

# **Archiving a Utopian Land: Some Considerations on Romanian Songs of Collectivization**

Anca Stere, University of Bucharest

**Paper prepared for the conference “Culture Archives and the State: Between Nationalism, Socialism, and the Global Market,”  
May 3-5, 2007, Mershon Center, Ohio State University, USA.**

## **Introduction**

The folkloric composition is influenced by the context in which it is created, transmitted, and performed. The constitutive elements of each performing situation – the time and the place, the performers, the objects used, etc. – may be reflected by the text. Each performance of a folkloric item, in general, and of a literary text, in particular, is related to the wide context of popular culture, considered in a certain historical period with its social and economic aspects. In this respect I approach the folkloric texts produced in the early years of the communist regime in Romania, focusing on the period when the collective farms (Gospodăriile Agricole de Producție) were imposed and organized. I intend 1) to grasp the mechanisms used by the communist power in order to shape the folkloric creative process, which selected and reflected certain fragments of social and historical reality in the so-called “folkloric texts with contemporary themes”<sup>1</sup>, and also 2) to trace the way the social realities are evaluated and signified within the text.

Yet it is important to mention that beside this type of text which represented an ideological command and which conveyed the official political message, the traditional folkloric items (those created and performed as a result of a natural creative process within the rural community) were also collected, archived, and studied during the period this paper is focused on.

## **The official discourse of collectivization**

From 1945 on, the government began to impose its control over private agricultural property. This meant the compulsory surrender of agricultural equipment to the town councils (the Stipulation of the Ministry of Agriculture and of Landed Property, no. 825, in OG 91/19.04.1945<sup>2</sup>) and the sharing of grain (the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 2339, in OG 161/19.07.1945). In the same year, the Supreme Council of the National Economy was founded, its president being Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej (OG 271/26.10.1945, OG 272/27.11.1945). Three years later, in 1948, when collectivization was a task ostentatiously assumed by the rest of the party leaders<sup>3</sup>, Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej warned, “with no reason and under no circumstances the peasants should be forced to adopt the form of collective farming.”<sup>4</sup> The statement<sup>5</sup> of the communist leader was meant, on the one hand, to forestall the future possible criticism concerning the abuses which took place in the villages, and, on the other, to falsify the real situation reflected by many incidents including even peasant uprisings in several counties: Botoșani (where the first conflicts took place, with the Securitate troops using their arms in order to put down resistance in the village of Roma), Bihor, Rădăuți, Suceava (in 1949), Ialomița, Vlașca, Ilfov, Giurgiu (where Party activists in the village of Căminesca summoned four lorries of soldiers, who subsequently fired at the peasants, leaving one dead and several wounded according to the official record<sup>6</sup>), Gorj (in 1950), Galați, Tulcea, Mureș, Gorj, Brașov (in 1958), Bacău, Dolj, Galați, Mehedinți, Olt, Cluj (in 1959), and Dâmbovița (in 1962)<sup>7</sup>.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1949, Decree no. 83 was issued, liquidating the remains of the landowners’ property left after the agrarian reform law promulgated by the Petru Groza government (set up on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1945; art. no. 187, in OG 68/23.03.1945). Not only was the land expropriated, but also livestock, buildings, agricultural equipment and products, and the

claims, titles, and shares of the landowners' enterprise of exploitation (art. 2). Opposition to confiscation or hiding of goods brought a punishment of 5 to 15 years of hard labour as well as property confiscation (art. 4)<sup>8</sup>. This decree was followed by the plenary meeting of the Central Committee between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1949, which represented the beginning of the collectivization campaign. One month later, on April 30<sup>th</sup>, Decree no. 183 established the penal code meant to ensure the progress of the "socialist change of agriculture." Thus, a punishment of 5-15 years of hard labour and a fine of 50,000 to 200,000 lei were inflicted for "hiding, destroying or altering products or goods" (art. 4, letter d). If the State plan was not observed, the penalty was 1-12 years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of 10,000 to 100,000 lei (art. 2, letter a)<sup>9</sup>. This political process, which had serious social consequences, was concluded on April 27<sup>th</sup> 1962, when Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej announced in the *Statement concerning the end of the collectivization and the reorganization of the leadership in agriculture presented at the extraordinary session of the Great National Assembly (Raportul cu privire la încheierea colectivizării și reorganizarea conducerii agriculturii prezentat la sesiunea extraordinară a Marii Adunări Naționale)*:

In the People's Republic of Romania, socialism has been irrevocably victorious in cities and villages. (Long, powerful applause) (...) The socialist sector in agriculture owns today 96% of the arable surface and 93.4% of the agricultural surface of the country; the collective farms comprise 3 201 000 families, almost all the peasant families. *The goal settled by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the Romanian Workers' Party in the domain of the socialist change of agriculture has been achieved almost four years before the term.* (Powerful applause.)<sup>10</sup>

The structure and the rhetorical means of the official discourse, both at the beginning and at the end of the collectivization process, focused on the need to eliminate the "capitalist element" from the life of the village, the "capitalist element" meaning the kulak (the *chiabur*). Or, in other words, "to intensify the class struggle in the villages". In this respect, the words

picked to better illustrate this perspective belong to the vocabulary of combat. The shorthand report of the plenary meeting of the Central Committee on March 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. 1949 outlines Dej's preference for war oratory: the scrupulous achievement of the tasks leads to "the victory in the battle in which our party has enlisted for the socialist transformation of agriculture;"<sup>11</sup> the class enemy, the kulak, is "dangerous, tenacious, combative." He "is different even from his fellows, the bourgeois in the cities, because he does not theorize much. He grabs the axe, the hammer, shoots from his hiding place, defends his property at the risk of his life because he's got the sense of the property in his blood."<sup>12</sup> More than this, the kulaks "has been fighting and trying day by day and by all means to carry with them and ally with the middle peasants and even the poor peasants."<sup>13</sup> That is why, "the kulaks represent a very powerful enemy for us, an enemy hidden in a forest of twelve million people, and it is this enemy that our plenary session intends to liquidate."<sup>14</sup> The end of the collectivization process is declared in the same terms by the general secretary of the communist party: "Within an extremely short time, short from a historic point of view, under the guidance of the party, the working class, allied with the peasantry, has defeated and chased away from the power the exploiting classes, has conquered all power, has nationalized the main means of production and gone further to the building of socialist society. (Applauses)."<sup>15</sup>

The study of the documents in the Romanian National Archives, especially those documents belonging to the fund of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, allows us to deconstruct the mechanisms used for imposing an organizational system required by the ideological needs of the communist regime and not by the needs of the rural social and economic reality. The critical analysis of the decrees, of the shorthand reports which recorded the Political Office meetings, and of the decisions and articles of law elaborated especially during

the 1950s represents the starting point of this research, which tries to grasp the official discursive strategies that aimed at imposing the collective farms.

