

THE SONG OF THE FIR TREE IN 'ȚINUTUL PĂDURENILOR' [THE LAND OF PĂDURENI], HUNEDOARA

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ABSTRACT

Among the funeral ritual songs of pre-Christian origin from the Romanian musical folklore, the song of the fir tree stands for a distinct thematic category. With a limited geographical spread of the custom (Northern Oltenia, Banat, Southern Transylvania), the song of the fir tree is found mainly in *Ținutul Pădurenilor* [the Land of Pădureni], in Hunedoara county. As proof stand the collections gathered in the area by Béla Bartók more than a hundred years ago, those of Emilia Comișel and of the team of researchers from Bucharest, gathered 70 years ago, and, last but not least, those gathered by Ph.D. Professor Ioan Bocșa and Ph.D. Lecturer Alina Stan, who recorded 26 songs reflecting this theme. The musical and literary elements of the ritual song performed in group only by women, with great interpretive force and spiritual emotion, are distinct from those of the songs from other areas. In this respect, we will undertake a comparative analysis of the melodic variants, taking into account: the identification of the main musical traits, the changes produced over time; the existence of a melodic type in several

The Song of the Fir Tree in 'Ținutul Pădurenilor' [The Land of Pădureni], Hunedoara villages, or the existence of several melodic types in the same village; the identification of the most enduring melodic type, collected during all the research periods. Although the area is currently less inhabited, with an ageing population, the variety and multitude of songs collected show us that they are alive in the memory of the people of the entire Land of Pădureni, and that in many communities it is practised according to ancient customs.

Keywords: *funeral ritual song, song of the fir tree, melodic type, Ținutul Pădurenilor [Land of Pădureni], Hunedoara*

In its traditional form, the funeral ritual embodied several ancient practices, some of which were based on pre-Christian beliefs and accompanied by musical productions. From the death of an individual to their funeral, an impressive custom was performed that facilitated the departure of the deceased from the world of the living, their passage and integration into the world of those “without longings”. As in the case of the wedding ceremony, all the preparations for the funeral and the ceremony itself involved the entire village community. Given that this was a moment of great emotional distress both for the family and for the community, certain rules imposed by tradition were observed; people knew very well their role in the performance of the ritual, such as: family members would bemoan the departure of their loved one; the group of women unrelated to the deceased would sing the ritual songs; the boys or men would provide the necessary physical assistance.

From a musical standpoint, the funeral repertoire¹ generally includes: vocal songs (ritual song, lament (*bocet*), dirge (*verș*)) and instrumental songs (funeral calls played on the alpenhorn (*bucium*) in the mountainous areas, or on the trumpet (*trâmbiță*) in Oaș and Maramureș, the piped lament in the pastoral areas).

The vocal repertoire is most prevalent. **The funeral ritual songs** hold a significant place in the custom; their practice is currently only reported in a few regions of our country (Northern Oltenia, Banat, Southern Transylvania). They are called by different names: *a bradului, a buhașului, a zorilor, a țarinii, a drumului, hora mortului, cocoșdaiul, harângul, de petrecut*. They were sung only in group, by women, in a strong, guttural voice, at different moments of the ritual. **The laments** (*bocetele*), true wails of the soul sung individually, can be performed at any moment of the ritual or even many years after the event. In Transylvania, they are usually referred to as *cântare după mort, morțască*, while in the Land of Pădureni, *de glăsit*. **The dirge** (*verșul*) is a quasi-scholarly production composed and sung by the cantor after the end of the funeral service. The melody is locally specific, borrowed from the church chant.

¹ For more information, see Ileana Szenik, *Folclor*, Modul de Studiu pentru Studii Universitare prin Învățământ la Distanță [Folklore, Module of Study for Distance Learning University Studies], MediaMusica, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, p. 125-132.

