

# New Europe College Yearbook 2005-2006



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# THE USE OF FOLK COMPOSITIONS IN CONVEYING IDEOLOGICAL MESSAGES: THE COLLECTIVIZATION PROCESS\*

## 1. Introduction

Folk compositions are influenced by the context in which they are generated, 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. Furthermore, each folk performance, particularly of a folk literary composition, is related to the broad context of folk culture, which is seen in the light of a specific historical period, with its distinctive social and economic aspects. In this study, I examine folk compositions produced in the early years of the Communist regime in Romania. This is the period when collective farms (*Gospodării Agricole de Producție*) were introduced. I focus on the ensuing process of forced collectivization and scrutinize the mechanisms used by the Communist power to shape the folk creation process and ensure the production of “folk compositions on contemporary themes.”<sup>1</sup> Expected to propagate official ideology, such compositions are predicated on a process of selection and fragmentation of the social and historical context in which they emerged. Against this background, I trace the way in which the social realities of the time are re-evaluated and signified by the text.

Yet, it is important to mention that beside this type of texts 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 creation process within the rural community) were also collected, archived and studied during the period this paper is focused on.

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\* The author was a Britannia-NEC Fellow for the academic year of 2005-2006.

## 2. The official discourse on collectivization

After private agricultural property had been placed under government control in 1945, the delivery of agricultural equipment (the Stipulation of the Ministry of Agriculture and of Landed Property, no. 825, in OG 91/19.04.1945<sup>2</sup>) and the grain share (the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 2339, in OG 161/19.07.1945) to town councils became compulsory. The same year marks the foundation of the Supreme Council of the National Economy, with Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej as its president (OG 271/26.10.1945, OG 272/27.11.1945). However, three years later, in 1948, when the other two prominent members of the Party leadership<sup>3</sup> endorsed collectivization, Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej warned that “with no reason and under no circumstances the peasants should be forced to join the collective farms.”<sup>4</sup> On the one hand, this statement<sup>5</sup> was meant, to withstand potential criticism concerning the abuses that took place in the villages; on the other hand, it was intended to cover up the actual situation. Numerous incidents, even peasant uprisings flared up in several counties: Botoșani,<sup>6</sup> Bihor, Rădăuți, Suceava (1949), Ialomița, Vlașca, Ilfov, Giurgiu (in the case of the uprising in the village Căminesca, the local Party activists requested four lorries with soldiers to control the revolt; the soldiers fired at the peasants, who had been summoned to meet; the casualties were one dead man and several wounded people),<sup>7</sup> Gorj (1950), Galați, Tulcea, Mureș, Gorj, Brașov (1958), Bacău, Dolj, Galați, Mehedinți, Olt, Cluj (1959), Dâmbovița (1962).<sup>8</sup>

On March 2, 1949 the government issued Decree no. 83, which eradicated any remains of land ownership. Until 1949, these remains were still licit by virtue of the Petru Groza government (set up on March 6, 1945) article of law concerning the agrarian reform (art. no. 187, OG 68/23.03.1945). This time, however, not only was the land expropriated but so were the livestock, the buildings, the agricultural equipment and products, the claims, titles, and shares of the landowners’ “exploitation activity” (art. 2) Opposition to the confiscation of any goods or their hiding entailed a punishment of 5–15 years of hard labor and property confiscation (art. 4).<sup>9</sup> This decree was followed by the Central Committee’s Plenary meeting of March 3–5, 1949, which inaugurates the beginning of the collectivization campaign. One month later, on April 30, the government issued Decree no. 183, which was designed to regulate the punitive system in order to ensure the progress of the “socialist transformation of agriculture.” As a result, “hiding, destroying or altering

products or goods" carried a penalty of 5 to 15 years of hard labor and a fine of 50,000-200,000 lei (art. 4, letter d). The penalty for failure to fulfill the State plan was 1 to 12 years of severe imprisonment and a fine of 10,000-100,000 lei (art. 2, letter a).<sup>10</sup> This political process, which had serious social consequences, was deemed final on April 27, 1962, when Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej made the following announcement 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 Romanian Popular Republic socialism is 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 set by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the Romanian Workers' Party in the domain of the socialist transformation of agriculture has been achieved almost four years ahead of schedule (Powerful applause.)"<sup>11</sup>

Both at the beginning and at the end of the collectivization process, the structure and rhetorical devices used in official discourse, were focused on the need to "to intensify the class struggle in the villages" and eliminate the "capitalist element" – the kulak (*kulak* was the Russian term often used in Romania, and referred to the rich peasant; the Romanian terms are *chiabur, ciocoi, boier*) – from the life of the village. Or, in other words, "to intensify the class struggle in the villages". The vocabulary chosen to illustrate this perspective is preeminently militaristic.. The shorthand report of the Central Committee's plenary of March 3–5, 1949 shows Dej's preference for warlike oratory: the scrupulous achievement of the tasks dictated by the Party leads to "the victory in the war waged by our Party for the socialist transformation of the agriculture"<sup>12</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, risks his life to defend his property because he's got the sense of property in his blood."<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the kulaks "have been fighting day by day, using all means to win over middle and even the poor peasants, and form alliances with them."<sup>14</sup> That is why, "the kulaks are a very powerful enemy, an enemy hidden in a forest of 12 million people,

and it is this enemy that our Plenary session intends to liquidate.”<sup>15</sup> The secretary general of the Communist Party describes the end of the collectivization process in the same terms: “*Within an extremely short time from a historic perspective, the working class, under the guidance of the Party and in alliance with the peasantry, defeated and removed from power the exploiting classes, conquered all the power, nationalized the main means of production, and proceeded to the building of the socialist society.* (Applauses).”<sup>16</sup>

An examination of the documents in the Romanian National Archives, especially those that belong to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party fund, allows us to deconstruct the mechanisms the Party used to impose an organizational system that suited its own ideological needs and not the needs of the rural social and economic reality of rural life. The critical analysis of the decrees, shorthand transcripts of the Politbureau meetings, and decisions and articles of law elaborated especially during the 50’s is the starting point of this study. My goal is to discuss the official discursive strategies used by the Party to achieve forced collectivization.

A recurrent discursive strategy in the Party’s ideological arsenal was to state that persuasion was the only method for achieving collectivization. During the meeting on January 19, 1954, Alexandru Moghioroș, the minister of agriculture, pointed out: “We need to work in such a way as to make sure that everybody join the agricultural association, and I don’t want to believe that we are not able to persuade the peasants to do so. If this happens, those who do not join will have their land in the pocket and not a specific area.”<sup>17</sup> The phrase *with the land in the pocket* refers to the property ownership document that, under the conditions of collectivization, no longer represented a warrant of individual or family right to the land.

