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Cuvinte cheie: dans, vergel, jocul miresei, strânsul finilor și al nepoatelor, cinstirea moașelor, dansul coșercilor, uspățu de daruri, globalizare.

Dansul popular între tradiție și actualitate

Rezumat

Dansul, ca oricare gen de artă, reflectă lumea sub formă de imagine artistică, specificul constând în faptul că gândurile, sentimentele, dispozițiile omului se transmit prin intermediul mișcărilor, gesturilor, mimicii. Jocurile populare sunt manifestări artistice prin intermediul cărora neamul românesc își manifestă continuitatea și își exprimă sentimentele și năzuințele.

Obiceiurile populare din județul Maramureș s-au pierdut într-un număr semnificativ sau sunt pe cale de a se pierde sau de a se contamina cu obiceiuri preluate din alte zone ale țării sau chiar cu tradiții importate de peste hotare de către cei care au luat drumul străinătății. Totul evoluează și se schimbă și mentalitatea asupra vieții. Este greu să mai vorbim despre folclor autentic, deoarece astăzi, asistăm la pierderea semnificației inițiale a obiceiului.

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Keywords: dance, *vergel*, bride's dance, godchildren gathering, honouring of the midwives, feast of the gifts, globalization.

The Romanian Folk Dances. Between Tradition and Actuality

Summary

Dance, like any kind of art, reflects the world in the form of an artistic image, the specificity being that the thoughts, feelings, dispositions of man are transmitted through movements, gestures, facial expressions. Folk games are artistic manifestations through which the Romanian nation manifests its continuity and expresses its feelings and aspirations.

The traditional customs of Maramureş County have been lost in a significant number or are about to be lost or contaminated with customs taken from other parts of the country or even with traditions imported from abroad by those who went abroad. Everything is evolving and the mentality about life is changing. It is difficult to talk about authentic folklore because today we are witnessing the loss of the original meaning of the custom.

The Romanian Folk Dances. Between Tradition and Actuality

Like any other form of art, dance reflects the world in the form of an artistic image, the specificity consisting in the fact that human thoughts, feelings, dispositions are transmitted through movements, gestures, facial expressions. Folk dances are artistic manifestations through which the Romanian people manifest their continuity and express their feelings and aspirations.

The Romanian peasant carries music in his soul. It always accompanied him in the loneliness of the mountains and plains, chasing away his fears, giving him back the longing, the hard-to-express nostalgia that burned his soul. "Springing from the soul of the Romanian people harassed by the oppressors, its music is painful and noble even in those playful rhythms of lively dances. As it is, this music is one of the treasures that Romania can be proud of."²

The ancestral dance of the Romanian people began by gaining the expression of an ethnic communion, beloved by all age groups, with an occasional festive echo, becoming more and more among the events dedicated to village gatherings. The generalizing character of the ancient Romanian folk dance will represent the image of human existence. Since ancient times, dance has been practised by children, the elderly, men and women. Dancing is a way of expressing feelings of joy, fear or mourning. Some researchers initially claimed that the dance had only ritualistic functions, and only later, has been practised for secular needs. We can say that both forms of existence, the sacred and profane, "embraced dance from the beginning, even if the sacred function has been more in the attention of researchers, as it is proved by the documents."³ Beyond the daily life of human nature, the action of folk dances suggests the state of harmony to an engaging sphere of substance entertainment. Their playful character, through multiple rhythmic and creative attributions, approaches the structure of a cultural good, transmitted with subtleness from one era to another. Dance has evolved from the simplest forms to its most complex forms, gradually enriching its content. "In the period before the formation of social classes, the culture of the society had a syncretic character. Not only the connection between the word-music-dance but also the direct connection between art and religion, art and work, art and social life are the characteristics for that time. Over time, dance will acquire the character of independent art, remaining accompanied only by instrumental music or vocals. Later, it will branch into several genres, having its whole origin in folk dances."⁴

Some distinct features have been defined along with the historical eras and are perpetuated to this day. This abundance of human energy of the dance, as a significance of the life and events of the entire ethnic community, is gradually embellished by a festive attire to all cycles of customs, associating and contributing to the harmonization of an event.

