

MARTOR



Title: "O"

How to cite this article: *Martor* 2002, 7.

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

URL: <http://martor.muzeultaranuluiroman.ro/archive/martor-7-2002/>

Martor (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Journal) 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 Journal* is published by the Museum of the Romanian Peasant. Interdisciplinary and international in scope, it provides a rich content at the highest academic and editorial standards for academic and non-academic readership. 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.

Martor is indexed by EBSCO and CEEOL.

O

OFFICIAL JOURNEY

When I was travelling by train, on an official duty, the travelling expenses were covered by the institution. One could use: the train, the plane, the bus or one's own car. If the distance was bigger than 300 km, the plane or 1st class train ticket, including the sleeping wagon at the same class, were accepted. Until 1980 they covered the price of the petrol for the personal cars: 75 lei for each 100 km, but the distance shouldn't exceed 500 km. If we were to go a longer distance, we had to take at least one colleague with us. We benefited from this solution until the summer of 1980, when a presidential decree forbid this kind of official journey, in order to spare the petrol of the country. In spite of all that, I secretly continued to use my car to attend to my job duties. When arriving at my destination, the first thing I would do was to go to the station, where I would ask those who had come from Bucharest to give me their train ticket (making sure that they didn't need it themselves to discount). On my way back, I would do the same thing at the station in Bucharest, which was more painful, because I had to find a traveler who came from the place where I was supposed to be.

The advantages were many. First, it was more comfortable to go by my own car to the destination and there I didn't have to cram myself in the local buses to the villages where I had work to do, buses which usually left from the bus station at around 5 in the morning. Then, even if I loathed it, I used to pick up hitch hikers from the highway who would pay and help me gather a little, nice and welcomed sum of money, be it to cover the cost difference (the petrol was more expensive than

the train and I couldn't always find train tickets in the stations), be it to round the pathetic *per diem* of 18 lei.

The system allowed me to play a trick that we all used and that I confess now, after more than 20 years, hoping not to be criminally charged: we came back a few days earlier, we would stay hidden in the house (benefiting undeservedly from the *per diem* and the accommodation money of 5 lei) and, the day of the arrival as written on the official paper, we would go to the station hunting for train tickets. All this was possible because, when working in the field, the officials would put the stamp on the "official mandate", and the date was to be filled in by us later. On one sole occasion, I met an over enthusiastic mayor, who wrote the date of my arrival, asking me to come by on the day of my leaving in order to stamp the date and to put the second stamp (the third would specify if one benefited or not from official accommodation). It was a little financial disaster!

Adopting the tactics of a friend who stated that, if he doesn't steal from the state on a daily basis, no matter how, he will be an accomplice to building the socialism, once I thought up something more extravagant. It was winter, the traffic of cars was forbidden. We had to go to Arad, with a colleague who loved skiing, like me. We bought first class train tickets to Arad, but we got off in Predeal. We went skiing for 3 days and after leaving our winter boots and ski equipment at a host, we bought second class train tickets to Arad with our own money, actually the state money, representing the 3 days of accommodation and *per diem*. On our way back we discounted the first ticket, the 1st class one, on the route Bucharest-Arad. (129).