Persuasion was used in almost all conclusive contexts of the Politbureau meetings with minimal variation in wording. This strategy was aimed at reaching all categories of people: young people (belonging to UTM - the Association of the Young Working People), women (belonging to the Communist organization), soldiers, elementary school teachers, and so forth. The method of transmitting the ideological message – “mouth-to-mouth propaganda”<sup>18</sup> – followed the folk model. In order to achieve their goals, the Communist authorities availed themselves of the best propagandists, who could use the same transmission code as the addressees.

The application of the persuasive method entailed both rewards for the foremost people in agriculture and sanctions against the “reactionaries.” The political discourse also targeted the opponents of this process along with the ways in which their reactions could be controlled and thwarted. A new classification of people living in the Romanian villages was thus created. According to the Party’s resolution of March 3–5, 1949, five categories of people worked in the agricultural sector. The first was represented by the agricultural proletariat, that is, by the peasants who had no land and by those who worked for the rich (*kulaks*, *chiaburi*). The second category consisted of poor peasants who had no more than 5 ha of land, representing more than 57% of the entire land that was 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 5–20 ha (i.e., 34% of the arable land) and would form the nucleus of the future collective farmers. The fourth category consisted of the rich peasants – the *chiaburi*. In this case, the classification criterion was based on their ability to hire labor force or agricultural equipment rather than on land ownership. The remaining class, the landowners, whose properties had been divided and given to the peasants during the 1945 reform, represented the fifth category.<sup>19</sup> Decree no. 83/2.03.1949 dealt with the remains of landowners’ holdings after the 1945 agrarian reform. Opposition to, confiscation and concealment of possessions carried a penalty of 5–15 years of hard labor and the seizure of any goods (article no 4).<sup>20</sup> In the summer of 1950, the Party leaders ordered the Agrarian Section take action against the “guilty” landowners and seize their holdings.<sup>21</sup> Some local authorities even bypassed the rule of law. They summarily confiscated the landowners’ holdings and sent them and their families to the Black Sea – Danube Canal without any trial.<sup>22</sup> These actions betray the Communist regime’s intent to segregate social classes and project negative connotations on rich peasants and landowners. Other social categories targeted by the regime included 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>23</sup>

The social reality of forced collectivization caused not only economic and social changes in the Romanian village but also changes in the mentality of the population in almost all rural areas of the country. The

social hierarchy was inverted, the human relations – modified / depreciated; the individuals representing the local authorities and the eligibility criteria for nominations in official positions were changed too. Indeed, all communitarian values were reconsidered from an ideological angle.

In order to impose the new system of agricultural organization, the Communist regime used three main methods: first, the direct interaction between villagers and political propagandists; second, the use of mass media (newspapers, which were collectively read at the village club, political programs broadcasted through loudspeakers, etc.); and third, the creation and transmission of a new kind of composition – “the new folk song.” This new literary genre embodied a fictional reality that offered the only structural and thematic model that was deemed ideologically acceptable in contemporary folklore.

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

The above-cited documents belong to and also shape the discourse that builds and imposes the vocabulary and rhetoric of the Communist regime. In James C. Scott’s terms, such documents belong to and create 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>24</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>25</sup> A public transcript 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>26</sup> Yet, the two groups – those who dominate and the subordinates – could not use the same code both for transcribing reality and for relating to it. Both the dominant group and the subordinates use a discourse that takes place “offstage” and consists of speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcript. This kind of discourse is called by James C. Scott “*hidden transcript*”.<sup>27</sup>

It is important to emphasize that the *hidden transcripts* of the two groups 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>28</sup> If 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>29</sup>

Against this background, the above-mentioned official documents can be subsumed to the *public transcript* of the dominant group. In the following section, I discuss folk compositions on new themes, which I consider to be expressions of the official version of the subordinates. These texts cover all ideological themes and motifs used in the official discourse of the Communist regime. In fact, they can be seen as metatexts that reshape and alter reality to offer a fabricated image of life, attuned to the demands of official ideology.

*The new folk song*<sup>30</sup> focuses on a specific aspect of socialist society, namely, on the process of collectivization. But the meaning and the value of the agricultural transformations found in these texts are totally different from the actual ones. The official versified structures embody the image of collectivization as promoted by the official Party policy. They do not mention the deportations of those peasants who did not want to join the collective farms, the peasants’ rebellions, or the police and Securitate’s abuses. The *new* literary compositions gathered in anthologies represent the official folk creation, which emerged in response to political command. This literature took the form of contests (whose purpose was the creation, collection, and performance of folk compositions) or of imposed performances, officially organized by village propaganda brigades. These new forms of poetic manifestation were not the result of a natural creation process within the rural community. They had a propagandistic purpose, representing a way of legitimizing the Communist leadership by constructing a fictitious reality. These creations did not appear spontaneously but as a result of the political command. The fact that the new folk compositions were performed only in a fabricated context – on stage – is also significant. Staging created opportunities for the emergence of a new category of performers – the artistic brigade members. Another explanation for the use of the images representing “the realities in the socialist society” may be the ideological “bombardment” dispatched by the official newspapers, radio broadcasts, and political agitation. All these means of mass propaganda promoted the

“achievements” of the Communist Party and the folk songs that were awarded prizes at the contests organized by the Creators’ houses. The language used in the new folk lyrics was adapted to the information conveyed by official propaganda and its intended purpose. Thus, a linguistic, thematic, and cognitive model was imposed, which may clarify to a certain extent the nature of some of the new folk creations.

These creations are generally referred to as *folk lyrical poetry on contemporary themes*,<sup>31</sup> *new folk songs*,<sup>32</sup> or *new creation of folk songs*.<sup>33</sup> In her introductory study *Cântecul popular nou*<sup>34</sup> (*The New Folk Song*), Eugenia Cernea does not object to the denominative syntagm but to its meaning: “The term *new folk song* (author’s emphasis) meant, in fact, the folk creator’s musical and literary product, which directly or implicitly approaches the life of the working classes in the spirit of the new mentality. But the term is conventional. We also adopted it because it had remained in force with the above-mentioned meaning since it was launched in our folklore studies three decades before. Taken ad litteram, the term is self-contradictory. As a product of a collective creation process that unfolds in time and space, the folk song cannot represent, in any shape or form, a totally new product (...) A creation whose component elements are totally new (i.e., absent in traditional folklore) cannot be considered a folk creation. Thus, a song cannot be both folk and new in the same time. The qualifier *new* (...) refers to the themes inspired by the new socialist reality in Romania. The creation of new folk forms involved partial innovations in the structure and developmental directions of folk language. Thus, the term *folk song should be understood as a song based on the folk tradition, in which the contemporary folk creator participates in order to express his attachment to the socialist country through the use of verse lines and tunes* (author’s emphasis).”<sup>35</sup>

In addition to a detached description of the purely formal attributes of the folk song, this definition includes a subjective (even emotional element) – ‘the attachment to the socialist country.’ This element is an essential ingredient of this type of folk creation.

