

Recent Books: Romanian Folklore

Margaret Beissinger, U W Madison

The following is a selected bibliography of recent works on folklore published in Romania and the Republic of Moldova. It includes books published since 1990. An overriding constraint on the printing of any scholarly works in Romania at the present is the dire shortage of paper. Despite this, however, books do periodically continue to be published. Several monographs have appeared since 1989 -- both new and reprints of earlier editions (some of which have undergone a purging of communist ideological passages in their post-1989 publication). A significant number of collections have also come out (including materials that have been recorded recently or earlier in the century as well as reprints of "classics").

Pop, Mihai & Pavel Ruxăndoiu. Folclor literar românesc. Bucharest: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1990. A reprint of a classic work from 1976 which covers the basic premises and genres of Romanian oral literature; this edition is significantly revised, including the removal of several chapters and all excerpts from the writings of Nicolae Ceaușescu (the longstanding Romanian dictator, executed in December 1989).

Rădulescu, Speranța. Cîntecul: Tipologie muzicală I. Transilvania meridională. Bucharest: Editura muzicală, 1990. Fourteen essays on folk song and nearly seventy transcriptions of lyric song texts and melodies collected by Rădulescu and others, including cross references to variants.

Sevastos, Elena D. O. Literatură populară. 2 vols. Ed. Ioan Ilișiu. Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1990. A reprint of previously published collections of oral literature by Sevastos as well as her best-known work, a monograph on traditional wedding practices (all

originally from between 1888 and 1893); it also includes an incomplete unpublished monograph, "Birth among Romanians," from 1892. A chapter treating religious practices from Sevastos' original monograph on traditional wedding, which had been removed by the pre-1990 editors, was fortunately reinserted just in time for the post-communist publication date.

Ghinoiu, Ion. Vrstele timpului. Chişinău: Ştiinţa, 1994. Enlarged second edition of a work previously published in Bucharest in 1988, it treats rituals, myths, and beliefs surrounding traditional concepts of the yearly calendar and time.

Marian, Simion Florea. Sărbătorile la români. 2 vols. Ed. Iordan Datcu. Bucharest: Editura Fundaţiei Culturale Române, 1994. A reprint of an early ethnographic study of Romanian calendrical-cycle folklore, originally published 1898-1901.

Şeuleanu, Ion. Dincoace de sacru, dincolo de profan. Târgu-Mureş: Editura "Tipomir," 1994. A series of essays in which Şeuleanu, one of the most outstanding folklorists in Romania today (from the University of Cluj), attempts to familiarize the Romanian readership with international -- especially American -- folklore scholarship, pleading in particular for a systematic approach to fieldwork and collection of folklore, as well as for viewing folklore in context.

Amzalescu, Alexandru I. Cântecul popular din Muscel. Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1995. Amzalescu, a leading specialist on Romanian oral poetry and an emeritus scholar formerly employed at the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest, presents a monograph on the generic

"song proper" as collected in Muscel between 1954 and 1962; he argues for the recognition of singers as individuals in the creative process and sensitively explores their roles and repertoires within the larger tradition.

Ispas, Sabina. Cântecul epic-eroic românesc în contextul sud-est european: Cântecele peșirii. Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1995. An exploration of ancient patterns of courtship and marriage ritual in Romanian heroic epic by a prominent senior researcher at the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest.

Voevidca, Alexandru. Cîntecele populare din Bucovina. Bucharest: Editura Muzicală, 1990. Publication of a virtually unknown corpus of 275 lyrical songs (texts and music) collected in the early 20th century in Bucovina; includes a listing of the informants, their villages, and the year of the recordings.

Ștefănescu, Călin-Bogdan. 10 ani de umor negru românesc: Jurnal de bancuri politice. Bucharest: Metropol-Paideia, 1991. Over 900 political jokes (collected from January 1979 up through December 1989), including a foreword by the distinguished "grandfather" of Romanian folklore, Mihai Pop, and a conclusion by the author.

Breazul, George. Colinde. Bucharest: Editura Fundației Culturale Române, 1993. A reprint of a volume published in 1938, it includes texts and melodies to 300 calendrical ritual songs collected by Breazul -- a well-known ethnomusicologist from earlier in the century. Titus Moisescu provides an analytical conclusion to this edition.

Florea, Virgiliu. Poezii populare din câmpie. Bistrița: Editura Cadran, 1993. This previously unpublished collection of oral poetry from Transylvania includes primarily lyric and ritual songs, notes on the context of performance, and references to variant texts.

Botezatu, Grigore. Făt-frumos și soarele: Povești populare din Basarabia. Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1995. In this anthology of twenty folktales collected in specified villages in Bessarabia (with no mention of informants, however), Botezatu has a tendency to "edit" the narratives somewhat; but the volume reflects the growing cultural and academic rapports between Romania and the former Soviet Republic of Moldova.

Robea, Mihail. Basme și legende populare românești. Bucharest: Casa Editoriala Muntenia, 1995. The volume includes not only folktales and legends collected by Robea in Muntenia during the last several decades, but also discussions on the context and perpetuators of these oral narratives.