

## **TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS IN THE ROMANIAN SPACE. CASE STUDY OLCEA MUNICIPALITY, BIHOR COUNTY ROMANIA**

**Marius ILE**

School No. 2, Călăcea, Bihor County, Romania, e-mail: [ile.marius@uoradea.ro](mailto:ile.marius@uoradea.ro)

**Grigore Vasile HERMAN \***

University of Oradea, Faculty of Geography, Tourism and Sport, Department of Geography, Tourism and Territorial Planning, 1 Universitatii Street, 410087, Oradea, Romania, e-mail: [filimonpunct@yahoo.fr](mailto:filimonpunct@yahoo.fr)

**Mariana Laura HERMAN**

Iosif Vulcan National College, 3 Jean Calvin Street, Oradea, Romania,  
e-mail: [lauralacatos@yahoo.com](mailto:lauralacatos@yahoo.com)

**Cristina Marina ILE**

School No. 2, Călăcea, Bihor County, Romania, e-mail: [ile.cris81@yahoo.com](mailto:ile.cris81@yahoo.com)

**Citation:** Ile, M., Herman, G.V., Herman, L.M., & Ile, C.M. (2022). Traditions and Customs in the Romanian Space. Case Study Olcea Municipality, Bihor County Romania. *Revista Română de Geografie Politică*, 24(2), 82-93. <https://doi.org/10.30892/rrgp.242106-358>

**Abstract:** From the appearance of man on Earth until now, his most important concern has been (and is) to understand the world. A decisive role in this sense is played by culture, which represents the specific way of human existence. The curiosity of the spirit, the thirst to learn and understand makes this heritage to be passed on from one generation to another, to live it as a new experience, according to one's own possibilities, but at the same time to be passed on as a heritage to the new ones generations. In this context, the purpose of this study is to share with the whole world the cultural aspects specific to the Olcea Commune area, aspects that characterize us as a community. The present research aims to discover some of these aspects (a legacy embodied in myths, ceremonies, songs and charms, in the notches made on the wood of agricultural tools, etc.), in order to pass them on to the next generations. Thus, the obtained results highlighted and outlined a synthetic picture of the main traditions and customs in Olcea commune, Bihor county, Romania.

**Key words:** traditions, customs, Bihor County,

\* \* \* \* \*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The traditions and customs of human collectivities represent an invaluable storehouse of specific human values, values that have been created, tested and

---

\* Corresponding Author

validated over time, in terms of human-nature communion (Herman et al., 2020a; Ilieș et al., 2008, 2009, 2010, 2017a). Thus, through all that it represents, traditions are nothing more than methods, ways of proceeding of man in relation to the other components of the environment, while customs are the immediate actions, during the life of a generation, they are being directed into a great extent by the informational component of the traditions and the concrete, momentary possibilities offered by the natural environment. Having said that, it follows that between traditions and customs there is a direct relationship of interconditioning, thus the change of traditions automatically requires the change of objects, which in turn involve new flows of information, matter and energy without which there is no change. Considering the changing nature of the environment, which is in a continuous process of transformation and change, as a result of the antagonistic struggles between the internal and external energies of the Earth, it is easy to understand that human traditions and customs are also defined by mutations and changes. The major problem, however, is the high speed of changes in terms of traditions and customs, which will lead to the disconnection of man from the component of the natural framework in which he naturally evolved over time (Herman et al., 2016a, b; Ilieș et al., 2014, 2017b, 2018). The context is favored by a series of factors, among which we can mention: the trend of numerical population growth; the increase in pressure induced by the large number of the population on the natural environment; the appearance of anthropogenic changes because of anthropogenic impact; consumption economy; globalization etc.

Although most of us perceive globalization as something negative/bad, I think it is not wrong to say that it is also a positive force for change (Herman and Grama, 2018; Herman, 2022). Global interaction offers new opportunities to discover people, places, to exchange ideas. And in this context, we recognize that in fact each of us has our own cultural identity, which we share with other people (Boc et al., 2022; Caciora et al., 2021a; Herman and Benchiș, 2017; Herman and Gherman, 2016; Herman and Wendt, 2011; Ilieș et al., 2020).

So, thanks to this interaction/globalization we were able to make known to the whole world the traditions and customs that we live and that make us who we are. Thanks to globalization, through our traditions and customs, millions of people were able to get to know our country, understand our culture or even fall in love with Romania. But so is the reverse, that is, due to the possibilities of travel and interaction, we have not only exported our traditions and customs, but imported new ones.

It must be emphasized, however, that the preservation of traditions and customs are very important because they have the role of putting a wall in the way of forgetting, they have the role of eliminating the challenges and disadvantages of globalization. Also, their role is to guide us through time, showing us where we come from and where we are going, a fact for which we must value them and pass them on to the generations to come (Ile et al., 2022).