Most studies written on this subject during the Communist period, put forward the notion that folk poetic compositions should reflect the socialist reality. In C. Bărbulescu’s article “The New Creation of Folk Songs,” the artistic creation of the “working masses” is deemed to be “a significant product of our epoch, which vividly reflects the new socialist reality” and “an active agent that contributes to the development of our society.”<sup>36</sup> Thanks to these studies, an adjacent literature develops that prescribes

the rules for creating new folk compositions. By the same token, this literature establishes the researchers' tasks for developing the phenomenon of new folk lyrical poetry. In the above-mentioned article the folklorists' tasks are clearly stated: to examine in depth the process of folk creation; to establish the laws of its development; to provide new elements of "artistic craftsmanship" closer in spirit to the socialist realism laid down for writers, artists, and composers; to guide amateur groups, folk orchestras, and song and dance ensembles; and to publish folk compositions.<sup>37</sup>

One can say that in a dictatorial regime, a relationship exists between two sides of life: The first is represented by the concrete reality – the objective social and historical conditions of life – which can be studied from archival documents, legislative materials of the time, or personal memoirs. The second side is represented by the official position of the power apparatus, whose ideological discourse filters each segment of reality through its own system of values. The result is not a distorted image but one in which the signifier acquires the opposite sign. Thus, the *public transcript* of the dominant group turns into a fictitious metatext, whose role is to break down the coherence of the former element. The new folk song becomes an instrument of ideological manipulation and deceit by disseminating , the concepts and mechanisms of Communist ideology to the masses. In this light, the folk composition could be seen as the *public transcript* of the subordinates. The same role is accomplished by the propaganda brigades, the mass media, or authored literature and music. In their turn, all these creative manifestations are expected, to portray the achievements of Socialism.

The studies written during the Communist period on this subject can also be seen as fictitious metatexts. Not only do they promote these versified structures discussed above as a model of folk creation; they also recommend them as sources of documentary evidence on the "objective" reality of life. Moreover, these studies offer (ideologically motivated) reasons for sidestepping certain aspects of traditional culture, which were relegated to the passive folk repertoire. This was the case, for instance, of rituals. Since they involve religious behavior, they were considered obsolete and retrograde.

"Because the gnoseological and social bases that generated folk genres such as the charms,<sup>38</sup> no longer exist, these folk forms seem obsolete to the contemporary mentality and were abandoned; others, which flourished during the feudal and precapitalist period, such as the *doina* (an elegiac

folk song) and the ballad, suffer a rapid process of involution, losing their former role and meaning. Other folk forms, namely, the song and the dance, moved instead to the forefront, acquiring new features. At the same time, forms of expression only accidentally found in traditional folklore, such as the unsung poem, became widespread, and were now recited by the brigade or written as propaganda material."<sup>39</sup>

The new folk compositions were included in the research plan of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore, in Bucharest, in 1949. The first materials were collected 1949 and 1950 in Bucharest, and the informants were fiddlers and vocalists in the folk music band "Taraful Gorjului." In 1951 the researchers collected materials in Batrâni, a village near Ploiești<sup>40</sup> and in Ieud, Maramureș.<sup>41</sup> An important stage in the creation and transmission of the new folk lyrical poetry was marked by the national contest organized by the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore and by the Central House of Folk Creation, in 1960. The theme of the contest was *The Collection of the New Folk Songs and of the 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 August 23, 1944).<sup>42</sup> Some of the pieces sent for the contest were published in *Revista de folclor (The Folklore Review)*.<sup>43</sup> After selecting the literary and musical creations, the Institute's researchers agreed upon the representative centers for this segment of folk compositions: Rupea, Sighet, Lăpuș, Găești, Costești, Drăgășani, Mediaș, Urziceni and Craiova – towns and villages where the folklorists did their fieldwork to record the pieces for the contest.

The new folk compositions were collected in anthologies and classified according to the following criteria: thematic, the regional, or alphabetical (by the first line). From a thematic perspective, two new levels can be observed in the new folk compositions: a surface level and a deep level. The surface level consists of officially prescribed themes for folk creation and collection contests. On this level, the themes are general and coexist within the same piece: the (Communist) Party, the Republic, the antifascist struggle, the socialist transformations in agriculture. These themes include subthemes that attempt to cover all the segments of a collectivized village – the collective farms, the mechanization in agriculture, the electrification of villages, etc.), life in the new village, the feeling of satisfaction following the abolition of the exploiting classes (the class struggle), working in factories and on the building sites, etc.

On the deep level, folk creation has two basic aims: on the one hand, to shape the profile of the “new person,” and, on the other hand, to stabilize the “just” social structure – the class structure – according to Communist ideology. A typical image of the “new person” is 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 kissing because she has to harvest with the brigade, etc.) and new appellatives (she is the tractor driver, a brigade member, etc.). The very criterion of choosing romantic partners is thus modified, as suggested by the following lines:

“Green leaf of a peony, / My beauty on the tractor, / Don’t make me suffer!  
/ 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 of your love. / - I will not eat until tomorrow, / It 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 will surely find another one like you,, / Even a nicer and a  
foremost one, / 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>44</sup>

The use of standardized subjects in folk poems on new themes conveys the notion that all folk creators think alike and write according to a pre-established model.

This *public transcript* fostered an enhanced version of reality and constructed a frozen model of people’s mentality. Behind this transcript, however, another reality was unfolding – the tragedy of collectivization, which was mirrored by the *hidden transcripts* of both groups. The funds of the National Archives in Bucharest include reports that detail the actual state of things during the collectivization process. These reports provide information on the use of force as the main method of “persuading” peasants to join collective farms: “[...] arrested, beaten, tortured, threatened 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. The reports speak about peasants’ uprising as well and reveal the methods used by the peasants to avoid yielding their

shares. For example, they would hide the products in the ground, share the crops with the poor peasants, bribe some of the collectors for being asked a smaller share, soak the grains to weigh more, harvest during the night, etc.

On January 29, 1958, the prime secretary of the Darabani region, E.Tzurcanu, signed a report on the violations committed during the socialist transformation of agriculture in his district. Quoted below is a passage from this report:

“Despite the directives given by the regional office, the office of the Party District Committee in some villages replaced the work of the local agitators’ group with the limited activity of some groups of 3-4 employees, who summoned the people at the People’s Council, and when they failed to persuade the working peasants to join the agricultural association, they sometimes used methods of intimidation and even resorted to abuse. Thus, in the Miorcani village, although on November 18, 1957 there were only 5 requests of 1.14 ha on an area of about 200 ha, 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 200-300 people, who owned lands on this field and who hadn’t even been asked whether 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 people’s village council ignored the peasants’ discontent and went further, ordering another part of the field to be furrowed and the two women to be convicted.”<sup>45</sup>

To apply Scott’s terminology, this document discloses a part of the *hidden transcript* of the dominant group, namely, the actions of the officials empowered to carry out the forced collectivization. These actions were presented as isolated rather than typical cases and appeared in documents of limited circulation.

