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PhD THESIS
FAMILY AND CALENDAR FEAST, THE DYNAMIC CHARACTER OF
TRADITIONAL CULTURES IN DOBROGEA
(ABSTARCT)

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ABSTRACT

The central idea of the doctoral thesis is represented by the comparative presentation of the traditional cultures from the Dobrogea area with an emphasis on interculturality and multiculturalism.

The theme is topical, because these cultures are viable in forms that retain the elements of identification and elements of topicality. Source of experience and wisdom of life, concepts of culture and popular traditions that transmit values and create connections between generations. Traditions, customs, folk costumes and folklore are priceless treasures that define a people, making it incomparable, steady and immortal. The importance of knowing the identity values at individual, community and national level, is fundamental for understanding and consecrating their place as harmoniously as possible in the world.

The varied traditions and customs of the Turks and Tartars have their origins in pre-Islamic traditions, with shamanic, pagan origins, and others are in line with the Islamic religion system.

Human relationships with the environment begin before birth and end with death. In the traditional social environment, the birth of a human being means entering a world with well-defined traditions and customs. Through marriage ceremonies, the second moment of decisive importance in human life takes place. In the funeral customs, the customs related to the organizational system of the funeral are carried out.

The topic of the proposed research, “Family and Calendar Feast. The dynamic character of the traditional cultures from Dobrogea”, is an open topic because these cultures are dynamic and accumulate in time variants of customs and holidays. The research highlights elements that derive from the originality of the custom and elements that are due to interference with other cultures.

The purpose of the research is to demonstrate the viability of the phenomenon of interculturality and to compare the habits of the minority ethnic groups in Dobrogea with the Romanian ones in this large ethno folkloric area.

The motivation for choosing the theme has two components:

1. Personal research experience in the field.

I chose this topic because it also resonates with my concerns in the field of traditional culture research in Turks and Tartars.

2. Comparison with the Romanian folklore from the Dobrogea area.

It is the challenge of this theme. My journalistic activity in the field of culture, especially of the Turkish and Tatar ethnic groups for 19 years, is based on a sustained work of researching the customs and traditions of the two ethnic groups, but also on the curiosity to find and find similarities with the customs and traditions of the people Romanian.

The interest in interculturality materialized in collections and studies on the Tatar community and the Turkish community in Dobrogea. The field research in Dobrogea started in 2003, continues today.

Between 2000 - 2010 I studied the Tatar and Turkish communities in Constanța and Tulcea counties. I constantly write articles that aim to promote the cultural values of the ethnic group I belong to, for the "Conviețuri" column on the Radio Romania Regional and Radio Constanța Portal.

In the period 2008-2012 we made shows under the title "Toți împreună" on the TVR3 channel, where we reflected the traditions, customs and language of the communities of Tartars and Turks in Romania. The shows I do are aimed at cultivating the language, values and cultural identity of the ethnic group to which they belong and are broadcast on radio and television programs dedicated to national minorities. I was and am the editor of the Tatar and Turkish language section at TVR and SRR Radio Constanța. I am a translator from Turkish. I am a translator for the official Turkish and Tatar delegations in the bilateral visits, on which occasion I got to know the customs and traditions of the ethnic communities regarding the calendar and family holidays. As a translator for the Turkish language, I translated some texts from the corpus of the paper, which gives an extra originality to the doctoral thesis.

The details of the research carried out in this space will be considered by us as essential in the analysis of the content of the holidays in the ethnic communities and support in the comparative analysis of the forms found at one time and the viable forms today.

The theoretical framework and research methods are:

- case study method (significance of family and religious holidays customs);
- the comparative method of ritual sequences found in two or more traditional cultures from Dobrogea. We have thus conducted micro-studies of ethnology to highlight interculturality;
- the method of direct observation carried out through direct and repeated contact with members of the Tatar and Turkish community, in order to make audio materials and photographs;
- the method of the questionnaire to analyze the reception of the holiday by people from different generations within the ethnic groups;

- the method of the interview in order to find out significant details and the symbolic plurivalence of the popular holidays from the perspective of the direct experience of the main actors.

Research status in the chosen topic:

There have been historical and cultural approaches to either ritual or historical epoch sequences. The originality of our doctoral thesis lies in the comparative approach to this topic in Dobrogea. I have preferred Turkish and Tatar culture, because I am part of a Tatar family and I have direct experience of belonging to this ethnic community. Research has been completed on this topic by publishing volumes (see bibliography).

The doctoral thesis includes the details of each feast, the identification of the role of the actors, the symbolism of the objects and ritual foods, it also offers a comparative perspective with Romanian holidays from the same period of the year. Thus we will find, in addition to similarities between these holidays, whether there is the process of influence, interference or assimilation of ritual practices from one ethnic community to another, or are just coincidences that lead to a common background of conservative mentalities of primary cultures.

The originality of the approach focuses on a complex, comparative study and case analysis on calendar and family holidays in the cultures of ethnic minorities in Dobrogea. This approach is made diachronically and synchronously regarding similar holidays in the Romanian popular calendar.

There are two perspectives for analysis and synthesis;

- the chronological perspective of the calendar and family holidays of the Tatar and Turkish ethnic groups from Dobrogea;
- integrated perspective (a synthetic image of the calendar or family holiday of the two Turkish and Tatar ethnic groups in Dobrogea: birth customs of Turks and Tatars, either calendar with holidays from all seasons or existential moments for these ethnic groups.

