

UDC 39(=135.1)(477+478):008:316.347+930.1:001.891(051)
DOI <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/97-1-2>

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**FOLK AND PROFESSIONAL CULTURE AMONG MOLDOVANS
AND INTER-ETHNIC INTERACTIONS IN THE ACADEMIC DISCOURSE
OF THE JOURNAL “FOLK ART AND ETHNOLOGY”:
A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS (1950S–2020S)**

This article presents a comprehensive historiographical analysis of articles published in the academic journal «Folk Art and Ethnology» that focus on the folk and professional culture of Moldovans, as well as issues of interethnic relations from the 1950s to the 2020s. Based on systematic, historical-typological, and problem-chronological approaches, key thematic areas of research are identified, including: field ethnographic studies, folklore and ritual traditions, material culture and folk art, as well as issues of ethnic identity, cultural memory, and intercultural contacts. A significant body of scholarly publications has been systematized, allowing for the identification of the logic of the development of research interests and the transformation of scholarly approaches within the field of ethnological knowledge. The evolution of methodological foundations has been traced—from predominantly descriptive and empirical approaches, characteristic of the early stage of ethnography’s development, to analytical, comparative, and interdisciplinary interpretations that reflect general trends in the development of the humanities in the second half of the XXth and early XXIst centuries. It has been established that the nature of scholarly discourse is gradually shifting: from the documentation and description of traditional culture to its conceptual interpretation within broader sociocultural and geopolitical contexts. Particular attention is paid to the historiographical dimension, specifically the analysis of reviews, overviews, and synthesizing works that reflect the formation of academic schools, the development of research strategies, and the deepening of international scholarly communication. It is demonstrated that these publications serve not only an informative but also a conceptualizing function, contributing to the institutional development of ethnology and folklore studies. It is demonstrated that the journal “Folk Art and Ethnology” serves not only as a source of empirical materials but also as an important intellectual platform for understanding ethnocultural processes and interethnic interactions, particularly in the context of Ukrainian-Moldovan relations. In the contemporary period, there has been an intensification of interdisciplinary approaches related to the study of identity, cultural memory, space, and border studies. In summary, the journal’s body of publications represents the evolution of ethnological science, reflects shifts in research paradigms, and attests to the integration of Moldovan topics into the broader European humanities landscape, which determines its relevance and promise in contemporary academic research.

Key words: Moldovans, folk culture, professional culture, interethnic interactions, ethnocultural processes, historiography, ethnology, folklore studies, material culture, cultural identity, academic periodicals, «Folk Art and Ethnology».

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**НАРОДНА І ПРОФЕСІЙНА КУЛЬТУРА МОЛДОВАН ТА МІЖЕТНІЧНІ
ВЗАЄМОДІЇ У НАУКОВОМУ ДИСКУРСІ ЖУРНАЛУ «НАРОДНА ТВОРЧИСТЬ
ТА ЕТНОЛОГІЯ»: ІСТОРІОГРАФІЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ (1950–2020-ТІ РР.)**

У статті здійснено комплексний історіографічний аналіз публікацій академічного журналу «Народна творчість та етнологія», присвячених народній і професійній культурі молдован, а також проблематиці міжетнічних взаємодій упродовж 1950-х – 2020-х років. На основі системного, історико-типологічного та проблемно-