On the other hand, the *hidden transcript* of the peasants who experience the process of socialist transformation of agriculture is more difficult to reconstruct because of the scarcity of texts documenting opposition to the regime. Although such texts could hardly be collected during that period, a few examples have still been preserved in the Archive of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest. 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.” This is a parodic text that reflects the real social image of village political officials, mentioning and explaining their nicknames.<sup>46</sup>

The researcher’s informant, Stefan Bornar, points out that this poem’s author was Vlad Dare, son of Simion. Vlad had been imprisoned one year before because a police officer found the text in his money belt. He was sentenced to 6 years of hard labor at the Black Sea – Danube Canal. After 1989, another Institute researcher, Dr. Cornelia Călin Bodea, discovered a photocopy of Vlad Darie’s handwritten lyrical compositions in a notebook. In fact, these lyrics are personal narratives distinguished by the presence of rhyme and meter but the absence of verse lines. These texts are an account of the author’s humiliating and excruciatingly painful experiences<sup>47</sup> from the moment of his arrest and transportation to the Black Sea-Danube Canal to his incarceration in the Communist prisons at Sighet and Poarta Albă. The last compositions in this notebook are three poems about the 1989 Revolution.

Also preserved in the Institute’s folklore archive are two more compositions that prove the existence of versified expressions of the peasants’ revolt against the Communist regime. These compositions were collected during research fieldwork. I am referring here to two information sheets:<sup>48</sup> no. 24376 and 24 103. 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 you, my barn / I have exchanged you for a piece of steak / Damn you my wealth / I have exchanged you for a bottle of beer.”<sup>49</sup>

The researcher’s comments on this stanza emphasize several noteworthy aspects. Firstly, that its theme recurrently appears during the researcher’s “private” conversation with the informant. Secondly, that this stanza was “jokingly” recited and does not represent a social reality but 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 indicate that samples of this kind of folk composition were collected for scientific reasons. Accordingly, he not only justifies his interest in this kind of folk composition; he also offers an “official” explanation for

studying it and by provides an ideologically “clean” context for collecting samples.

The latter information sheet preserves a lyrical text that betrays lack of trust in the collective ownership of land. It is a song in which a daughter begs her mother not to marry her to a rich but undesirable man. Neither does the girl love the man, nor is she interested in his land because the collective farm will take the land away anyway, and she will be left with an unwanted husband.<sup>50</sup>

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

When the Communist regime took control over the political, social, and cultural areas of life, it reshaped the concepts and the symbolic universe through which the leading elite justified its existence and organized all its actions and institutions. The emblematic signs, forms, and discursive structures built by the political power were meant to integrate all the social elements into its own frame of ideological purpose and meaning. This symbolic power system was used not only to impose the Communist social conditions but also to “influence people’s indigenous norms of conduct so that they themselves contribute, albeit not necessarily in a conscious way, to a government’s model of social order.”<sup>51</sup>

The significations of the already existing social structures were changed to perfectly fit the ideological system of meaning. In this manner, the Communist regime forcibly imposed its networks of power and projected a negative connotation on the previous axiological grid. The values informing it were considered retrograde and incompatible with the regime’s requirements for social reconstruction.

The concept of *power* used in this study is based on Michael Mann’s typology of power.<sup>52</sup> All types of power defined and discussed by Mann can be identified within the Romanian Communist society after 1947: *extensive power* (“the ability to organize large numbers of people over far-flung territories in order to engage in minimally stable cooperation”); *intensive power* (“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* (“willed by groups and institutions” and comprising “definite commands and conscious obedience”); *diffused power* (power that “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* (power that "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").

The focus of this study is *ideological power*. In this respect, the Communist regime can be said to have monopolized and controlled three important elements mentioned above: meaning, norms, and aesthetic/ritual practices. The folk composition became a channel for conveying the "proper" meanings, i.e., the political message that distorts actual events to support a propagandistic goal. This newly achieved purpose of the folk composition altered its very significance and structure.

The folk discourse was not only meant to "reflect the new social reality" but also to establish the social norms of conduct that regulated the relations among villagers in the context of "the socialist transformation of agriculture," namely the imposition of the collective farms (Cooperativele Agricole de Producție). The intrusion of ideology in the world of folk poetry modifies both its language and its content. As mentioned earlier, a new category of texts is now created for this purpose – *folk texts on new themes*. The form in which the political message was shaped and transmitted to the masses bore, on the one hand, the characteristics of "the wooden language"<sup>53</sup> but on the other, it was adapted to the intended recipients through the use of traditional themes, motifs, and structures.

The issue of "wooden language" was comprehensively approached by Francoise Thom in her study *Langue de bois*.<sup>54</sup> In her *Introduction*, the author discusses the origin and the evolution of this phrase and its uses: it comes from the Russian expression *dubovii iazik* (literally, *oak tongue*) and, before the Communists came to power, was used to designate the heavy style of the czarist bureaucracy. In the 1920s, this way of writing was spread by the newspapers and was often ridiculed. The writer Mikhail Zoshchenko labeled it "monkey tongue." During the same period, a "frozen language" emerges in Poland, but the first who understood that the "wooden language" is not just a ridiculous yet harmless form of form of political discourse but a metamorphosis of the language caused by its contact with ideology was George Orwell. It was him who revealed the actual role played by "wooden language" (Orwell's "Newspeak") in a

totalitarian state. After considering the stages in the evolution of the term, Françoise Thom concludes that the wooden language has only one function: to be a vehicle for ideology.<sup>55</sup>

Among the Romanian studies<sup>56</sup> dedicated to this topic, Tatiana Slama-Cazacu's deserves special mention. Her study relates the ideologized form of the language to the socio-political contexts that generate it, to the mechanisms used for imposing it to the masses, and to the intended effects.<sup>57</sup>

Considering these approaches to the structure, functions, and contexts in which the "wooden language" appears, the use of these discursive formulae in the *folk texts on new themes* shapes a certain horizon of linguistic expectations and a specific architectural pattern. Fixed, rigid structures are inserted in the texts next to traditional folk expressions, themes, and motifs, which are supposed to create the imagistic and linguistic frame familiar to the peasant population. Thus, verbal and conceptual folk elements appear in the *new folk texts* with different meanings and functions than in their genuine context. Two such examples can be found in an article published in *Revista de Folclor* in 1959.<sup>58</sup>

The first concerns the amateur artistic brigade in Fetești. The brigade paraphrased a text recited during the ritual of *paparude*<sup>59</sup> and performed it in its characteristic tune. However, the versified structure was distorted in order to convey a satiric message meant to ridicule "certain shortcomings or remnants of the past in people's conscience. Thus, the content and the meaning of this custom have been changed: its ritual character and magic function have totally disappeared; the old custom has been transformed into a show with an important educational function."

