

MARTOR



Title: "The days of the national shame"

Author: Vlad Manoliu

How to cite this article: Manoliu, Vlad. 2005. "The days of the national shame". *Martor* 10: 61

Published by: *Editura MARTOR* (MARTOR Publishing House), *Muzeul Țăranului Român* (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant)

URL: <http://martor.muzeultaranuluiroman.ro/archive/martor-10-2005/>

Martor (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review) is a peer-reviewed academic journal established in 1996, with a focus on cultural and visual anthropology, ethnology, museum studies and the dialogue among these disciplines. *Martor* review is published by the Museum of the Romanian Peasant. Its aim is to provide, as widely as possible, a rich content at the highest academic and editorial standards for scientific, educational and (in)formational goals. Any use aside from these purposes and without mentioning the source of the article(s) is prohibited and will be considered an infringement of copyright.

Martor (Revue d'Anthropologie du Musée du Paysan Roumain) est un journal académique en système *peer-review* fondé en 1996, qui se concentre sur l'anthropologie visuelle et culturelle, l'ethnologie, la muséologie et sur le dialogue entre ces disciplines. La revue *Martor* est publiée par le Musée du Paysan Roumain. Son aspiration est de généraliser l'accès vers un riche contenu au plus haut niveau du point de vue académique et éditorial pour des objectifs scientifiques, éducatifs et informationnels. Toute utilisation au-delà de ces buts et sans mentionner la source des articles est interdite et sera considérée une violation des droits de l'auteur.

„The days of the national shame“

Vlad Manoliu

In June 1990, I was working at the Technical Engineering University in Bucharest while living relatively close to my job, so that on 14th June, in the morning, when the miners arrived in Bucharest, I wasn't present in the city centre. Hardly had I reached the University when I received a phone call from a former student, a police officer, who warned me not get near the city centre, regardless of the situation. Why? Because I was bearded, bespectacled and I used to wear jeans. In other words, I fit the description of a ragamuffin from Universităţii Square perfectly. Which I actually was!

Completely disregarding what was happening in the city centre and planning to go to the Academy Library, I thought that my ex-student was overreacting. Calm, with a folio under my arm, I headed towards the Academy. But, down the stairs of the Faculty, I met a colleague of mine, an associated professor from one of the Departments who, with a deadly pallor, grabbed my shirt and asked me where I was going. He was extremely nervous. I told him that I was going to the Academy. He started yelling at me and calling me irresponsible for not knowing what was going on in the city. And he told me

what he had seen around the University while coming to the faculty. It is more than obvious that I didn't go anymore and thus I got rid of a potential conflict with the miners. And all that just for being bearded and bespectacled.

Then, I had the chance to see enough terrible images about the miner invasion, so easily authorised by our chosen ones. On the evening of 15th June, after our biased television had tried to explain how necessary that miner riot had been, after seeing how Ion Iliescu was thanking the miners for the “high civic spirit” they employed in cleaning the capital city, after seeing the crime acknowledged by the state, I felt terribly ashamed for being Romanian.

For the first time in my life, I felt sorry for being Romanian and, looking at my wife, who experienced the same feeling, we asked ourselves what we were doing in Romania. I will never forgive Ion Iliescu for that feeling of not finding our place in our own country. I think that this is the reason why I can call 13th-14th-15th June, ‘days of national shame.

Translated by Raluca Vîjîiac