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In this paper dedicated to the funeral ritual songs from the Land of Pădureni, we will turn our attention to a literary theme of outstanding beauty, *the song of the fir tree*. The area was first investigated in December 1913 and in January 1914 by Béla Bartók, who roamed the villages of Cerbăl, Ghelari and Feregi, collecting about 80 songs which he recorded on phonograph. Of the entire material, the funeral repertoire includes three laments and five ritual songs, four of which are songs *Of the Fir Tree* (variants collected from all the three villages). In his study entitled *Dialectul muzical al românilor din Hunedoara* [The Musical Dialect of the Romanians from Hunedoara]², he mentioned only the lament as a category, while providing only footnote clarifications on the thematic differences: "3. Various funeral songs, known as laments (*bocet*). (in the footnote: They are sometimes called "*după morți*" [for the dead], "*vaiet*" [wail], "*zorilor*" [of the dawn], "*cântecul bradului*" [song of the fir tree])³.

A team of specialists from the Bucharest Institute of Folklore (Emilia Comișel, Mariana Kahane, Ilarion Cocișiu, Ovidiu Bârlea) conducted a field research in this region between 1946 and 1960, which was concluded with the publication of an anthology entitled *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor* [Folk Anthology from the Land of Pădureni]⁴, which includes about 150 songs collected from 12 villages. Of these, we have identified three laments and ten funeral ritual songs, seven of which are *The Song of the Fir Tree* (collected from different villages).

In 2017, after looking over the two collections from the Land of Pădureni during the *Folk Song* classes and being impressed by the beauty and complexity of this material, together with Ph.D. Professor Ioan Bocșa we eagerly embarked on a thorough research of the region, in order to see the situation on the ground after a hundred years. We scoured 31 settlements from the Land of Pădureni and recorded 337 songs, 100 of which belong to the funeral repertoire: 30 laments and 70 ritual songs. Of these, 26 are *The Song of the Fir Tree*. During the 1980s, researcher Rusalin Ișfănoni also compiled collections from this region, gathering over 200 songs, 10 of which on the theme of *The song of the Fir Tree* (the musical material is attached to our recent collections).

The song of the fir tree, a distinct thematic category of the funeral repertoire, is an integral part of a special ceremonial. Rusalin Ișfănoni investigated this area for a long time and wrote an impressive monograph⁵ in which the burial custom is described in the smallest details. Below we provide a brief description of the custom, highlighting the features that are specific to the region:

² Béla Bartók, *Dialectul muzical al românilor din Hunedoara* [The Musical Dialect of the Romanians from Hunedoara], in *Muzică și poezie* [Music and Poetry], Revista Filarmoniceii, Editura Fundațiilor Culturale Regale, Bucharest, Year I, No. 4, 1936.

³ *Idem*, p. 6.

⁴ Emilia Comișel, *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor* [Folk Anthology from the Land of Pădureni], Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1959.

⁵ Rusalin Ișfănoni, *Pădurenii Hunedoarei* [The Pădureni of Hunedoara], Editura Mirabilis, 2006.

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"A distinctive feature of the burial ritual in the Land of Pădureni appears when the deceased is a young man. Whether he is married or not, he must be brought a *fir tree*".

From the first night of the vigil, the "host" of the house of the deceased names two young men (usually relatives) to go to the forest and "bring the *fir tree*"; this is also the time when the women who are going to sing the *fir tree* song are announced.

In the early morning of the burial day, the two young men, carrying axes, go to the forest where they know they can find the right fir trees to suit their needs, then choose one of them, six to seven meters tall, which they should be able to carry on their shoulders. After making the sign of the cross, they sever it with great care, as it must not touch the ground or fall down; while one of the lads holds it, the other one strips it of its branches halfway up the trunk. Then they leave with the *fir tree* on their shoulders towards the edge of the forest, where they are awaited by the group of women who will sing *the Song of the Fir Tree*. They are always uneven in number, five, seven or nine. They flank *the fir tree*, three on one side of its tip and four on the other, heading towards the village and singing *the fir tree* song, which echoes across hills and valleys."⁶ To make this ethnographic reality even more transparent, we present below the text of a song performed by a group of women, which we collected in the village of Feregi, in June 2017:

