time when old fashioned attire (*ruvo*) finally came out of regular use. Changes also happened during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, mostly in the direction of the unification of the costume, especially the female one.

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(1997) Ethnological themes in Županja region, in: *Županjska Posavina*, Vinkovci, Slavenska naklada "Privlačica" Vinkovci, pp. 20-29.

(1997) Headgear of Married Women in Županjska Posavina, in: *Female Headgear in Županjska Posavina*, Županja, County Museum "Stjepan Gruber" in Županja, pp. 11-20.

<sup>3</sup> My expressions of gratitude to informants: Eva Čolić (born 1925), Manda Bušić (1930), and Martin Verkočić (1937) from Županja, Katarina Parašilovac (1930) from Gradište, and Kata Maroševac (1978) from Štitar.

<sup>4</sup> This division and names originate from the times of the Croatian Military Border (Vojna krajina). As a part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Brod infantry regiment, Županja was the headquarters of the 11<sup>th</sup> company (German elf=11), and Drenovci of the 12<sup>th</sup> company (zwolf=12). The villages Drenovci, Đurići, Gunja, Posavski Podgajci, Račinovci, Rajevo selo, Soljani, and Vrbanja belonged to *Cvelferija*; while Županja, Bošnjaci and Štitar belonged to *Elferija*. The village Strošinci was not a part of the Brod regiment, but it was a part of the Petrovaradin regiment, and it is the only village in Županjska Posavina geographically belonging to Syrmia.

<sup>5</sup> There are more similarities with the Brod costume (for example scarf and apron with adornment, festive female long shirt with longitudinal embroidery, etc).

## Historical influences

The indigenous population dominating the entire county are *Šokci*.<sup>6</sup> The existence of the Croatian Military Border and the reign of foreign governments had great influence on the life of the country population, from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and this is why many elements from this time period have become original parts of traditional culture. Abolition of the Croatian Military Border at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century sped up the disintegration process of village extended families, and with it certain milestones of village life gradually started to disappear, such as, for example, a characteristic hierarchy in those families, distribution of chores, the manufacture of textile in household workshops, etc.

The presence of Englishmen and Frenchmen from the 1880s until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also influenced the dress code of the inhabitants of Županja and its surroundings<sup>7</sup>. It is well known that city and village influences intertwined during the centuries and that certain art styles can be recognised in some parts of traditional costume and its adornment. It has yet to be established to what extent the presence of the previously mentioned foreigners influenced clothing habits in a more restricted county area.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes informants themselves notice the influences made by a district (*kotar*) and gentlemen (*gospoda*)<sup>9</sup>.

## The folk costume of Županja and its surroundings

### Generally

The main parts of the traditional clothes were made from homemade white linen; earlier it was flax and later on, especially during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was cotton (purchased threads). Until the Second World War, women wove linen in their homes. The forms of linen which prevailed were not tailored ones – the Županja area does

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<sup>6</sup> *Šokac* is the ethnic name for a part of the Croatian population in Slavonia, Sylvania, Baranya, Bačka, Banat, and Bosnia. The origin and meaning of the name *Šokac* have not been clearly determined until today, although there are several different interesting theories. In times of the Croatian Military Border (*Granična*), *Šokadija* was considered to be only the military area in its middle and eastern part, different to its civic part (*Paorija*), which was under a governor's jurisdiction.

<sup>7</sup> Foreign entrepreneurs were attracted to oak forests hundreds of years old, and this is why a tannin factory was established in Županja, as well as a manufacturing plant of barrel staves for European markets.

<sup>8</sup> Influences on social life and economy have been investigated in more detail so far.

<sup>9</sup> After the abolition of the Croatian Military Border, Županja became the center of the county. People living in nearby villages considered inhabitants of Županja to be of a *lordly bearing* and dressing. Often they used to sing:

*Oj, Županjo, bečki perivoje, (Oh Županja, public-gardens of Vienna,  
U tebi su najljepše gospoje. The most beautiful ladies live here.)*

not differ here from other parts of the Pannonian cultural area. Pieces of woven linen were usually joined together by minute white embroidery named *sastav* (=joining) after its purpose.<sup>10</sup>

Various kinds of linen woven fabric (*tkanje*), which were used for making specific types of attire, are known in this region. For example, festive types of costume were made from very thin fabric (*usnivano misirsko tkanje*), while parts of everyday clothes were made from a thicker one.<sup>11</sup> Other elements of clothing were made of wool, leather or various fabric materials - silk for example.

## Children's costume

Because we are lacking in older sources, today it is difficult to determine the forms of traditional children's costume. It can be presumed that, during the first years of their lives, children wore long shirts tailored in a simple way with very little adornments, as it was in the neighbouring areas.<sup>12</sup> As children grew up, their clothes started bearing more resemblance in type and shape to adult clothing. When they were about four or five years old, boys received trousers (*gaće*), a short shirt (*rubina*), and a waistcoat (*prsluk*); while girls received shirts (*rubine*), skirts (*suknje*), and blouses (*bluze*). After finishing elementary school, at about the age of twelve, girls were allowed to decorate themselves and keep company with young women (Toldi, 1979:2).

## Male costume

Main parts of traditional male attire are a shirt (*rubina*) and trousers (*gaće*). The shirt was worn over the trousers and it reached the thighs. A front and back part were made of two widths of linen, while every sleeve was made of one and a half. Sleeves were creased at the wrist into cuffs (*manžetne*); in older days they were called *zapunci*. Square inlays (*latice*) were added under the sleeves. Shoulders were lined with linen shoulder-straps (*poramenice*, *naramenice*). As a rule, the shirt was buttoned partly on the left side of the chest, although examples of right-sided buttoning can be found.