The rhythm, inseparable from movement, took on, in the beginning, the forms of nature. It was the very rhythm of life, pulsing from every joint of nature and transmitting it to the joints of the human body. Dancing became a pleasure, an aesthetic manifestation women and children

² C. Arvinte, I. Râpă, *Ceteră, Lemnuț cu Dor*; Casa Creației Populare a județului Maramureș, 1968, pag. 5.

³ Ovidiu Bârlea, *Eseu despre dansul popular românesc*, Editura Cartea Românească, 1982, pag. 10.

⁴ G. Baciu, *Cartea coregrafului amator*, Comitetul de stat pentru cultură și artă, Casa Centrală a Creației Populare, București, 1965, pag. 5, 6.

were allowed to participate as spectators, beating the rhythm with their palms and feet in rhythmic shouts. In her work *Symbolism of the rites of passage*, author Delia Suiogan studies in parallel the Romanian folk rites, typical today only of certain rural areas but also the psychological and philosophical impulses that determine any person to perform a ritual. Delia Suiogan considers that these rituals are, at a higher level of understanding, discourses, forms of communication both horizontally (in the social sphere) and vertically (from a religious and theological perspective).

Suiogan emphasizes the permanence and persistence of the discursive nature, pointing out that rite is, first of all, a process, a relational syncretism that finds its finality in the very performance of the rite. "Folk dance, like any other action that belongs to the significant play, gives us a certain freedom, in the sense that the traditional part, through the simplicity of the movements, offers the performer the easiest ways to give a personality to the choreographic figures, thus being considered as a creation of his".⁵ Folk dances have their explanation not only in the everyday dances of the people or in connection with the labours of the year, but they fully reflect the influence of the scenery in which they are born. The characteristics of our folk dances vary according to the typology of each region because of the difference in landscapes and atmosphere that create a great variety of rhythms, musical compositions, costumes and dance styles.

The author considers that the need to dance (since in the case of early humans we can discuss the need, not an aesthetic desire) are motoric evidence of a communication intention. Man communicates and is communicated, using his body to transmit messages that he often cannot send otherwise.

Beyond this freedom, traditional dance remains structured by a significant scheme, which gives it a state of harmony. Dancing is learned by imitation, allowing innovative elements, but not invention. Learning dance moves by imitation means participating and taking over the scheme and the transmission of the message. "Dance means celebration, a language. A language beyond words. And what is this fever capable of embracing and shaking to madness any creature, if not the often explosive manifestation of the instinct of life, which aspires to the suppression of any duality of the temporal world, to suddenly rediscover the original unity in which bodies and souls, creator and creation, visible and invisible are found and fused beyond time, in a unique ecstasy".⁶

Folk dances are very varied, containing a lot of movement mainly dominated by leg movements in very different attitudes and situations. The arms and the body are coordinated with leg movements, which can be on the floor or in the air. The feet are placed on the floor with a sole, cushion or heel. The sole is generally supported in the natural position. The stretching of the tips should never be forced. In some movements, the tip detaches from the floor, but the foot remains supported by the heel. The main groups of movements are the steps, the kicks on the floor and the movements of the arms that accompany the movements of the legs in perfect coordination. The arms are used differently in our folk dances. They can be gripped by hands or fingers clasped in a belt, a wide leather belt or sticks, crossed at the back or in front, supported on the shoulders of the partner like in the Sârba dance, or by the partners underarm,

⁵ Ovidiu Bârlea, *Op. cit.*, pag. 20-22.

⁶ Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dicționar de simboluri*, vol. I, Editura Artemis, București, 1993, pag. 427.

arm, forearm, as in the Transylvanian folk dances performed in pairs.

Life is like a dance. There is a reason why it is called a play in two and not dance for two. In our folk dances, one leads and the other is led. We refer to the dance in two, as an erotic dialogue. “The dominant side belongs to the rotation of the partner around them as if tied to an invisible axis, located halfway between them, a rotation, with small and intense jogging; the rotation sometimes reaches a dizzying speed, which forces the dancer to hold his hands tightly on the partner’s shoulder and back.”⁷ But when dancing horă, the participants become one. In folk dance, as a symbol of traditional culture, everyone becomes the same. They all form a vortex, they all dance in the same way, they are all in harmony, they are all part of the same dance, they are all dressed in the specific costume of their area, they exchange partners and they all dance together. Dance is the language through which we express our personality.