Another aspect, equally important, is represented by the opportunity to exploit through tourism the traditions and customs specific to local communities in tourist destinations (Ezenagu, 2020; Stamboulis and Skayannis, 2003; Tien et al., 2019; etc). The area of Bihor County represents a tourist space in a process of deep transformations, against the background of the intensification of specific tourism activities. Against this background, the numerous studies on tourism and the possibilities of valorizing traditions and customs through tourism, seen

as elements of local identity, stand out (Ban et al., 2021; Bădulescu et al., 2014; Caciora et al., 2021b; Herman et al., 2019, 2020a,b,c; 2021; Wendt et al., 2021; Tătar et al., 2020).

In this context, the aim of the present study is to identify, analyze and record the traditions and customs of Olcea commune, Bihor County, Romania.

Olcea commune is in the south of Bihor County, between the Crișul Negru and Crișul Alb rivers, in the Western Plain, in the historical region of Crișana, at the foot of the Codru Moma piedmont, being made up of four localities: Olcea (the seat of the commune), Călăcea (with the largest number of inhabitants), Ucuriș and Hodișel (Ile et al., 2022). From an administrative point of view, it borders the territorial administrative units: Tinca (to the north), Cociuba Mare (to the northeast), Șoimi (to the southeast), Craiva from Arad County (to the south), Apateu and Batar (in west) (Ile et al., 2022).

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is the result of research activities - documentation both in the specialized literature and in the field. In the field, a series of introspections, unstructured interviews of the type of free discussions on the topic of traditions and customs were carried out with older local representatives who know well the studied problem from personal experience (Table 1). The discussions took place in 2018, in their households. The information acquired in this way was structured, organized and used in order to carry out this study. Although in some places they include a dose of subjectivism (due to the human nature of the issuer, being influenced by emotions, feelings, etc.), the information obtained in this way is important in terms of shaping a synthetic picture of local traditions and customs.

**Table 1.** List of consulted persons

No. Crt.	Name and surname	Localities	Gender	Age
1	Ana Sabău	Călăcea	female	81
2	Mărioară Râpan	Călăcea	female	70
3	Cornelia Păcurar	Călăcea	female	60
4	Moisă Mic	Călăcea	male	79
5	Mărioară Mic	Călăcea	female	71
6	Gheorghe Mihăeș	Călăcea	male	49
7	Teodor Ile	Călăcea	male	73
8	Ana Ile	Călăcea	female	72
9	Nicolae Ciucea	Călăcea	male	68
10	Gheorghe Gomboș	Călăcea	male	72
12	Ana Ștean	Călăcea	female	81
13	Mic Teodor	Călăcea	male	81
14	Mic Ana	Călăcea	female	79

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The rural community presents a wide range of manifestations with a strong spiritual character, in a repeatable way. An important role in the transmission of these traditions and customs was played by the oral tradition, so that from generation to generation, the traditions were passed on, undergoing small changes, depending on the era. Traditional customs, both those that mark the transition

from one year to another, called calendar customs, predominantly agrarian, and those that accompany the crucial stages of human life: birth, marriage, death - show many similarities at the level of the entire country (Crăciun, 2018).

### **Traditions and customs throughout the year**

They are represented by those traditions and customs related to church holidays and agricultural work, in which the whole community participates (Ardelean, 2018). The most important holiday of Christianity is the Resurrection of the Savior (Easter). Eagerly awaited by children, prepared with great care by adults, Easter represents the victory of good over evil, i.e. the dose of energy that a community needs, to move forward, to hope that it will be better. Holy Week (the week before Easter) is a very important one. This week starts with cleaning the house (spring cleaning); clothes are washed, interior items are painted (doors, kitchen cabinets), cracks in the walls are repaired (with clay), the exterior walls of the house are painted. The trees in front of the house are painted white, so that the village receives a new, fresh air of renewal (the return to life together with nature) (Ana Sabău, 2018).

On Good Friday, the entire community fasts (no food and no water), including young children. Of course, they can't fast all day, so a bean soup is boiled for them. In the evening, the eggs are usually dyed red. In the past, there weren't as many solutions for dyeing eggs as there are today, so onion skins were used, and older women used to coat the eggs with wax. Also, for a greater variety of egg decoration, leaves from different plants (clover, mouse tail, rose, etc.) were used. The procedure was simple and involved placing the leaves on eggshells, then placing them in a lycra stocking and boiling them in water with onion skins. In the end, the shape of the leaf remained printed on the egg, thus obtaining motifs of floral decoration applied to the eggs (Mărioara Răpan, 2018).

Also on Good Friday, the Easter lamb is sacrificed, and those who cannot afford a lamb, buy a lamb together with their neighbor (or relatives). On the evening of Holy Saturday, the whole community participates in the resurrection service. With candles lit, everyone surrounds the church at midnight, heralding the triumph of life over death.