<sup>10</sup> *Sastav* – white embroidery made using an ordinary sewing-needle. Pieces of linen are sewn together with a thread, thus creating various patterns.

<sup>11</sup> *Misir* - the finest and thinnest woven textile, which was made from purchased cotton thread marked 200 (informants use the term *dvi stotine*). *Usnivo* – patterned textile (with vertical stripes) made by inserting thicker threads in the warp. Threads marked 150 created a somewhat thicker material, while parts of everyday clothes were made from cotton thread called 'sixty in a package' (*šezdeset u paketu*). As opposed to this, in some parts of Slavonia, *misir* is the name used for linen woven on two shafts. *Čenar* – rough textile. *Švoravo tkanje* and *bora* were not used for clothes-making.

<sup>12</sup> Zvonimir Toldi analyzed the data regarding children's dress forms in the Slavonski Brod area for the needs of the exhibition "The Child and Its World" (Museum of Brodsko Posavlje, 1979).

On the front side, at chest level, there was a decorative gore - *prsa* or *foramelle* - made using one of many techniques of perforated white embroidery. Shirts were decorated with lace at their bottom edge, and above it with a gusset - *umet*. Older examples were mostly decorated with hollie stitch (*priplet*), woven hem stitch (*raspljet*), and newer ones with eyelet hole (*šlinga*), Richelieu lace (*rišalje*) or *toledo*.<sup>13</sup> Usage of golden embroidery started spreading in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, so more festive examples of shirts were decorated in this technique as well. Vegetative motives prevail in embroidery decoration (different kinds of stylized flowers, leaves, and branches; oak leaves and acorns are a frequent motive), sometimes combined with geometrical forms (curls, rhombi and circles). A somewhat shorter *rubina*<sup>14</sup> of a different cut was worn tucked into the special type of trousers (*rajtozne*).

Every leg of *gaće* was tailored from two widths of linen, while on the seam where they were joined there was a square inlet - *tur*. At waist level a string (*svitnjak*) was pulled into the hem, and thus *gaće* were creased and fastened; their legs were ankle-length. Their lower part was also decorated with lace and a gusset made using one of the above mentioned needlework techniques. As a rule, basic parts of male clothes were decorated with the same embroideries as female ones, only in a more modest form. Older people, especially shepherds (*čobani*), wore trousers of homemade firm white linen over *gaće* (Krstonjivić, 1982:9). Those trousers were called *oplatnjare*.

A sash (*tkanica*) was not worn on a working day (except when going to the village or during haymaking days, when a whetstone holder was attached to it), but it was worn for more festive occasions. Older sashes were made of rough wool in different combinations of colours. Their hems ended in somewhat short tassels. From the times of the activity of Radić's HPSS (HRSS, HSS) and "Seljačka sloga", the usage of a three-coloured sash ('folk sash' - *narodna tkanica*) started spreading.<sup>15</sup> Sashes with woolen pompons (*tkanice s gombama*), known in some parts of Slavonia<sup>16</sup> were not worn in the county area.

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<sup>13</sup> Hollie stitch (*priplet*) = *sastav*; woven hem stitch (*raspljet*) – white embroidery where threads of the weft are pulled out, while threads of the warp are then sewn over using a simple needle; eyelet hole (*šlinga*) – perforated white embroidery where parts of design are cut out and embroidered (by hand or by machine) using tiny running stitches close to the edge of the motives; Richelieu (*rišalje*) – cutwork embroidery where distinctive buttonhole-stitch bars cross the cut out areas; *toledo* – a certain number of threads of warp and weft are pulled out using the system of counting threads, and then the remaining threads are sewn over.

<sup>14</sup> These shirts are of a newer origin. In the shoulder area they have a bodice (*satl*); the lower part of the shirt, sleeves and a collar are then sewn onto it.

<sup>15</sup> Brothers Antun and Stjepan Radić formed the Croatian Folk Peasant Party in 1904. In the 1920s an educational and charitable organization »Seljačka sloga« (Peasant Unity) was formed. This organization has put great efforts to include peasants into political and economical life of the country, thus dealing with the education and enlightenment of the people and raising their consciousness; they also started forming choral associations, introducing them at major and regional folklore festivals.

<sup>16</sup> Lovretić states that in Županja and surrounding villages spangled belts (*šljokani kajšiši*) were worn by men (Lovretić, 1990:97).

For more festive occasions a somewhat shorter waistcoat blue, brown or black in colour named *kamizol*, was worn over a shirt. In the summer men wore silken waistcoats, and on colder days they wore waistcoats made of suiting material or velvet. During winter a lambskin jacket (*pršnjak*), with fur turned inwards, was worn as well. On its front side it was adorned with multicoloured leather applications, small mirrors, and it was trimmed with fur. It was buttoned at the shoulder and hip.

During winter men wore *gaće* made of thicker material, trousers of rolled wool (older form) or trousers of equestrian cut (*rajtozne*) made of brown corduroy.<sup>17</sup> During winter men also wore long felt coats (*kabanice*) of dark colours, adorned with green, red, or black applications of ribbons (*gajtani*). Male coats have collars, while female ones do not.

A short dark-blue coat made from rolled wool was called *špenzle* in the Županja area, except for Babina Greda, where it was called *ćurakle*. At its lower edge and at the edges of the sleeves, the *špenzle* from Županja is adorned with eleven multicoloured, horizontal, undulating stripes. Ornaments were a sign of identification with parts of the former Croatian Military Border, and Županja was the centre of the 11<sup>th</sup> *kumpanija – Elferija*.<sup>18</sup> Identical ornament was also found on male socks of rolled wool (*fusekle*).<sup>19</sup> On older photographs we can see dark-red woollen socks decorated with white grains like on a kind of bracelets (*šticle*). Examples like this used to be worn until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but there are not many preserved today.