The arm movements are combined with clapping, slapping the top of the boot, the calf or thigh. The body posture in Romanian dance is straight, quiet and proud. The head is always



Vergel din Maramureșul Istoric; foto: Felician SĂTEANU

kept straight, dignified, without affectation or arrogance. The initial posture of the shoulders is straight and unstretched, and during the dance, it moves visibly.

In Maramureș County, on Sunday, people practised the customs called „Jocul la șură” (Dance at the barn), „Jocu pă arie” (Dance at the fields) or „Jocul la scenă” (Dance on the stage) held only at daytime.

The evening dance was called *Vergel* and it was organized on the occasion of the great holidays: Christmas, Easter, New Year and Saint John’s Day. We also encounter dances within different family customs or over the year, from each village: at baptisms, nuptial ceremonies,

⁷ Ovidiu Bârlea, *Idem*, pag. 87.

on different evening sittings of the village woman, at the sheepfold, at *Lăsarea de sec* (the day before the beginning of the year's Orthodox Great Lents), in the historical region of Maramureș at the customs called *Strânsul finilor și al nepoatelor* (Godchildren gathering) and *Cinstirea moașelor* (Honouring of midwives), in the Land of Chioar at *Dansul coșercilor* and at *Ospățu de daruri* (the feast of gifts), etc. We will further exemplify how some of these customs took place, which we consider more representative of popular culture.

Throughout Maramureș County, young people participated on Sundays at the barn dance, where the „jocul la arie” and the dance called „la șcenă” took place, performed on a wooden platform in the historical region of Maramureș. Sometimes, the dances were held in more spacious houses that were suitable for such an event. And later the dances took place in the Cultural Centres. Several young people participated, sometimes the girls being accompanied by their mothers. Romanians practised the game from the earliest times of Christianity and closely related it to their religious customs. Thus, even on the occasion of the biggest holidays, such as the birth of Christ, Easter and New Year, they danced at the evening gathering called *vergel*. *Vergel* is the most awaited event and it used to be organized at the „Casa Vergelului” (House of the *vergel* host) and then, over the years, it took place at the Cultural Center.

A few days before the *vergel*, the boys choose the venue of the event and which musician they will hire. They all bring food and drinks from home and they eat together, with the girls, sometimes their parents assisting from the sidelines and sometimes, catching even the older ones in the dance.

A girl could participate only accompanied by the boy who invited her and asked for permission in advance from her parents. These dances, performed by both sexes, played on the sounds of the violin, whistle, drum, bass depending on the traditional areas of Maramureș, consist of a certain circles dance, sometimes faster, sometimes slower, making different head and body movements and shouting usually humorous verses. In addition to food and drink, young people have a lot of fun and dances specific to this event. In the villages near the Chioar area they performed the most cherished dances: „Codrenescu”, „Pă sub mână”, „Ardeleanca”, „Țăgănescu”, „Mânântălu”. In the Land of Lăpuș „Pă picior”, „Învârtita”, „Mărunțălu”, „P-alungu”.

In the historical region of Maramureș: „Învârtita”, „Feciorescu”, „Dansul lui Vili”, „Răchițăua”, „Jurelu”, „Sârba”, „Mătura”, „Oglinda”. In the Land of Codru, „Joc țărănesc de doi”, „De-nvârtit”, „Mânântălu”, „Înturnatu”, „P-a lungu”, „Bătrânescu”, „Scuturatu” etc.

Former Palaga Grigor describes how dances were performed in her youth: “I also went to the dances, *vergel* parties and garbage collecting events. I have been dancing since I was 15. I had a friend next to me, a neighbour. Her mother said: “Take Pălăguța to dance with you because there will be poorer boys and they will dance with her.” I had an eye problem as a child. Yes, rich boys also danced with me, because I knew how to dance very well. In the past, dancing took place in houses, barns or outdoors. Yes, that is how I remember, I participated more in the dances that were organised inside, in houses. In the evenings they organized *vergel* (parties), where the musicians from the village sang.

