

THE ROMANIAN FOLKLORE NOWADAYS

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Abstract: *The research of the contemporary folklore phenomena underlines the processes of transformation/adaptation of the folklore reality to the conditions of social life nowadays. The two apparently contradictory trends – the urgent research to save the traditional folklore consumer goods which have not suffered essential changes and the research of the contemporary phenomena which seeks the transformation processes – show the idea of the existence of two forms of manifestation of folk creation : traditional folklore performed in rural authentic communities and folklore as consumer goods in modern society . From the arrival of the industrial society (the 18th century) to the contemporary era, the spiritual and material traditional creation has suffered a slow but certain process of transformation and adaptation to social realities. So that, certain rituals or authentic musical creations have changed while others have disappeared losing their original function.*

Keywords: *folklore phenomena, tradition, processes of transformation/adaptation, folklore realities, rural community, spiritual/material creation, folk customs, traditional / modern folklore, musical repertoire, ritual songs / games, folklore as consumer goods.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION AND ADAPTATION OF THE TRADITIONAL FOLKLORE TO MODERN CONDITIONS

The belief that in the field of European culture there are fewer and fewer areas in which the folklore preserves its traditional meanings is now dominant. For this reason, in recent years the two apparently contradictory trends became more and more frequent – the one of urgent research, designed to save those consumer goods of traditional folklore which have not disappeared yet or have not been totally transformed and another one – the research of contemporary phenomena which is just the process of transformation and adaptation of traditional folklore to the conditions of social and industrial life.

In this context, the contradiction between the necessities of defining the folklore status in various situations is a need. Defining can be made successfully in the field of the Romanian folklore, in which all the current situations can find references in the tradition of folklore which is still alive. In this regard, considering the folklore as a means of communication between people, as an exchange item, we can say that its two edges, the traditional folklore of the rural authentic society and the folklore as consumer goods of the industrial society of today, coexist. Rural Romanian society was, in a distant past, an autarkical society, one which was producing and consuming its own goods. It had within the communities, the different ethnographical areas, a well-outlined cultural life, the folklore entering into this life through ancient rites, customs, oral poetry and prose, through dances and songs. It was an integrant part of the cultural- artistic language of each community. Through this language the needs of communication among community members were met, ritual ceremonial or artistic messages were being produced and received, the ritual musical and choreographic goods which are called folklore today were being conveyed. This stage of the Romanian folklore has never been recorded as such because it preceded the interest in scientific research of folk culture.

The reconstitution of its various aspects has been tried and it has been romantically exalted by traditional researchers. Today it might be just the lower limit of the process that led to the current state of cultural life in which the folklore becomes consumer goods.

1.2. TENDENCIES IN THE CURRENT REPERTOIRE

Not to exclude from the earliest times the possibility of the contact between the language of autarkical closed communities, of enriching the repertoire and means of expression through the assimilation of heterogeneous goods, not only in rural and urban areas, it is generally counted that in the Romanian folklore the major contact with the heterogeneous western urban languages with what would later become the culture of the industrial society, began in the 18th century.

So, the beginning of the transition process from traditional folklore to contemporary folklore, in which the costume, song and dance, even poetry and prose, become consumer goods, is placed two centuries ago. It started with the entry of the manufactured goods, with the beginning of education and printed books, army and the modernization of roads and the cities transition from feudal to capitalist life. Like all similar processes the rhythm was slow, only later becoming stronger and stronger. Although consuming some heterogeneous goods, the villages have continued to keep up to the First World War in most areas, the local folklore, with its traditional meanings. In certain areas, some folklore categories had moments of exceptional flourishing, mentioned by several researches (B. Bartok, C. Braileanu).

1.3. THE COEXISTENCE OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN FOLKLORE

The coexistence of the traditional folklore with the consumer goods folklore presents different forms in different folkloric areas, the supremacy of one over the other being different depending on certain categories of the folk culture. In cultural life the traditional folklore meets the consumer goods folklore and influences each other. Sometimes, the conveyed goods on modern ways being a genuine folklore language reviving those folklore categories which haven't totally disappeared. This phenomenon occurs especially in the local folklore demonstrations which give new meanings and development to the traditional customs and creates new opportunities for their display. The forms of the folklore are thus designed to live together. But their function is different and will remain as such. The facts of the traditional folklore are messages of their creators, addressed to themselves or to the other community members, with differed purposes, but always fitted in the traditional context.

2. CONCLUSIONS

The status of the consumer goods folklore can thus be defined only in the context of the contemporary culture. So to define it means to integrate it in the other artistic events of the present days. In this respect, its definition involves an explicit language also used for the knowledge of its multiple and complex joints. As it is today, the Romanian folklore represents the contemporary age of the Romanian culture, as a proof of our history on the lands bordered by the Carpathians, the Danube and the Black Sea.

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