Relevance to the type of research proposed

The relevance consists in the exemplification of the popular holidays from different traditional cultures, the demonstration of the continuity of these feasts and the identification of the new development frameworks. In this doctoral dissertation I present feasts of spring, summer, autumn and winter, which have been preserved over time in a form close to traditional, even if some of them have undergone modernization under the not at all beneficial influence of globalization and urbanization.

Corpus

It consists of photographs, film sequences, family documents, transcripts of interviews with the actors of the customs according to the annexes.

The bibliography is structured in the section volumes with this topic, press articles, articles in collective volumes.

The structure of the paper

The doctoral thesis is structured in six chapters, bibliography and annexes.

The paper opens with a necessary Introduction, which outlines the theoretical framework approached, the motivation for choosing the topic, the purpose of the research and the originality of the topic.

The first chapter deals with the applied methodology.

The second chapter is dedicated to research on multiculturalism in Dobrogea and published so far. Over the years, many Tatar personalities have made Tatar culture, art and tradition known in the country and abroad. In the period 1920-1989, in Romania the Tatar and Turkish community created and developed a strong education system and a press in their mother tongue, able to meet the requirements of knowledge and cultural fulfillment. The presence of a numerous elitist group, from the Tatar and Turkish community, implicated in various progressive actions, justifies a press and an education, which know, in the interwar period, a certain qualitative increase.

After the establishment of the communist regime, the cultural side suffers a stagnation. The revolution of December 1989 also opened up to the Turkish and Tatar community in our country perspectives for the development of culture in the national language.

The third chapter is dedicated to multiculturalism and multiethnicity in Dobrogea. The creation of a legislative framework regarding the national minorities in Romania, allows their self-organization and their contribution to the general and local patrimony.

In chapter four we have included the ethnic and cultural diversity and the evolution of multiculturalism, as well as the analysis of the Dobrogean interethnic climate, detailed in subchapters such as: hospitality, gastronomy, traditional dress and details about the characteristic housing of the Tatar and Turkish community.

Chapter five includes the calendar holidays, the Romanian calendar by similarity for the Tatar and Turkish holidays, specificity, trends and novelty in the traditional Tatar, Turkish and Romanian culture in Dobrogea.

Chapter six is dedicated to family holidays. Birth-threshold between pre-existence and existence, habits before birth, during birth and after birth are analyzed. Attached are photos taken in person on the spot, with obvious documentary value. Next, the marriage is analyzed in terms of the Tatar wedding ceremony compared to the Romanian wedding ceremony, the pre-wedding customs are studied and analyzed in the Tatar traditions, the actors of the wedding ceremony and the sequences of the wedding ceremony.

The funeral customs address the traditions related to the ordinances of people close to the deceased.

The doctoral dissertation includes conclusions at the end of each chapter, conclusion and is accompanied by a bibliography, which provides a solid theoretical support with many titles and annexes that include radio interviews, press articles, photos from its own archive, footage from various feast sequences calendar and family.

Traditions can change in every age and community. They apply more or less, for each. In the three essential moments of human life, the habits related to a series of requirements turn into ceremonies.

Traditions and ceremonies, as well as common practices, resemble the changing scenes of a play written in time for man. The people who play in this play know your roles well and help each other to play them as well as possible. As participants forget their roles, the specifics of ceremonies weaken traditionally. The multitude of participants, their duties, the traditional elements, as well as the various beliefs are the result of collective value judgments.

The doctoral thesis is conceived under the sign of interdisciplinarity, on the border between folklore, anthropology and history, it is based on factual materials collected from different points, considered of interest to Dobrogea.

Conclusions

The comparative analysis of the spring holiday of the Tartars and Turks and of the Orthodox Christian pre-Easter and Easter holidays highlights the similarities and especially the common background of the two cultures, coexisting today in a multiethnic space.

The comparative analysis of the wedding ceremony for Tartars and Romanians highlights the similarities and especially the common background of the two cultures, coexisting today in a multiethnic space.

The scientific methods that formed the basis of the research were the actual observation of the fieldwork, the actual participation of the actors presented through interviews, but also the personal participation in certain stages that make up the wedding

ceremony. Observations on the similarities and conceptual differences between the customs and traditions of the wedding ceremony of Tartars and Romanians, the traditions are similar with small differences, which is explained by cultural developments, by relating to the past according to national identity and by accumulating individual and collective experiences. which particularizes them in relation to each other.

Marriage is the spiritual union between man and woman before God. It is the period of one man's life when he becomes "one" with another man and not only he exists, the other also exists.

In traditional communities, the time of birth is well marked by ritual. But unlike weddings and funerals, the range of rituals, ceremonies, and magical practices is less comprehensive. Most of the moments of the birth ceremony cycle have disappeared, only those that have a pronounced social-festive character remain.

Between the objects with double value, profane (everyday) and sacred (repeatable in the ritual development) the wheat with its metamorphoses is a leitmotif of human existence, from the placement on the wheat straw of the pregnant woman waiting for the birth of the baby to the boiling of wheat , cage, given for the soul of the dead. Ritual practices are ways of accessing the sacred, and the tendency in any existential moment is to establish a "touch" with the sacred.

Wheat and bread reveal the Romanian popular mentality "a system of beliefs and myths, religious practices, sacred ceremonies and rites of worship."

Traditions remain a means of solidarity, support, brotherhood and unity. Traditions remain a means of solidarity, support, brotherhood and unity. However, the diversity of the practices of both the Muslim cult and the Orthodox Christian cult is based on real life and the meanings given to life for centuries.

Habits have always contributed to the cohesion of certain communities, to the preservation of traditional ways of life. Traditional communities have preserved and preserved them and made their habits remain even if some of them have lost or changed their meaning.