A recurrent discursive strategy stated the need to persuade the peasants as a unique method for reaching their goal. During the meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 1954, Alexandru Moghioroș, the ministry of agriculture, specified: “We need to work in such a manner so that everybody should join the agricultural association and I don’t want to believe that we are not able to persuade the peasants to join it. If this happens, those who do not join it will have their land in the pocket and not a specific field area.”<sup>16</sup> The phrase *with the land in the pocket* referred to the property act which, under the conditions of collectivization, no longer represented a warrant of the individual or family right to the land.

The persuasive strategy was used in almost all conclusive contexts of the Political Office meetings, with very slightly changed phrase variants. It referred to all categories: young people (belonging to the Association of the Young Working People - UTM), women (belonging to the communist organization), soldiers, primary school teachers, and its transmitting follows the folkloric pattern: “mouth-to-mouth propaganda.”<sup>17</sup> In order to achieve their goals, the communist authority used the best propagandists who could handle the same code as the addressees.

The persuasive method implied both rewards for the foremost people in agriculture and sanctions for the “reactionaries.” The political discourse also included the opponents of this process together with the ways in which their reactions could be controlled and thwarted. It thus created a new classification of people living in the Romanian villages. According to the Party’s resolution on 3<sup>rd</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> March 1949 there were five categories. The first category represented the agricultural proletariat, the peasants who had no land and those who worked for the rich (*kulak*

was the Russian term often used in Romania, *chiaburi* in Romanian). The second one consisted of poor peasants, those who had no more than 5 hectares of land, representing more than 57% of the entire land privately owned. The middle peasants, who covered 60% of the agricultural production of the country, formed the third category. The middle peasants used the labor force of their families, owned from 5 to 20 ha. (meaning 34% of the arable land), and would constitute the nucleus of the future collective farms. The fourth category was made up of the rich peasants – the *chiaburi* – the criterion being not the area they owned but the fact that they hired the labor force or the agricultural equipment. The remaining class of the landowners whose properties had been divided and given to the peasants during the reform in 1945 represented the fifth category.<sup>18</sup> Decree no. 83/2.03.1949 dealt with what remained from the landowners' properties after the 1945 agrarian reform. Opposition against the confiscation of possessions and hiding them meant a punishment of 5-15 years of hard labour and the seizure of the goods (article no 4).<sup>19</sup> In the summer of 1950 the party leaders ordered the Agrarian Section to proceed against the “guilty” landowners and to seize their properties.<sup>20</sup> Some local authorities did not maintain this appearance of following the law but simply confiscated their properties and sent them, together with their families, to the Black Sea – Danube Canal, without any trial.<sup>21</sup> In this way, the social classes were delimited and stigmatized by the communist regime. Besides the rich peasants and the landowners, there were other social categories delineated: bankers, industrialists, merchants, owners of nationalized buildings, and “the other elements of the upper bourgeoisie” (article no 1 of Decree 16, concerning the former exploiters, Official Gazette 13/31.01.1951.<sup>22</sup>).

The fact that the collective farms were organized and imposed as a social reality on the Romanian village caused not only economic and social changes but also a transformation of

mentalities in almost all rural areas of the country. The social hierarchy was inverted, human relations modified and degraded. The representatives of local authority and their criteria of eligibility changed, as all communitarian values were reconsidered from an ideological point of view.

The new organization of agriculture was imposed in two different ways: directly through the activity of members in the party cells, political propagandists, etc., and indirectly in two ways: through mass media (the party's newspapers which were collectively read at the village club, the programmes transmitted by the loudspeakers) and through the creation and transmission of a new type of popular composition – “the new popular song” – offered as a fictional model of reality and as the only structural and thematic model for contemporary folklore that was ideologically acceptable.

### **“Public transcript” and “hidden transcript”**

The above cited documents belonged to and also shaped the discourse which built and imposed the vocabulary and the rhetoric of the communist regime. Or, in James C. Scott's terms, belonged to and created the “public transcript”, used as “a shorthand way of describing the open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate.” The American anthropologist explains that “*public* here refers to action that is openly avowed to the other party in the power relationship, and *transcript* is used almost in its juridical sense (*proces verbal*) of a complete record of what was said. This complete record, however, would also include nonspeech acts such as gestures and expressions.”<sup>23</sup> The role of the *public transcript* is to “provide convincing evidence for the hegemony of dominant values, for the hegemony of the dominant discourse.”<sup>24</sup> It can have three aims: “to magnify the awe in which the dominant elite is held or to keep certain social facts out of public sight altogether or to serve cosmetically to beautify aspects of power

that cannot be denied.”<sup>25</sup> Yet the two groups could not use only one code for translating and relating to the reality. Both the dominant group and the subordinates use a discourse that takes place “offstage”, a discourse which consists of speeches, gestures and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript and is called by James C. Scott *hidden transcript*.<sup>26</sup> The characteristic of the *hidden transcripts* of the dominant and subordinate is that they are “never in direct contact. Each participant will be familiar with the public transcript and the hidden transcript of his or her circle, but not with the hidden transcript of the other.”<sup>27</sup> While for the dominant group it is “an artifact of the exercise of power,” for the subordinate one it is “an acting out in fantasy – and occasionally in secretive practice – of the anger and reciprocal aggression denied by the presence of domination.”<sup>28</sup>

After considering the above-mentioned official documents as a part of the *public transcript* of the dominant group, I’ll further mention the official version of the subordinates, which I consider to be the folkloric texts on new themes. These texts cover all ideological themes and motives used in the official discourse of the communist regime, thus appearing as a metatext reshaping and mystifying the reality, offering a fabricated image in concordance with the requests of the official ideology.

