

The Scientific Conference
of the Research Center for Heritage and Cultural Anthropology (RHeA)
Mediating differences through food memory: Several approaches on Regional Cultural Identity
5th edition, Timisoara, 30th June 2023, West University
(hybrid)

AGENDA

Thursday, 29 June 2023, room 223 & link day 1 [here](#)

17:00 – 19:00 **Reading on food: books & book reviews** (Chair: Diana Mihuț)

- Alex-Drace Francis, *The Making of Mămăligă: Transimperial Recipes for a Romanian National Dish*, Central European University Press, 2022 (presentation made by Dana Percec, West University of Timișoara)
- Violeta Kotseva (ed.), *Culinary Traditions and Cultural-historical Heritage in Small Settlements – Inventing, Exploiting, Promoting*, St. Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2023 (presentation made by Petya Grueva, University of Sofia)
- *Bornemisza Anna szakácskönyve 1680-ból (Cartea de bucate din 1680, a Annei Bornemisza)*, ediție îngrijită de Dr. Elemér Lakó, Editura Kriterion, București, 1983 (presentation made by Mihaela Bucin, University of Szeged)

Friday, 30 June 2023, room 223 & link day 2 [here](#)

09:00 – 09:30 **opening session** hosted by Otilia Hedeşan (West University of Timișoara) and Petko Hristov (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- Prof. Vladimir Penchev, Director of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
- Prof. Dana Percec, Head of the Council for Doctoral Education, West University of Timișoara
- H.E. Gheorghe Nakov, Honorary Consul of Bulgaria in Timisoara

09:30 – 11:00 **A topic under construction: Corpus of Romanian culinary traditions** (Chair: Otilia Hedeşan)

- Cosmina Timocea – Mocanu, Sextil Puscariu Institute of Linguistics and Literary History, Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, *The culinary novelty - what and how do people narrate on this topic today? Examples and remarks*
- Mihaela Călinescu, “Alexandru și Aristia Aman” Library from Craiova – Romanian Exile Institute, *Romanian Writers in Exile. Texts and food related fragments*
- Petronela Savin, “Vasile Alecsandri” University from Bacău, *Terminologia culinară populară. Aspecte patrimoniale și culturale / Traditional Culinary Terminology. A cultural approach*

11:15 – 12:45 **Negotiating identity: migration and culinary heritage** (Chair: Petko Hristov)

- Ivaylo Markov, Violeta Periklieva, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Navigating Foodscapes: A Study of Food Adaptation among International Students in Bulgaria*
- Desislava Pileva, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Tastes beyond Borders: Negotiating Food Habits and Identity within Intercultural Families*

- Amandine Leporc, West University of Timișoara / University of Pau, *De l'immigration à l'intégration : une évolution des pratiques culinaires traditionnelles d'une famille italienne*

12:45 – 14:30 lunch break

14:30 – 16:00 **Eating together: meals as bridges between communities** (Chair: Ivaylo Markov)

- Petko Hristov, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Migration and Community – Village Kurban as a Common Table*
- Niya Spasova, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Transformations in daily life and food under the influence of modernization in the first decades of the 20th century in Bulgaria*
- Mila Maeva, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, *Food and Care of Left-behind in Bulgaria*

16:15 – 17:45 **Pachetul 2.0 / Package 2.0 / Пакет 2.0** (Chair: Cosmina Timocea Mocanu)

- Sanda Ignat, Institute of Folklore Archive, Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, *An introduction: Package 1.0*
- Ioana Dorobanțu – Gordon, West University of Timișoara, *Food package(s). Case study 1: stories and storrtellers*
- Alina Negru, West University of Timișoara, *Food package(s). Case study 2: distribution networks*
- Diana Mihaș, West University of Timișoara, *Food package(s): Case study 3: useful or astonishing?*
- Dana Popeti, West University of Timișoara, *Legal framework: Package 2.0*

18:00 – 19:30 **Soups / Supe / Soupes / Супи** (moderator: Mihaela Bucin)