The boy called me by name when he took me to the dance: Come on, Pălăguța, come on and dance! waving at me. The girls sat separately from the boys, so if we didn't have enough

space in the house, then the boys held us on their laps, and sometimes they tickled us. The mothers also went to the day dances, on the dances held in the evening, they did not participate. Everyone went to the Cultural Centre and watched with whom is their daughter dancing. From the evening dances, the girl returned home accompanied by the boy who asked her from home initially. At daytime dances, the girl did not go accompanied. But for the vergel the boy came and asked for permission from the parents: I came to take Pălăguță, do you let her come with me to the vergel? If she wants to go, she can go. But you weren't allowed to go until the boy asked for permission. If you don't go with the boy, then who do you dance with? First, you dance with him, then he dances with another girl, and you dance with another boy. But if no one asks you, you just sit there gaping, and no one will take you to the dance. You are more ashamed of the other girls.

Anuța Șimon, from Sarasău, told us: "There was dancing at the Cultural Centre every Sunday. We went in groups, girls and boys, playing the violin and drum. Before building a cultural centre, dances and weddings took place in houses, there were two houses and a porch. If a boy didn't come to call the girl to the dance, we all went in groups. The boys paid the musicians."⁸

Therefore, we only captured the sequence of „Jocului miresei” (Bride's dance), meaning that the dance was paid by each of the wedding guests and that it was considered appropriate for all of them to dance. This means the acceptance and integration of the bride in the new community, a phase of perfecting the rites of passage; cash payment would mean that those who dance (the guests) receive something in exchange from the bride, part of her sacred virtues that bring health and prosperity. The bride's first dance was dedicated to the godparents, bridesmaids and parents, who put money in a „taljer” (tray). The last to dance with the bride was the groom, after which the dance ended.

In Sarasău, at weddings, “they performed the Bride's dance after midnight. They all danced with the bride and gave money to her. The groom was the last to dance with the bride he redeemed her from the flag bearer.”⁹

Further on, we will see how this Bride's dance was performed in the Land of Codru: “A table has been placed in the middle of the barn. The groom's best man put two plates on it. Whoever wanted to dance with the bride would go and spin her twice and put money in the plates. In the end, the groom danced and put money on the plates.”¹⁰

This dance reminds us of solar rotation. Beating rhythmically with the foot in the ground represents the magic gesture of fertilizing. “The Bride's dance was also practised in the Land of Lăpuș, in that time there was only a pair of witnesses (a married couple) for both, the groom and the bride. First, the bride danced with bridesmaids, the callers and the flag bearer. The groom was the last to dance with the bride, and he also had to pay for it.”¹¹

⁸ Performera Anuța Șimon, 83 ani, Sarasău, februarie, 2021.

⁹ Performera Anuța Șimon, 83 ani, Sarasău, 2021.

¹⁰ Maria Mirela Poduț, *Nunta tradițională din Mogoșești, (comuna Satulung)*, în revista Memoria Ethnologica, Nr. 54-55, ianuarie-iunie, Editura Ethnologica, Baia Mare, 2015, pag. 162.

¹¹ Culegător Corina Isabella Csiszár, performera Maria Dumitra, 75 ani, Lăpuș, din arhiva Centrului Județean pentru Conservarea și Promovarea Culturii Tradiționale „Liviu Borlan” Maramureș, Dosar Nr. L / 06 /2012.

As part of the birth-related customs, “the christening celebration was held at the newborn’s house and where the parents, midwives, godparents, relatives, neighbours, and friends attended. After arriving home from the church, the midwife placed the child to the head of the table, as a symbol of heaven, to be the first in everything in his life. In the historical region of Maramureș, the child’s father dances with the godmother, who holds the baby in her arms, so he will be “smart and a good dancer.” After placing the baby on the table in a place of honour, symbolic objects were placed in his hand with the role of predestining a future as bright as possible: book, money, pencil, flowers, etc.”¹² The midwife performs a ritual dance with the baby in her arms, as a form of introduction of the newborn in a magical circle with an apotropaic role and also as a manifestation of celebration. “The child’s entry in horă (the circle dance), even if he is in the situation of a passive agent, can be considered both a rite of consecration and a rite of initiation.”¹³ The guests are served with traditional dishes prepared at home, they worshiped and danced and shouted specific verses for this event. The child’s mother gets caught in the game of „roată prin casă” and expresses her joy through specific songs.

