

ABSTRACT

This volume is part of the *People and Context* series, one that proposes to present the individual and his oeuvre together, the oeuvre that can be understood in the context of the author's life, the different moments of that life being strongly connected to its creation. This volume intends to be a document that preserves the life and oeuvre of a self-taught peasant woman from Suceagu, the region of Calota, on the shores of the river Nadăș in Cluj county.

Újvári Anna was born in 1942 and lived her life in her native village. Although she was known from her childhood as a good student, capable of writing beautiful essays, her poetry became known only later when her own four children reached school age. Her oeuvre consists of both poetry and prose, all written for different occasions and in connection with important moments in the life of her community: weddings, funerals, baptisms, anniversaries, name days, retirements, important church feasts etc. but she also wrote poems that express personal feelings. She became an important person and of great prestige in her village, well known by everyone and with multiple important relationships in the community. Knowing so well her fellow villagers she was capable to shape her poems according to each occasion, thus Újvári Anna became a specialist in this work. Her writings often had their own life independent of the author, many of them being borrowed multiple times by others by simply replacing names or dates to fit the occasion.

The volume has three large parts. The largest one is dedicated to the oeuvre itself compiled from several manuscripts, both poetry and prose that was copied by the author in four notebooks. The next chapter contains the interviews that were conducted with the author during the time when her oeuvre and the studies about her life were prepared for publishing. The third part studies in detail those moments of her life that are strongly connected to her work.

Based on the interviews we examined both writing customs, those referring to writing techniques and motivations as well as use of language. At the basis of our methodology stands the approach to writing as a means of communication, therefore this activity has to be studied in the context of life as a whole. Customs regarding writing in popular culture can be found in the following specific fields: functions of writing, attitudes, techniques, genres, motivations, dating of texts, forms and levels of writing. The texts written by Újvári Anna reflect entirely her life and her standing within the community. In her texts orality gains a specific form. We can find both the dialectal characteristics of Suceagu and those of everyday language. The orthography and calligraphy correspond to her level of formal schooling, sometimes they go beyond the level that is specific to her age and social status. Her writing abilities and the fact that writing as an activity is part of her everyday life is reflected on the pages of her notebooks.

By publishing Újvári Anna's life and oeuvre we intend to present a naïve author who by her attitude and oeuvre belongs entirely to the world of Transylvanian naïve authors.

Tamás Csilla (born Szabó) is a linguist who has a passion for popular culture. She graduated from the Faculty of Letters in 1992 earning her PhD in Philology in 2002. Throughout her career she worked at the editing of the Historical Dictionary of Hungarian Vocabulary in Transylvania, she published the Nagyszombati and Döbrentei codexes that are part of a collection of resources on the history of the Hungarian language compiled in Budapest, she wrote studies in linguistics that were published in *Nyelv- és Irodalomtudományi Közlemények* as well as in *Erdélyi Múzeum*, she participated in national and international conferences and congresses of linguistics. On the field of ethnography she published already in 1995 a study about the popular costumes in Sâmbriaș, Mureș county. She has a passion for onomastics, her most recent research being conducted in this field.