Men and especially women during shrove-tide, used to wrap up their legs in rags of cloth (*obojci*), chequered in a brown-beige combination. Onto *obojci* they put strapped soft-soled footwear (*opanci kajišari*). *Opanci* with a decorative metal clasp (*baga*) called *ideali*, or with a tongue (*kalančor*) prevailed later on. They were made by craftsmen *opančari*. Boots with long boot-legs were always worn with trousers (*rajtozne*).

For festive occasions and during warmer days men would cover their heads with black hats called *kape*. These were usually decorated with flowers, asparagus fern, a three-coloured ribbon, and sometimes with golden coins (*dukati*). During winter men would protect their heads by wearing black or brown lamb-fur caps that sagged on top of the head.

<sup>17</sup> The upper part of the trousers is wider, while the lower part is narrower. The name comes from the German Reithose – riding-breeches (Anić, Goldstein, 1999:1066).

<sup>18</sup> In the middle of the 19th century, military authorities decided to make a uniform among the unofficial Borderer clothes in the area of the Brod regiment. The up-to-then upper, winter part of the costume – *gunjac* - made of cloth – was given ornaments corresponding to the *kumpanija* on its bottom edge and the edges of its sleeves. The term *špenzle* is used in a narrower Županja area, allegedly after an English factory owner named Spencer, whose way of making clothes of rolled wool was accepted also by the knitters (*štrikeri*) in this area (Lešić, 1975:135). Older people wore simpler coats without any ornaments. The knitters were situated in Vrbanja, Vinkovci, Vukovar, Đakovo, and Šid.

<sup>19</sup> Female socks were decorated by apple motives (*na jabuke*), as well as *špenzle* from Šitar. Lovretić notes a dark knitted jacket without ornaments (Lovretić, 1990:96).

## Female costume

Everyday usage of female traditional dress lasted longer than the usage of its male counterpart – in some areas until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some parts of this attire remained as a basis for later *šokačko* clothing, which today has also faded away in most villages of Županjska Posavina (Fig.1).

The older layer of traditional clothes, which consisted of a blouse – *oplećak*, and a skirt – *vezenka*, disappeared from everyday usage during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The main part of ‘small blouse’ (*mali oplećak*) was tailored from three or three and a half linen widths, while sleeves were made from one width. Somewhat shorter sleeves were decorated on the edges with crochet-work (*heklanje*), eylet hole (*šlinga*), or richelieu lace. The neckline of the *mali oplećak* from Županja was trimmed with a ribbon (*ošvica*). The chest (*prsa*) was also decorated (*naradita*). The *oplećak* from Bošnjaci is partially buttoned on the front side. Later on, it was worn with skirts, for example when going on a visit or attending a mass on a regular day.

The lower part – *vezenka* - was usually sewn from six widths of thicker homemade striped or plain weave.<sup>20</sup> Horizontal and vertical decorations were made with cotton thread – *predica* - or wool in red colour or in a combination of black-red or blue-red colours. *Vezenka* was named after a type of embroidery *napuššana pružanka* – hand-made relief-embroidery created using the technique of counting threads. Relief-embroidery was also made in the technique *štikanje* using a simple hand tool - *mašinica*. In Županja area geometrical motives prevailed – circles, braids, and wavy or zigzag lines. On older specimens of the skirts there is a wide horizontal hem, which ended in its upper part in a miniature perforated needle-made embroidery (*šupljika*). On the same spot we also find a narrow decoration done in a woven hem stitch. In distinction from other parts of Slavonia, horizontal embroidery made with a linen or woollen thread was created well above the hem. Crocheted (*heklana*) lace of simpler making was sewn onto the hem. In Gradište this *rubina* was called *petopolka* (made of five widths), although it was actually made of six widths of linen. Examples decorated using the blue cross technique, which were worn on Palm Sunday, are especially beautiful. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century *rubine vulanke*, decorated with white cotton *vula*,<sup>21</sup> were no longer in usage.

In order to move around more easily when working, women used to raise their skirts at hip level and tuck them into the sash; this was called *potkasivanje*. Depending on a woman’s corpulence, women wore two or more underskirts underneath *rubina*. First an underskirt (*donja rubina*) was put on, and then the *unterok*.<sup>22</sup> They were made of simpler fabric, later on from chiffon, and they were most commonly decorated with

<sup>20</sup> Older specimens of *vezenka* were made from plain thick woven material, while widths of linen were not sewn together, but they were joined together by *sastav*.

<sup>21</sup> Informants state that, when they were young, these type of skirt was worn only by very old women.

<sup>22</sup> In Šitar the lowermost underskirt was named *krila*, and in Gradište *krilea*.

crocheted (*heklana*) lace.<sup>23</sup> Underskirts also represented underwear, since pants were not worn. When *starovirsko* attire was substituted with *šokačko* dressing of skirts and blouses, *donja rubina* and *unterok* remained in usage. They have kept their original function as undergarments.

The waist was girded with multicoloured woollen sash with short tassels. When wearing the older costume, a woman would wear a dark woollen apron – *kecelja* - bordered with short fringes. It could be completely black in colour or streaked with colourful woollen or silver (*srmani*) threads. Mostly the wool that was interwoven (*priktivana*) was in one colour (blue, dark-red, green), so aprons were not particularly colourful. Except for this older type of homemade apron, along with *vezanka* skirt a woman would wear an apron made from a thinner bought cotton material – chintz (*cic*).<sup>24</sup> They were of various colours – more vivid for younger women and deeper in colour for older ones, usually with small dots and patterns. Aprons sometimes had a sewn on flounce and two narrow ties - *tračci*. In Županja they were worn especially at shrove-tide.