-Șet'ină d'e bradu, [Fir tree branch,]
 Șe t'e-ai oblișitu, [What was it that urged you,]
 Din codru-ai pornițu? [To leave the forest?]
 -Îeu n-aș fi pornițu, [I would not have left it,]
 Numa am avutu [But I had]
 Un frat'e zuratū [A sworn brother]
 Și iel o mânatū [Who sent]
 Doi voiñis din satu, [Two strong lads from the village,]
 Cu două toporă, [With two axes,]
 Žos să mă doboră. [To cut me down.]
 Žos mă doborără, [They cut me down,]
 Faîn mă curățară, [Stripped me of my branches,]
 Pă umeri mă-luăară, [Took me on their shoulders,]
 Cu miñe plecară [Off they went with me]
 P-o rar'e cărar'e, [Along a lonely path,]
 P-un pripor la val'e. [Down and down a slope.]
 P-un d'eluț frumosū, [On a pretty hill,]
 P-un pripori în žosu. [Down and down a slope.]
 'N cal'ea me veñiră [Out to meet me came]
 Tăt nevęste-nalce, [Only slender wives,]
 Jălniše-mbrăcaće, [Dressed in mourning garb,]

⁶ *Idem*, p. 295.

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Pă mi \bar{n} i să mă cânce. [To sing me a song.]
Pă mi \bar{n} i mă cântară [They sang me a song]
Și-n sat mă băgară, [Took me to the village,]
La o poartă-al'eașă, [At a chosen gate,]
La frațele-acasă. [At my brother's house.]
'N ocol mă băgară, [They put me in the courtyard]
Pă cas mă propcîră, [Propped me against the house,]
Fai \bar{n} mă înflorără [Nicely dressed me up]
Cu flori de fonfiu, [In periwinkle flowers,]
Đ e-amar să le fiu; [To soothe their sorrow;]
Cu flori d'e izlazu, [In blooming wildflowers,]
Le făcu \bar{u} năcazu. [To soothe their grief.] (x3)

Collectors: Ioan Bocșa, Alina Stan, 2017,
Text transcription: Cosmina Mocanu.

Continuing the description of the custom, researcher Rusalin Ișfănoni narrates: "Once at the household of the dead, the young men lean the *fir tree* with the tip against the eaves of the house, to be adorned by the girls. They decorate the fir tree branches with woollen tassels coloured in red, *violet-blue*, *peach flower pink* etc. More recently, coloured silk ribbons or even crepe paper strips are used. Under the branches they tie the *cișcineu*, a red Kashmir headkerchief worn only by maidens on feast days and put a little bell on top. While the girls adorn the *fir tree*, the women sing another fragment, specific to this moment".⁷ We further present the text of a song performed by a group of women, which we collected in August 2017, in the village of Vadu Dobrii:

l: Ćișcîneu rotat \bar{u} :| [Headkerchief with pretty flowers,]
l: Gr'ecul đe ce-o dat \bar{u} | [That Greek who sold you]
Rău ce-o blăstămat \bar{u} (x 4) [Has put an evil curse on you]
l: Ca tu să nu stai \bar{u} :| [That you no longer stay]
Niși la fețe-n cap \bar{u} , [On the maidens' heads,]
Numa-n vâr \bar{v} đe brad \bar{u} , [But on fir tree top,]
l: Pluaja să ce pluaj \bar{e} , :| [To be drenched by the rain,]
l: Vântu să ce-nduaj \bar{e} , :| [Bent by the wind,]
l: Năe \bar{a} să ce níngă, :| [Burdened by the snow,]
l: Žeru să ce strângă. [Shrivelled by the frost] :|

Collectors: Ioan Bocșa, Alina Stan, 2017,
Text transcription: Cosmina Mocanu.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 296.

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The peak moment of the ritual is described as follows: "On the way to the graveyard, the *fir tree* leads the funeral procession, while the women who perform the fir tree song go in front, two of them holding its branches."⁸



Fig. 1. Women flanking the tree on both sides.

Photo from the "Tache Papahagi"⁹

Fund of the "Folklore Archive of the Romanian Academy" Institute, Cluj-Napoca.



Fig 2. Fir tree stuck in the ground by the grave. Photo from the

Photo from the "Tache Papahagi"¹⁰ Fund of the Folklore Archive of the Romanian Academy Institute, Cluj-Napoca.

At the end of the funeral service, the fir tree was "stuck" in the ground, next to the cross of the deceased. Researcher Rusalin Ișfănoni also points out that in certain villages (Cerișor, Socet), the women who sang the fir tree song go for six more Sundays in a row to sing at the grave.