In the old days, on Easter morning, children went from house to house "after eggs", with the "straita" on their shoulders, greeting "Christ is risen!", and the host answers them. "He is truly risen!". Each child received a red egg (Ardelean, 2018).

At noon, the children meet in the center of the village (in front of the school, which is opposite the church) and organize a kind of egg-scrambler contest to see who has the strongest egg. On the second and third day of Easter, the whole community celebrates by attending the religious service. So, from Good Friday until the Tuesday after Easter (inclusive), fieldwork is suspended.

Christmas is the other great Christian holiday. Preparation for this celebration begins at the beginning of December. In the weeks before Christmas, another traditional (Romanian) custom takes place, which is highly respected, the slaughtering of the pig (Ignatul), pork products (especially sausages).

In the week before Christmas, the table is prepared for the celebration. Braided cakes are baked, "cakes" are made, and in the evening of Eve, the streets of the village are full of carolers. The children's carol mentions the expected gifts: "Black chick put it in the bag / Hostess, give me a "colac" / Don't

give me a small one / Because I'm cold / Give me a big one / I like it / like a plow wheel / Fills the baby's throat" (Crăciun, 2018).

Another carol that expresses the feeling of solidarity and hospitality of the Ucuriș people sounds like this: "Daybreak pours / Leave us the host in the house / It's pouring rain outside / Good morning to Christmas / And his shirt is thin / And the rain passes through it / Good morning to Christmas / Good morning to Christmas in "târnaț" / And he gives us some sausage / And a penny for the coat / Because the shirt is not warm" (Ardelean, 2018).

In the village of Ucuriș, on Christmas day, after the Holy Liturgy, the young people's caroling begins at the priest's house, continues at the mayor's and the teachers, and then at all the houses. Upon entering the house, they greet each other with "Christ is born!" and are greeted with "Truth is born!" of host. After the end of the carol, the host offers gifts, cakes, palinka, apples and nuts. At the departure, the carolers thank the host: "Thank you to our host / He is hardworking and beautiful / It was a good meal / A bottle gives a rattle / Taken it gives a beam / May God speak / The house, the table and the garden / Let us not longing / Cross-in-house, cross-in-table / Be a healthy host / We are going to another house" (Ardelean, 2018).

Another time, equally important and full of meanings for the local community is the New Year. On New Year's Eve, the children go with the "sorcova" and the plow, announcing the end of the old year and the beginning of the new year, wishing the host health and prosperity: "Happy "sorcova" / May you live, bloom / Like an apple, like a hair / Like a strand of rose / Happy birthday and happy birthday". For this, the host offers money to the children as thanks.

Since the agricultural calendar is very important in the village world, and because there were no weather forecasts (or at least they were not known in the village), there was a ritual for predicting the weather (from the perspective of agricultural work), the "onion calendar". 12 leaves were taken from an onion (each corresponding to a month of the year) in which salt was put. In the ones where the water collected, there was going to be a rainy month (coincidence or not, there were also sheets where the salt didn't even get wet, that meant drought). For this prediction to be valid, it had to be made only on New Year's Eve (Cornelia Păcurar, 2018).

In the village of Călăcea there was a custom (today it has disappeared) called "Turca", a kind of "Goat" nowadays. Thus, two people would dress up as an animal with a beak, which the locals called "Turca", doing all kinds of dances and jumps, after which "the beak yawns" and you had to throw money into it. Those who did not throw money were bitten or had their hats thrown from their heads. The most awaited moment was the shooting of the "Turca". Two men "armed" with a wooden rifle pretended to shoot him. To make the scene as believable as possible, there was also a hunter firing a real rifle into the air while the two pretended to shoot him. The "Turca" would fall as if dead and then the mourning would begin, until he woke up (Moisă Mic, 2018).

Among the superstitions related to the New Year, we mention: the "obligation" to have money in your pocket; the obligation to wear something (clothing) red; on the first day of the year in the householders' house, the girls are forbidden to enter in front of the boys because they bring bad luck; also on the first day of the year nothing is thrown/taken out of the house, as luck is thrown /taken out.

A beautiful custom that is still preserved today on these winter holidays is the reconciliation and reunion of families.

The winter holidays end with Epiphany on January 6. Before this date, the "priest goes with the cross" to sanctify the houses, accompanied by two children dressed in white clothes, who walk in front of the priest with "țângălău", singing "Jordan" to announce the arrival of the priest.

On Epiphany, unmarried girls put basil under their pillow, so that at night they dream of their future husband. In the old days, to know what the future husband will look like, the girls, fasting on the eve of the Epiphany, gathered at the house of a villager who was waiting for them with a "blid" (plate). Under it was a symbolic object: bread, money, coal, etc. The host invited the girls to choose one. The girl who found bread would have a husband as good as bread, the one who found money would have a rich husband, and the girl who found coal would have a brunette husband (Crăciun, 2018).