Younger women used to wear red cotton chintz neckerchiefs ornamented with small white dots, around their necks, while older women wore mostly blue ones. They were of a triangular form, often with a sewn on flounce along the edges. Older women wrapped themselves with black silken or cotton scarves. Such scarves were also worn during the mourning period. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Štitar and Bošnjaci there appeared white linen scarves decorated in eylet hole technique, with flounces. Women of Županja did not wear them often.

When the weather was colder, one would put on a short waistcoat (*kožuščić*) made of lambskin, richly ornamented with multicoloured leather applications and small mirrors. Older examples in Županja do not have a lot of small circular applications, but they are dominated by a few larger vegetative motives, which match the ones on the male *pršnjak*. Examples like these are rare today, because the usage of *kožuščići* resembling ones from western, Brod areas had spread as time passed. In winter one would wear a shorter coat made of dark-blue rolled wool – *reklja*. For younger women it was decorated on its lower edge with a narrow trimming (*obrub*) and *loza*, and for older women it was decorated with a green decoration in the form of tendrils and twigs - *loza*. They were made by craftsmen in Vinkovci, Vrbanja, and Đakovo. Women also wore coats made of brown cloth – *kabanice*. Female *kabanice* and *reklje* had no collars; they had oval necklines.

<sup>23</sup> On this clothing elements lace is often made using the technique of *nec*, which is not the case with upper parts of attire. *Nec* – net-like lace; first, using a needle and a *rašak* one makes a small net, and then certain small squares are filled in with embroidery in order to create a particular motive.

<sup>24</sup> These aprons (*kecelje*) came into usage to a greater extent when women moved onto a "more modern" way of female dressing of skirts and blouses (*šokačko odijevanje*). Aprons can be of a rectangular or oval form with a sewn on flounce or pocket.



In winter women also wrapped their legs with *obojci* and put on *opanci kajišari*. This sort of footwear likely remained until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Judging by photographs taken before the Second World War, at that time they were put on in this manner only at shrove-tide. A similar thing happened to woollen knee-length stockings with interwoven glass grains, knitted stockings (*čičkane čarape*), and, today rarely preserved *fuseklice* – dark-blue stockings made from rolled wool with a specific ornament (*šara*) on the top hem.<sup>25</sup> Dark-red stockings (*čarape*) with *gulice*<sup>26</sup> most often pink in colour, remained in usage the longest. They are also worn today in combination with the *vezenka* skirt. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century *opanci* with a decorative metal clasp (*baga*) - often referred to as *ideali*, or with a tongue (*kalančor*) were worn.

During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a new form of attire developed designed for festive occasions, which is, despite certain changes that occurred through time, recognized and defined today as the folk costume of Županja (*županjska narodna nošnja*).<sup>27</sup> It was regularly worn at all important church holidays until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The main dressing elements of this costume are the upper part - *oplećak* and the lower part - *rubina*. In Županja, Štitar and Gradište a 'big blouse' (*veliki oplećak*) remained in usage; its front and back are made of four widths of linen (two for the front part, and two for the back), while every sleeve is made of two widths.<sup>28</sup> Sleeves are, together with front and back, creased into the neckline using a string (*pertla*). They are wrist-long, and under the armpit they are widened by a rectangular inlay (*latica*). Such blouse was worn at festive occasions, and this is why it was decorated using highly regarded needlework techniques – *toledo*, *šlinga* and *rišalje*.<sup>29</sup> Decoration is placed on the edges and in the middle of the sleeves where pieces of linen are joined together. The *umet* also can be a stitched on ribbon with golden embroidery, which is taken off when clothes are being washed.<sup>30</sup> Below the *veliki oplećak* a smaller one was

<sup>25</sup> Different than male ones, female stockings have an ornament of apple motives (*šara na jabučice*), as does *špenzle* from Štitar.

<sup>26</sup> *Gulice* are small wollen balls, part of a relief decoration on the knee-length stockings.

<sup>27</sup> The term most often used is "costume of Županja" (*županjska nošnja*).

<sup>28</sup> In Županja and Štitar sleeves are straight, while in Gradište they can be creased into thin creases (*falte*).

<sup>29</sup> *Toledo* lace and eyelet hole embroidery (*šlengeraj*) developed especially in Bošnjaci; this village is known for these techniques in ethnological literature. In villages around Vinkovci and Županja this manner of decoration almost enters the professional industry of local women (Gušić, 1955:70). In Bošnjaci they often use to sing

*Bošnjaci se nadaleko znaju (Bošnjaci are known by far*

*Po oborci i po šlengeraju. For oborci and for šlengeraj.)*

*Oborak* or *uborak* is a kind of flat recipient with the brim made of bentwood.

<sup>30</sup> Main parts of attire were more richly decorated with golden embroidery (*umet* on sleeves of *oplećak* and vertical decoration on *rubina*) only after the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Until then golden embroidery could be found only on the neckerchief – *zlatara*, and on the kerchief (*zavoj*) for the head. Golden embroidery is most often embroidered over paper.

worn, functioning as an undershirt. In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century sleeves were allowed to fall freely at the shoulders, while later it became common to lift them up using a linen or a cardboard inlay (*nadigač*) attached at the shoulders onto the bottom part of the blouse; this custom has been kept until today. Sleeves are tied under the elbows with red or pink silken bows (*mašle*).<sup>31</sup> Wide sleeves of the *veliki oplećak* used to be called rococo sleeves (*rokoko rukavi*).