As far as the manner of performance is concerned, as previously said, these songs are sung only by women, in a very strong, metallic, chest voice. We also notice that the texts of these songs are extremely long (dozens of verses), usually with only one new verse added to the stanzas and therefore take a very long time. Ileana Szenik made a very important remark on this aspect: "In this slow tempo, performing in group is difficult; in order to ensure the unity of performance and

⁸ *Idem*, p. 297.

⁹ Tache Papahagi, *Images d'ethnographie roumaine: (daco-roumaine et aroumaine)*, vol. II, 1928, p. 170.

¹⁰ *Idem*, p. 170.

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keep the right succession of the thematic motifs in the very long text, the performance is led by the best singer, who is most knowledgeable of the text; she begins singing the stanzas alone, while the others join her only after two or three syllables (this manner of performance is actually present in other ceremonial songs as well)."¹¹

The Song of the Fir Tree – musical features

Analysing the variants identified in the collections presented above and in the material collected by us in the field, we notice that the melodies share certain common features, despite being collected from different villages. The most stable elements that grouped the melodies around certain melodic types are the architectural structure in close connection with the cadential profile and the general melodic contour of the stanza.

The simplest architectural structure, of two melodic lines, occurs in five variants collected during our recent research, set to the text *Brad încetinat* [Fir Tree Full of Branches]. We identified this melodic type in the villages of Meria, Hășdău and Cernișoara-Floresc. It has the following musical features: tripodic verses, ceremonious rhythm, a minor pentachord sound structure with a final on the first scale degree and a subfinal (the range can be extended to the high register – C, D). The initial melodic formulas start from the low register (D-G), or from the middle register (E-B, G-B, A-B). The form has the basic structure of two melodic lines AB, cadences VII 1 and a unilinear general melodic contour:

Meria, HD
Sălășan Marie, 72

♩ = 72

Bra - de-n - ce - ti - na - te,

Bra - de-n - ce - ti - na - te.

PAD 217 *Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.*

Example 1. Collected by Ioan Bocșa and Alina Stan, new material

Twelve more songs with the same musical features were added to these variants, collected by our team from the villages of: Vadu Dobrii, Hășdău, Dăbâca, Goleș, Feregi, Poienița Voinii, Runcu Mare, Bunila, and a song from Goleș published in Comișel collection under No. 43. The verses are also tripodic, but the texts are

¹¹ Ileana Szenik, *Folclor*, Modul de Studiu pentru Studii Universitare prin Învățământ la Distanță [Folklore, Module of Study for Distance Education University Studies], MediaMusica, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, pp. 128-129.

The Song of the Fir Tree in 'Ținutul Pădurenilor' [The Land of Pădureni], Hunedoara more differentiated: *Brad încetinat, Cetină de brad* or *Brade, brăduț, brade*. The difference from the previous variants occurs at form level; the stanza is extended to four melodic lines by doubling (ABAB), by inserting a different melodic line (ABCB), or by inserting two different melodic lines (ABCD). Due to the extension of the form, the placement of the cadences creates another contour, in descending motion. Within this melodic type, with a stanza consisting of four melodic lines (ABAB – extension by repetition), there are also melodies with a special personality. At the beginning of the song, three excessively long notes are sung on the first syllable, with fermatas (*D, G, F#*). We will present comparatively two examples collected from the Bunila commune, 70 years apart; the former example is taken from the Comișel collection, while the latter is from our recent research:

42

BRADE CETINATE
Cîntecul bradului

Fgr. 14492.
Culeg. O. Birlea.

Com. Bunila – Hunedoara.
Inf. Ghiura Petra, 26 ani,
Nandra Eva, 26 ani,
Georgese Eva, 27 ani,
Georgese Ana, 55 ani,
Bobora Sofia, 60 ani.
1951

Rubato $\text{♩} = 60$
langu

Bra - de - ce - ti - na - te, Bra - de - ce - ti - na - te,
Bra - de - ce - ti - na - te, Bra - de - ce - ti - na - te.

Example 2. Emilia Comișel, *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor* [Folk Anthology from the Land of Pădureni], No. 42:

Bunila, HD
Grup femei

$\text{♩} = 42$

Bra - de - n - ce - ti - na - te,
Bra - de - n - ce - ti - na - te,
Bra - de - n - ce - ti - na - te,
Bra - de - n - ce - ti - na - te.