De Sânjorj (St. Gheorghe) – April 23, boys and men water girls to marry and barren women, as an act of purification and fecundity.

On the first Saturday, after the start of Great Lent, Sântoaderul is celebrated, on which occasion wheat is boiled and eaten sweetened with sugar. In the old days, it was a long-awaited moment of spring and "I remember sitting with the plate and waiting for my mother to put us boiled wheat" (Gheorghe Mihăeș, 2018).

During the holidays there are many superstitions such as: on Christmas, New Year's and Epiphany, money is put in the water where you wash; who sleeps on the New Year, the whole year will be sleepy; if it snows on New Year's Eve, it will be a rich year; whoever drinks water from "țângălău", when the priest walks with the cross, will have a beautiful voice, etc. (Crăciun, 2018).

## **Customs and traditions related to important moments in human life**

### **Marriage – Wedding**

This event targets not only the two brides and grooms, but also their families, involving the whole community. It is a joy of the whole community, all citizens participating (to some extent) in this beginning of the road in the life of the newlyweds.

In the past, young people married very early, girls at 14-16 (at 20-25 they were considered old girls), and boys at 16-18 (after 30 it was said that only their daughters married them) (Cioș, 2018).

In a world where the main means of meeting was the "șezătoarea" or "claca", this was also the place where young people met. Unmarried girls went "with a pitchfork" in the evening to a host, and boys came to them "on the street". It was the place where the flirting started, where the boy got a kiss, at the "fountains" game (Moisă Mic, 2018).

When the boy left the lounge, the girl he was flirting with would follow him "to spend his time". They had a few intimate moments of "yes, not too many, the host was coming, if he was too late." When the boys who didn't have any sympathy left, the girls had to go out one by one, "to party" and "every boy she went out after had to be kissed" (Mărioara Mic, 2018).

If the young people agreed to marry (that is, the boy asked her to be his wife), the boy's family came to visit the girl's family, to fix other details of the marriage. It was a special moment, in which the girl's family had to organize a meal in honor of the occasion. There were also situations where the parents of

the young people did not agree with the marriage between the two. In these situations, most of them went over the will of their families (Teodor Ile, 2018).

Later, the parents, out of shame or because the girl became pregnant, welcomed them home. A funny episode happened at a religious wedding service, when the bride was pregnant, and the priest said, "may the Lord give the fruit of the womb" and the husband replied "he is, he is the father" (Moisă Mic, 2018).

Invitations to the wedding were made verbally, by people dressed in folk costumes, on horseback. Today, at Baptist weddings, the invitation was made at the Assembly (Baptist Church), and all those who wanted to participate were invited. Later, these methods are abandoned, the two young people personally going "to the Gentiles" to invite them (Ana Ile, 2018).

The preparation of the wedding table started on Monday, when the women brought: flour, eggs, nuts, cabbage, chickens, etc. Starting on Thursday, the women came to help prepare the dishes, noodles, bread, cakes, etc. On the morning of the wedding, the village girls would gather at the bride's house and help her dress. While they were cooking it, the bride's hora was sung.

On the wedding day, the groom's guests went to the bride's house. At the gate they were stopped by the bride's guests, and there a dialogue was taking place. The first told what they had come for, and the others introduced another girl or an old woman, with her head covered. After several negotiations, they "reconciled", giving each other something to drink (Cios, 2018).

After a short feast, the procession went to the church. They went before the bride and groom singing, dancing and rejoicing. At the church, most people stayed outside, where they continued to dance and sing, which mostly had nothing to do with the wedding: "your priest and ours / he was a great man" (Moisă Mic, 2018).

From the church to the house (where the party was taking place), those who came out to see the wedding were delighted, with shouts manufactured on the spot: "That's the playful girl / With trash by the door" or "That's a girl who gives a lot / You don't know how to put it in a bowl / From the door to the table / When she takes it all-over", and another says "How many tutes, how many mutes / All with leading men / You're the only one proud of yourself / You don't have a man, it's a shame" (Nicolae Ciucea, 2018).

Also on the way home, the street connects. In the middle of the road were two people disguised as "jamdarmis" with wooden rifles. When the procession reached them, he stopped them on the spot, on the grounds that there was a border and they could not cross until they spoke to their "emperor". Then a carriage was pushed along the road in which was a man sitting on a seat (throne), dressed as an emperor. After several negotiations, they passed, after the newlyweds paid the customs in the palinca. Sometimes they fought (Gheorghe Gomboș, 2018). This custom has been preserved to this day but has undergone some changes; The street is tied with string, with children and the godfathers give them money, without negotiations.

The actual party took place at the groom's house, if the weather was nice in the yard, if not, in the 2 rooms of the house. The "menu" consisted of "chicken soup", the second course of mashed potatoes, sarmales, "curichi" with meat, cabbage soup. The most common "cakes" were string cake with poppy, nut or shell, and the bride's cake was not even known. The children did not sit at the table, they each received a slice of colac corda and played outside (Teodor Mic, 2018).