- Patricia Heiniger – Casteret, University of Pau, *La poule au pot du bon roi Henry*
- Corina Popa, Research Center for Heritage and Anthropology, *The kitchen as a battlefield for the defence of the national identity. The use of cultural arguments instead of weapons – the case of Ukrainian List of Intangible Cultural Heritage*
- Otilia Hedeşan, West University of Timișoara, *Preparing the perfect soup. Between family and community local know-how*

Abstracts:

CĂLINESCU, Mihaela, *Romanian Writers in Exile. Texts and food related fragments*

Abstract: Throughout the war, migration, revolution or food restrictions, people have always had to eat. This paper attempts to assemble the memories of home-cooked meals preserved in the minds of the Romanian exiles (M. Eliade, H. Vintilă, V. Cupșa, C. Brâncuși, V. Brauner, F. Mihali, L. Nichita, M. Milcovitch, Ș. Baci), during the communist regime. The present study also portrays the preferences of King Michael I of Romania for certain dishes. Furthermore, we identify and present a corpus of documents (memories, diaries, manuscripts, handwritten correspondence) and attempt an applied analysis on food text fragments of certain Romanian writers and artists from outside the country's borders. In this regard, the Romanian Book and Exile Museum, an innovative project in Craiova, a center for multidisciplinary research, hosts important funds and collections and seeks to reintegrate the national culture with the cultural heritage created beyond Romania's borders during the 45 years of communism.

HEDEȘAN, Otilia, *Preparing the Perfect Soup. Between Family and Community Local know-how*

Abstract: Current paper focuses on *soup* (rom. supă / reg. var. zupă), an essential dish of Romanian cuisine, wellknown especially in the western and north-western parts of Romania. Two sources were explored for this purpose: (a) a set of the author's own family memories and narratives about soup; (b) the corpus of food-related interviews (104 texts) produced as part of the FOODie project. A subjective and internal perception of the (romanian) culture and/versus an objective and external perspective will thus be used and compared. Trying to discern the rules of understanding/making/evaluating a perfect soup, the analysis insists on the regional specificity of food, on the multisensory character of cooked dishes (taste, smell, appearance) and on the groups that define themselves by reference to a particular way of eating.

HEINIGER – CASTERET, Patricia, *La poule au pot du bon roi Henry*

Toute personne qui vient visiter le sud-ouest de la France et plus précisément la ville de Pau doit absolument, dans son séjour, déguster une « poule au pot ». Ce plat complet offrant bouillon, viande, légume et farci aurait comme origine une phrase du bon « Roy Henry IV » prononcée en 1600 : « je veux que chaque laboureur de mon royaume puisse mettre la poule au pot le dimanche ». Cette préparation paysanne est ainsi devenue, par « voix » royale, un des plats de la gastronomie française et un emblème de la ville de Pau. Nous nous intéresserons donc à cette préparation culinaire qui oscille entre mythe et histoire et qui participe de l'éducation gustatives de tous les jeunes gascons.

HRISTOV, Petko, *Migration and Community – Village Kurban as a Common Table*

The paper deals with the specific use of collective rituals focused on the blood sacrifice and a common table among the Orthodox Christians in the Balkans, known mostly as *kurban*. In studying a variety of feasts, the analytical focus is on the collective gathering and common table, which celebrates the small village community as a 'homeland', but also as a virtual ritual community living in the different places of the world. This paper pays particular attention to examples of the collective *kurban* in abandoned villages. *Kurban* is therefore understood as a ritual that helps produce and/ or re-produce a group identity within a broader national framework, and also as a means of social cohesion for kinship-based and territory-based communities, beyond confessional attachment. In a selection of cases, the paper demonstrates how through a blood sacrifice, shared around a common table, as well as by the symbolic use of the saint-patron of a birthplace, the cohesion between the former members of a now deserted as the result of migration village is recreated.