хронологічного підходів виокремлено ключові тематичні напрями досліджень, серед яких: польові етнографічні студії, фольклорно-обрядова традиція, матеріальна культура та народне мистецтво, а також питання етнічної ідентичності, культурної пам'яті й міжкультурних контактів. Здійснено систематизацію значного корпусу наукових публікацій, що дозволило виявити логіку розвитку дослідницьких інтересів і трансформацію наукових підходів у межах етнологічного знання. Простежено еволюцію методологічних засад – від переважно описово-емпіричних підходів, характерних для раннього етапу розвитку етнографії, до аналітичних, порівняльних і міждисциплінарних інтерпретацій, що відображають загальні тенденції розвитку гуманітаристики другої половини ХХ – початку ХХІ століття. Встановлено, що поступово змінюється характер наукового дискурсу: від фіксації та опису традиційної культури до її концептуального осмислення у ширшому соціокультурному та геополітичному контекстах. Особливу увагу приділено історіографічному виміру, зокрема аналізу рецензій, оглядових і узагальнювальних праць, які відображають формування наукових шкіл, розвиток дослідницьких стратегій і поглиблення міжнародної наукової комунікації. Показано, що ці публікації виконують не лише інформативну, а й концептуалізуючу функцію, сприяючи інституційному розвитку етнології та фольклористики. Доведено, що журнал «Народна творчість та етнологія» виступає не лише джерелом емпіричних матеріалів, але й важливою інтелектуальною платформою осмислення етнокультурних процесів і міжетнічних взаємодій, зокрема у контексті українсько-молдовських зв'язків. У сучасний період спостерігається активізація міждисциплінарних підходів, пов'язаних із дослідженням ідентичності, культурної пам'яті, простору та прикордонних студій. Узагальнено, що корпус публікацій журналу репрезентує еволюцію етнологічної науки, відображає зміну дослідницьких парадигм і засвідчує інтеграцію молдовської тематики у ширший європейський гуманітарний простір, що визначає її актуальність і перспективність у сучасних наукових дослідженнях.

Ключові слова: молдовани, народна культура, професійна культура, міжетнічні взаємодії, етнокультурні процеси, історіографія, етнологія, фольклористика, матеріальна культура, культурна ідентичність, академічна періодика, «Народна творчість та етнологія».

The academic journal «Folk Art and Ethnology» is one of the most authoritative specialist publications in Ukraine, systematically covering issues relating to folk culture, ethnology, folklore studies, inter-ethnic relations and world art. In 2025, the journal celebrated its 100th anniversary, which was reflected in regulatory documents (Постанова Верховної Ради України «Про відзначення пам'ятних дат і ювілеїв у 2024–2025 роках» від 21 грудня 2023 року № 3536-IX), as well as in academic publications on the history of its formation and development (Постанова 2023; Стішова, Бех 2025: 8–13; Бех 2025: 22–36). In the current context of the development of humanities scholarship, there is a growing need for a comprehensive historiographical analysis of the body of publications devoted to specific ethno-cultural traditions. An analysis of a series of issues of an academic journal as a historical corpus of scholarly materials allows us to trace not only shifts in thematic focus, but also the evolution of methodological approaches and intellectual trends in line with the social and geopolitical transformations of the second half of the 20th century and the early 21st century. The journal's substantial body of scholarly publications covers the issues of the existence and development of the folk and professional culture of the Moldovans. The aim of this article is therefore to conduct a comprehensive historiographical analysis of the articles published in the academic journal «Folk Art and Ethnology» that focus on the folk and professional culture of the Moldovans, as well as to identify the main thematic, methodological and conceptual shifts in the coverage of this subject

matter in the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries. To achieve this objective, a range of general and specialised research methods were employed, including historical-typological, comparative, problem-chronological and historiographical analysis, which enabled the systematisation of the body of publications, the tracing of the evolution of scholarly approaches, and the identification of key areas of research.

The academic originality of this work lies in its comprehensive historiographical analysis of the journal's publications as a representative corpus reflecting the evolution of research into Moldovan ethnoculture within a broad interdisciplinary and intercultural context, as well as in identifying changes in research approaches and academic emphases throughout the second half of the 20th century and the early 21st century.

The article outlines the main areas of research featured in the journal, including: field ethnographic studies and professional academic activity; folklore and ritual traditions; material culture and folk art; as well as inter-ethnic relations and ethnic identity. This structure allows one to trace the logic of the development of academic discourse and identify key trends in the study of Moldovan ethnoculture.