In Bošnjaci, where the *veliki oplećak* does not exist, a smaller version, also representing a festive form, was decorated more lavishly than the one in Županja and Štitar. This is why the neckline and the embroidery on the chest (*prsa*) were trimmed with minute decoration,<sup>32</sup> *prsa* were richly embroidered, and the hem decoration on the sleeves was wide. Examples decorated in *toledo* lace are especially beautiful; their usage has spread in Županja as well.

Top shirt (*gornja rubina*) is worn above undershirts, and is ankle-length.<sup>33</sup> It is made of six or seven widths of striped *misir* fabric. On the back part of the belt there is a part of fabric called *ušivalo*, and the *rubina* is richly creased into it.<sup>34</sup> The *gornja rubina* is decorated with a horizontal decoration (*umet*) above the hem, while on the rim it is decorated with somewhat large laces made using the techniques *šlinganje*, *rišalje*, *toledo*. Older examples have *tamburirani* and *derđani* embroideries as well as *file*.<sup>35</sup> Creases (*falte*) in Županja were neither especially decorated with silken embroidery nor with *narodni vez* (flat embroidery made using a coloured thread), although lately they are richly filled with golden embroidery.<sup>36</sup> In Gradište, along longitudinal creases (*pruto-vi*),<sup>37</sup> from the waist-line to horizontal decorations, motives using silken embroidery or *štikanje* (*narodni vez*) can be found.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>31</sup> In Štitar and Gradište sleeves are tied above the elbows.

<sup>32</sup> These decorations are small triangles or semicircles made in eyelet hole embroidery.

<sup>33</sup> In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century *rubine* were mid-calf-length. Informants remember that some women used to curtail their *rubine*. Some of them dress this way even today. On photographs taken at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, one can notice people dressed in quite short clothes.

<sup>34</sup> A flounce was often sewn onto the lower edge of the *unterok* and it spread the *gornja rubina* the most, since it was well starched.

<sup>35</sup> *Tamburiranje* – embroidery where a motive is formed using a twisted thread. It is used most commonly to fill up the space around the central motive, and sometimes the whole surface as well (Juzbašić, 1994:8). *Derđef* – at the beginning four horizontal and four vertical threads are pulled out, and the remaining ones are then sewn over to form a net. Various motives are formed by filling-in spaces inside the net (Forjan, 2003:22). *File* – embroidery that some informants identify with *derdef*.

<sup>36</sup> I do not consider examples of modern manufacture to represent the Županja area, because characteristics of neighbouring types of costumes have been taken over (from Vinkovci or Slavonski Brod, for example).

<sup>37</sup> Festive *rubine* from Gradište are also ankle-length, and creases are somewhat narrower than in Županja and Štitar.

<sup>38</sup> Flat filling-in of motives uses a coloured thread. The term *narodni vez* is in usage in Županja, and *štikanje* in Gradište.

Besides *misirske gornje rubine*, women also wore silken *rubine* for festive occasions, woven from silken threads – *svilenac*. During the process of weaving, the weft (*pučica*) was either of homemade or bought silken thread, while the warp was of cotton. These kinds of *rubine* were not creased into *falte*, but they were richly creased at the waist. Fine bought silken lace was usually sewn alongside the bottom edge. For less important holidays (*manjim svecem*) during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *rubine* decorated only with lace on the lower edge were worn; they were made by joining the parts of linen together with *sastav*. Today not many are preserved.

The waist was girded with woollen sashes (*tkanice*) or three-coloured sashes that ended in fringes. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century a belt was not worn over the sash in Županja; it appeared only at the end of the century, decorated with golden embroidery on newly made ensembles of folk costumes. Women from Štitar sometimes wore a belt, and at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century so did women from Bošnjaci (Lovretić, 1990:99).<sup>39</sup>

The front part of *rubina* was always covered with various kinds of aprons. A silken apron (*zapreg*) of a rectangular form, which was spread from one hip to the other, and abundantly gathered (*narozan*) onto a string, was worn over a festive *rubina*. The apron reached the edging lace of the *rubina*. Older examples of these aprons are made exclusively from one-coloured or patterned silken fabrics in soft colours – pink, light-blue, light-green, cream and the colour of old gold.<sup>40</sup> Usually they were not decorated with flounces, nor with laces, nor golden embroidery. Lately *zaprezi* are being decorated with golden embroidery all along the edges, or the motives are evenly spread on the surface. In Gradište, aprons mostly have *garnir* on the bottom part - a somewhat larger flounce creased into fine creases and above it a decoration in golden embroidery.

*Prandžare* – bought kerchiefs made of thicker silken fabrics, decorated along the edges with large tassels in corresponding colours - were worn around one's neck for festive occasions. They were of square-form, worn diagonally folded and crossed on the chest. Certain kerchiefs (usually dark-blue and red in colour) had several lighter stripes along the edges. In certain parts of Slavonia examples of this kind are called *križare*.

From the 1930s usage of golden embroidery on kerchiefs started spreading. Very beautiful examples of *zlatare* were created from the finest silken fabrics and richly decorated with golden embroidery over paper, on the part covering the back (*ćošak*). Often they had prolonged ends (*tračci*), also decorated with golden embroidery, which were tied at the back into a bow (*mašla*).<sup>41</sup> A short flounce was always sewn onto

<sup>39</sup> A waist-band is not put on if a scarf for the back has decorated edges, which are then tied at the back around a woman's waist.