LEPORC, Amandine, *De l'immigration à l'intégration : une évolution des pratiques culinaires traditionnelles d'une famille italienne*

Abstract : Cette communication se base sur le témoignage d'Assunta Del Prete, une femme italienne arrivée en France après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale pour travailler et subvenir aux besoins de sa famille restée dans son pays d'origine. Il sera question de

recettes traditionnelles italiennes et leur réalisation en France. Ont-elles été adaptées ? Les ingrédients ont-ils changé ? A quelle fréquence ces recettes ont été réalisées ? Dans la vie quotidienne ou pour un évènement spécial ? Je m'attarderai également sur la réception des recettes traditionnelles françaises et régionales par la communauté italienne immigrée dans le Nord de la France. Comment étaient-elles perçues et apprises ? Via quels moyens/techniques (livres de recettes ? amis ? etc). L'apprentissage de ces pratiques culinaires était-il un moyen de s'intégrer plus facilement dans une région en demande cruelle de main d'œuvre mais ayant un biais plutôt xénophobe ?

MARKOV, Ivaylo, PERIKLIEVA, Violeta, *Navigating Foodscapes: A Study of Food Adaptation among International Students in Bulgaria*

Abstract: The paper's aim is to examine the multifaceted process of food adaptation among international students in Bulgaria. We proceed from the concept of foodscapes to refer to the social and cultural aspects of food within a particular environment. It encompasses the diverse food practices, food-related activities, and food-related infrastructure present in a given space. Foodscapes can include various elements such as markets, restaurants, cafes, street food stalls, and even home kitchens. They are not limited to physical spaces but also encompass the social interactions and meanings associated with food. As globalization continues to facilitate student mobility, understanding the ways in which individuals negotiate new foodscapes becomes increasingly important. The study examines the experiences, challenges, and strategies employed by international students in adapting to the Bulgarian food environment, including the availability, accessibility, and acceptability of food options. We consider the practices of carrying "the taste of home": sending and receiving homemade food, typical products, ingredients, etc. The paper sheds light on the dynamics of food adaptation, the role of food in cultural integration, and the impact of food on students' overall well-being. The general study is based on a fieldwork research conducted in the period 2019 – 2020 in four Bulgarian cities – the capital city of Sofia, Plovdiv, Blagoevgrad and Varna, and seven universities. Three main research methods were used – semi-structured in-depth interviews, focus groups and a questionnaire survey.

PILEVA, Desislava, *Negotiating Food Habits and Identity within Intercultural Families*

Abstract: People individually and within communities, build up their perceptions of “own” and “other” culinary space based on foods (tastes, smells, and appearance), ways of food preparation, and manners of consumption. Food preferences are mostly established at an early age in the birth home. Although tastes are constantly elaborating throughout one’s lifespan, as an adult, one tries to recreate familiar tastes and aromas from childhood, considered an intangible connection to the native place, culture and home. Thus, among other things, in migration, people bring along their native cuisine and preferred tastes into the receiving country, and through food they present themselves as non-locals, while maintaining a sense of belonging to a certain ethno-cultural heritage. In case of intermarriage, partners negotiate the place of each other’s native cuisine in everyday life and special occasions. At the same time, it is through culinary interactions that families construct their unique foodways. The aspiration for providing a permanent supply of foods confirms the significance of the non-local cuisine into families’ daily culinary routine. In general, there are two main supply sources of specific foods – the migrant’s home country and the local ethnic shops. The first suggests transnational travel (maintenance of physical co-presence). The second, however, suggests greater sustainability. Over all, the food consumed within a family educates the taste of its members, which however results in preferences towards a given cuisine or towards a unique combination of both. The aim of the here proposed paper is to present the place of the non-local cuisine within intercultural families (between Bulgarians and immigrants from Middle Eastern countries), residing in Bulgaria, and its role in the process of culinary and identity negotiations. Different manners of food and food ingredients supply are discussed within the context of various family lifestyles.