*The new popular song*<sup>29</sup> reflects a particular image of the socialist society, namely the one promoted by the party’s policy, focused on the process of collectivization. But the meaning and the value of the agricultural transformations found in these texts are totally different from the real ones. For example, the official versified structures do not reflect the deportations of those peasants who did not want to join the collective farms, nor the peasants’ rebellions and the corresponding abuses of the militia and Security. The *new* literary texts gathered in anthologies, which represent official creation, appeared as a result of a political command in the form of

competitions (with the purpose of creating, collecting, and performing *popular texts*) or imposed by the propaganda brigades that were organized and functioned in villages. These new forms of poetic manifestation are not the result of a natural creative process within the rural community; rather, they represent a way of legitimating the communist leadership through which a mystifying surreality is built for propaganda purposes. These compositions did not appear spontaneously but as a result of political command. The fact that the new popular texts were performed only in a fabricated context, that of the stage, is significant. These circumstances created opportunities for the appearance of new categories of performers, i.e. artistic brigade members. Another explanation for the use of the images representing “the realities of the socialist society” may be the ideological “bombardment.” The newspapers and the radio programs, on the one hand, and the agitators’ activity, on the other hand, promoted the “achievements” of the Communist Party and the *popular songs* which were awarded prizes at the contests organized by the Houses of Popular Creation. The language used was adapted to the information conveyed and to the purpose aimed at by the communist regime. Thus, a linguistic, thematic, and cognitive model was imposed which may explain, to a certain extent, some of the newly appeared popular compositions.

These compositions are generally referred to as *popular lyrical poetry with contemporary themes*,<sup>30</sup> *new popular songs*,<sup>31</sup> *new creation of popular songs*.<sup>32</sup> Eugenia Cernea, in the introductory study at *Cântecul popular nou*.<sup>33</sup> (*The new popular song*), criticized not the denominative syntagm but its meaning:

“The term *new popular song* (author’s italics) meant, in fact, the popular creator’s musical and literary product which directly or implicitly deals with the aspects of the working classes, approaching them in the spirit of the new mentality. But the term is conventional. We also adopted it because – being launched in our folkloristics, three decades ago – it has become rooted with the above-mentioned meaning. If it is understood *ad literam* the term is contradictory. The popular song, as a result of a

collective composition process, which takes place in time and space, cannot represent, in any of its shapes, a totally new product. (...) A composition whose compounding elements would be totally new (i.e. they cannot be found in the traditional folklore) could not be considered a folkloric composition. Thus, a song cannot be popular and new in the same time.

The determinative *new* (...) refers to the themes inspired by the new of the Romanian socialist realities, this involving some partial renewals of the folkloric language, of its structure and the directions in its development. Thus, *saying new popular song we understand the song based on the folkloric tradition, in which the contemporary popular creator participates in order to express by the use of the lines and of the tune, his attachment to the socialist country* (author's italics)."<sup>34</sup>

The definition contains, besides an explanation for the mechanism of composition, a subjective element (we may even call it an emotional one) – “the attachment to the socialist country” – which is essentially promoted by this realm of popular creation.

One feature of the new popular song poetry – a feature stated by most of the studies that approached this subject in the communist period – is the need to reflect socialist realities in the poetic text. In C. Bărbulescu's article “The New Creation of Folkloric Songs,” the artistic creation of the “working masses” was qualified as “a significant product of our epoch which vividly reflects the new socialist reality” and “an active agent which contributes to the development of our society.”<sup>35</sup> Thus, through these studies, an adjacent literature developed. It was a literature that promoted the new rules for creating popular texts and established the researchers' task of enlarging the phenomenon of new popular lyrical poetry. In the above-mentioned article the folklorists' tasks are clearly stated: to deepen the process of popular creation; to establish the laws of its development; to provide new elements of “artistic craftsmanship,” closer to socialist realism, to writers and the composers; to guide the amateurs' groups, popular orchestras, and song and dance ensembles; and to publish the popular production.<sup>36</sup>

One can say that there is a relation between two elements of living in a dictatorial regime. On the one hand, we consider the concrete reality, the objective social and historical conditions, which can be re-collected from archive documents, from the legislative material of that period, or from personal memories. The latter element of this relation is represented by the official position of the representatives of power, by the ideological discourse, which filters through its own system of values each segment of reality, offering not a distorted image but an image in which the signifier bears the opposite sign. Thus, a mystifying metatext is created, the *public transcript* of the dominant, to interrupt the coherence of the former element. One of the ideological instruments for manipulating and mystifying was represented by the new popular creation, which brought to the level of the masses the concepts and mechanisms of the communist ideology and could be considered as the *public transcript* of the subordinates. The same role was accomplished by the propagandistic brigades, by mass media, or by single-authored literature and music, which had, in their turn, to reflect socialist achievements.

The studies on this subject written during the communist period created a mystifying metatext, too. They not only promoted these versified structures as a model of popular creation but also recommended them as evidence, documents of the “objective” reality. More than this, these studies offered ideological reasons to ignore certain segments of the traditional culture, presenting them as part of the passive repertoire only. For example, ritual genres, because they imply a religious behaviour, were considered obsolete and retrograde: “Because some folkloric genres, such as the charms<sup>37</sup>, do not have nowadays the gnoseological and social bases which generated them, they seem obsolete to the contemporary mentality and are abandoned; others, which flourished during the feudal and precapitalist period, such as the *doina* (an elegiac folkloric song) and the ballad, suffer a rapid process of involution, losing their former role and

meaning. Song and dance are developing instead, acquiring new features. In the same time, in contemporary folklore expression, forms only casually found in tradition begin to generalize. Such is the unsung poem, now recited by the brigade or written as propagandistic material.”<sup>38</sup>

The new popular creation was included in the 1949 research plan of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest. The first materials were collected in 1949-1950 in Bucharest. and the informants were fiddlers and vocalists in a folk music band, “Taraful Gorjului.” In 1951 the researchers collected materials in Batrâni, a village near Ploiești (folklorists Paula Carp and Tiberiu Alexandru first recorded them in Bucharest, then Ghizela Sulițeanu, Boris Marcu, and Paula Carp recorded the same informants in their native villages) and in Ieud, Maramureș (Paula Carp, Ghizela Sulițeanu and E. Popovici-Feuer recorded the materials during their fieldwork at the agricultural farm “Scânteia” in Ieud).