<sup>40</sup> In all the villages of *Cvelferija* festive aprons and scarfs for the back are made from black silk. In the middle of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, according to Lovretić, women mostly wore black *zapreg* also in Bošnjaci (Lovretić, 1990:99).

<sup>41</sup> During my field-research I came across *zlatare* for which *mašle* were made separately, to be fastened at the back onto a woman's waist.

a kerchief (*marama*) and its ends. These types of triangular kerchiefs are a characteristic of Županja and nearby villages. The most common *zlatare* are white in colour, i.e. cream-coloured, pink, light-blue, green, and black. In recent years usage of various nuances of red has become common.

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century wrists were decorated with woollen bracelets – *šticle*, *štucne* – black or dark-red in colour, usually decorated with white glass-grains. Today a small number of *šticle* are preserved and they are not used for folklore purposes, as is the case in other parts of Slavonia. Around the neck, tied onto a red silken ribbon, small gold coins (*mali dukati*) are placed, while big gold coins (*veliki dukati*) are placed on the chest. Their number showed the material status of the girl or a married woman (*snaša*), and of her family. Except for gold coins, women also used to put smaller brooches on the chest, on the place where the kerchief was crossed.

In the summer they used to wear thin nylon stockings (*najlonke – kajzerice*), while during colder days they wore *flor* or *glotiferket* stockings, all in sand-colour (*drap*).<sup>42</sup> White cotton stockings, which lately dominate stage-performing, were never worn by Šokice. Along with festive forms of clothes, corresponding footwear was worn: black leather sandals (*sandale*) with a small strap or lacquered ones, also leather sandals (*sandalete*) with a small strap and low heels, which were made by local soft-soled footwear makers (*opančari*) in Županja. In Gradište *sandale* have higher heels. Until the 1920s women wore shoes tied high during winter, and later on - heavy boots (*gojzerice*).

When they discontinued the everyday usage of traditional attire, women started wearing skirts and blouses, while former under-clothing (*donja rubina*, *unterok*) kept their primary usage as underwear. This kind of dressing was called *nositi se šokački* (dressed in the *šokački* way), as opposed to the exclusively bought clothes – *civilke*, worn by other women. The main parts are a skirt and a blouse of a special cut, which, in an ensemble, make a dress (*aljina*), while the skirt and jacket of the same colour and fabric are called a costume (*kostim*). The skirt was often a little raised and fixed at the waist, so that the lace on the bottom dress can be seen, i.e. - to defy (*da prka*). During colder days, women wore, and still wear today, a waistcoat of lambskin decorated a little with colourful applications (*kožu*). In winter they wear figure-hugging plush, cloth or fur jackets. For covering the head they use various bought kerchiefs – made of plush, cloth and similar materials.

On their wedding day young Šokice used to put on a silken dress (*aljina*) or, in winter, a costume of fine cloth. Later on, many of them took on *civilno* clothing and younger people accepted store-bought wedding-dresses (Fig. 2).

<sup>42</sup> *Flor-čarape* can be compared to today's thicker stockings, and *glotiferket* to thicker cotton tights. *Flor* – a thin silken, partly transparent fabric (Anić, Goldstein, 1999:437), *glatt* (Ger): straight, *verkehrt*: conversed (Anić, Goldstein, 1999:419).

Women from Županja used to dress ‘*u vuk*’<sup>43</sup> for shrove-tide. The gear was made of underskirts, finer *rubina*, a silken blouse and *zapreg*, and finally *kožuščić*. Stockings with *gulice* and *opanci* were the footwear. Heads were tied into *zavoj*, as it was done for festive occasions. This is a combination of an older and a newer type of costume, i.e. a more festive dress with attachments of winter clothing (Fig. 3).

Today in Županja only a few women of the older generation are dressed in the *šokački* way (born in the 1920s and 1930s).<sup>44</sup> In Štitar, however, younger women are still dressing themselves in this way, which makes this village an exception in the area of Županjska Posavina.

## Headgear

Girls’ hair was most often plaited into one or two braids, which then fell freely down the back, or two top braids, which were plaited into two bottom ones.

It can be stated, on the basis of narration from informants and old photographs that, during the 20th century, girls’ hairdos suffered more significant changes than the headgear of married women. Girls’ everyday hairdos were of hair plaited into *cupovi* – one or two braids neatly arranged at the back of the head.<sup>45</sup> (Fig. 4) For festive occasions, at the end of the 19th century, a wide braid was plaited from many strands of girl’s own hair.<sup>46</sup> When comparing hair-styling in Otok and other villages of eastern Slavonia, Josip Lovretić writes about Županja: “This is a braid like the one from Bošnjaci, but big and wide. On the forehead, hair is either combed or curled (*brenovanja*).<sup>47</sup> Flower decorations are put under the braid. (Lovretić, 1990:121).” He disposes of information for the village Bošnjaci dating around the middle of the 19th century. He notes that girls plaited their hair into big braids, even from 70-100 strands, and fastened them on the top, set aside from the head. The void was then filled with flowers. The front part of the hair was either tightened or curled, later on it was combed. Towards the end of the 19th century braids became shorter and narrower, and many girls accepted the town style of hair plaiting with three strands *u troje* and the braid then wrapped around the head (Lovretić, 1990:120).<sup>48</sup> In Gradište, Štitar and Babina Greda at the end of the 19th century, the same kind of braids was made as in

<sup>43</sup> Moving in a column, women sing various songs, while the one heading the column carries a big switch in her hand. The origin and meaning of this custom are not known, and there are no specific shrove-tide songs associated with it (a wedding song - *svatovac* - was mostly sung).