The wedding gift usually consisted of various household items or clothes; very little money was offered (only the family). Mic Moisă remembers that he received a "chimeşe" (shirt) as a gift from the "nanny", and his wife (Mic Mărioăra) received a cloth (handkerchief), and the two families collected 100 lei.

Usually, until they built a house, the two stayed with the groom's family (very few had their own house), where there were also 2-3 daughters-in-law. This is very interesting because "then 3-4 daughters-in-law could live in the same house with their mother-in-law, today they cannot fit in a village" (Moisă Mic, 2018).

A more special case, from the point of view of marriage, was that of Pecu (Little Peter) who, after the wedding party, took his wife home (he had a household), after which he ran away with Dele Juji. Pecu remained single and never married again (Ana Mic, 2018).

The scale and importance of the wedding are very well represented by the numerous songs on this occasion: "White dress bride / You are dear to my father / Just to the ugly mother / But that woman married you"; "My dear bride / When will your mother-in-law be bad / Sweep the house with her / When your sister is bad / Lock in the barn / And close the doors / Lest the flies eat him"; "As long as you were at my mother's place, my mouth ate the cakes and my cheeks were rosy / But since you married me, my mouth eats courses and my cheek slaps and punches"; "Play well, it doesn't hurt you / Or you don't play with who you like / Because with whom you like / You would play but don't get married"; "This girl plays well / And teaches me too / This girl knows how to play, her mother teaches her"; "What a little girl / Jump up like a frog / After the hoe he does not stoop / After the hoe the need tramples it"; "Don't hit me with your hip / It will break my legs / Not even those legs / That break from the thighs"; "This girl knows how to play, because her mother was beaten / At school at Tinca, Dance with "Măria", Don't wait for her to say, that "Măria" is ashamed / If you play it, she likes it"; "Green leaf of risk / The bride after nimash / Green sheet of mulberry / Junele is cackling"; "Come on, don't try to pass me / Because you'll give me your kiss to rub it on me / Legs give ears"; "For a vine that gives oats, put the penance down / For a vine that gives poor, take the penance again"; "Repent, repent, yes, people don't leave me / When I go to assembly 2 o 3 get in my way"; etc (Ana Mic, 2018).

### **Birth and baptism**

They are essential moments in terms of family consolidation, in which the family and the community participated. The fear of the unknown, as everyone wanted a child healthy in body and mind, led young mothers to follow a series of superstitions: pregnant women should not kick the cat, because he who loves kittens loves children too ; if you put salt on the head of a pregnant young woman, without her knowing, and first put your hand on her nose, a boy will be born, and if you put your hand on her mouth, it will be a girl; don't tell a child who hasn't started talking "shut up", that he will remain mute; friday is good for weaning children etc. (Crăciun, 2018).

The birth was assisted by midwives (without education), who cut the "umbilical cord" and for 6 weeks came every day to wash the baby and see the mother. Because there was not much medical knowledge, the cleansing of the woman (removal of the placenta) was done slowly and over a longer period. Until she was cleansed, she was considered "unclean" and was not allowed to enter the church, therefore at the baptism, the godmother was the one who took the



child in front of the priest to baptize him. The water from the child's bath had to be thrown in the same place (where no one steps, until the baptism) or among the flowers, so that it would be as beautiful as the flowers. A red thread was tied to her hand to protect it from prying eyes. If the child was "blind-eyed", the mother or grandmother put 9 pieces of coal to put out in a cup of water, after each coal she put her right hand on the mouth of the glass, plugging it and holding her breath. With that water, the child was made the sign of the cross on his forehead and given to drink from it (Ana Ștean, 2018).

In the Orthodox church, the child is baptized in water, in the font, by immersion, witnessed by the godparents, who also testify on behalf of the child. When returning home, at the entrance, the godmother said three times "we went pagans and came Christians" (Crăciun, 2018).

In the Baptist Church, also at 6 weeks, the child is taken to the blessing, a prayer in which the pastor, the parents and the church ask for God's blessing on the child, he will receive baptism at an adult age, on his own initiative, when he can confess on his own baptism (Mic Teodor, 2018).

### **Death and burial**

The feeling of deep sadness and bitterness towards the missing, deceased is reflected on the funeral, when the relatives (family) of the deceased mourn and mourn. Although man is aware that life has an end, death is not expected in the same way as marriage or birth, because there is fear of the unknown, of what is beyond death. On the verge of death, the family members resort to various charms, as a cure, so that the sick person recovers, and if not, they call the priest (to pray for him and to confess him) to facilitate his passage to the afterlife (Crăciun, 2018).