POPA, Corina, *The kitchen as a battlefield for the defence of the national identity. The use of cultural arguments instead of weapons – the case of Ukrainian List of Intangible Cultural Heritage*

Abstract: The presentation proposes an undistorted look at the process of “reconstruction” of the national identity, ongoing in the Ukrainian society. Referring to the factual history of the independent Ukraine, which has broken away from the Soviet Union in 1991, we try to reveal the significations of a cultural form of resistance to extinguishment. Ukraine has subscribed, on the UNESCO’s List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, under the title Culture of Ukrainian Borscht

Cooking, a manner of intergenerational cohabitation and communion with the natural space. In the XXI century, a powerful state, with imperial obsessions, denies the very existence of the Ukrainians as “subjects” of history, as representatives of a post-colonial nation which has its own characteristics. Ukraine responds by displaying a series of attitudes and cultural practices which highlights, first of all, the „normality” of Ukrainians, their will and their capability to integrate in the European political and economic structures based on the principles of the real democracy. In the present, Ukrainians resist to unacceptable forms of aggression. Meanwhile, convinced that there are no alternatives to dignity and individual freedom, they continue to search the best ways to transmit their traditions, to preserve a collective memory which embraces the cultural differences of the communities with whom they share the living space.

SAVIN, Petronela, *Terminologia culinară populară. Aspecte patrimoniale și culturale / Traditional Culinary Terminology. A cultural approach*

Abstract: Actul pregătirii și servirii mâncării în viața de zi cu zi înseamnă nu numai cunoaștere, ci și numire. Diferitele contexte cotidiene și de sărbătoare în care masa ocupă un loc central au contribuit, de-a lungul timpului, la producerea unei terminologii complexe pentru a desemna preparatele culinare, procesele, instrumentele etc. Cercetările de teren realizate în cadrul proiectelor eCULTFOOD și FOODie, care au avut ca scop documentarea felului de a găti de acasă, ne-au prilejuit înregistrarea unui inventar de denumiri culinare care atestă două tendințe. Pe de o parte se remarcă conservatorismul celor intervievați în ceea ce privește asumarea unei tradiții denominative pe care o respectă ca semn al afirmării unei identități locale, și, pe de altă parte, se observă tendința de înnoire a discursului gastronomic ce reflectă schimbările petrecute în societate sau în stilul de a comunica care pun în valoare mentalități, mode și gusturi ale actualității.

SPASOVA, Niya, *Transformations in daily life and food under the influence of modernization in the first decades of the 20th century in Bulgaria*

Abstract: The rapidly developing society in the decades of early modernization in Bulgaria let the introduction of new modern and contemporary lifestyle. In the following decades, it underwent a number of changes that led to the slow but sure overturning of

perceptions of it. Changes happen quickly and are visible in every aspect of social life - communication, culture, clothing and of course food. It was at this point that the social phenomenon of maiden servantry emerged, aiding and reinforcing the changes taking place. In our country, under the influence of the country's socio-economic factors and the modernisation of Bulgarian society in the first half of the twentieth century, maid servanthood developed and gained great popularity. Due to the strong influence on the lives of different social groups in society, it is becoming a channel for cultural exchange between them, servanthood can also be defined as a social mediator. It creates a kind of bridge between the village and the town and facilitates the penetration of the new Western European culture and urban models into the small local rural community. The changes in attitudes and attitudes towards servantry, and its very prevalence, give us important information about society as a whole and make it possible to trace the changes that have occurred.

TIMOCE MOCANU, Cosmina, *The culinary novelty - what and how do people narrate on this topic today? Examples and remarks*

Abstract: The paper analyzes the topic of culinary novelty as it manifests itself in 20 texts produced through the interviews conducted in 2021-2023 within the project Digital Collection of Romanian Food Heritage and Transfer to Society (FOODie). These texts are the result of a dialog between four researchers and 24 persons (19 women and 5 men), of Romanian, Hungarian, Greek and Ukrainian nationality, living in villages and towns in several regions of Romania (Bucovina, Dobrogea, Moldova, Muntenia and Transylvania). At the moment of interviewing, our interlocutors were aged between 82 and 49 years, so that the topic of interest can be followed over a period of about six decades, i.e. from the sixties of the last century to the present. More concretely, we aim to discuss: (a) which ingredients, dishes, preparation techniques and kitchen equipment are perceived as “new” by our respondents; (b) in which contexts did they come into contact with these categories of “novelties” and which was the motivation for their adoption in food practice or, on the opposite, their rejection; (c) what are the rhetorical strategies used by our interlocutors in telling this story.