The second example concerns the brigade in Brănești. This brigade "satirized the indolence of some cultural work organs (that did not find a conductor for the choir of the village club<sup>60</sup>), using for this purpose the paraphrased text of a charm 'against snakes'; thus, they reached a dual educational goal: to fight against an old practice<sup>61</sup> by proving its ineffectiveness and to criticize people's incorrect attitudes in order to improve them."<sup>62</sup>

If the formal level met the requirements of both the political language and of the category of addressees, the content level was expected to reflect the new institutions (with their attributes, characteristics, and functions), the social village hierarchy, as well as the villagers' attitude towards the "revolutionary gains." The most important institution in a collectivized village was the collective farm (*gospodăria agricolă*

*colectivă*), with its imperfect variant, the agricultural association (*întovărășirea*).<sup>63</sup> The analysis of about 300 texts<sup>64</sup> stored in the Archive of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest offers a utopian image of the socialist village. Under the auspices of the new political leadership, this image bore the signs of *renewal*, *change*, and *new beginnings*.

The organization of a collective farm entirely transforms the place where it exerts its civilizing influence, making it unrecognizable.<sup>65</sup> It becomes the space of “togetherness,” where private property is eliminated to be replaced by collective ownership. One no longer works for oneself but for the entire community, on the joined lands of the collective farm. A religion of labor is, thereby, developed:<sup>66</sup> one must work diligently (“*cu hărnicie*”), in an organized way and following the brigade’s plan (“*planificat, în brigăzi organizat*” – mgt. 627i), or in a humane way (“*cu omenie / La noi în gospodărie*” – mgt. 1701gg). Even those who lead an ill-advised life style are reintegrated within the community through work and competition.<sup>67</sup>

The reward of one’s labor is measured in material goods (houses, TV sets, grains, sugar, furniture) or in money, which can be earned by the collective work of the people.<sup>68</sup> Besides listing examples of newly acquired goods, 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. Thus, the villagers benefit from acquiring big, new houses, loudspeakers, radio stations, cinemas, clubs, tractors, etc.<sup>69</sup>

Electrification and wire broadcasting are two more elements of the collectivization propaganda. References to loudspeakers and the electric light are always present whenever the decision to join the collective farm is mentioned. In fact, they are the results of this decision.<sup>70</sup>

All these elements impress the *folk compositions on new themes* with the image of an earthly paradise, built by villagers who have freely accepted the call of the Party. (The discursive strategy used here is identical with the one used in official speeches: The emphasis is on the need to persuade rather than force the peasants to join the collective farms). All positively connoted social and professional categories of people (collective farm members, members of the Romanian Union of Working Youth, tractor drivers, weavers) work together and sing the *new folk songs*<sup>71</sup> on the joined lands. Thus, these texts function as a metatext for the new type of creation, which they try to legitimize and impose as the unique

folk pattern. The performers use traditional dance tunes<sup>72</sup> in order to appeal to the receivers' familiarity with the folk tradition and facilitate the process of assimilation.

Apart from the happiness and prosperity enjoyed by the working people, a happiness and prosperity possible only within the context of a collectivized village, the analyzed texts also record the social categories that were negatively connoted by the official ideology. Singled out were the enemies of the new social order, the kulaks – who were either expected to adjust themselves to the conditions imposed by the Communist authorities or risked to be excluded from the community.<sup>73</sup> They were the only cloud in the blue sky above the collective farm because they represented the remains of the former, property-based social structure and, therefore, they were seen as a threat to the “perfect” system of collective ownership.

Collective ownership of the land is the foundation of the socialist transformation of agriculture. Nevertheless, the authority and control of the collective farm extends farther, affecting the personal life of each individual. It legitimizes and institutionalizes matrimonial relationships (e.g., the marriage ceremony takes place within the “protective” space of the its authority)<sup>74</sup> and relates them to the rhythm of working in the field, which is the only purpose of the future family.<sup>75</sup> Dating locations do not extend beyond the collective farm area, which can be seen either as an enclosure or as an indefinitely expanding, boundless space.<sup>76</sup> This space also dictates the fulfillment of people's feelings and harmonizes their rhythms to the very rhythm of work in the collective farm.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, marital happiness merges into collective happiness within the most important institution of the village.<sup>78</sup> Gender-specific terminology is mainly borrowed from working class professions: she is a weaver (“lucrătoare, țesătoare / Pentru clasa muncitoare”), a front worker in the fields (“fruntașă pe ogoare”), “the child of the collective farm” (“copila gospodăriei”), a brigade member or leader, a deputy or a guide for agricultural work (“îndrumătoare”). The male character is the “pride of the collective” (“fala colectivului”) and is most often depicted while working on the “joined lands”, driving a tractor, plowing, or sowing. The country's industrialization forced many villagers to migrate to the cities, converting them to urban dwellers. As a result, urban themes and images make their way into the world of folk poetry: the man works in a factory (“la Onești, la combinat”), in a pit, is an oil-industry worker, or a foremost driller.

People lose their individuality. They are now perceived only as fixed and unchangeable elements in the complex social mechanism. The roles they play, either willingly or unwillingly, replace their actual personalities<sup>79</sup> and turn them into tokens of standardized and unilateral categories.<sup>80</sup>

The texts on new themes create a versified pattern of the utopian land<sup>81</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.<sup>82</sup>

The happiness of the working people and the beauty of the country are brought about by the Communist Party, as it is striving to build a “new road” towards a prosperous way of life.<sup>83</sup>

## 5. Performing contexts and creation mechanisms

As mentioned before, the purpose of the *new songs* was to legitimize the social structures introduced and imposed by the Communist regime. They did not spontaneously appear in answer to esthetic or ritual needs of the village community. That is why their performing contexts were also ideologically fabricated to generate, support, and transmit these artifacts. Archival materials indicate that the stage – in village clubs, collective farm, radio stations, houses of culture – was the favored environment in which these creations took shape. The stage also accommodated suitable folk genres: village choirs and ensembles, propaganda artistic brigades, collective farm, festivals, and contests.

The genesis of the *new folk creation* can further be explained in at least two other ways: First, this process became possible thanks to cultural activists who worked at Houses of Popular Creation (either regional or the one in Bucharest) and whose task was to write, collect, and disseminate folk lyrics. Using folk rhyme and metrical patterns, the activists versified the official political message and gathered their lyrics in anthologies and collections. (Some of them included scores of folk tunes that were totally different from those created in their genuine context). Such lyrics became prerequisites for contest or festival participation.

Additional sources for the *new folk creation* were folk lyrics that the Institute’s researchers recorded during their fieldwork. Archival documents

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 privileged positions: collective farm worker, weaver, bookkeeper at the consumers' co-operative society, barkeeper ("bufetieră la Trustul Alimentar 8"), member of work brigade, etc. Their declared reasons for creating folk lyrics bore the stamp of the official ideological discourse. As one informant put it, they created "in order for the peasants to know which path we all should follow."<sup>84</sup> These informants were such good versifiers that they could extemporaneously produce a text on demand. Thus, some *new songs* were created during fieldwork, when the researchers would tell the informants what they were looking for. These folk poets were also motivated by the potential prestige to gain from participation in contests and festivals or from performing in radio broadcasts.