An important stage in creating and transmitting the new popular lyrical poetry is represented by the national contest organized by the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore and by the Central House of Popular Creation in 1960. Its theme was *The collection of new popular songs and of workers’ revolutionary songs*. The materials were classified into three categories: new literary texts (legends, ballads, poems, verses, riddles, brigade texts); new songs (texts and tunes – collected or personally created); and workers’ revolutionary songs (before 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1944).<sup>39</sup>. Some of the pieces sent for the contest were published in *Revista de folclor* (The Folklore Review).<sup>40</sup> After selecting the literary and musical compositions, the researchers from the Institute agreed upon the representative centres for this segment: Rupea, Sighet, Lăpuș, Găești, Costești, Drăgășani, Mediaș, Urziceni, and Craiova, places where the folklorists went for fieldwork in order to record the pieces sent for the contest.

The new popular creations are gathered in anthologies and categorized according to different criteria: the theme, the region, or alphabetically (considering the first line). One may say that there are two levels of the new themes. On the surface, there are the themes suggested by the regulations of the creation and collection contests or of those which can be traced after considering the materials presented. The titles are general and address the same processes: the (Communist) Party, the Republic, the antifascist struggle, the socialist transformations in agriculture (having sub themes which try to cover all the segments of a collectivized village – the collective farms, the mechanization in agriculture, the electrified village etc.), life in the new village, the satisfaction of abolishing the exploiting classes (the class struggle), working in factories and on building sites, etc.

A deep thematic level can also be traced, which intends, on the one hand, to shape the profile of the “new person,” and, on the other hand, to settle the “fair” social structure, the class structure, according to the criterion of communist ideology. Within the former specification can be placed the image of the woman who acquires new attributes (the beautiful girl is singing *doinas* on the tractor, she is elected among local authorities, she does not have time for being kissed because she has to harvest together with the brigade, etc.) and new titles (she is the tractor driver, a brigade member ,etc.). The very criterion for selecting romantic partners was modified. This aspect can be found in the following lines: “Green leaf of a peony, / My beauty on the tractor, / Don’t cause suffering! / Stop the tractor for a while / ‘Cause my heart burns with desire. / Come down to hear my words / For my heart to be relieved, / I cannot even eat / Because your love. / - Have no food until tomorrow, / Doesn’t bother me at all, / I don’t stop my tractor to hear your praises, / All I have to do is cross the road / And another one like you is sure to turn up, / Even nicer and a leader, / Not like you a loiterer. / Forget about love / And go to work, / There’s

no time to sit and talk, / The field has to be ploughed / So let's start the tractors / All over the fields.”<sup>41</sup>

The poetry with new themes induced the idea – through using these standardized subjects – that all the popular creators thought in the same manner and wrote according to a pattern.

Behind this *public transcript* which ensured the beautification of the real situation and built a frozen model of people's mentality, the collectivization tragedy was reflected in the *hidden transcripts* of both groups. The collections of the National Archives in Bucharest contain reports that reflect the real situation of the collectivization process, including the use of force as the main method for “persuading” the peasants to join the Collective Farm:

arrests, beatings, torturing, threatening them with guns, they were terrorized when summoned at the Provisional Committee during the night, their children were sent home from school, the middle peasants were threatened that they would be enlisted as kulaks [...] People were forced to make a choice: joining the Collective Farms or imprisonment for sabotage. When persuasion or violence failed to succeed, extreme solutions were used, namely putting to death some kulaks on the spot.

They also report that the peasants resorted to different methods in order not to give shares (for example, they would hide the products in the ground, share the crops with the poor peasants, bribe some of the collectors to be asked for a smaller share, soak the grains to weigh more, harvest during the night, etc.); and the peasants' uprising as well.

On January 29<sup>th</sup> 1958, the prime secretary E. Țurcanu signed a report about the violations committed during the socialist transformation of agriculture in Darabani region. Below is a passage from this report:

In some villages, despite the directives given by the regional office, the office of the party district committee replaced the work of the local agitators' group with the limited activity of some groups of 3-4 wage earners who summoned the people at the popular council and when they did not succeed in persuading the working peasants to join the agricultural association, used in some cases intimidation methods and even abuses. Thus, in Miorcani village, although on an area of about 200 hectares there were on November 18<sup>th</sup> 1957, only 5 requests of 1.14 hectares, Culică Ion the president of the village council, with the

approval of the regional instructor of the village popular council, brought a tractor and started to furrow the whole area. The working peasants, about 2-300 people, who had lands on this field and who hadn't even been asked if they wanted to join the agricultural association, gathered on that field and the women Matei Natalia and Lupașcu Maria flung themselves down, in front of the tractor. The president of the village council and the regional instructor of the village popular council did not consider the peasants' discontent and went further, and commanded to furrow another part of the field and to convict the two women.<sup>42</sup>

If we go back to Scott's terms, this document discloses a part of the *hidden transcript* of the dominant group, namely the actions of the official representatives of the power for imposing the collectivization, actions which were presented as isolated and not typical and appeared in documents with a narrow area of circulation.

On the other hand, the *hidden transcript* of the peasants subjected to the process of socialist transformation of agriculture is more difficult to reconstruct today because of the lack of texts against the regime, which could not have been collected during that period. Yet the Archive of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest still stores a few examples. During the fieldwork carried out in Săliște, Maramureș in August 1950, researchers Alexandru Amzulescu and Emilia Dragnea wrote down two variants of a text labelled as „a kulak's song”. It's a parody which reflects the real social image of the village political officials, mentioning and explaining their nicknames.

The researcher's informant, Ștefan Bornar, specifies that the author of this poem was Vlad Dare, son of Simion, who had been imprisoned one year before, because a Militia officer found the text in his money belt. He was sentenced to 6 years of hard labour at the Black Sea – Danube Canal. After 1989, another researcher of the Institute, Dr. Cornelia Călin Bodea, brought to the Archive a photocopy of Vlad Darie's lyrical compositions handwritten in a notebook. In fact, these are personal narratives, written with rhyme and rhythm but without formal attention to the lines. These texts are an account of the author's experiences: the moment of his arrest, his

transportation to the Black Sea-Danube Canal and the communist prisons (at Sighet and Poarta Albă), as well as all kinds of humiliations and the excruciating pains suffered during his imprisonment. The last texts in this notebook are three poems about the 1989 Revolution.