PAD 199 Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.

Example 3. Collected by Ioan Bocșa and Alina Stan, new material

Added to this melodic type is also a group of eight melodies with similar musical features as the previous variants: the same sound and rhythmic structure, cadential formulas, a generally descending melodic contour. The difference consists in the addition of a rhythmic-melodic cell inside each verse, resulting in a tetrapodic structure (on the literary level, the marked words are interspersed in the text): *Brade, brade, brăduț, brade* or *Cetină verde de brad*). Here too we have variants with two melodic lines AB and three melodic lines ABB. The Comișel collection includes a variant published with this text, which we will not take into consideration here because of its numerous melodic instabilities.

Below we will present comparatively two songs collected from the same commune of Bătrâna: in 1982, Rusalin Ișfănoni collected a variant based on the ABB form, and recently we have discovered this song in a simplified form AB, without the repetition of the second element:

Bătrâna, HD
Herciu Cornelia, 53

♩ = 66

ă, Ce - ti - nă ver - de de bra - du,
ăi, Ci - ne-a - mar te-o blăs - tă - ma - tu,
ă, Di la co - dru de-ai ple - ca - tu.

Var. 1
a b
st. 1, 6 st. 4, 5, 13 st. 21

PAD 376 *Cul. Ișfănoni R., 1982-1983, Tr. Stan A.*

Example 4. Collected by Rusalin Ișfănoni, new material

Bătrâna, HD
Grup femei

♩ = 52

Ce - ti - nă ver - de de bra - du,
Ce - ti - nă ver - de de bra - du.

PAD 250 *Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.*

Example 5. Collected by Ioan Bocșa and Alina Stan, new material

Another distinct melodic type of the song of the fir tree, both from a musical and literary standpoint, groups twelve variants collected from the villages of Cerbăl, Muncelu Mare, Muncelu Mic, Lelese, Socet, Ulm, Sohodol, Feregi, Vadu Dobrii,

*The Song of the Fir Tree in 'Ținutul Pădurenilor' [The Land of Pădureni], Hunedoara Cerișor. They are sung only to the text *Cetină de brad* [Fir Tree Branch], while the last line of the musical stanza is shortened (apocope): *Cetină de! (brad), Rău te-ai dople! (cat)*, a technique unseen in other variants of the fir tree song from the other areas of circulation. The title specified above indicates the tripod form of the verses, while the rhythm is ceremonious, sung with slow pulsations; the sound structure is a minor penta-hexachord, with a fluctuating third (F, F#) which appears especially in the initial formula *D-F(#)-A*. There are variants with three melodic lines, AAB and ABC, with a final cadence on the note *E* and a descending contour in most cases.*

Below we present comparatively two variants collected 70 years apart from the same village of Muncelu Mare, with the former belonging to the Comișel collection, and the latter, to our collections:

39

CINTECUL BRADULUI¹
Cetină de brad

Fgr. 10233 b.
Culeg. I. Cocișiu.

Com. Muncelul Mare — Hunedoara.
Inf. Duma Măruța („a lui Crăciun”), 58 de ani.
Dinga Valeria, 22 de ani.
1946

Poco rubato (Lento)

funzia

Example 6. Emilia Comișel, *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor* [Folk Anthology from the Land of Pădureni], No. 39

Muncelu Mare, HD
Marina Samvina, 67

$\text{♩} = 52$

Var. 1)
rit. 2 în cont.

PAD 303 *Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.*

Example 7. Collected by Ioan Bocșa and Alina Stan, new material

This type also includes variants with four melodic lines (AABC, ABBC, ABCD) and with the same descending contour. This is the only time when we identified the same song during each period of research of the region. In 1913, Bartók collected four variants of this song (*Romanian Folk music* No. 639 a, b, c, d) from the villages of Cerbăl and Feregi; in 1950, Comișel collected the same melodic variant from the village of Cerișor (Comișel No. 40, 41), and we have recently collected five melodic variants from the villages of Socet, Feregi, Vadu Dobrii, Cerișor și Lelese:

M. Gr. 13 a; Cerbăl (Hunedoara), Marie Costa (13), Susana Costa (16), 18, III, 1914.

Example 8. Béla Bartók, *Romanian Folk Music*, vol. II, No. 639a

Example 9. Emilia Comișel, *Antologie folclorică din Ținutul Pădurenilor* [Folk Anthology from Land of Pădureni], No. 40.