Considering all the elements involved in the creation, transmission, and imposition of *new folk compositions*, namely – their form, content, functions, structure, context of performance, and mechanisms of creation – the *new folk songs* emerge as a laboratory of ideological creation serving the interests of the Communist regime. This form of political discourse achieved a certain degree of circulation, but it has not survived outside the contexts especially created for it or after the end of the Communist era.

## NOTES

- 1 This syntagm strictly refers to the communist period, being specific for those texts created in concordance with the official ideology.
- 2 All the data referred to the period of collectivization between 1945 and 1962 (the latter year represent 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*, Anul I, Nr. 1/1993, pp. 146-169.
- 3 Ana Pauker declared in the newspaper *Universul* no. 229/2.10.1948, that the victory of socialism in Romania is inconceivable without the fulfillment of collectivization. Teohari Georgescu praised this process in the same newspaper, no. 260/7.11.1948. (*apud*, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151).
- 4 Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări (Articles and Speeches)*, Editura pentru literatură politică, Bucharest, 1953, p. 231, *apud* O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151.
- 5 His statement was followed, in 1951, by a Party memorandum that warned: “[E]ach economic or administrative pressure put on the working peasants with the aim of forcing them to join the collective farms will be severely sanctioned” (The Ministry of Justice, *Legislația Gospodăriilor Agricole Colective și a Întovărășirilor Agricole – The Legislation of Collective Farms and of the Agricultural Associations*, Editura de Stat pentru literatură economică și juridică, Buc., 1956, *apud*, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 157-158).
- 6 The first conflicts between the peasants and the Securitate troops took place in Roma, a village in Botoșani, where the troops put down the peasants’ resistance by means of fire arms.
- 7 The archive of the commission for the research on abuses and for petitions in the Romanian Parliament, File no. 6172/1992, p. 2, Bucharest, *apud*, O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 157.
- 8 *Apud* O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 152-167.
- 9 Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Dimensiunea politică (The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania. The Political Dimension)*, vol. I, 1949-1953, p. 33.
- 10 *Idem*, p. 34.
- 11 “Raportul cu privire la încheierea colectivizării și reorganizarea conducerii agriculturii prezentat la sesiunea extraordinară a Marii Adunări Naționale” (Report concerning the end of collectivization and the reorganization of leadership in the field of agriculture; presented at the extraordinary session of the Great National Assembly), in Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări (Articles and Speeches)*, 1961-1962, Editura Politică, Bucharest, 1962, p. 287.
- 12 Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *op. cit.*, doc. 2, p. 87.
- 13 *Idem*, p. 88.

- 14 *Ibidem.*  
 15 *Ibidem.*  
 16 Gh. Gheorghiu-Dej, *op. cit.*, p. 292.  
 17 Romanian National Archives, Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, file no. 6/1954. p. 9.  
 18 *Idem*, file no. 45/1954, p. 14.  
 19 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.  
 20 O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 151.  
 21 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.  
 22 D. Deletant, *op. cit.*, p. 108.  
 23 O. Roske, *cit. art.*, p. 158.  
 24 James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts*, Yale University Press New Haven and London, 1990.  
 25 *Idem*, p. 4.  
 26 *Idem*, p. 52.  
 27 *Idem*, p. 4.  
 28 *Idem*, p. 15.  
 29 *Idem*, p. 37-38.  
 30 The denominative syntagms for this are discussed further below.  
 31 Nicoleta Coatu, *Lirica populară cu tematică actuală (The Popular Lyric with Contemporary Thematic)*, Ed. Minerva, Bucharest, 1984.  
 32 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., Bucharest, 1966 and Eugenia Cernea, Nicoleta Coatu, *Cântecul popular nou (The New Folk Song)*, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 1986. These are but two anthologies, which contain in their title the above-mentioned syntagm.  
 33 C. Bărbulescu, *Creația nouă de cântece populare (The New Creation of Folk Songs)*, in "Studii și cercetări de istorie literară și folklor", Anul I, Nr. 1-4, 1952, p. 193-220.  
 34 E. Cernea, N. Coatu, *op. cit.*, p. 15-16.  
 35 *Ibidem.*  
 36 C. Bărbulescu, *cit. art.*, p. 193.  
 37 *Ibidem*, p. 206.  
 38 One of the least ideologically permissive species.  
 39 "Introducere" (Foreword), Eugenia Cernea, Vasile D. Nicolescu, Monica Brătulescu, Nicolae Rădulescu, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

- 40 The 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.
- 41 Paula Carp, Ghizela Sulițeanu and E. Popovici-Feuer recorded the materials during the fieldwork, at the agricultural farm "Scânțea", in Ieud.
- 42 *Idem*, p. 3.
- 43 Vasile D. Nicolescu, "Din materialele premiate la concursul de cântece noi și cântece muncitorești – revoluționare" ("Selected award materials from the new songs and workers' revolutionary songs contest"), in *Revista de folclor*, Anul VII, Nr. 1-2, Bucharest, 1962, p. 72-93.
- 44 E. Cernea, V. D. Nicolescu, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
- 45 C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, *Dosar nr. 5 / 1958*, p. 84-85.
- 46 „Morți voj de comuniști / Cum v-om face fermentiș / Prin pădure, prin costiș / Și-ț șede cum șad și eu / Când era Martin Birău (Președintele Cooperativei) / Președinte, om cu școală / Bun de ucenic la moară. / Coastă ruptă secretar (referentul luga Vasile) / Buciulean este notar (Gheorghe Lupu) / Bucă scurtă de pă vale (Pop Vasile, instructor județean) / Țîne câte-o cuvântare / De colhoz că ce rost are / Și o ține de colhoz / Să alea un colomoz (Ca cân să distrugă un lucru) / Mîrtin și cu Talianu (Preș. Gosp. Colect.) / Și cu Grigore Țiganu (Omu care bate doba) / Ieremi schinare ruptă (agent agricol) / Au ajuns gazdă de munte / Titirezu Zapului (luga Ion de la colectare) / Din capătu satului / Șăzu sindicatului / Lihet, nas încârligat (gestionar cooperativă, preș. Frontul Plugarilor) / L-o pus Groza deputat / Sări-i-ar ochii din cap / Vasfluc, nas de picioac / A ajuns zaviț la joc (mai mare) / Și cîn joacă cite-o sîrbă / Cîn îi vez nasu țî-i scîrbă / Lăzăruc agent agricol (Chiș Ion, fost agent agricol) / Aoleo ce mai pericol / Cîn te baji la el în casă / O putoare nu te lasă / Hilip cu-a lui doi feciori (Dunca Filip, îngrijitor tauri) / Dă mîncare la taori / Și-i mătură-n primărie / De colb și de hîrțulie / Și mai spală și closetu / Unde cacă comitetu. / Cucu boacter desmățat (Vlad Ion, guard comunal) / Tot bate doba pîn sat / Cîrcu boacter desmățat (Vlad Dumitru) / Și de spate înduplecat / Și cur mare din Budești (Bud Ileana, moașă, secretara UFDR) / Fă carnete femeiești / Las-să facă că nu-i bai / Că-i de 40 de ani.”
- 47 „Pentru ce-am horit o hore, am stat doi ani la închisoare. Dar când am venit acasă, comuniștii iar mă lasă fără boi și fără casă, fără boi, fără curele, fără liacă de avere și îmi trăiesc tot cu durere. Iesă lumia la arat, numa eu rămîi în sat. Boii mi-au confiscat, pămîntu l-au comasat. Rău mă doare în inimă când văd plugu tot rugină. Teleguța lîngă plug și n-am boi ca să-i înjug și la arat să mă duc. (...) Inima mă doare când văd pluguri și tractoare. Tractoarele ară pe șes, noi punem pe deal ovăz. Dar cota musai s-o dai și de grâu și de mălai. Bate-i, Doamne, ce mai stai.” (Mss. 226)
- 48 The information sheets contain data that are only handwritten during fieldwork and not recorded on tape.