Two more examples of anticommunist compositions also found in the Institute's Folklore Archive prove that versified expressions of the peasants' revolt against the communist regime were then encountered during the fieldwork by the folklorist researchers. I am referring here at two information sheets<sup>43</sup>: no. 24376 and 24103. The former preserves a stanza collected on May 16<sup>th</sup> 1961, in Mocod, Năsăud. At the official opening of the collective farm in Nimigea de Sus, Năsăud in January 1961, the following lines were heard in the crowd. "Damn my barn / I have exchanged it for a piece of steak / Damn my fortune / I have exchanged it for a bottle of beer".

The researcher's remarks accompanying this stanza emphasize several aspects. First, that its theme recurrently appears during the researcher's conversation with the informant, a conversation held "in privacy". Second, that this stanza was "jokingly" uttered and does not represent a social reality, but rather isolated points of view shared by those with "a bourgeois mentality who find it difficult to separate themselves from their personal belongings when joining the collective farm." And, finally, the researcher's notes point to the reasons, namely scientific ones, which led to considering and collecting this kind of folkloric composition.

Having stated all these details, he not only justifies his interest in this type of folkloric composition by offering an "official" explanation. He also builds a "clean" context for collecting them, "clean" from the communist ideology point of view.

The second information sheet preserves a lyrical text where one can find the lack of trust in land ownership. It is a song in which the daughter begs her mother not to marry her to a rich

but undesirable man, a man with land but who is not loved by the young woman, because the collective farm will take the land and she will remain with an unwanted husband.

### **The collective farm – a utopian place**

When the communist regime took control over the political, social, and cultural realms, it reshaped the concepts and the symbolic universe through which the leading elite justified its existence and organized all activities and institutions. The emblematic signs, forms, and discursive structures built by political power attempted to integrate all social elements into its single framework of ideological purposes and meanings. This symbolic power system was used not only to impose communist social conditions but also to “influence people’s indigenous norms of conduct so that they themselves contribute, not necessarily consciously, to a government’s model of social order.”<sup>44</sup>

Already existing social structures were reshaped to fit perfectly into the ideological system of meaning. In fact, this meant casting a negative connotation upon the previous axiological grid, considered retrograde and not consonant with the requirements of the social reconstruction promoted by the communist regime which thus forcibly imposed its networks of power.

When talking about *power* we can apply Michael Mann’s typology<sup>45</sup> to the Romanian totalitarian regime after 1947. All types of power defined and discussed by the aforementioned author can be identified within the Romanian communist society, i.e. *extensive power* (“refers to the ability to organize large numbers of people over far-flung territories in order to engage in minimally stable cooperation”), *intensive power* (“refers to the ability to organize tightly and command a high level of mobilization or commitment from the participants, whether the area and numbers covered are great or small”), *authoritative power* (“is actually willed by groups and

institutions. It comprises definite commands and conscious obedience”), *diffused power* (“spreads in a more spontaneous, unconscious, decentered way throughout a population, resulting in similar social practices that embody power relations but are not explicitly commanded. It typically comprises, not command and obedience, but an understanding that these practices are natural or moral or result from self evident common interest”), *ideological power* (“derives from three interrelated arguments in the sociological tradition: *meaning, norms* and *aesthetic/ritual practices*”), and *political power* (“derives from the usefulness of centralized, institutionalized, territorialized regulation of many aspects of social relations”).

Focusing on *ideological power*, one may say that the communist regime monopolized and controlled the aforementioned three important elements: meaning, norms, and aesthetic/ritual practices, within which we include the folkloric text used as a channel for conveying the “proper” meanings, i.e. the political message that reflected the real events in a distorted manner, so that they should support a propagandistic goal. This newly achieved purpose of the folkloric text altered its very significance and structure.

The folkloric discourse was meant not only to “reflect the new social reality” but also to settle the social norms of conduct which regulated the relations of the villagers to “the socialist transformation of agriculture,” namely the imposing of the collective farms (Cooperativele Agricole de Producție).

The intrusion of ideology at the level of folk poetry (a new category of texts was now created for this purpose, i.e. *the folkloric texts on new themes*) modified both its language and its content. The form in which the political message was shaped and transmitted to the masses, on the one hand bore the characteristics of “the wooden language”<sup>46</sup> and, on the other hand was

adapted to the receivers for whom it was meant (themes, motifs, and structures taken from the traditional folkloric poetic composition).

The issue of “wooden language” was comprehensively approached by Francoise Thom in *Langue de bois*.<sup>47</sup> In the introduction, the author presents the origin and the evolution of this phrase and its uses: it comes from the Russian *dubovîi iazîk* (literally *oak tongue*) and used to name the heavy administrative style of the czarist bureaucracy. In the 1920s, this new way of writing, spread by newspapers, is often ridiculed: called „monkey tongue” by the writer Zoşcenko. In the same period, Polish critics spoke of a “frozen language.” But Orwell was the first to understand that the “wooden language” was not a ridiculous and yet harmless form of slang, but a metamorphosis of the language caused by its contact with ideology. He observed the role played by Newspeak in a totalitarian state. After considering all these perceptions of this form of discourse, Francoise Thom concludes that the wooden language has only one function: as a vehicle for ideology.<sup>48</sup>

Among the Romanian studies<sup>49</sup> dedicated to this topic we mention Tatiana Slama-Cazacu’s, which relates the ideologized form of the language to the socio-political contexts that generate it as well as to the mechanisms used for imposing it on the masses and their intended effects.

Considering these approaches to the structure, functions and contexts of *the wooden language*, the use of these discursive formulae in the *folkloric texts on new themes* shapes a certain linguistic horizon of expectations and specific architectural pattern. The fixed, rigid structures are inserted in the texts, next to expressions, themes, and motifs belonging to folkloric poetry, which are supposed to create the imagistic and linguistic frame familiar to this segment of receivers, namely the inhabitants of the villages. However, the verbal and conceptual folkloric

elements appear in the *new folkloric texts* with different meanings and functions than in their genuine context. Two illustrative examples can be found in an article published in *Revista de Folclor* in 1959.<sup>50</sup>

The first one is about the amateur artistic brigade in Fetești which paraphrased a text uttered during the ritual of *Paparude*.<sup>51</sup> and performed with its characteristic melody. The versified structure was distorted in order to convey a satiric message meant to ridicule “certain lacks or old survivals in people’s consciousness. Thus, the content and the meaning of this custom have been changed: its ritual character and magical function have totally disappeared; the old custom has been transformed into a show with an important educative function.”