“The role of the nași (witnesses) is wide, as evidenced by their presence in the lives of the newlyweds in decisive moments - baptism, wedding, funeral. Continuing the role of midwife, the godparents contribute to the integration of the newborn in the community, baptism and marriage which seal the role relations between newborn and parents, nași (witnesses) and groom and bride.”¹⁴ An ancient and interesting custom encountered in the past in the historical region of Maramureș was the “godchildren gathering.” This custom has its roots related to birth and nuptial rites and could be subsumed in family customs, by family we mean, the village community: godparents, midwives, grandchildren, nieces. Midwives and godparents are considered spiritual parents of the newborn and the newlyweds. That is why, when nieces and nephews or the godchildren grow up or get married, they turn their full attention to their spiritual parents, their midwife, and their godparents who attended their baptism and wedding. Strânsul finilor și al nănașilor (gathering of the witnesses and newlyweds) happens usually during the winter, during between two Orthodox fasts when meat can be eaten, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays or Sundays. Godparents gather their godchildren they baptized, in the case of the nași (witnesses) the married couple. Midwives gather the “grandchildren” and “granddaughters” they delivered.

Guests were invited to sit at the table and were served at the wedding traditional food and drinks. After the meal, the midwives and the godparents receive gifts and money, after which all the guests start dancing the local traditional dances, „trototita” and „învârtita”.

Men, but also women, are also dance the “old woman’s dance” and “the dancing and drinking around the house” game. They all hold hands and spin around, swaying slightly on their left foot and at the same time singing cheerful songs, to the rhythm of the bell-harp. This circle dance has a ceremonial character that sends us thinking of the solar wheel, the function

¹² Corina Isabella Csiszár, *Câteva considerații cu privire la obiceiurile legate de naștere din Țara Lăpușului*, din revista *Memoria Ethnologica*, nr. 58-59, Editura Ethnologica, Baia Mare, 2016, pag. 83.

¹³ Delia Suiogan, *Simbolica riturilor de trecere*, Editura Paideia, București, 2006.

¹⁴ Delia-Anamaria Răchișan, *Modificarea statusului premarital (căsătoria)*, în revista *Memoria Ethnologica* Nr. 20-21-22, an VII, Editura Ethnologica, 2007, pag. 2103.

of celebrating the solar cult. This celebration had both a financial role, the midwife and the godparents raising large sums of money, as well as a role in strengthening the relationship between the godchildren and the godparents, the midwife and newborns.

Performer Palaga Grigor reveals an interesting custom of “Honouring the midwives” as a sign of gratitude, which was practised in the historical region of Maramureş in which only the women she assisted at birth participated: “They gathered at the midwives house with whom the women gave birth. They ate, drank and sang. And there were only women, no babies, only women and midwives. They had music after drinking 2-3 glasses of horincă, strong one. They danced in a circle, with the midwife in the middle trotting and shouting. *Long live dear midwife! Thank you for assisting me.* And they gave her gifts, a pillowcase, a towel, a pot.”¹⁵

This custom from the historical region of Maramureş also has its correspondent in the Land of Chioar and is called “The feast of gifts”, “The redemption of gifts” in Preluca, the “Redemption” in Coaş. In the Land of Chioar, the parents of the child or children are the ones who organize the celebration, when they decide that they do not want to have more children. The midwife who helps the woman during the birth is rewarded and so are the godparents and the spiritual parents of the child. Between the midwife and the family, lasting mutual obligations are established over time. A party is organized with the participation of the child’s parents, godparents, and relatives. The call to the feast was made by the „chemători” (callers). The caller was a married man, who did not wear distinctive signs on this occasion, and the addressing was a greeting, followed by the invitation to the feast. The guests brought pie, cakes and brandy. Godparents and elders brought large quantities of cooked food and a “decorated hen”. It was a celebration with dancing, an orchestra consisting of 3-4 instrumentalists, the principal violonist, two double basses, a second violinist was invited. After the meal, the gift offering (braided bread, apron, household items, money), and the dance took place, either in the barn or in the house.

