

Preparing for the Wedding

Moldovan transcript:

I: Dar se făcea nuntă sâmbăta la mireasă. Concomitent, la mire și la mireasă, începeau, drustele sau vornicelele, prietenele, domnișoarele de onoare găteau mireasa în casă, muzica de fapt era de fapt la mire, aici era un instrumentist care cânta când găteau, împodobeau mireasa, de acolo era orchestra, fanfară de obicei, sau cele mai vechi erau grupuri de lăutari. Și găteau mirele acolo și mireasa aici. Și apoi mireasa trimitea niște soli, niște prieteni și se duceau și aduceau de acolo mirele. Mirele venea dar venea spre seară, călare pe cal, împreună cu nașii, nașii erau în căruță, și cu doi conocari, care aveau doi colaci. De fapt, unul din partea mirelui, și din partea miresei era acasă, alt conocar.

Și intrau mai întâi în ograda conocarii, și era o orație de nuntă, așa numita conocărie, de tip “Am auzit că aveți aici o floare, care nu înflorește, solul nu-i prieste, și împăratul nostru ne-a trimis să o luăm, să o ducem la noi în grădină, unde o să crească, o să înflorească.” Deci de tipul asta, o orație, și acolo se schimba colacul miresii, schimbau colacul mirelui și al miresei, vorniceii între dânși, conocari, era un ritual, luptau care colac se rupe mai repede, mai ușor și aruncau în mulțime bucăți de colac, de pâine, considerându-se că dacă ai să prinzi o bucățică de colac, ești neînsurat, ai să te însori, ești însurat o să ai belșug în casă.

D: Știu că este o tradiție cu colacul la nuntă, cand se rupe colacul și care rupe partea mai mare, acela va fi capul familiei. E ceva nou sau...?

I: Este ceva nou, pentru că colacul de fapt, în unele părți, mirele îl face cruce deasupra capului miresei, și îl rupe și îl aruncă în mulțime. Chestia că acela va fi capul familiei este ceva mai nou, pornind de la chestia asta, când colacul se rupe, acum au inventat că cine va fi capul familiei; oricum în tradiții, capul familiei era bărbatul. Deci femeia era cea care ținea casa, bărbatul cel care trebuia să ia decizii, dar oricum dintotdeauna femeia a fost cea care a orientat bărbatul către decizii corecte, prin diferite metode și ieri și azi.

English translation:

I: But the wedding would happen on a Saturday at the bride's house. At the same time, [both] at the groom's [house] and the bride's, they would start: the *druste* or *vornicele*, the friends, the *domnișoarele de onoare*¹, would prepare the bride. The music was actually at the groom's [house] – here [at the bride's house] there was an instrumentalist who would play as they prepared the bride, adorned the bride; there [at the groom's house] was an orchestra, a brass band usually, or in the old days, a group of musicians. And they would prepare the groom there and the bride here. And then the bride would

¹ *Druste*, *vornicele*, or *domnișoarele de onoare* are bridesmaids.

send some messengers, some friends, and they would go and bring the groom from there. The groom would come, but would come in the evening, on a horse, together with the godparents – the godparents were in a horse-drawn cart – and two *conocari*², who had two *colaci*³. Actually, one of them was from the groom’s side, and from the bride’s side the other *conocar* was already at the bride’s house.

And they would come into the yard, the *conocari*, and there was a nuptial ode, a so-called *conocărie*⁴, like: “We heard you have a flower here that is not blooming; the soil is not good for it; and our emperor sent us to take it with us, to bring it to our garden, where it will grow, it will bloom.” So something like this, an oration, and there they would exchange the bride’s *colac*, they would exchange the groom’s *colac* and the bride’s, the groomsmen between themselves, the *conocari*. It was a ritual; they would fight over whose *colac* breaks the fastest, the easiest, and they would throw at the crowd pieces of *colac*, of bread. They used to say that if you catch a piece of the *colac* and you’re not married, you would get married, and if you were already married, then you would have prosperity in your home.

D: I know there is a tradition with the *colac* at weddings, when you break the *colac*, and whoever gets the bigger portion, that person will be the head of the family. Is it something new, or...?

I: It’s something new, because the *colac* in fact, in some areas, the groom makes with it the sign of the cross above the bride’s head and breaks it [into pieces] and throws them into the crowd. The thing where that person will be the head of the household, based on this thing, when they break the *colac*, is something new; now they invented the thing [in which someone] becomes the head of the family. Anyway, traditionally, the head of the family was the man. So the woman was the one keeping the house and the man the one making decisions, but anyway, the woman has been the one influencing the man towards the right decisions, through various methods, both in the past and nowadays.

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² *Conocari* (singular *conocar*) are groomsmen.

³ *Colac* (plural *colaci*) is a type of ritual bread.

⁴ *Conocărie* is an archaic term referring to a traditional wedding song that is interpreted by the *conocari*.