*The Song of the Fir Tree in 'Ținutul Pădurenilor' [The Land of Pădureni], Hunedoara
Cerișor, Lelese, HD
Grup femei*

♩ ≈ 100

(i), Ce - ti - nă de bra - du,
Ce - ti - nă de bra - du,
Din co - dru-ai ple - ca - tu,
Din co - dru-ai ple'.

PAD 004 *Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr: Stan A.*

Example 10. Collected by Ioan Bocșa and Alina Stan, new material

In the current research, we have collected about 35 more funeral songs, but with different musical features than those of the types presented above and with literary texts that introduce other themes: *Strîgă moartea la fereastă, Fii, progadie, făloasă, Lăsați, oameni, lăsați lucru, Apleacă-te, vârf de casă, Draga me și mama me, Hai, neamuri, la sărutare, De-ar fi lăsat Dumnezeu* (we have identified two more examples with these melodies belonging to other types, but illustrating the theme of the fir tree: Bartók, No. 640 and Comișel, No. 45). In this order of ideas, Ileana Szenik emphasized: "It is also worth noting that the multitude of names of the ritual songs from a particular area does not always imply a multitude of melodic types, but rather very close melodic variants, albeit with different themes, appropriate to the moment."¹²

Concluding on this distinct category of the *Songs of the Fir Tree* from the Land of Pădureni, we have identified, based on their analysis, musical features that lend them an archaic flavour. The poetic text, a description of the sad fate of the tree, is structured both on tripodic and tetrapodic verses (see *Appendix 1*), with the prevalence of the tripodic ones, with catalectic or acatalectic forms, constantly with the syllable-extending vowel u (*Cetine de bradu*), and with the specific element of the apocope at the end of the musical stanza (*Cetine de!*). The sound structure is based mostly on a minor pentachord, with the final on the first degree, which creates an expansion of the range through the intonation of the subfinal, and, in the high register, by going up to the sixth or seventh, sometimes only ornamentally. The rhythm is closely related to the manner of performance in group, in a slow

¹² Ileana Szenik, *Folclor*, Modul de Studiu pentru Studii Universitare prin Învățământ la Distanță [Folklore, Module of Study for Distance Education University Studies], MediaMusica, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, p. 126.

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tempo, performed in motion for the most part of the ritual. It unfolds with slow pulsations, specific to the ceremonial rhythm (sometimes resembling the free rubato rhythm). Due to this performance, the main pillars of the melody are richly ornamented: short, long, simple, double, multiple appoggiaturas, anticipations. The architectural structures have several variants, from the simplest ones, with two melodic lines, to three- and four-line structures, created by repetition or the introduction of a different structural element. As Ileana Szenik concluded, through all these musical features, "the funeral ritual songs, despite being *represented by several melodic types*, share some common musical features that place them on the oldest musical layer, alongside the ceremonial wedding and harvest songs."¹³ These melodic types have not been identified in any other areas of Transylvania.

We notice that in the Land of Pădureni, several melodic types of *The Song of the Fir Tree* have been encountered, while there were also cases when the same melodic type was collected from several neighbouring or more distant villages. Also, worth noting is that these songs have endured the test of time, as proven by the variants presented comparatively above. Although this region is characterized by an ageing population and the customs have lost their living power, this ritual of the fir tree is still practised today, despite the fact that its performance requires the gathering of women from different villages.

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¹³ *Idem*, p. 128.