For the second example, the author mentions the brigade in Brănești which “satirized the indolence of some cultural committees (who did not find a conductor for the choir of the village club), using for this purpose the paraphrased text of a charm ‘against snakes’ and, thus, accomplishing a double educational goal: to fight against the old practice.<sup>52</sup> by proving its ineffectiveness and to criticize people’s unjust attitudes, in order to improve them.”<sup>53</sup>

If the level of form meets both the requirements of the political language and of the category of people these texts are addressed to, the level of content is to reflect the new institutions (with their attributes, characteristics, and functions) and social hierarchy of the village, as well as the villagers’ attitude towards the “revolutionary gains.” The most important institutions in a collectivized village are the collective farm (*gospodăria agricolă* or *colectiva*) and its incomplete variant, the agricultural association (*întovărășirea*). The analysis of about 300 texts.<sup>54</sup> held by the Archive of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest offers the utopian image of the socialist village which, under the auspices of the new form of authority, is presented as bearing the signs of *renewal*, *changing*, and *beginning*.

The organization of a collective farm entirely transforms the place where it exerts its civilizing influence, making it unrecognizable. It becomes the space of “togetherness” where private property is annulled and turns into common ownership. Thus a person does not work for himself any longer but for the entire community on the joined lands of the collective farm. Thereby, a hygiene and a religion of labour develop: one must work diligently, following the brigade’s plan in an orderly way, or with honour. Even those who lead an ill-regulated life are reintegrated within the community through work and competition.

The reward of one’s labour is measurable in material goods (houses, TV sets, grains, sugar, furniture) or in money which can be earned by all working people. Besides these individual profits, the texts also convey the image of the perfectly organized new village where the institutions reorganized by the “democratic regime” are themselves the community’s gains after joining the collective farm. Thus, the villagers benefit by big, new houses, loudspeakers, radio stations, cinemas, clubs, tractors, etc.

The electrification and the wire-broadcasting are two more elements of collectivization propaganda. Loudspeakers and electric light always appear in texts next to the decision to join the collective farm. In fact, they are the results of this decision.

All the above-mentioned elements in the *folkloric texts on new themes* shape the image of an earthly paradise built at the call of the Communist Party but by the village will (the same discursive strategy as in the officials’ speeches on the need to persuade rather than force the peasants to join the collective farms). All positively evaluated social and professional categories of people (collectivists, members of the Romanian Union of Working Youth, tractor drivers, weavers) work together and sing the *new folkloric songs* on the joined lands. Thus, the texts (performed to traditional dance tunes in order to appeal to the receivers’ folkloric competence

and facilitate the process of assimilation) function as a metatext for the new type of composition which they try to legitimize and impose as the unique folkloric pattern.

Apart from the happiness and prosperity of the working people, possible only within the context of a collectivized village, the analyzed texts also record the social categories negatively evaluated by the official ideology, the enemies of the new social order – the kulaks (*chaiburii, ciocoi, boierii*), who must either adjust themselves to the conditions imposed by the communist authorities or be cleansed from the community. They are the only cloud in the blue sky above the collective farm because they represent the remains of the former social structure which functioned on the principles of private property, thus a threat to the “perfect” system of owning everything in common.

Land tenure was the foundation of the socialist transformation of agriculture, yet the authority and competence of the collective farm was extended further, affecting even the personal life of each individual. It legitimized and institutionalized couples: marriage also took place within the “protective” space of authority, tied to the rhythm of working in the field which was to be the main purpose and only plan of the future family.

Sites of courtship do not go beyond the collective farm area, which thus can be seen either as a concentrated space or as an always expanding place whose borders one can neither reach nor perceive. This closed area also dictates the fulfillment and the rhythm of people’s feelings because these must follow the very rhythm of working in the collective farm. Thus, marital happiness merges into collective happiness within the most important institution of the village.

Gender terminology is borrowed from working-class professional categories: she is a weaver, a front worker in the fields, “the child of the collective farm,” a brigade member or

leader, a deputy or a guide for agricultural work. The male character, the “pride of the collectivity,” is most often captured by the lyrics while working on the “joined lands” on the tractor, plowing or sowing. The industrialization of the regions changes the status of villagers moved to urban areas. This situation also leaves traces in the texts on new themes in the way people address and relate to one another: the man works in a factory, in the pit, is an oil-industry worker or a driller foreman.

The persons lose their individuality, perceived only as a fixed and unchangeable element in the complex social mechanism in which the roles either willingly assumed or imposed upon them replace their actual personality. Thus, people are placed in standardized and unilateral categories.

The texts on new themes create a versified pattern of the utopian land<sup>55</sup> promised by the communist regime. They offer a frozen image of a collectivized country in which everybody is working and singing in the green fields. The happiness of the working people and the beauty of the country were brought by the communist party which is striving for building a “new road” towards a prosperous way of life.

### **Performing contexts and composition mechanisms**

As mentioned before, the purpose of the *new songs* was to legitimize the social structures brought and imposed by the communist regime. They did not spontaneously appeared as an answer to esthetic or ritual needs of the village community. That is why their performing contexts were also ideologically fabricated and were meant to generate, support, and transmit these artifacts. The archive sheets preserve information concerning the occasions on which these compositions were sung, mainly in staged contexts: village clubs, village choirs and ensembles,

propaganda artistic brigades, radio stations, collective farms, festivals and contests, houses of culture.

Apart from the situations and places of performing, the actual process of composition may have two explanations. First is the situation of cultural activists working at Houses of Popular Creation (either regional or the one in Bucharest), who had the task of writing and disseminating them. Using folkloric rhyme and rhythmic schemes, they versified the political message and gathered their lyrics in anthologies and collections (some of them published in musical settings to folkloric melodies, thus used with a totally different text than typically found in their genuine context), which were imposed as a compulsory element for participating in a contest or festival.