The first steps towards exploring Moldovan themes in the journal were taken within the context of ethnographic work aimed at documenting folk culture in the field and exchanging experience in this field. It was precisely these expedition reports and descriptions of fieldwork practices that laid a solid empirical foundation for subsequent theoretical

and synthetic studies. Thus, a 1957 publication by the Moldovan scholar V. Zelenchuk reveals the essence of the fieldwork carried out by Moldovan ethnographers, who document the traditions, rituals and worldview practices of the local population (Зеленчук 1957: 157). For its time, this work was significant not only as a documentary record, but also as the first attempt to analyse the subject of research within an academic framework. Subsequently, the researcher V. Zelenchuk, in collaboration with A. Demchenko, published an expanded article in which they summarised the findings of their fieldwork in Moldova during the socialist era (Зеленчук, Демченко 1974: 53–57). In the article, the scholars noted that the ethnographer's task consists not only in collecting field data, but also in developing their own methodology and engaging in scholarly reflection. Several articles in the journal 'Folk Art and Ethnology' discuss the close collaboration between representatives of various academic centres and the preparation of a large-scale ethnographic publication. Specifically, in 1967–1969, publications by Naulko V., Guslistyi K. and Rabinovich M. outlined the methodology for creating a historical-ethnographic atlas for the region of Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova (Наулко 1967: 34–40; Гуслистий, Рабинович 1969: 10–14). These texts demonstrate an attempt to organise field data institutionally and to create a theoretically sound database that went beyond mere descriptions of a single ethnic group. Here, one can already discern a striving for structured scientific knowledge, which shapes professional ethnography as a discipline, in particular the systematic mapping and generalisation of field materials. Interest in the institutional aspects of academic research continues to feature in the journal's pages even in the post-socialist era. For instance, the works of Baran T. and Golovko O. highlight the participation of Ukrainian ethnologists in international events and academic conferences, which forms part of the discipline's professional self-identification in the contemporary context (Баран 2000: 141; Головко 2019: 96–100). This indicates that fieldwork and professional practices in ethnology not only retain their significance but are also becoming the subject of academic reflection within a broader international context.

A second key area is folklore studies and the associated ritual practices, which feature prominently in the journal. Early publications in this field focused on the recording and popularisation of folk texts, which was characteristic of the formative period of folklore studies in Eastern European countries, where folklore developed as a key branch of the humanities, aimed at documenting, systematising and preserving

traditional cultural heritage. For example, the Moldovan researcher B. P. Kiroshko examines specific issues relating to the development of Moldovan folklore studies, highlighting the importance of systematically collecting the oral tradition (Кірошко 1960: 64). Meanwhile, Ukrainian scholars A. Volkov and Sh. Sadovnik present a description of a collection of Moldovan folk poetry as an important source for ethnographic analysis (Волков, Садовник 1963: 138–139). At the same time, these publications focus primarily on the empirical aspects of folklore – texts, melodies and motivic structures.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the journal's coverage of the folklore tradition was gradually enriched with comparative and functional analyses, reflecting general trends in the development of folklore studies as a discipline. For instance, in his works, the eminent Moldovan philologist I. Ciobanu examined the distinctive features of songs about the friendship between Moldovans and Eastern Slavs; furthermore, the scholar elaborated on the paths and specific nature of the development of Moldovan folklore studies (Чобану 1970: 22–36; Чобану 1972: 11–15). This marked a shift from a descriptive analysis of the material to an interpretation of folklore forms within a broader socio-cultural context.

