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Aspects of the Magic Rituals of the Weds-to-be in the Salaj Region of the Somes

Summary

Drafted in the spirit of the Bucharest Monographic School, this article comes up with a diachronic approach of the magic phenomenon, surprisingly present into the Romanian rural communities' life all along the 20th century.

For its elaboration, we examined documents collected between the years 1930 – 1940 by Ion Muslea, founder of the Folklore Academy of the Romanian Academy, the Cluj subsidiary. We have also used collections of the Cluj researchers and students, which date back to the Communist period, especially the 7th and 8th decades. In order to check upon the authenticity of the previously registered statements, the author himself attended several documentation seasons in the archaic Salaj Valley of the Somes river, ever since the second half of the last century. The results of this scientific approach seem to fully satisfy these efforts.

Beforehand, they reveal an extremely live magic and folklore world of the Salaj inhabitants during the researched period and area. Among other practices, the magic phenomenon enjoys a particular place. Its importance and scope are due to the mentality of the historical peasant masses, according to which marriage occupies the central place in the life of the whole community, a crossroads moment for every individual's earthly destiny. "Left-over" lads or "old" maids, under certain ritual circumstances, become a good target for the participants' amusement and irony. In order to avoid such a situation, years passing by and destiny hiding away, the maids are the ones to mainly seek for the magic means in order to find the husband of their dreams, on the right moment.

The ritual incantations poetry uttered for that purpose expresses aesthetic shafts thrilling great Romanian or international poets, such as the poet and philosopher Lucian Blaga.

Marriage-related folklore practices from the approached ethnic and cultural area seem to be numberless and widely spread. In this study, we aimed at clarifying external aspects and social implications of the "marriage magic", this being the unique chance to thoroughly understand the structure and the functions of the researched phenomenon.