Yet there might be a second explanation, which concerns those peasants recorded during fieldwork by the Institute's researchers. The archive sheets also provide personal information about the informants. Many of them mention that they used to be very poor before 1949, then joined the new forms of village authority which, above all, offered them a privileged position: they became workers at the collective farm, weavers, a bookkeeper at the consumers' cooperative society, a barkeeper ("bufetieră la Trustul Alimentar 8"), members of working brigades, etc.

Their declared reasons for creating such texts are part of the ideological discourse: "in order for the peasants to know which thread we all should follow."<sup>56</sup> They were very good versifiers who can produce a text at once. Thus, it happened that some *new songs* were created during the researchers' fieldwork, when the informants were told what the folklorists were after. They also created songs for participating in contests and festivals and for the prestige earned by being played on the radio.

After considering all the elements involved in creating, transmitting, and imposing texts with this type of folkloric pattern, namely their form, content, functions, structure, context of performance, and mechanisms of composition, the *new songs* appear as a laboratory ideological product which served the communist regime in sending its message to the masses. This form of political discourse has not survived outside the contexts especially created for it or after the end of its epoch, yet it achieved a certain degree of folkloric diffusion, carrying with it the concepts conveyed by the Communist Party.

---

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> This syntagm strictly refers to the communist period, referring specifically to those texts created in concordance with the official ideology.

<sup>2</sup> All the data referring to the period of collectivization between 1945 and 1962 (the latter year representing the date when Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej announced that the process of collectivization was completed) are taken from Octavian Roske, „Colectivizarea agriculturii în România, 1949-1962” (“The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania”), in *Arhivele totalitarismului* (The Archives of Totalitarianism), Anul I, Nr. 1/1993, pp. 146-169.

<sup>3</sup> Ana Pauker declared in the newspaper “Universul”, no. 229/2.10.1948, that the victory of socialism in Romania was inconceivable without fulfilling the task of collectivization and Teohari Georgescu praised this process in the same newspaper, no. 260/7.11.1948. (apud, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151).

---

<sup>4</sup> Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări* (Articles and Speeches), Editura pentru literatură politică, București, 1953, p. 231, apud O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151.

<sup>5</sup> This statement was followed in 1951 by a Party memorandum which warned, “any economic or administrative pressure put on the working peasants in order to force them to enter the collective farm will be severely sanctioned” (The Ministry of Justice, *Legislația Gospodăriilor Agricole Colective și a Întovărășirilor Agricole* – The Legislation of Collective Farms and Agricultural Associations, Editura de Stat pentru literatură economică și juridică, Buc., 1956, apud, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 157-158).

<sup>6</sup> Archive of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuses and Petitions in the Romanian Parliament, File no. 6172/1992, p. 2, Bucharest, apud, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 157.

<sup>7</sup> Apud O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 152-167.

<sup>8</sup> Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Dimensiunea politică* (The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania. Political Dimension), vol. I, 1949-1953, p. 33.

<sup>9</sup> *Idem*, p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> *Raportul cu privire la încheierea colectivizării și reorganizarea conducerii agriculturii prezentat la sesiunea extraordinară a Marii Adunări Naționale* (Statement concerning the end of the collectivization and agriculture leadership reorganization process presented at the extraordinary session of the Great National Assembly), in Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări* (Articles and Speeches), 1961-1962, Editura Politică, București, 1962, p. 287.

<sup>11</sup> Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *cited work*, doc. 2, p. 87.

<sup>12</sup> *Idem*, p. 88.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, *cited work*, p. 292.

<sup>16</sup> Romanian National Archives, Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, file no. 6/1954. p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*, file no. 45/1954, p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> Ghită Ionescu, *Communism in Romania, 1944-1962*, Oxford University Press, London, 1964, p. 187-189, apud Dennis Deletant, *Teroarea comunistă în România. Gheorghiu-Dej și statul polițienesc 1948-1965* (*The Communist Terror in Romania. Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State, 1948-1965*), Ed. Polirom, Iași, 2002, p. 106.

<sup>19</sup> O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Levy, *The “Right Deviation” of Ana Pauker*, in “Communist and Post-communist Studies”, vol. 28, no 2, p. 244, apud Dennis Deletant, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>21</sup> D. Deletant, *cited work*, p. 108.

<sup>22</sup> O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 158.

<sup>23</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press New Haven and London, 1990.

<sup>24</sup> *Idem*, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Idem*, p. 52.

<sup>26</sup> *Idem*, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> *Idem*, p. 15.

<sup>28</sup> *Idem*, p. 37-38.

<sup>29</sup> We shall discuss this denominative syntagm later.

<sup>30</sup> Nicoleta Coatu, *Lirica populară cu tematică actuală* (Popular Poetry with Contemporary Themes), Ed. Minerva, București, 1984.

<sup>31</sup> Eugenia Cernea, Vasile D. Nicolescu, Monica Brătulescu, Nicolae Rădulescu, *Cântece și strigături noi* (New Songs and Verses), Ed. Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor din R.S.R., București, 1966 and Eugenia Cernea, Nicoleta Coatu, *Cântecul popular nou* (The New Popular Song), Ed. Muzicală, București, 1986. These are but two of the anthologies that contain the aforementioned syntagm in their title.

<sup>32</sup> C. Bărbulescu, *Creația nouă de cântece populare* (The New Creation of Popular Songs), in *Studii și cercetări de istorie literară și folklor*, Anul I, Nr. 1-4, 1952, p. 193-220.

<sup>33</sup> E. Cernea, N. Coatu, *op. cit.*, p. 15-16.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> C. Bărbulescu, *cit. art.*, p. 193.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 206.

<sup>37</sup> One of the least ideologically permissive genres.

<sup>38</sup> Introducere (Foreword), Eugenia Cernea, Vasile D. Nicolescu, Monica Brătulescu, Nicolae Rădulescu, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Idem*, p. 3.

<sup>40</sup> Vasile D. Nicolescu, "Din materialele premiate la concursul de cântece noi și cântece muncitorești – revoluționare" (Some of the materials awarded at the new song and workers' revolutionary song contest), in *Revista de folclor*, Anul VII, Nr. 1-2, București, 1962, p. 72-93.