<sup>44</sup> Eva Čolić, Anica Bačić, Ana Balentović, Katarina Balentović, Ana Baotić, Manda Bušić, Liza Filipović, Matija Filipović, Manda Galović, Reza Galović, Liza Juzbašić, Kata Svirčević and others.

<sup>45</sup> The name *cup* is used today in Županja for a plaited braid of cut-off hair.

<sup>46</sup> This is probably the type of braid referred to as *graničarski*. If we consider the entire Županja area, this wide braid is plaited today only in Gradište and Cerna, villages bordering on the town Vinkovci area, which has kept this type of hair-styling.

<sup>47</sup> *Brenovanje* is a way of curling the hair with curling-irons (*brenajzle*), previously heated over the fire.

<sup>48</sup> Otok and Bošnjaci are two neighbouring villages, which gives Lovretić’s remarks greater credibility.

Županja. It is interesting to note that the memory of this kind of headgear has almost disappeared today and it is not used for folklore purposes.

The second type of festive girls' hairdo is *češljanje pod nec*,<sup>49</sup> where hair on the front was *brenovana* or curled, while on the back it was plaited into a braid and wrapped into a wreath or *cup*.<sup>50</sup> For these hairstyles hair was either parted on the side or combed back. Hair covering the ears was combed in short tufts and was slightly wavy (it was curled using small curling-irons - *brenovani malim brenajzlom*). *Brenovanje* was kept until the middle 1940s, when there was a prevalence of simpler hairstyling: hair at the back was styled into a *cup* or a wreath formed of two braids. In the front it was smoothly combed and then parted on the middle or on the side. This hairstyle was fixed with sugar and water or with lard. When headgear was formed it was decorated with branches of asparagus (*šumica*), or geranium flowers. Decoration with small gold coins (*dukatići*) was not spread in the narrower Županja area. Today folklore groups mostly use this last hairstyle (or, perhaps, *brenovanje*),<sup>51</sup> where they use *cupovi* of hair that has been cut off. (Fig. 5)

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a bride's hair was styled in the manner of young women. On the forehead there usually was a bought wreath of white waxen flowers. At midnight the girl's hairdo was substituted with the headgear of a married woman - *kuba*, which was the job of the maid of honour. In the old days the newlyweds used to leave the wedding party just after midnight, so this festive act was omitted.

The completely formed headgear of a married woman in Županja and Štitar is called *kuba*. The way of hairstyling and covering the head is the same in these two towns, although some data indicate that this was not the case in the past. Headgear of today's form became an established practice at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The hair is divided into front and back parts. From the parting, down the middle, the hair is plaited into braids *u četvero*, *petero* or *šestero* (in fours, fives or sixes) on every side. Underneath the braids, from ears to forehead, there are fringes, short tufts of hair smoothly combed to the face. From the back part of the hair, a braid was plaited and formed at the back of the head. In order to create a small convexity, a gently bent narrow cardboard was attached onto the *cup*. The entire hairdo used to be done using one's own hair, while during the 20<sup>th</sup> century usage of cut-off fringes (*šiške*), braids (*pletence*) and *cupovi* became customary. Firstly, a woven white cap (*pocalica*) with a string pulled through, which was used for fastening it onto the head, was placed on hair formed in this way.<sup>52</sup> The edge of the *pocalica* is always crocheted (*opheklan*) – with one-coloured thread. A diagonally folded red square head scarf (*krpa*) made of bought fabrics follows, creased on the forehead (to seem thicker, i.e. that

<sup>49</sup> The origin and meaning of this name are not established.

<sup>50</sup> Antun Radić wrote against *brenovanje*, considering it then to be a new fashion.

<sup>51</sup> *Brenovanje* is done in the hairdresser's shop, "Anđelka", in Županja, owned by Anđelka Božić.

<sup>52</sup> In Štitar the name *kapara* is used.

it can be seen later underneath the top head scarf). The ends of the head scarf are arranged around the hair tied at the back of the head. Headgear formed in this way was the everyday and working variant, and at the same time it represented the basis for every other form of head-strapping. In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century women started discontinuing the everyday head-strapping into a *kuba*.<sup>53</sup> (Fig. 6)

With the old variant of attire – *vezenka* – in the Županja area women wore white woven head scarves of rectangular form, diagonally folded, with ends tied under the chin or lifted up to the top of the head. The edges of the head scarf were decorated with various kinds of white embroidery. Underneath weaved *krpa*, a completely formed basic headgear was formed with fringes, braids, *pocalica* and a red head scarf. This kind of head scarf was also worn during field-work, as it was the best way of sun-protection.

For festive occasions young brides (approximately until the age of 35) covered their heads with ‘red silk’ (*crvena svila*) – a bought head scarf of fine silk in various nuances of red colour. These head scarves were of a square form; they were worn diagonally folded, and the back part was folded in a special way. The ends of the head scarf were not wrapped around the plait, but they were lifted up, so that the top (*repić*) sticks upward. On the part of the headgear under the top a woman used to attach a piece of black velvet cloth, so that the hair underneath could not be seen. Along the edge of the forehead, head scarves of red silk were sometimes decorated with narrow golden embroidery – *obod*. *Crvena svila* was worn to church on important holidays – Holy Saturday, Christmas Eve Mass, walks in processions on the holiday of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This custom no longer existed by the middle of 1950s. In Štitar, *crvena svila* was worn on every first Sunday in the month, and even today it is worn for wedding-celebrations - female guests from the bridegroom’s side can be seen with their hair styled in this way.<sup>54</sup>

Until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a custom where the young bride ties her hair into black head scarf embroidered with golden thread (*zavoj sa zlatom*) – a gift from her mother-in-law – existed in Županja.<sup>55</sup> The same *zavoj* was worn for a mass on the first Sunday after the wedding, and sometimes for important holidays.<sup>56</sup>

For more festive occasions (for example: for Easter, full masses through the year, etc) onto a red head scarf they would put *zavoj* – a silken head scarf of triangular form

<sup>53</sup> Today only in Štitar can one find younger women with their heads strapped.