As soon as he dies, the deceased is placed (on the hearth) and a candle is lit on his head (Baptists do not have this practice), to light his way to the underworld. The news spreads by notifying relatives, neighbors and the priest (for Baptists), and for the Orthodox, the bells are rung with one interruption if a child has died, with two interruptions if a woman has died and three interruptions for a man. The mirrors are turned to the wall so that the dead cannot be seen and the ghost of the dead can come without harming the living; the body is washed, dressed in new clothes and placed in the coffin. A white cloth is placed over the crossed hands, to have something to wipe the other world with, and a wax cross in the palms, a sign that he is a Christian, and a cloth is placed over the dead (Crăciun, 2018). From the date of death until the funeral, there is a vigil in which the close ones dress in black (mourning) and mourn their dead: "why did you die, ha, you didn't have a house, and what did you eat", "Wait, mother, in the detour / Let the empty carriage go / Your house, your detour / Without you, it's bad", "Mother, your new house / How to break the beam in two / There are two beams left / God take care of them / How does today and tomorrow / There is only one trace of you left / A single trace around the corner / Where did you put your bare foot" (collected from Hodișel by professor Mistor Ioan).

In the vigils of the Baptist community, after the vigil service, officiated by the parish priest, religious songs are sung until about midnight, after which only the family and very few relatives remain, who keep vigil until the morning. Regardless of religious denomination, the entire community is present at the vigil. Today, vigils are held at the mortuary chapel, and after the priest finishes

the service, around midnight, the dead person is locked in the chapel and everyone, including the family, goes home. On the third day after the death, the funeral service took place. In Călăcea, at the baptists, the service was held in the courtyard of the house (since the deceased was not allowed to enter the church, being considered unclean for the "Temple of God"), after which he was led on the last road to the Cemetery. Usually, the sermon draws the attention of the audience that man must prepare for the meeting with the Creator, because death can strike at any time, and this must be done while man is alive, because after death everything is in vain. At the pit, the pastor reminds those present that "we are dust and to dust we will return" (explanations of the Baptist pastor Mic Teodor, parish priest of the Călăcea Baptist Church).

In the Orthodox tradition, when the deceased is taken out of the house (feet first), upon crossing the threshold, the coffin is lowered and raised three times, and the doors close and open three times behind the dead (opening the way to the world of shadows). So that the dead person does not know to come home, the table (or chairs) on which the coffin was placed is turned, with the legs up. The lifeless body is then taken to the church, where the priest officiates the religious service and the singers sing the choir of the dead. From the church, the dead is taken to the cemetery. At the cemetery, money is thrown into the pit, so that the dead have something to pay their 24 air taxes, and as a sign of alms, a hen is given over the coffin to children from needy families. Also, there were cases when the tools and tools of the deceased were deposited in the pit, so as not to come after them. The priest said the prayer for sealing the grave and the coffin is covered with earth (Ardelean, 2018). On behalf of the family, the priest invites the participants to the "alms of the dead", with food and drink.

Other customs and beliefs "sântarea" or "sorozașul" (a custom regarding army recruitment), "strâgoii" (who carried the milk from the cows); "to step on the wrong side" (if you walked through the forest at night you had every chance to step on the wrong side), etc. The lack of knowledge and information was ensured by these popular beliefs, which basically tried to explain the unknown.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The most important annual holidays are Easter, Christmas, Sânjorju, Sântoaderul, etc. On these and not only, the Calacean community developed a series of customs and beliefs, some common to the entire Romanian space, others specific only here. As for the main moments in a person's life, as everywhere else, they stand out for the scale of their manifestations and significance: wedding, birth and baptism, and passing away.

Traditions and customs in the Romanian space abound depending on the geographical area, religious beliefs, ethnicity and historical past. Such a geographical space is also represented by the Commune of Olcea, where traditions and customs acquire a special value. These cultural values are valuable for the local community, representing at the same time a way of seeing and understanding the world (Manea et al., 2013; Otovescu and Parlea, 2021). Thus, the rural world tried to explain everything that was happening in the community, at the level of rural understanding, that is, by correlating events with religious life, thus giving rise to a series of myths, superstitions, ceremonies, songs and carols, symbolic meanings transformed by - over time in traditions and customs that dictated the course of events in human life, even "governed" the social life of the community.