In the works of Bostan G. and Popovich N. V., the study of ethnocultural characteristics is carried out through an analysis of wedding customs, rituals and 19th-century periodicals, which contributes to a deeper understanding of inter-ethnic influences in the realm of ritual practices (Бостан 1971: 24–28; Попович 1977: 37–45). In the same vein, Y. G. Myronenko examines the origins of a particular type of wedding song found in Ukraine and Moldova, exploring the interconnection between the musical and ritual components of ethnoculture (Мироненко 1979: 30–35). A similar approach to understanding ethnocultural processes through ritual practices can also be seen in studies of calendar customs, particularly in the work of O. V. Kurochkin, where the new ritual practices of socialist society in the second half of the 20th century are analysed in the context of Ukrainian-Moldovan cultural ties (Курочкін 1986: 23–28).

The current state of research into the ethnoculture of the Moldovan population is represented by the works of Moldovan researchers Katerina and Victor Kozhukhar, in which New Year's rituals are examined through the prism of transformations in traditional culture, specifically using the example of the 'Malanka' ritual complex in the village of Tecani in the Briceni district (Кожухар, Кожухар 2016: 51–65). Attempts to analyse the specific features of folk culture have also been made by Ukrainian ethnologists, who have

focused on studying the folklore and ritual traditions of the Ukrainian population in the border regions of Moldova. In particular, the work by Pastukh N. and Kharchyshyn O. is devoted to the traditional folklore of Ukrainians in northern Moldova, with an emphasis on its relevance and local characteristics (Пастух, Харчишин 2009: 40–46), whereas М. Рупак's article examines the distinctive features of wedding rituals in the villages of the Vinnytsia region on the Ukrainian-Moldovan border, highlighting the characteristics of inter-ethnic interaction in ritual practice (Пилипак 2009: 100–103). These articles in the journal «Folk Art and Ethnology» demonstrate that, through the analysis of folklore and ritual forms, it is possible to trace the dynamics of ethnocultural processes, in particular the adaptation of traditional culture to new sociocultural conditions and its subsequent transformations.

The musical aspects of Moldovan culture, which form an important component of the ethnocultural system, have developed in close connection with the folklore tradition. Their distinctive features have been thoroughly examined in the works of both Moldovan and Ukrainian researchers, published in the journal «Folk Art and Ethnology». In particular, comparative analyses of Ukrainian and Moldovan folk songs reveal the common and distinctive features of musical traditions and trace cross-cultural influences in the field of music (Столяр 1979: 41–46). At the same time, research into the specific characteristics of Moldovan folk instrumental performance highlights the importance of the instrumental component within the structure of folk musical culture (Хинку 1991: 27–32).

Similarly, folk-dramatic elements of culture have developed in connection with the folklore tradition, and these too have been the subject of scholarly analysis within the scope of this publication. In the works of Spetar G. I., as well as Gainitzer O. I. and Fedas Y. Y., folk performance is regarded as a multifunctional cultural phenomenon that combines ritual, aesthetic and socio-communicative aspects, serving as an important means of representing collective experience and cultural identity (Спетару 1966: 36–41; Гайніцеру, Федас 1973: 91–92; Гайніцеру, Федас 1982: 75–77).

Another important area of focus is the material culture and folk art of the Moldovans. Research in this area highlights the material dimension of folk culture and demonstrates how artefacts function within the context of everyday life and cultural memory. Material culture emerges not merely as a collection of objects, but as a multi-layered semiotic system in which historical experience, social practices and artistic

representations are encoded. In particular, the issue of folk housing is systematically explored in a series of works by I. F. Hrebin, covering the characteristics of housing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and its rapid transformation in the second half of the 20th century (Гребінь 1983: 64–68; Гребінь 1984: 56–62). Folk art and traditional clothing are examined in the articles included in our review as complex systems of signs that combine aesthetic, symbolic and social meanings. The works of T. I. Bushyna and M. R. Selivachov examine Ukrainian and Moldovan folk and visual arts, allowing artistic forms to be interpreted as a kind of 'cultural text' reflecting aesthetic principles and social practices (Бушина 1979: 34–41; Селівачов 1982: 69–76). Summarising the arguments of the scholars mentioned and the authors of the articles reviewed, we emphasise once again that material culture emerges not merely as a collection of objects, but as a multi-layered cultural text in which historical experience, social practices and artistic representations are encoded, ensuring the continuity and transformation of ethno-cultural tradition.