<sup>41</sup> E. Cernea, V. D. Nicolescu, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>42</sup> C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, *Dosar nr. 5 / 1958*, p. 84-85.

<sup>43</sup> The information sheets contain data which were only hand written during fieldwork and not recorded on tape.

<sup>44</sup> Cris Shore and Susan Wright, "Policy. A new field of anthropology," in *Anthropology of Policy. Critical perspectives on governance and power*, edited by Cris Shore and Susan Wright, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York, 1997, p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. Vol. I. A history of power from the beginning to A.D. 1760*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 7-8, 22-23, 26-27.

<sup>46</sup> This phrase is literally translated from French *langue de bois* (see Tatiana Slama-Cazacu ed., "The 'wooden language.' A topical problem for psycholinguistics and for modern linguistics", in *IJPL*, 13, no. 2[37] Thematic issue). In English there are also other words for it: *officialese* or *gobbledegook* (Patrick Sériot, *Analyse du discours*

---

*politique soviétique*, Institut d'Études Slaves, Paris, 1985, p. 26, apud Tatiana Slama Cazacu, *Stratageme comunicăionale și manipularea*, Polirom, Iași, 2000, p. 59)

<sup>47</sup> I have used the Romanian translation of the book - Françoise Thom, *Limba de lemn*, Humanitas, București, 2005.

<sup>48</sup> Françoise Thom, cited work, p. 34.

<sup>49</sup> For the analysis of totalitarian discourse in Romania, Cristiana-Nicola Teodorescu's *Patologia limbajului comunist totalitar*, Editura Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 2000, is very useful.

<sup>50</sup> Florin Georgescu, „Folclorul și mișcarea artistică de amatori” (Folklore and Amateurs's Artistic Groups), in *Revista de Folclor*, an IV, nr. 1-2, 1959, pp. 97-113.

<sup>51</sup> A ritual performed by children and meant to bring the rain during summer periods of drought.

<sup>52</sup> That is, the performance of and the belief in charms.

<sup>53</sup> Florin Georgescu, article cited, p. 108.

<sup>54</sup> These texts were recorded during 1954 and 1962 during fieldwork or in the Institutes' studio.

<sup>55</sup> “One can define utopia as an image of a future and better world, which is: felt as still unfulfilled and requiring an additional effort to be brought about; perceived as desirable, as a world not so much bound to come as one which should come; critical of the existing society; in fact a system of ideas remains utopian and thus able to boost human activity only in so far as it is perceived as representing a system essentially different from, if not antithetical to, the existing one; involving a measure of hazard; for an image of the future to possess the qualities of utopia, it must be ascertained that it will not come to pass unless fostered by a deliberate collective action.” Zygmunt Bauman, *Socialism: the active utopia*, Holmes and Meier Publishers, New York, 1976, p. 17.

<sup>56</sup> Informant's sheet no. 12 221.

## References

BĂRBULESCU, C., „Creația nouă de cântece populare” (The New Creation of popular Songs), in *Studii și cercetări de istorie literară și folklor* (Studies and Researches on Literary History and Folklore), Anul I, Nr. 1-4, 1952, pp. 193-220.

BAUMAN, Z., *Socialism: the active utopia*, Holmes and Meier Publishers, New York, 1976.

BUZATU, GH., CHIRIȚOIU, M., *Agresiunea comunismului în România (The Aggression of Communism in Romania)*, vol. 1,2, Paideia, 1998.

CĂTĂNUȘ, D., ROSKE, O., *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Dimensiunea politică* (The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania. Political Dimension), vol. I, 1949-1953, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, București, 2000.

CERNEA, E., COATU, N., *Cântecul popular nou* (The New Popular Song), Editura Muzicală, București, 1986.

CERNEA, E., NICOLESCU, V. D., BRĂTULESCU, M., RĂDULESCU, N., *Cântece și strigături noi* (New Songs and Verses), Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor din R.S.R., București, 1966.

COATU, N., *Lirica populară cu tematică actuală* (Popular Poetry on Contemporary Themes), Editura Minerva, București, 1984.

DELETANT, D., *Teroarea comunistă în România. Gheorghiu-Dej și statul polițienesc 1948-1965* (The Communist Terror in Romania. Gheorghiu-Dej and the Police State, 1948-1965), Editura Polirom, Iași, 2002

GEORGESCU, F., „Folclorul și mișcarea artistică de amatori” („Folklore and the artistic amateur movement”), in *Revista de Folclor*, an IV, nr. 1-2, 1959, pp. 97-113.

GHEORGHIU-DEJ, GHE., *Articole și cuvântări* (Articles and Speeches), 1961-1962, Editura Politică, București, 1962.

IONESCU, G., *Communism in Romania, 1944-1962*, Oxford University Press, London, 1964.

LEVY, R., “The ‘Right Deviation’ of Ana Pauker”, in *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, vol. 28, no 2.

MANN, M., *The Sources of Social Power. Vol. I. A history of power from the beginning to A.D. 1760*, Cambridge University Press, 1988.

NICOLA-TEODORESCU, C., *Patologia limbajului comunist totalitar* (The pathology of totalitarian communist language), Editura Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 2000.

NICOLESCU, V. D., „Din materialele premiate la concursul de cântece noi și cântece muncitorești – revoluționare” (Some of the materials awarded at the new songs and workers’ revolutionary songs contest), in *Revista de folclor*, Anul VII, Nr. 1-2, București, 1962.

ROSKE, O., “Colectivizarea agriculturii în România, 1949-1962” (The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania), in *Arhivele totalitarismului*, Anul I, Nr. 1/1993, pp. 146-169.

SCOTT, J. C., *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press New Haven and London, 1990.

SÉRIOT, P., *Analyse du discours politique soviétique*, Institut d’Études Slaves, Paris, 1985.

SHORE, C. and WRIGHT, S. (eds.), *Anthropology of Policy. Critical perspectives on governance and power*, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York, 1997.

SLAMA-CAZACU, T., *Stratageme comunicaționale și manipularea*, Polirom, Iași, 2000.

THOM, F., *Limba de lemn*, Humanitas, București, 2005.

For writing this paper I have also used the information provided by several interviews conducted with former researchers of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore (Lucilia Georgescu, Helga Stein, Ghizela Sulițeanu, ing. Ion Georgescu).