“On a socio-human level, globalization is a captivating and devouring phenomenon at the same time, with multiple implications in the material and spiritual life of people. The desire to keep up with the times, to live in the rhythm of post-industrial civilization, aligning our behavior and thinking with the constant bombardment of information - scientific discoveries and technology, the internet and the achievements of artificial intelligence - has generated a kind of impatience of individuals to broaden the universe of knowledge, leaving behind the cultural peculiarities of the society in which they were born.”¹⁶ A significant number of traditional customs in Maramureş have been lost or are about to be lost or contaminated with customs taken from other parts of the country or even with traditions imported from abroad by those who left the country.” It is difficult to talk about authentic folklore because today we are witnessing the loss of the original meaning of the custom. In this way, hybrid habits become a real spectacle, in which some ancient traditions are preserved and others from the West are imitated.”¹⁷

We identify functional mutations: “in this context, the traditional culture of different

¹⁵ Perfomera *Palaga Grigor*, Palaga Cârnicului, 69 ani, Onceşti, martie, 2021.

¹⁶ Marius Matei, *Tezaur bănăţean*, Prefaţă de Dr. Doina Işfănoni, Editura Astra Museum, Timișoara-Sibiu, 2014, pag. 7.

¹⁷ Corina Isabella Csiszár, *Elementele tradiționale și psihologia kitsch-ului în nunta maramureșeană*, în revista *Memoria Ethnologica*, Nr. 54-55, anul XV, Editura Ethnologica, Baia Mare, 2015, pag. 120.

rural communities slowly disappears or metamorphoses into a folkloric spectacle, festival or a product/commodity that endangers the existence of authentic cultural identity values of Romanian popular spirituality.”¹⁸

In the past, in the historical region of Maramureș the traditional Taraf (small folk music ensemble) was composed of cetera (violin), zongoră (instrument similar to a guitar) and dobă (drum). Currently, very few weddings still retain the traditional specificity. “We are dealing with a contamination of the traditional taraf band with an orchestra playing lăutărească music on the microphone,”¹⁹ which does not lack the saxophone sounds.

“In Lăpuș, Chioar and Codru they used to play the violin, braci (slightly larger than a violin,) gordună (the bass), taragot (woodwind instrument) and clarinet. Today the traditional orchestra has been abandoned in these areas, imported instruments took over such as amplified or electronic acoustic violin, alto saxophone, electronic drums. The archaic folk dances are full of celebration symbols, of explosive manifestation of the instinct of life, of merging beyond time, of liberation in ecstasy. The rhythm of the drum produced that state of liberation, spiritual uplift, joy and ecstasy and the manifestation of cultural expression. Today at weddings, we see a form of distortion, subculture, lascivious ripples in *manele* (a genre of pop-folk music from Romania) rhythms and hops on altered forms of tango and Sârba dance. The music is getting louder, the volume is at its maximum so that it resounds in the guest’s ears even the next day. Well-known manelist bands are invited, with manele dedications running until dawn. All the guests dance like that - the so-called Sârba, although few know the steps, they jump by throwing their legs from left to right”²⁰ forming a wheel or even concentric circles at weddings with many guests.

In the past, a wedding’s musical repertoire was specific to each area, today the music repertoire is largely common to all areas of the county, songs are sung from other parts of the country, which are often promoted in the media, and taken over by bands invited to Wedding. For example, *Cu ce m-am ales în viață* (What I have realized in my life) Banat, *Pușca și cureaua lată* (The rifle and the wide belt) Bistrița, *Constantine, Constantine* in Oltenia, *Foaie verde cinci chiperi* (Green leaf and a pepper), *Fetele lu tata* (Dad’s girls) Moldova. In the past, the musical repertoire of the wedding ceremony was in a very high percentage, specific to the area where the event took place. Even then, songs imported from other parts of the country were sung, from Maria Tănase’s repertoire, for example, but today, we are witnessing a globalization of the musical repertoire throughout the country. The same songs are sung everywhere, and the area-specific repertoire is getting smaller and smaller. There are some standard songs that are played everywhere.