## REFERENCES

- Ardelean, P. (2007). *Terra Ucrus: pământul Ucuriș: contribuții monografice [Terra Ucrus: the land of Ucuriș: monographic contributions]*, Editura Universității din Oradea.
- Bădulescu, A., Bădulescu, D., & Borma, A. (2014). Enhancing cross-border cooperation through local actors' involvement. The case of tourism cooperation in Bihor (Romania)–Hajdú-Bihar (Hungary) Euroregion. *Lex Localis-Journal of Local Self-Government*, 12(3), 349-371.
- Ban, O., Hatos, A., Droj, L., & Toderașcu, C. (2021). Investigating the image of the Bihor tourist destination among Romanians in the context of increasing economic indicators of tourist activity. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 9002. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13169002>
- Boc, E., Filimon, A. L., Mancia, M. S., Mancia, C. A., Josan, I., Herman, M. L., ... & Herman, G. V. (2022). Tourism and Cultural Heritage in Beiuș Land, Romania. *Heritage*, 5(3), 1734-1751.
- Caciora, T., Herman, G. V., Ilieș, A., Baias, Ș., Ilieș, D. C., Josan, I., & Hodor, N. (2021a). The use of virtual reality to promote sustainable tourism: A case study of wooden churches historical monuments from Romania. *Remote Sensing*, 13(9), 1758.
- Caciora, T., Herman, G.V., Baias, S. (2021b). Computer Analysis of a Heritage Item – Traditiona Sheepskin Waistcoat in Beiuș Area. *Revista de Etnografie și Folclor / Journal Of Ethnography And Folklore*, (1-2), 195-209.
- Cios, T. (2003). *Istorie, oameni și locuri din Comuna Olcea [History, people and places from Olcea Commune]*, Editura Buna Vestire, Beius.
- Crăciun P. (2014). *Folclorul tradițional. Sărbători și obiceiuri, în volumul, Monografia Comunei Olcea [Traditional folklore. Holidays and customs, in the volume, Olcea Commune Monograph]*, Editura Arca, Oradea.
- Ezenagu, N. (2020). Heritage resources as a driver for cultural tourism in Nigeria. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 7(1), 1734331. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2020.1734331>
- Herman G.V, Wendt J. (2011), Development and promotion of tourism, an extra chance in maintaining and asserting the identity and specificity of Oas Land. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 7(1), 87-94.
- Herman, G. V., & Benchiș, L. B. (2017). Fairs, forms of expression of the local identity. Case study: Beiuș fair, Bihor County, Romania. *Analele Universității din Oradea, Seria Geografie*, 27(1), 108-113.
- Herman, G. V., Caciora, T., Dumbravă, R., Sonko, S. M., Berdenov, Z. G., Safarov, R. Z., & Ungureanu, M. (2019). Geographical considerations regarding the tourist information and promotion centers from Bihor county, Romania. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 27(4), 1439-1448.
- Herman, G. V., Banto, N., Caciora, T., Ungureanu, M., Furdui, S., Grama, V., ... & Buhas, S. (2020a). Tourism in Bihor County, Romania. Trends and Prospects. *Folia Geographica*, 62(2), 87-105.
- Herman, G. V., Grama, V., Sonko, S. M., Boc, E., Băican, D., Garai, L. D., ... & Peptenatu, D. (2020b). Online information premise in the development of Bihor tourist destination, Romania. *Folia Geographica*, 62(1), 21-34.
- Herman, G. V., Ilieș, D. C., Dehoorne, O., Ilieș, A., Sambou, A., Caciora, T., ... & Lăzuran, A. (2020c). Emitter and tourist destination in Romania. *Baltic Journal of Health and Physical Activity*, 12(5), 120-138.
- Herman, G. V., Banto, N., Caciora, T., Ungureanu, M., Furdui, S., Garai, L. D., & Grama, V. (2021). The Perception of Bihor Mountain Tourist Destination, Romania. *Geographia Polonica*, 94(4), 573-587.
- Herman, G. V., Grama, V. (2018). Geographical Aspects of Space-Time Evolution of Independent States. *Revista Română de Geografie Politică*, 20(2), 49-56.
- Herman, G. V., Ilieș, D. C., Baias, Ș., Măduța, M. F., Ilieș, A., Wendt, J., & Josan, I. (2016a). The tourist map, scientific tool that supports the exploration of protected areas, Bihor County, Romania. *GeoSport for Society*, 4(1), 24-32.
- Herman, G. V., Ilieș, D. C., Măduța, M. F., Ilieș, A., Gozner, M., Buhaș, R., & Mihók-Géczi, I. M. T. (2016b). Approaches regarding the importance of Natura 2000 sites' settings pupil's education through geography. Case study: Valea Rose (Red Valley) Natura 2000, Bihor county, Romania. *Journal of Geography, Politics and Society*, 6(4), 57-62.
- Herman, G.V. (2022). The Man Between Regionalization and Globalization. *Revista Română de Geografie Politică*, 24(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.30892/rrgp.241101-352>
- Herman, G.V., & Gherman, V. (2016). Identification, quantification and analysis of the ethnographic potential of folk songs specific to Bihor, Romania. *Analele Universității din Oradea, Seria Geografie*, 26(2), 261-267.
- Ile, M., Filimon, C.A., Herman, L.M., & Ile, C.M. (2022). Elements of Local Identity in the Romanian Rural Space. Study Case Olcea Commune, Bihor County. *Revista Română de Geografie Politică*, 24(1), 10-21. <https://doi.org/10.30892/rrgp.241102-353>
- Ilieș, D. C., Buhas, R., Ilies, M., Ilies, A., Gaceu, O., Pop, A. C., ... & Baias, S. (2018). Sport activities