Among the numerous articles in the journal «Folk Art and Ethnology» that explore the distinctive features of traditional Moldovan ethnoculture, a significant number are devoted to intercultural relations and the challenges of identity practices among different ethnic groups. One of the first to raise the issue of ethnic interrelationships in the pages of the journal was the Moldovan scholar V. S. Zelenchuk; specifically, he focused on East Slavic features in Moldovan wedding rituals, which makes it possible to trace cultural contacts and borrowings (Зеленчук 1959: 57–65).

More active research into inter-ethnic relations, demography and cultural identity began to emerge in the mid-1970s and continues to develop today, in the 21st century. In particular, key contributions to this field include articles by Bostan G. K., which analyse Moldovan-Ukrainian folklore links as a cultural phenomenon of interaction, as well as a publication by Zelenchuk V. S., which explores the coexistence of Moldovans and Ukrainians within a single ethnic environment, as well as the specifics of cultural interactions (Бостан 1973: 13–21; Зеленчук 1978: 24–30). These publications reflect scholars' interest in the structural aspects of ethnic communities and their interactions during the socialist period of the second half of the 20th century.

In the 1980s, the focus of research gradually shifted towards the study of ethno-cultural interrelationships, which were shaped by the political, social and demographic factors of the socialist period of these countries' development and which determined the

characteristics of inter-ethnic interaction. In particular, A. V. Orlov analyses Ukrainian-Moldovan ethnic ties, emphasising their role in shaping local identity and social structures, whilst M. V. Marunevych explores the mutual influences of cultures in border regions, demonstrating the mechanisms of integration and differentiation within ethnic communities (Орлов 1984: 61–66; Маруневич 1985: 76–78). These works have demonstrated the need for a comprehensive approach to assessing ethno-cultural processes that continue to influence inter-ethnic relations in the post-socialist era. At the beginning of the 21st century, the subject of inter-ethnic relations and identity is taking on not only new dimensions but also new academic approaches. In particular, I. Bezhan-Volk examines ethnic identification through a gender lens using the case of Moldova, reflecting a pan-European interest in the problems of identity as a complex cultural phenomenon (Бежан-Волк 2004: 32–34). I. Subotina examines the size of the Russian population in Moldova as an ethnic minority from the perspective of demographic ‘risks’ (inter-ethnic marriages, birth rates, labour migration, etc.), which broadly reflects the inter-ethnic situation in the region (Суботіна 2010: 39–44).

More recent works by Viktor and Kateryna Kozhukhar and O. Golovko examine Ukrainians in the independent Republic of Moldova and the historiography of inter-ethnic, particularly cultural, interaction in the Ukrainian-Moldovan border region (Кожухар, Кожухар 2018: 23–35; Головко 2014: 60–68). The publications demonstrate that issues of identity, ethnic relations and demography remain a research priority, but are taking on new meanings through the prism of contemporary geopolitical and sociocultural changes. Currently, the study of the anthropology of memory is emerging as a priority area within the international academic community. Bosa L. and Golovko O. investigate shared Ukrainian-Moldovan sites of memory within the cultural landscape of the Orhei Codru, demonstrating the interplay of space, memory and identity in the contemporary socio-cultural context (Боса, Головко 2022: 80–99).