Some standard songs are played everywhere. The songs of performers like Năstăcuța Iuga or Ancuța Anghel have a great weight all over the county, whose repertoire contains new songs from the historical region of Maramureș. They are well known and sung or mimicked by the entire community invited to the event. The traditional songs from the Land of Lăpuș, lately, have been replaced with music specific to the Someș area (Cluj). *P-a lungu*, one of the

¹⁸ Marius Matei, *Op. cit.*, pag. 7.

¹⁹ Corina Isabella Csiszár, *Op. Cit.*, pag. 125

²⁰ Corina Isabella Csiszár, *Op. Cit.*, pag. 125.

characteristic dances and much loved by the villagers of the Lăpuș land, is rarely danced at some weddings. If in the past most of the dance repertoire was played purely instrumental, nowadays, the respective songs are no longer sung or are sung less and less, these being replaced by vocal songs, keeping the structure and order specific to a dance suite. Instead of Contrănesc instrumental (violin), today they play vocals and dance to the song *Trecui asară prin codru*. They dance the same way, the rhythm is the same, the tempo being about the same. Unfortunately, these songs will be lost in time, the youth being more and more interested in the very intense vocal repertoire promoted on television channels. The dance songs played by bands are increasingly chosen according to their musical tempo and not according to the specific area. Since the tempo is the same, the steps are the same. Even if the song is *De scuturat* or from Banat or Cluj, the guests perform the same dance, they do the same steps, except for the dancers who were part of the folk ensembles and who know the differences between these dances.

Between the so-called traditional music and the manele, the ethno-musical phenomenon appeared, which is a combination of folk music and easy listening, for example, *Tăte șogorișăle*. Everyone dances as they know on this song, some in a circle, others dance in pairs, performing two steps to the left and two to the right. And yet, despite this widespread phenomenon, there are still folk bands that maintain their specificity, singing only the authentic repertoire, for example, the Iza Group.

The uniqueness of folk costumes is lost in the dances performed on stage. In the past, girls secretly made their shirts to have unique patterns, even arguing with their peers, refusing to show them the pattern of the shirt. Today, the dancers on stage wear identical costumes made by the same craftsmen. The dance steps are also performed simultaneously.

In some areas of the county, we notice an attempt, with the help of the authorities, to preserve, or to revive some long-lost traditions. We remember “Dansul coșercilor” from Copalnic Mănăștur which is held on January 30 at the Cultural Center and managed to maintain its authentic specificity every year. Also, thanks to the goodwill of the mayor of Oncești, the vergel is organized again, which now takes place at the “Casa de petrecere a moroșenilor” in Oncești. Some villages of the Chioar area have managed to revive the “Dance at the barn.” We also meet traditional weddings, it’s true, these cases are rare, but we are glad that they still exist. At these weddings, the bride and groom keep the traditional dress and the wedding still retains some elements of the past. Traditional dance is practised and authentic music is played.

In some villages in Maramureș County, the practice of evening sittings has been revived, but more as a show with guests, television and people of culture, the custom, in which in addition to practising collective work, we find folk costumes and authentic dance played by village girls and boys. Also, the habit of evening sittings is the practical test of the degree works, of some educators and teachers from schools and kindergartens, the students have the opportunity to wear a traditional costume and to participate in an authentic custom that was practised in the past. The teachers mentioned to us that the students are very excited, excited and happy to participate in such an event, dedicated to the examiners and also to the parents.

An important aspect for us as ethnologists is the research work, the growing number of valid performers and good keepers of traditional horă songs and shouts. The fact that these songs are no longer sung, there are no more shouts at the various village events, the massive

migration of the population abroad, the advanced age of the performers, the media, the lack of desire of children and grandchildren to learn these elements of folklore, inevitably lead to the loss of this treasure. The research of the reported aspects implies not only a good knowledge of the information, but also of the environment in which they live, of the community they represent artistically, whose songs they sing, whose games they play. Every folkloric manifestation, every folkloric fact, is part of the cultural life of the community, mirroring the conception of life, the mentality of the people and, as such, it is received by the community in one way or another, under this mentality.

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