Section Pachetul 2.0 / Package 2.0 / Пакет 2.0 is a series of papers organized in two parts: the first proposes an analysis of the editorial project *The Parcel* (publisher Otilia Hedeşan,

2020, Timișoara) and its related activities, while the second part constitute a series of case studies intended to carry forward this scientific exploration project of the multiple meanings that “package” may have.

DOROBANȚU – GORDON, Ioana, Food package(s). Case study 1: stories and storytellers

Abstract: The paper provides an overview on the performance entitled *Six Stories about the Package* which was constructed from video interviews filmed with six storytellers, edited in a certain sequentiality that at times follows a narrative thread, and enriched with black and white archival photographs, to which live music was added at the time of presentation. The selected testimonies have been generated by fragments of memories and revealed, from different geographical corners, the essence of various packages from the past - a past more distant or closer to the present day - often containing food from home and carrying with them a deep emotional weight.

IGNAT, Sanda, An introduction: Package 1.0

Abstract: The presentation analyses the book *The Parcel (Pachetul*, ed. Otilia Hedeșan, 2020, Timișoara) and aims to map the stages, results, and perspectives of a multidisciplinary team research carried out between 2019 and 2021 in Timișoara and other towns and villages in Romania, the Republic of Moldova, and Serbia. Such an enterprise is a first for contemporary Romanian ethnology. In tackling this topic, the authors break new ground in the field of ethnology. The food parcel appears as a niche subject, at the crossroads of several fields of study: ethnology, gastronomy, and oral history. The uniqueness of the project consisted in exploring the possibilities of scientific investigation of the topic by combining classical methods and experimental approaches. In this context, stories about food parcels emerged as a new type of ethnological text, both as products of field research and as subjective narrations by researchers.

MIHUȚ, Diana, Food package(s): Case study 3: useful or astonishing?

Abstract: The case study focuses on the content of the packages, bringing to light several situations when it might be both predictable and useful, as well as unexpected and astonishing. The argumentation is built around several products, especially food, that Romanians either send to their relatives living abroad, or that they transport themselves

and which, by the nature of the content or the conditions of transport, are almost at the limit of the law. Paper aims to explore the way in which certain products become identity brands and the way in which they are perceived by insiders and outsiders alike, while their “transfer” from one country to another / from one space to another might generate not only sensational news, but also a series of legal responsibilities.

NEGRU, Alina, *Case study 2: distribution networks*

Abstract: Proposed case study explores several methods by which packages containing various food products can be “sent” to recipients located at considerable distances, most often abroad. We will analyze, through several showcases, the way in which the existence of rather informal networks meant to collect, transport and distribute packages that start from Romania towards certain spaces in Europe where Romanian diaspora lives contribute to the preservation of a cultural identity, by facilitating the “procurement” of products that are considered as defining.

POPEȚI, Dana, *Food package(s): Legal framework: Package 2.0*

Abstract: This intervention aims to draw some observations regarding the current Romanian legal frameworks regarding the way in which the various parcels containing food or similar products can circulate from the sender to the recipient. We will thus consider a review of some standard legal provisions that regulate, in principle, the circulation of certain types of goods, with a focus on food and the way in which they influence the possibility for certain groups to receive certain products that they value.

Scientific committee:

- Otilia Hedeşan (Professor, West University of Timișoara)
 - Patricia Heiniger Casteret (Professor, University of Pau)
 - Petko Hristov (Professor, Institute for Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)
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