

DUDESTII VECHI-TOMNATIC-CENEI QUALITATIVE STUDY REGARDING CO-HABITATION IN THE MULTIEHNCIAL ROMANIAN VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT: *There are places endowed with a force of attraction and filled with energy, which prevoke a spiritual state and a spiritual experience for most people. The present study focuses on only a part of the national minorities who live together with the Romanians in Timiș County, namely: Serbs, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Germans. These ethnic groups represent the most important components of the total population throughout the recent history of Banat.*

Keywords: *multicultural and multiethnic space; rural community; multiethnic communities; values; attitudes.*

1. Religion. Language. Communication

We chose these communities – Old Dudești, Tomnatic and Cenei - because here we find the majority of minorities in Banat region. The present study focuses on only a part of the national minorities who live together with the Romanians in Timiș County, namely: Serbs, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Germans. These ethnic groups represent the most important components of the total population throughout the recent history of Banat.

There are places endowed with a force of attraction and filled with energy, which prevoke a spiritual state and a spiritual experience for most people. This state is realized especially during the holidays, the moments being experienced at that time being of maximum spiritual intensity. The place where the event takes place offers a unifying space of feelings, states, attitudes, ways of being.

The state of mind of both the Orthodox religion common to Romanians and Serbs, as well as the Catholic religion of Hungarians, Germans, Bulgarians is an extraordinary one, as well as the ritual in which all the

village, regardless of ethnicity, takes part in.

The calendar, considered the mirror of time, was born because of man's conception that there are repeating events in the world. Time is not limited only to the repetition of these natural events of the world, but also to the great ritual remembrance of mythical events (S. Lavric, 1997, p.111)

The Orthodox faith of new and old rites is distinguished by worship practices due to the two-week gap between the Gregorian calendar (specific to Romanians) and the Julian calendar (specific to Serbs). Up until the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Christians in the state called Romanian Lands had celebrated The New Year on Christmas, on December 25. (This is also proven today because in some the villages of Banat, January 1 is also known as Little Christmas.

The values of the Orthodox faith have led to a peaceful coexistence based on respect, understanding, empathy and compassion towards those in difficulty, love for one's neighbour, honesty and fairness. These values mentioned above, transformed into life principles, are found in the attitudes of Romanians and Serbs.

Fixed-date holidays are offset by 13 days, and those that are calculated, that is: Palm Sunday - one week before Easter, Easter, Ascension - 40 days after Easter, The Descent of the Holy Spirit-- 50 days after Easter or 10 days after Ascension, follow this rule.

In the religious traditions common to Romanians and Serbs, and even to Germans, Hungarians and Bulgarians, we celebrate the patron of the is church, the godfather of the church and the feast of the house.

The Dedication of the Church (when they celebrate the patron saint of a church) is chosen by every community studied on a holiday day, different from one village to another, which allows this feast (which becomes the Day of the Village) to be celebrated together with the locals from the neighbouring villages. This is common in all communities studied. Germans celebrate Kirchweih on the same day as their church's patron day. There were chosen two leading couples, and on the day of the feast, the whole convoy of pairs, dressed in Swabian folk costumes, walked through the village streets to the church.

With Bulgarians in the studied communities, the church has a unique value and it played an important role, even in the communist period: "I would sometimes skip classes at school, as all children do, but no way would I miss Sunday service "(Gheorghe Nacov, Mayor-at the time of the study - and member of the Union of Bulgarians in Banat).

The church's godfather is chosen annually and has a few duties: he brings to church on the day of the feast a big cake to be sanctified and then divided at the end of the service amongst all the participants to the ceremony (which is common for both Romanians and Serbs).

Every home chooses a feast, usually the wedding day of the young bride and grooms, or a different day, chosen by the parents of the young people, by their godparents, or by

chance picking an icon depicting a saint by the young couple on the day of their marriage. Likewise, the patron saint is taken as the feast of the house, if the man of the house has such a saint's name (common to Romanians and Serbians). The respective saint becomes the protector of the house, and on the day of the patron saint there were festive meals, with relatives and friends coming together to celebrate.

An interesting fact encountered in Serbian churches is the ceiling, which is painted in light blue and golden stars to resemble the sky.

It is also worth mentioning the fact that the majority of religious terms are of a Slavic origin. From the identical words used both in Romanian and Serbian, we can mention the following: *agheasma* (holy water), *anafura* (wafer), *apostol* (apostle), *Blagovestenie* (Annunciation), *clopot* (bell), *dascal* (teacher), *denie* (evening service during Passion Week), *duh* (spirit), *liturghie* (liturgy), *molitva* (a prayer for the sick), *parastas* (requiem), *pomana* (charity), *post* (lent), *rai* (heaven), *slava* (glory), *taina* (mystery), *vecernie* (evening service).

