

SEASON CUSTOMS

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***Abstract:** Spring and summer customs preserve traces of the ancient rites for the New Year, which were once celebrated at the beginning of spring and they symbolize either fertility or the joy of nature's coming back to life, or they can even have the function of a carol (Lazarul). In order to underline the place and the musical function within the customs.*

1. Introduction

1.1. Spring and summer customs

They preserve traces of the ancient rites for the New Year, which were once celebrated at the beginning of spring and they symbolize either fertility or the joy of nature's coming back to life, or they can even have the function of a carol (Lazarul). In order to underline the place and the musical function within the customs, I have introduced the following integrated folk musical species:

- with agricultural significance: Lazarul, Paparuda, Scaloianul, Dragaica;
- with different significances: Tudorita (Santoadarul), Homanul, Calusul;

As a result of a direct study, I noticed that in the analyzed Dambovita region only a few of the season customs are accompanied by music, that is: Paparuda, Scaloianul, Calusul. I will therefore briefly summarise the first two quoted customs.

Even if there was a period of a few decades when Paparuda (as well as other customs) was practiced only rarely and intermittently, within the latest years it has come back with an unexpected intensity. The custom is practiced both as prevention and during the drought.

Of the two typological categories noticed by the researchers in the ceremony structure, the most frequent is the one in which the two elements - water and paparuda-meet constantly and has as a main character a girl/woman who adorns her body and head with leaves or twigs. She is accompanied by a group of girls together with an old woman or the girl's mother. She dances and sings clapping her hands in the rhythm and the hostess waters her (in the village of Runcu the role of the paparuda is played by a boy).

The paparuda songs are different from one region to another and are in accordance with the character of the dance, being part of a pentacordy or a hexacordy which can be turned through an extension into heptacordic steps, the most frequent being the eolic and the mixolidic. The rhythm can be giusto-syllabic or/and aksak. Within the custom, practiced even today in Dambovita county, the vocal song is followed by a series of local dances: Itele, Floricica. The Paparuda practiced in the village of Piersinari (and mentioned in this work) confirms the structural features of the species.

Scaloianul was practiced up to the previous years in the geographical area which we have in view, and it is practiced again to a certain extent. The custom is practiced by children and consists of making a clay or wax doll which is prepared for its funerals. The whole development of the ceremony follows the funerals ritual: Scaloianul is mourned, accompanied by a procession similar to a funerals one, it is buried (or thrown in a river), the dead person's last meal is organised etc. If generally the songs which accompany Scaloianul are in accordance with the mourning songs from the region, "The Rain Mother" (Muma Ploii) practiced and collected from the village of Piersinari is based on a song with a fixed form, which is based on a diatonic pentacordy with a high third, the rhythm being giusto-syllabic, and the form is free.

1.1. **The winter customs** are widely appreciated and are produced with a high frequency during 24th December-7th January. The pre-Christian, pagan elements of the winter holidays determined the church to forbid or assimilate these "devilish" customs, as the carol was once known. This fact didn't manage to remove its profane character, which was transmitted up to the present days, proving the age and originality of these Romanian customs.

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The carol is the richest and the most representative winter holiday traditional song, it has wishing functions and two forms:

- a) the carol with animal mask which is considered the oldest form of joyfully greeting the New Year; the masks which we use are: Capra (the Goat)/Brezaia, Vasilca and recently the Bear(Ursul).
- b) The act of carol going, practiced by children and grown-ups.

If from a musical point of view the carol with an animal mask does not especially stand out, the carol is characterized by the text briefness and also of the song which has a precise outline, a strong rhythm, a fixed form, most often with a chorus. The character of the songs is vigorous, optimistic, other times solemn, two musical types coming into view: an old one and a new one which can prevail in a region or another, in other places living together.

The region of Dambovită county is rich and various in carols, starting with the scanned rhythm (in the villages of Piersinari, Gura Sutei, Voinesti, etc.) and continuing with the carols that can be sung, which are part of primary sound systems, prepentatonic, pentatonic, and even hexacordic system. The pace belongs to the children's rhythmic system.

The above presented musical examples bears the mark of some local names: Mos Ajun, La Mos Ajun, Buna dimineata, Asta seara-i seara mare, La colindat, colindete, etc.

1.1.1.**Sorcova** – is practiced before New Year and is often seen in Dambovită county, the blossomed twig being gradually replaced by a little stick adorned with artificial flowers. Even if it is certified as being of a Slav origin (“surova”), the custom is also met at the Romans, at January Feasts, green branches (Steve) and presents were distributed, Steva representing the goddess of health.

The songs which accompany the custom and which were collected from many of the county villages (Piersinari, Barbulet, Cucuteni, Buciumeni, etc.) can be placed in oligocordic systems of a major and minor type, which proves their belonging to the ancient stratum of the Romanian customs.

1.1.2.**The star song (Cantecul de stea)**- was certified in the 18th century and it was created by the church under the influence of the Lutheran and Calvin creations. It combined with the Vicleim, a strict separation between them being impossible. Unlike carols, the star songs have no chorus and due to the same length of the verse and the coincidence of the day when they are used, some carol texts use star songs tunes and vice versa. As far as the poetical text aspect and the tune are concerned, the star song becomes interesting regarding the relation between the laic and the folk creation.

1.1.3.**The plugusor and the sowing-** have an archaic agricultural meaning, having as an aim to assure the harvest abundance, through the “imitative magic”, being also practiced in Muntenia as well as in the neighboring areas. The Plugusor from Dambovită county has two ways of being presented: one with a scanned rhythm and the other one sung, which is more frequently met than the first one. The songs collected from Valea Leurzei, Buciumeni, Piersinari, Cazaci, Pietrosita can be included in prepentatonic, pentatonic and hexacordic sound structures, the usual texts being sometimes replaced by those of some local ballads (Miorita, Ghita Catanuta, Miu Cobiu, etc.)

In the winter repertoire besides carols, plugusor, sorcova, I have noticed Plugul cel Mare (The Big Plough) and the Children's Plugusor performed on a tune, which is an exception, as this creation is known as a recitation on the topic of abundance, having a favourable character.

The tune of the Plugul Mare (the Big Plough) collected by Elisabeta Dragoi, 84 years old, in the village of Piersinari is in accordance with a tetracordy with a high third, and the text reminds of the atmosphere of ancient agricultural activities (the corn sowing using the heel).

The custom of carol going with the pig head, Vasilca, is more recent and it has remained as a creation of the slave gypsies from the landlords' courts. Today it is very rarely practiced, the tune being accompanied by an accordion (the village of Piersinari) or a violin (the village of Cucuteni).

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