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Appendix

Cântecul bradului [The Song of the Fir Tree] – Tetrapodic text variant: *Brade, brade, brăduț, brade*

(village of Ruda, informer: Catrina Anișca, 74, Dan Viorica, 67)

Collector: Ioan Bocșa, Alina Stan, 2017,

Text transcription: Cosmina Mocanu.

l: – Brađe, brađe, brăduț, brađe, :	[Fir tree, fir tree, little fir tree, fir tree]
l: Șe, brađe, Ț-ai d-obrișitu, :	[What, fir tree, was it that urged you,]
l: Cân din codri ai pornițu, :	[To leave the forests,]
l: Din codri, din livez verzu :	[The forests, the green groves]
l: Și di la izvora rășițu, :	[And the chilly string,]
l: Aiș la pețrile-ăl sășițu? :	[To come here to the barren stones?]
l: – Da' niș iețu n-aș fi plecatu, :	[I would not have left them,]
l: Da-am avut frațe zūratu, :	[But I had a sworn brother,]
l: Aișeș, la voi în satu.	[Here, in your village.] :

Dictated:

După miște o mânat	[He sent after me]
Doi veri bui a lui, din sat.	[Two good cousins, from the village.]
Codru l-or înconjurat,	[Who roamed the forest,]
Pân pe miști m-or căpătat	[Until they found me]
AșA nalt ș-așA citat;	[So tall and beautiful;]
Pingă miște s-or întușors	[They turned around me]
Ș-or văzut că mi-s frumșos,	[Saw how beautiful I was,]
Pingă miște s-or sușit	[They turned around me]
Ș-or văzut că-s învilit.	[And saw how fully branched I was.]
Cu topușă m-or tăiat,	[With axes they cut me down,]
Țos de vatră am picat,	[To the ground I fell,]
Crenșile s-or deșd'inat,	[My branches fell apart,]
Cu bărđiț m-or curățat	[They stripped me with a hatchet]
Și m-or luat și or plecat,	[And away they went with me,]

Alina Stan

The Song of the Fir Tree in 'Ținutul Pădurenilor' [The Land of Pădureni], Hunedoara

Cân suarele-o scăpătat.	[When the sun went down.]
Și cu miine-or însărat,	[And in the evening they took me,]
La o marzine de sat,	[To the edge of the village,]
M-or lăsat propăcit p-on gard.	[And left me leaned against a fence.]
Vai, še urât m-o mânăcat,	[Oh, how unhappy I was,]
Pân cocoșîl, or cântat,	[Until the cock crowed,]
Pân să zărię zăriile,	[Until the dawn appeared,]
De pleca muierile	[And the women left]
Đin tăce ocuălele	[From all the courtyards]
Să iș mâne marhăle.	[With their cows to the pastures.]
După miine o mânat	[He sent after me]
Patru veri a lui đin sat	[Four cousins from the village]
Și cu patru verișuare.	[And four cousineses.]
Verișuori mă legăna,	[The cousins rocked me,]
Verișuare mă cânta,	[The cousineses mourned me,]
Cu miine acasă azunze,	[Then arrived at home with me,]
Pă doă ruz mă propce,	[Propped me up against two poles]
Cu piruane mă prinde	[Fastened me with nails]
Și pă crușe mă čice,	[And raised me on the cross,]
Și cu miine iar porne	[And again with me they left]
La beserica săcească,	[To the village church,]
Acolo să mă sădească.	[To plant me there in the ground.]
Čișčineu mare, rotat,	[Big headkerchief with pretty flowers,]
Grecoița de ce-o dat,	[The Greek woman who sold you,]
Cân pă čine ce-o țasut,	[When she wove you,]
Trii fire đin čine-o rupt,	[Three yarns she tore of you,]
Pă doă le-o înnodat	[Made a knot from two of them]
Și pă unu l-o zoitat,	[And forgot the other one,]
Ș-așă rău ce-o blăstămat	[And such curse she put on you]
Să nu stai și tu pă cap,	[To not stay on the head,]
Ńiși-n ladă-mpăturat,	[Nor folded in the coffer,]
Numa-ntr-o cruambă de brad;	[But only on a fir tree branch;]
Vânturile să ce bată	[To be bent by the wind]
Și suarele să ce ardă,	[Burnt by the sun,]
Să ce ningă neile,	[Covered by the snow,]
Să ce pluăie ploile.	[And drenched by the rain.]
Brađe, sub șecina te,	[Fir tree, right beneath your branches]
Činăr voinic putreză,	[A strong lad lies there rotting,]
Su șecina te a verde	[Beneath your evergreen branches]
Ńim'e-n lume nu-l mai vede.	[The world will see him no more.]

Translated from Romanian by Marcella Magda