- 49 "Dumnezău tău de șură, / Că te-am dat pe o friptură. / Dumnezău tău  
de-avere, / Te-am dat pe-o sticlă de bere."
- 50 „Foaie verde d-un susai, / Măicuță să nu mă dai / După Ion a lu' Mihai. /  
C-are căruță și cai. / Are, mamă, și pământ. / Nu-l iau mamă că-i urât. / Că  
pământu' stă pă coastă / Iar urātu șade-n casă. / Pământu' mă putrezește,  
/ Urātu mă-mbătrânește. / Pământu-l ia colectivul, / Iar eu rămâi cu urātu'.”
- 51 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.
- 52 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.
- 53 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  
comunicaționale și manipularea*, Polirom, Iași, 2000, p. 59)
- 54 I have used the Romanian translation of the book - Francoise Thom, *Limba  
de lemn*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2005.
- 55 Francoise Thom, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
- 56 For the analysis of the totalitarian discourse in Romania, very useful is  
Cristiana-Nicola Teodorescu's *Patologia limbajului comunist totalitar*,  
Editura Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 2000.
- 57 Tatiana Slama Cazacu, *Stratageme comunicaționale și manipularea* (Chapter  
2. "Limba de lemn", pp. 55-101), Polirom, Iași, 2000, p. 71.
- 58 Florin Georgescu, "Folclorul și mișcarea artistică de amatori", publicat în  
*Revista de Folclor*, an IV, nr. 1-2, 1959, pp. 97-113.
- 59 A ritual performed by children and meant to bring the rain during the  
droughty summer periods.
- 60 I've translated *cămin cultural* by *village club*.
- 61 That is, the performance of, and the belief in, charms.
- 62 Florin Georgescu, article cited, p. 108.
- 63 „Bună-i întovărășirea / Dar mai bună-i colectiva.” (Mgt. 1846b)
- 64 These texts were recorded during 1954 and 1962 during fieldwork or in the  
Institutes' studio.
- 65 „Ș-am zis verde matostat / Astăzi satul s-a schimbat. / Uite neică și privește /  
Satul meu cum înflorește / Că-n colectiv să muncește.” (Mgt. 1668c) „Foaie  
verde ș-un dudău / Drag îmi e și satul meu. / Când în el totul e nou. / Avem  
colectivă-n sat / Acum toate s-a schimbat.” (Mgt. 1670j) „Firicel de bob de  
rouă / Azi trăim o viață nouă. / Toți în colectiv muncim / Țara noastră

- să-nflorim." (Mgt. 1742z) „Cântă cuce cum poștești / Ce-ai lăsat nu mai găsești. / Plugul ai lăsat cu boii, / Și-ai găsit tractoare noi. / Țarina ai lăsat-o (mie?) / Și-ai găsit gospodărie. / (...) / Ne-ai lăsat stingheri trudind / Ne găsești uniți muncind (...)” (Mgt. 2136b).
- 66 „De când e colectiv la noi / Avem viață-mbeșugată / Că munca-i organizată / Muncim cu râvnă și spor / C-avem traiul mai ușor.” (Mgt. 1701ii) și „De când e democrație / E mai mare veselie / Toți suntem colectivști / Și lucrăm mai fericii / Căci muncim organizat / Munca ni s-a ușurat. / (...) / Și traiu ni l-a schimbat / Căci muncim planificat.” (Mgt. 1700jj) Contextul competiției între colective devine stimulant și recuperează prin muncă chiar și pe cei cu o viață dezordonată: „Dar la noi la colectiv / Chiar Istrate cel bețiv / Când e vorba de muncit / Se avântă-nveselit / Și cu spor el că muncește / Și pe toți ne-nveselește / Și ne-ndeamnă să muncim / Primul colectiv să fim.” (Mgt. 1787k)
- 67 „Dar la noi la colectiv / Chiar Istrate cel bețiv / Când e vorba de muncit / Se avântă-nveselit / Și cu spor el că muncește / Și pe toți ne-nveselește / Și ne-ndeamnă să muncim / Primul colectiv să fim.” (Mgt. 1787k)
- 68 „Iară noi în colectivă / Muncim bine, fără grijă / Că-ntr-o zi de sărbătoare / Ne luăm televizoare / Case noi ne vom clădi / Și mai bine vom munci.” (Mgt. 1701z); sau în bani „Foaie verde matostat / În colectiv am intrat / Și-am muncit cu hărnicie / Și-am scăpat de sărăcie / Bucate mi-am adunat / Case noi mi-am ridicat / Partidu m-a ajutat / Și bani din bancă mi-a dat / Banii se plătesc în rate / Și fără dobândă frate.” (Mgt. 1698 le) and also „Frunzuliță verde din vie / Bine-i în gospodărie / Știm lucra și știm munci / Știm face economii / Surplusu de-un an întreg / Noi îl depunem la CEC / (...) / La CEC banii se păstrează / Și la sută se dublează / Îi scoatem la un an, doi / Și ne facem case noi.” (Mgt. 1701y) or „Colectivul nostru harnic / Azi ne-arată că e darnic / din beșug / El ne dă la toți bucate / Bani și zahăr și de toate / să avem / Casele să le-mbrăcăm / Mobilă să ne luăm / tot ce vrem / Astăzi viața ne e dragă / Cu partidul nu-i de șagă / măi flăcăi / Pe cât ne-a planificat / Mai mult am realizat / pentru noi.” (Mgt. 1787j)
- 69 „Foaie verde și-o lea / În comuna Dacia / În regimul democrat / Multe lucruri s-a schimbat / S-a făcut tovărășie / Și o mare gospodărie / Și să lucră frățioare / Cu mașini și cu tractoare / Partidul ne-a ajutat / Satul nostru s-a schimbat / Case noi s-au ridicat / Și tot omu frățioare / Are-n casă difuzoare / Și s-a mai făcut în sat / Crepuri pentru adăpat / Cămin mare arătos / Și un cinema frumos / (...) / Multe lucruri s-a schimbat / Doar aici la noi în sat / Este-un sat ca un model / Parc-ar fi un orașel / Și de drag să stai în el.” (Mgt. 1698 ld)
- 70 „Foaie verde ca bobu / Satul nostru Mocodu / Este sat radioficat / Că s-a colectivizat / Că noi mult nu ne-am gândit / Cererea am iscălit / (...) / Mocodu e un sat mare / Tătă casa difuzoare / Datorită grijii lui / Dragului partidului.” (Mgt. 1850e) and „Colectivă să trăiești / Că tu dragă ne mai ești / Ne-ai adus lumină-n sat / Libertate tu ne-ai dat.” (Mgt. 337a)