A distinct strand of the journal’s scholarly output consists of articles devoted to historiographical issues concerning the development of Moldovan folk and professional culture, as well as the interaction between Ukrainian and Moldovan research centres. This area also includes reviews, analytical surveys and summarising works that reflect the formation of scholarly approaches and the development of academic discourse. In the 1960s–1980s, reviews and overviews predominated, aimed at recording

and popularising the achievements of Moldovan ethnographic science. For instance, in M. Prykhodko’s review of «A Collection of Studies by Moldovan Ethnographers and Archaeologists», the research of Moldovan ethnographers and archaeologists is analysed, highlighting the comprehensive nature of the approaches to the study of material and spiritual culture (Приходько 1965: 92–94). A similar function is fulfilled by V. Gorlenko’s review of the monograph «Agricultural Implements of the Moldovans in the 18th–Early 20th Centuries», which emphasises the significance of the technological aspects of traditional agriculture for the reconstruction of ethnocultural processes (Горленко 1970: 92–93). In turn, M. Guboglo, in his analytical study, draws attention to the individual contributions of specific researchers to the development of Moldovan ethnography, which indicates a gradual strengthening of biographical and intellectual-historical approaches within historiography (Губогло 1980: 89–91).

A separate group consists of reviews devoted to publications of folklore and ethnographic materials. In particular, I. Buruiană presents a multi-volume edition of Moldovan folklore, emphasising its importance for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage (Буруйане 1982: 80–83). O. Matkovska assesses publications on Slavic folklore in Moldova, which demonstrate inter-ethnic cultural influences (Марковська 1985: 72–73). An overview of the achievements of Moldovan folklore studies is presented in an article by the academic researchers G. Botezatu and S. Moraru, which outlines the main thematic areas and achievements of the field (Ботезату, Морару 1987: 35–38).

Publications from the late 20th and early 21st centuries attest to the broadening scope of historiographical studies and the intensification of international academic exchange. In particular, in O. Golovko’s review of the publication ‘International Academic Readings in Memory of Academician Konstantin Popovich. Vol. 1: Ukrainian-Moldovan Ethnocultural Ties’, prepared by the Institute of Cultural Heritage of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Moldova in 2015, the focus is on the development of Ukrainian-Moldovan ethno-cultural relations as a distinct field of research, combining historiographical, ethnological and cultural studies approaches (Головко 2016: 110–113).

Thus, the historiographical section of the journal’s publications demonstrates a gradual shift from descriptive and cataloguing forms of scholarly knowledge towards conceptualised interdisciplinary research that integrates ethnological, cultural studies and anthropological approaches. It demonstrates not

only the accumulation of empirical material, but also the gradual conceptualisation of research, which allows Moldovan ethnography and folklore studies to be viewed as an important component of a broader regional and European academic context.

Key findings. A historiographical analysis of articles published in the journal «Folk Art and Ethnology» on the folk and professional culture of Moldovans reveals that academic discourse in this field underwent a complex evolution during the second half of the 20th century and the early 21st century. It has transformed from predominantly descriptive and empirical studies to systematic analytical research focused on interdisciplinarity and the interpretation of cultural processes.

The early phase was characterised by a focus on fieldwork and the documentation of findings, in line with the objectives of classical ethnography. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a growing emphasis on the comparative and functional aspects of culture, particularly rituals, musical traditions and theatrical traditions. The post-socialist period is marked by a

broadening of the thematic scope of research and the introduction of new theoretical approaches – to the analysis of identity, cultural memory, space and inter-ethnic interaction. Of particular significance is the development of the historiographical strand, which includes the analysis of scholarly schools, academic periodicals and the institutional forms of scientific practice. This allows the journal to be viewed not merely as a source of empirical data, but as an intellectual platform for the formation of humanities knowledge.

Thus, the journal «Folk Art and Ethnology» serves not only as a means of documenting ethnocultural phenomena, but also as an important tool for shaping academic discourse, reflecting shifts in research paradigms, methodologies and approaches to the study of culture and interethnic interactions. Throughout its development, the journal has evolved from a platform for describing ethnographic materials into a fully-fledged academic environment, within which contemporary standards of humanities research are established and socio-cultural transformations are intellectually analysed.

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Дата першого надходження статті до видання: 02.03.2026

Дата прийняття статті до друку після рецензування: 25.03.2026

Дата публікації (оприлюднення) статті: 19.05.2026

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