

## FORMS AND MEANS OF IDENTIFYING THE CURRENT POTENTIAL IN THE FIELD OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE IN IASI

Adrian ARDELEANU<sup>1</sup>

1. Prof., Ethnomusicologist, Director of County Center for Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture – Iasi, Romania  
Corresponding author: adiardeleanu@yahoo.com

The identification of cultural heritage values, may they be tangible or intangible, is a constant concern in the research aimed at contemporary traditional culture in Iasi.

In the present context, when the economic and financial means are limited, the number of specialists is declining and young people are less interested in this field of research, we sought new ways and means of investigation in the territory to complete and update the database of the Center.

Projects initiated in recent years by the County Center for Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture of Iasi consider new ways of investigating the existing heritage within the district's villages. Thus, organizing cultural meetings, exhibitions, workshops, fairs, as well as participation in local festivals is a good opportunity to come in contact with the realities of the center of the village. The results of these activities have led to deeper investigations and also provided new research directions. In this regard, in early 2009 we responded to the County Council as partners of the project "CIPS" – Community Identity Policy Support – which aims to identify the main component elements of the rural heritage of Iasi county and Ungheni district – Moldova; to clarify and characterize the items of the identified heritage; to create a new database; to evaluate the rural heritage of Iasi and to achieve a "Rural Heritage Evaluation Guide" of the Iasi-Ungheni border region. The project addresses the notion of village heritage in terms of two aspects: *tangible heritage* – landscapes, monuments, buildings related to agricultural activities, household objects, religious objects, natural products and products processed by methods characteristic to the village:

*intangible heritage* – traditional local culture, literature, dialects, customs, manifestations of the community life etc. Within this project, the Iasi Center has made investigations in thirty spots in the county, and the partners of Moldova – in seven spots of the Ungheni district.

To identify the main component elements of Iasi county's rural heritage as well as those of the Ungheni district, one has to substantiate a local development policy based on these compounds' capitalization.

"*Rural Heritage Evaluation Guide*" will provide a tool for preserving and highlighting the rural heritage of Iasi and Ungheni. However, the *Guide* will include information on the methodology for analysis of assets, the classification and description of rural heritage elements of Iasi and Ungheni areas as well as ways and means aimed at integrating the rural heritage in the sustainable development of communities. This ten months' project will be completed in November 2009 with an exhibition of folk art and photo images and the launching of the *Guide* which will include 120 pages.

Another form of identification for the traditional cultural heritage is represented by the folk art exhibitions. Thus, under the title "grandmother's coffer", there were held exhibitions of fabrics and seams in Ceplenița, Buhalnița village. This project, initiated in 2008 by the County Center for Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture – Iasi, and having the support from the local parish priest, counted eighty-seven craftsmen participants, who exhibited more than three hundred pieces, kept from generation to generation: some from late nineteenth century, others made over the years until now. The project was well publicized by

the media and had a great impact on the residents of the village. The target of the project comprised: identifying the potential of the area, and the master craftsmen, picking up information on the working techniques and about the circumstances in which the pieces were created (weddings, funerals, religious holidays etc.). On this occasion, there has been settled a very good relationship of cooperation between these artists and our institution, with the desire to make such actions permanent and to involve a larger number of householders from the village and even from the surrounding areas. The success of the event was represented also by the fact that, through the dialogues held with the master craftsmen, new ways of investigation have been opened to the purpose of obtaining valuable information about family and calendar customs, village dances and other events that used to be held in the area lots of years ago. Craftsman charts, interviews, photographs and films were made that will complete the database of the institution.

For the Hârlău area, Buhalnița village remains a benchmark in future research, as further investigations will also be conducted in other traditional villages from this area, such as Poiana Mărului, Sticlăria - Scobinți, Pârcovaci, Poiana Deleni etc.

The experience gained in this project required us to realize extensive records on villages, regarding traditional crafts. With fabrics and seams we considered the following aspects: the age of these occupations in the area, the fabric

types, the processing of raw materials, natural colors, installations, traditional tools and work techniques, defining elements of fabrics (structure, composition, ornaments, chromatics) as well as the ritual - ceremonial implications.

Another form of identification of tangible and intangible assets existing in the rural areas of the county is the socials. This old custom has been common in the village life until the early 70s years of the last century. In the last forty years the socials have begun to disappear and today one can just sporadically find them in the householders's homes.

To revive the spiritual life of the villages, the County Center for Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture - Iasi initiated in 2007 the project "Social Evenings in Our Village". This project aims to actually identify popular artists, the cultural and artistic potential and, at the same time, to assess the current preservation state of the intangible heritage in the county.

The first social evenings of the project were held in Sticlăria-Scobinți and Miroslovești, with the contribution of the teachers and householders living there. Without any prior selection of the participants, we still had the pleasant opportunity to meet craftsmen, storytellers, bards and dancers willing to give us as much information as they could about the customs and traditions of the area. Movies, photos, popular craftsmen charts have been made on this occasion, that have completed the Center database.