- 71 „Foaie verde iasomie / Bine-i în gospodărie / Frunzuliță matostat / Cătu-i țara-n lung și-n lat / Nu mai e plâns și oftat / Pe câmpiile cu rouă / Răsună cântarea nouă / Cântarea muncii unite / A zilelor fericite.” (Mgt. 1732f)
- 72 „Haideți dragi colectivști / Utemiști și tractoriști / Hora mare să jucăm / Cu toți să ne bucurăm.” (Mgt. 1961d) „Vin ciobanii de la stână / Codrul verde larg răsună / Unii cântă, alții joacă / Joc bătuta să se-ntreacă / Foaie verde iasomie / Bătuta cine o știe / Să o cânte mai cu foc / (...) / Tuturora ea le place / Muncitori și muncitoare / Și țărani de pe ogoare / Toți muncesc cu drag și spor / Pentru țară și popor.” (Mgt. 1787p)
- 73 „Mereu cu drag să muncim / Traiul să ni-l fericim / Că în timpul cel trecut / Multe rele-am petrecut / Munceam la ciocoi măi frate / Azi ni-i munca în dreptate.” (Mgt. 1852g) or „Foaie verde de-o sipică / Mărioară, Măriucă / Mai ții minte-alaltăieri / Eram slugă la boieri / Ba țin minte bade-al meu / Cum munceam la el din greu / Îi munceam trei zile-odată / Mă lăsa o zi c-o vacă.” (Mgt. 1942k) and also „Să-mi ajute Dumnezeu / Să-i duc la canal pe toți / Să scăpăm țara de hoți / Fir-ar ai dracului morți.” (Mgt. 1974a) „Frunză verde merișor / S-arătăm chiaburilor / Ei să treacă-n țara lor / Astă țară nu-i a lor / Că-i a proletarilor / Cu chiaburii la-nchisoare / Cu proletarii pe ogoare / Foaie verde iarba găștii / Să trăiască comuniștii.” (Mgt. 1729s)
- 74 „Foaie verde de stejar / S-a dus badea militar / (...) / La toamnă s-o libera / Ș-o veni și m-o lua / Ș-om face nuntă frumoasă / În gospodăria noastră.” (Mgt. 1631 IIIh)
- 75 „Mare-i hora și frumoasă, / Cine mi-e drag, nu-i acasă. / Armata de-o isprăvi / El acasă o veni. / Și-mpreună om munci / Om munci cu omenie / La noi în gospodărie.” (Mgt. 1852h)
- 76 „Foaie verde iasomie / Drag mi-e și la vară mie / C-oi lucra-n gospodărie / Cu bădița lângă mine / (...) / Mi-o fi drag a secera / Într-o holdă cu badea / Bădița mi-o lega snopii / Eu i-oi da gura și ochii / Bădița mi-a pune clăi / Eu i-oi da ochii-amândoi / Și snopii i-om treiera / La batoză cu badea. / Ș-om avea recoltă multă / Ș-oi face cu badea nuntă.” (1852h)
- 77 „Așteaptă-mă, puică dragă, / Să termin tarlaua-ntreagă / Și la tine oi veni / Și-amândoi ne vom iubi, / Când de-arat oi termina / Câmpu-ntreg și țarina.” or „Hai, mânduțo, să lucrăm / Norma pe zi s-o gătam / Ș-apoi să ne iubim / Până noaptea va veni.” (1700 Ih)
- 78 Și la toamnă, mă, bădiță, / Ne căsătorim / Ș-amândoi în colectivă / Frunțași o să fim / Casă nouă ne vom face / Cămin fericit / C-odată cu colectiva / Noi am înflorit.” (1846d)
- 79 „Foaie verde iasomie / Plin este de voinicie / Cu flori mândre-n pălărie / Frunțaș în gospodărie / Și când vine din câmpie Cu mult drag îmi zice mie / la te uită, tu, Mărie / Cât de bine-ți șade ție / Frunțaș-n gospodărie.” (Mgt. 2095k)
- 80 „Poți să fii mire-mpăcat / Ce mireasă ți-ai luat. / Știe coase, știe țese, / Și-n colectiv să lucreze;” or „Ce mai fete mândre-s pe la noi / Știu a țese la război

/Toată ziua-n colectiv lucrează / Seara cântă și brodează". (Mgt. 1857d) and „Rău mă teme maică-mea / Că mă iubește neica / Mă iubește-adevărat / Dacă el nu-i altu-n sat / E voinic și sprâncenat / Și dulce la sărutat / El când pornește tractorul / Pân la prânz ară ogorul / Trage brazde-adânci și late / Și crește mândre bucate / Trage brazde-adânci și bine / Și ma iubește pe mine.” (Mgt. 1865d)

81 “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.

82 „Floritică micșunea, / Mi-e dragă primăvara / Că văd tractoarele arând / Tractoristele cântând. / Primăvara cân’ sosește / Codru iarăși înverzește / Și ară tractoarele / Pe toate ogoarele. / Cântă ciocârliile / Pe toate câmpiile. / Pornesc flăcăii la muncă. / Cântă fetele pe luncă / Cântă cucu’ și mierla / Că nu mai e viața grea / C-au sosit tractoarele / Și semănătoarele.” (Mgt. 2133o)

83 „Foaie de iasomie / Bine-i în gospodărie, / Numai cânt și veselie / Așa cum îmi place mie. / Viață nouă a-nflorit / Că partidul a muncit / Drum nou de ne-a construit / Soare nou a răsărit. / Foaie verde, foaie lată, / Ce frumoasă-i țara toată / Becurile strălucesc / Oamenii muncii muncesc. / Asta-i viață de trăit / Că ni-i traiul fericit.” (Mgt. 2133z)

84 Informant’s sheet no. 12 221.

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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).