- and leisure in Nature 2000 protected area–Red Valley, Romania. *Journal of Environmental Protection and Ecology*, 19(1), 367-372.
- Ilieș, A., Ilieș, D. C., Josan, I., Grama, V., & Gozner, M. (2008). Romanian Rural Tourism between authentic/traditional and modern/contemporary. The case of Crișana and Maramureș area (I). *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 2(2), 40-148.
- Ilieș, A., Ilieș, D. C., Josan, I., Grama, V., Herman, G., Gozner, M., ... & Stașac, M. (2009). Cosău Valley (Maramureș)–Evaluation of anthropic patrimony (I). *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 2(4), 203-216.
- Ilieș, A., (coordonator); Baias, S, Baias, I., Blaga, L., Buhaș, S., Chiriac, A., Ciocan, J., Dăncuș, M., Deac, A., Dragoș, P., Dumitrescu, G., Gaceu, O., Godea, I., Gozner, M., Grama, V., Herman, G., Hodor, N., Hurley, P., Ilieș, D., Ilieș, G., Ilieș, M., Josan, I., Leșe, G., Măduța, F., Mojolic, D., Morar, C., Olaru, M., Stașac, M., Stupariu, M., Sturza, A., Ștefănescu, B., Tătar, C., Vârnav, R., Vlaicu, M., & Wendt, J., (2014). *Crișana-Maramureș. Atlas geografic al patrimoniului turistic/ Geographical atlas of tourism heritage*, Editura Universității din Oradea.
- Ilieș, A., Ilieș, D. C., Tătar, C., & Ilieș, M. (2017a). *Geography of tourism in Romania*. In The Geography of Tourism of Central and Eastern European Countries (pp. 329-374). Springer, Cham.
- Ilieș, D. C., Baias, S., Buhaș, R., Ilieș, A., Herman, G. V., Gaceu, O., ... & Măduța, F. (2017b). Environmental education in protected areas. Case study from Bihor County, Romania. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 19(1), 126-132.
- Ilieș, A., Ilieș, G., Grama, V., & Herman, G. V. (2010). Sănnicolau Român (Bihor County, Romania)–model of capitalization through tourism of the Romanian authentic and traditional heritage. *Analele Universității din Oradea, Seria Geografie*, 20(2), 300-310.
- Ilieș, D.C., Herman, G.V., Caciara, T., Ilieș, A., Indrie, L., Wendt, J., Axinte, A., Diombera, M., Lite, C., Berdenov, Z., & Albu, A. (2020). *Considerations Regarding the Research for the Conservation of Heritage Textiles in Romania*. In Textile Industry and Waste. IntechOpen.
- Manea, G., Matei, E., Vijulie, I., Marin, M., Cocos, O., & Tiscovschi, A. (2013). Tradition and Modernity in the Romanian Rural Space. Case Study: the Arges Sub-Carpathian Foothills. *Eastern European Countryside*, 19, 127-152. <https://doi.org/10.2478/eec-2013-0007>
- Mistor I. *Contribuții monografice, manuscris, p. 23. Ioan Mistor, Contribuții monografice, manuscris [Monographic contributions, manuscript, p. 23. Ioan Mistor, Monographic contributions, manuscript]*, lucrare nepublicată, dar importantă resursă de inspirație, prima lucrare monografică despre localitățile comunei noastre. Lucrarea a fost realizată cu prilejul celui de-al XX lea congres al PCR, fiind închinată partidului (doar partea finală de economie, cultură și școală laudă realizările mărețe ale PCR.
- Otovescu, D., & Parlea, A. D. (2021). Customs and Traditional Values of the Macedonian Communities in Romania. *Rev. Universitara Sociologie*, 27(2), 32-39.
- Stamboulis, Y., & Skayannis, P. (2003). Innovation strategies and technology for experience-based tourism. *Tourism management*, 24(1), 35-43.
- Tătar, C. F., Studzieniecki, T., Czimre, K., & Penzes, J. (2020). Marketing awareness of crossborder destination-the case study of Bihor-Hajdu/Bihar Euroregion. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 28(1), 95-103. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.28107-454>
- Tien, N. H., Thai, T. M., Hau, T. H., Vinh, P. T., & Long, N. V. T. (2019). Solutions for Tuyen Quang and Binh Phuoc tourism industry sustainable development. Comparative analysis. *International Journal of Research in Marketing Management and Sales*, 2(1), 101-107.
- Wendt, J. A., Grama, V., Ilieș, G., Mikhaylov, A. S., Borza, S. G., Herman, G. V., & Bógdał-Brzezińska, A. (2021). Transport infrastructure and political factors as determinants of tourism development in the cross-border region of Bihor and Maramureș. A comparative analysis. *Sustainability*, 13(10), 5385.