

Habilitation Thesis

ABSTRACT

This Habilitation Thesis reflects the scientific research and didactic experience carried by the candidate since obtaining her Ph.D. (1996).

The first chapter of this thesis presents the main research directions and topics focused on three trajectories: *the dynamics of the Romanian traditions*, *the coexistence in multiethnic areas* and *oral history*. In this research I have presented a detailed analysis of the field work results and studies focused on marriage and wedding, and on the dynamics that are related to these traditions. These studies were performed in two ethnographic areas with a very strong identity (Telciu, in Năsăud and Bârgaiei Valley, in Bistrița) and another area, placed at the intersection of two areas of great prestige - Banat and the Pădureni County of Hunedoara. I have emphasized in these pages the defining and the very well preserved elements, but also the transformations that occurred in the nuptial ceremony from the interwar period until the beginning of the third millennium.

In the second subchapter I chose, from the aspects that define the funerary traditions, two manifestations less studied in Romania: "Horele morțești" (ritual lyrical songs composed by peasant-poets after the literary, cult patterns, that have a wide spread in Transylvania and Banat) and "hora de pomană"/"alms hora"- the round dance offered as oblation to the dead (post funeral ritual from Romanați area dedicated to unmarried dead people, concordant with those in the nuptial scenario, but with compensatory meanings).

In a chapter with strong theoretical and didactical purpose, I have proposed a classification of the actual customary manifestations according to their relationship to tradition and the actors (individuals or groups) that perform them. In my opinion, today we can identify in the Romanian villages: (a) *customary vestiges* - customs and rituals preserved through themselves, in actu; (b) *customary latencies* - ceremonies and rites that revolve around Christian holidays and/or the prestigious religious establishments, customs kept only in the villagers memory; (c) *cultural experiments for scientific purposes* - customs temporarily revitalized by activating collective memory; (d) *customary pretexts for festivals and other cultural events* - customs designed and supported from outside the community to be performed outside their natural framework or context. Regarding the last category, I have dedicated a dense and substantial chapter to the Căluș Ritual by inserting the fieldwork results from 2005 - 2008.

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Another direction in my research consists in studying the coexistence of minorities groups in multiethnic areas. Here I merely state the principles and research methods applied in the study of ethnic groups in Dobrogea, southern Transylvania and Banat. I made reference to articles and volumes published in recent years.

The third line of research, oral history, also consists of publishing theoretical articles and a volume of commented narratives that I have briefly presented in another chapter, mentioning my opinions regarding the usefulness of an approach through the narrative research method.

In the second chapter I presented my involvement in the cultural politics of Romania, especially in the field of Intangible Cultural Heritage, as a member of the National Commission for Safeguarding ICH.

The third chapter presents my activity as a member of the following professional associations: the *International Association for South-European Studies* (2003), the *Ethnological Studies Association of Romania* (2004, General Secretary from 2007 to 2012) and the *Société Internationale d'Éthnologie et du Folklore* (2010).

In the fourth chapter I have listed the main directions in which I have developed my editorial activity: publishing studies and articles, designing university lectures and summaries on traditional culture, coordinating collective volumes and other contributions. This part contains detailed examples that describe my academic affirmation strategy through written contributions.

Also, in the fifth chapter I have included a list of grants I have participated in - both as coordinator and as a member of the implementation team - I have specified my activities and I have mentioned the results I have obtained. In the sixth chapter I included brief references of the scientific and academic recognition (presentations of my work made by the authors of dictionaries, of bibliographies and of works of synthesis regarding the evolution of Romanian ethnology).

Chapter seventh contains informative data regarding my teaching methodology and didactic activity at the Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest: lectures, coordinating bachelor and master theses, participation in committees to grant doctoral degrees and contribution to the opening and accreditation of bachelor and master studies in ethnology and cultural anthropology.

I have dedicated the last chapter to future projects and directions towards which I intend to develop my career. These are broadly the same as the ones I have followed so far, but I have included other areas of interest that underscore the interdisciplinary and intercultural view of my fieldwork research, such as the urban space (for the study of the

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rites of passage), the enclaves – the isolated cultural spaces – inhabited by ethnic groups in Romania and the Romanian-inhabited settlements outside the borders. I intend to continue conducting narrative research but with new subjects, such as settlements that used to have a certain kind of fame or glory during the communist era or even before the war, that today has faded.

In regard to my teaching and methodological activity, I propose to continue the lectures based on fieldwork experience and to coordinate students' work and research towards the current trends of ethnology, anthropology and folklore. Also, I will reserve a privileged place to the dissemination of my experience in ethnological research, both by developing new synthesis studies and by involvement in the management of intangible cultural heritage.