The service in church is done in several languages, depending on the ethnicity of the population in the community.

2. Civic attitudes and belief in the institutions of the Village (Community)

The important institutions in village life were and are the Church, the School and the Town Hall.

School, through its educational mission, somehow makes a connection with every family in the village, directly or indirectly, because every resident has or had a child or a grandchild at school; thus, school plays an important role in the studied rural communities, regardless of ethnicity.

Love of learning is also manifested because of the desire to enter city life, where the person hopes to find a job often

associated with the rise of living standards. Books and school meant access to culture, but also the hope to find a job, a better living, according to the saying, "Ai carte, ai parte" (You have learning, you have everything). School also signifies a place where one's own culture is preserved. There are some proverbs that the inhabitants of the studied communities tell their children whenever it comes to school: "The man with no science adorned is like the ungrafted tree"; "Books maketh man and the graft, the tree"; "Honey flows from the mouth of the learned"; "Whoever does not learn attracts evil."

The City Hall, as a local institution of power, faces new problems. When the mayor is elected, the personality of the man who represents the village is not taken into account, but it is done according to other criteria.

The model of the mayor- the first man in the village, is no longer "trendy" (FM, 67 years), now "the one who steals is rich" (FM, 67 years) and it is not a model to follow. From this perspective, it can be said that the maintenance of a scale of values in the life of the village arose from the belief that "better poor and honest than rich and unable to sleep at night" (F. M., 67 years). Poverty is associated with honor, so thieves are rich, and stealing is considered a sin. Village people retain their faith and do not conceive other ways of enrichment, except through work.

If, once, the elite of the village was formed of people who were raised in the countryside, who had not forgotten their village, who had done something for it, nowadays, those who represent the village are not regarded with a lot of respect for what they do. This lack of respect has several explanations, namely: they do not live in the village but they commute from the city (teachers, doctors, priests); do not do their job as well as everybody wishes, that is, in the interest of the village people; there is no concordance between words and deeds, that

is, they say something during the electoral campaigns and they forget to do it after they have been chosen.

We can talk about the elders of villages, regardless of ethnicity, as a special category of rural communities. They represent the village, being the majority, and, thanks to them, in some villages, tradition endures. Their problems are not only material, but also social. The small pensions they get from the C.A.P. (Agricultural Production Cooperatives), as well as the inability to work the land, their health problems make many of them regret the past they associate with the time they were still able to work. The elders of the village were valued in the past, they were the wise men of the village, being consulted on diverse problems. Now, in this modern society, one of knowledge, which has entered the village world, he who has studied a lot is considered wise, the more years you have spent in school, the better you are considered to be (LP, 75 years old).

3. Attitudes towards work and traditional occupations

Land has represented in the studied communities a factor of stability for all inhabitants, favoring the development of social life in this area. After the 1989 Revolution, when people were given back their land taken by force by the Communist regime, people believed in the possibility of prosperity for country folk. Few people, however, are currently working on their own the hectares of land they got back, most of them give the land to the various farm associations and receive a yearly sum of money or some products. It is one of the simplest forms of "practicing agriculture" in the studied areas.

Village people's attitude towards work is expressed in several traits such as: diligence, laziness, helpfulness. These are found in the following proverbs: "It's at work where you see the real man"; "What you can do today do not leave for tomorrow"; "The working

peasant is proclaimed as a ruler"; "I'm ashamed that you are not ashamed"; "Lion at the feast and bull at work"; "Many hands make work easier"; "Craft is a golden bracelet"; "Your work puts food on your table".

Animal husbandry, farming, masonry, shoe mending, cheese making, bee-keeping were the main occupations in the studied communities. Unfortunately, nowadays, due to the aging of the villages and the departure of young people to the city, there are too few inhabitants who practice these occupations. For example, horseshoe making or smithmanship have not been practiced for some time, due to the fact that too few people still have horses and old machinery whose components must be sharpened or beaten. Another obsolete occupation is putting rubber soles on crochet wool slippers, job that used to be done by the village "Shushter"/shoemaker.

4. Conclusions

The mayor, the priest, the teacher, the doctor are no longer models to follow.

People go on holding the belief that it's better to be honest and poor than rich and unable to sleep at night.

Poverty is associated with honor, and stealing is considered a sin. The former personalities of the village, mentioned above, are just passers-by.

The low remuneration in the village makes them look for better paid jobs in the city.

Even if, in the past, land represented a stability factor for the residents of the studied villages, now there are very few people who work it. It is mostly leased, and villagers receive, agricultural products or money in return.

Occupations from the past have long vanished in the darkness of the past.

The elders of the villages are a cultural source for those who have "ears and time" to listen to them.

Although today's schoolchildren are considered to be more learned, this is not always the case, as old people have the school of life that no modern education system can substitute with transmitted knowledge.

References

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