<sup>54</sup> At Marko and Kata Maroševac’s wedding, in 2003, many guests from the bride’s side (from Štitar) had their hair styled and strapped into a *kuba*.

<sup>55</sup> Certain informants state that earlier, when golden embroidery just started being used for the decoration of headgear, all *zavoji* were made of black (satin) silk. For a holiday, Lovretić noted, women from Županja strapped their hair into *zlatare* embroidered mostly on black and blue satin (Lovretić, 1990:121).

<sup>56</sup> In Gradište, on the first day after the wedding, a young bride used to decorate her headgear with peacock feathers. On weddings in Štitar, female guests from the bridegroom’s side used to decorate their headgear with feathers.

decorated with wider golden embroidery on the forehead part, as well as with a small motive on the place covering the convexity at the back of the head. Except for black *zavoji*, which were given to young brides from their mothers-in-law, most often colours are nuances of brown, Bordeaux red, blue and green. Motives are usually made in golden embroidery over paper, edged with

spiral wire and decently decorated with metal spangles (*šljokice*). Concavities in the area around the hair convexity, i.e. a *kuba*, were filled up with *ružice*, a decoration made of wire, small beads, and narrow paper ribbons. Multicoloured silken head scarves of triangular form, with less golden decorations (only along the edge of forehead), represented a less festive variant and were worn usually on the second day of important church holidays. They were called *obodi* – after their narrow decoration. A festive headgear was not something a woman would make herself; she would entrust it to a girlfriend or to a woman of greater skills.

As a part of the bride's headgear, the veil (*šlajer*) appeared after the Second World War, and the Šokice did not wear it, as a rule. Later on its usage, along with other various ornaments on the bride's headgear, became frequent. Sometimes, before the dance, the bride's veil was taken off, and a bought head scarf in light colours was put on her head.

In the period from Lent until Easter, the head was covered with a plain bought cloth (*krpa*) or somewhat prettier head scarf with a tiny pattern – *delinka*.<sup>57</sup> *Delinke* were mostly worn to early masses or for more important holidays, when older women covered their heads with plain cloth (*krpe*). In winter, one-coloured or patterned plush head scarves with somewhat shorter tassels prevailed. Thicker head scarves of darker colours, onto which a certain pattern (*muštra*) was impressed on the front side only, were called *farbarice*. During the period of Lent and Advent, young girls also came to church having their heads covered with bought head scarves and *delinke* of darker colours. In mourning, young girls and women wore black bought head scarves.

As a rule, for festive occasions, *zavoj sa zlatom*, *crvena svila*, *obod* or just a silken head scarf were worn; on regular days in summer – head scarves of thin bought materials, and in winter - plush head scarves in various colours were worn. All of these types of head scarves (except for *zavoj*) were worn folded diagonally and tied under the chin.

## Conclusion

From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until today traditional dressing in Županjska Posavina suffered many changes. Except for the basic division into *Elferija* and *Cvelferija*,

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<sup>57</sup> There were also somewhat thicker *podelinske* head scarves.



every village is distinguished by certain forms, names, and ways of decorating particular elements of clothing. Male traditional clothing was discontinued as early as the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Female traditional clothing in Županja and nearby villages (Bošnjaci, Štitar) was kept in everyday usage longer than traditional male clothing, in some areas until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Basic elements of clothing, *oplećak* and *vezenka*, were still being worn during field-work.

From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a new form of attire intended for festive occasions developed. Its value is seen in the usage of bigger quantities of woven material (more widths of fabric) for basic parts, as well as the usage of fine factory-made fabrics from Europe (various kinds of silk) for other parts of the costume. The narrower Županja area is known for handicraft needlework (*šlinganje*, *rišalje*, *toledo*, *neć* and others), the making of which practically developed into a professional activity for local women, so the basic parts of the costume were richly and precisely decorated with these embroideries. From the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century decoration with golden embroidery over paper became more popular. This new type of costume was regularly worn to church on important holidays until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

With the abandonment of the everyday usage of traditional clothes, women started wearing skirts and blouses, similar to the folk costume's cut, made from factory materials. Former bottom parts of attire (*donja rubina*, *unterok*) have kept their original function as underwear. This kind of everyday *šokačko* clothing is present today only with women born in the 1930s, and it will disappear with this generation. The newer generations wear exclusively factory-made clothes of modern cuts.

The *šokačko* population of this area is proud of their *graničar* history, ancient customs, songs and dances, and especially of their folk costume (*narodna nošnja*), which they cherish with love. With their goal being the preservation of the traditional specifics of the Županja area, every year during the shrove-tide period (since 1968) a gathering »Šokačko sijelo« is held in Županja, where mostly societies for culture and art from the villages in Vukovar-Syrmian and the neighbouring counties participate. The most beautiful costumes are pulled out from old chiffoniers and drawer-desks and put on for this occasion, and all their richness and luxury is then revealed.

Recently, new ensembles of folk costumes are being made, which, in the way they are decorated, do not follow the tradition of typical Županja costumes. It is understandable that every season brings its own aesthetic contributions, but I think that these contributions should not erase local diversities, since therein lays the richness and value of Croatian folk costumes. May traditional clothing of villages in *Cvelferija* be the subject of further research.

Translated by Hrvojka Barlek