

**NICOLAE CONSTANTINESCU**  
**(10.05.1941 – 07.18.2025)**

The eminent Romanian ethnologist Nicolae Constantinescu was born in Fierbinți (commune in Ialomița County, close to the capital Bucharest). Both his parents, Florica and Alexandru Constantinescu, were primary school teachers and later in his life, professor Constantinescu often evoked them with gratitude and affection. He obtained his BA in Romanian Language and Literature from the Faculty of Philology, University of Bucharest. He defended his Ph D thesis coordinated by Professor Docent Mihai Pop in 1971.

Immediately after University graduation he was employed in the Faculty of Philology (named Faculty of Letters after 1989), an institution he served as junior assistant (1964-1967), assistant (1967-1973), lecturer (1973-1990), associate professor (1990-1995), and professor (since 1995). His area of expertise comprised “Romanian Literary Folklore”, “Ethnology”, and “Cultural Anthropology”.

He worked as a Romanian language lecturer at Portland State University, Oregon, U.S.A., as a Fulbright grantee (September 1976 - July 1978) and as Romanian language lecturer at the University of Turku, (Turun Yliopisto), Finland (November 1978 - May 1979 and January 1992 - December 1995). He delivered special courses on “Romanian Folk Culture”, “History of Romania” and “History of Romanian Culture” in the International Programme at the University of Turku.

Professor Constantinescu was Director of the Chair of Ethnology and Folklore at the faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest in the period 1996-2007 and together with his department colleagues, he created and coordinated a BA programme on Ethnology and an MA programme on Ethnology, Cultural Anthropology and Folklore. These two programmes are managed at present by the professors in the Collective of Ethnology and Folklore – Department of Cultural Studies at the Faculty of Letters.

Since 1997, he was a Ph D coordinator in Philology, with an area of expertise on Folklore Studies, Cultural Studies, Ethnology and Anthropology. In 2010, he was granted the title of Professor Emeritus, member of the Doctoral School of the Faculty of Letters.

Professor Nicolae Constantinescu delivered several special courses for the students of the Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest, among which: “Introduction to Romanian Folk Culture”, “Ethnology”, “Ethnology of Kinship”, “Contemporary Folklore”, “Romanian Folk Culture in European Context”, “Anthropology of Literature”.



He is author of 12 books on ethnology and folklore, 11 volumes of commented texts, more than 200 studies and articles issued in volumes and periodicals in Romania and abroad. His reference works are: *Rima în poezia populară românească* [Rhyme in Romanian Folk Poetry] (volume based on the doctoral thesis, Minerva Printing House, Bucharest, 1973); *Lectura textului folcloric* [Reading the Folklore Text] (Minerva Printing House, Bucharest, 1986); *Etnologia și folclorul relațiilor de rudenie* [Ethnology and Folklore of Kinship] (edition by Rodica Zane, Univers Printing House, Bucharest, 2000 – revised edition of the volume *Relațiile de rudenie în societățile tradiționale: reflexe în folclorul românesc* [Kinship in Traditional Societies: Reflection in Romanian Folklore], Romanian Academy Printing House, Bucharest, 1987); *Romanian Folk Culture. An Introduction* (“Scripta Ethnologica Aboensia” 42, Turku, 1996; second edition in 1999, The Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing House, București; two further editions issued at Paideia Printing House, Bucharest, 2011 and 2012); *Citite de mine... Folclor, Etnologie, Antropologie. Repere ale cercetării* [Books I Read... Folklore, Ethnology, Anthropology. Hallmarks of Research] (2 volumes issued by the National Centre for the Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture, 2 volume, ed. Oana Gabriela Petrică, Collection Cultural Seasons, Bucharest, 2008, 2011); *Folclorul, cum poate fi înțeles: studii și articole de etnologie românească (1968-2008)* [Folklore: How It Could Be Understood. Articles and Studies on Romanian Ethnology (1968-2008)] (edition, English abstracts and Afterword by Ioana-Ruxandra Fruntelată, University of Bucharest Printing House, 2011); *Cultura antropologică: studii, cronici,*

*comentarii apărute în revista “Cultura” editată de Fundația Culturală Română (2010-2015)* [Anthropological Culture: Studies, Chronicles, Comments published in “Cultura/ Culture”, a review of the Romanian Cultural Foundation (2010-2015) (edition, Foreword and notes by Cătălin D. Constantin, Etnologică Printing House, Bucharest, 2016), *Repertoriul patrimoniului cultural imaterial din România* [Repertoire of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Romania] (co-author of vol. 1, CIMEC, Bucharest, 2009; coordinator and co-author of vol. 2 A, Etnologică Printing House, Bucharest, 2014).

Also, Nicolae Constantinescu edited the studies of Professor Mihai Pop in three volumes: Mihai Pop, *Folclor românesc* [Romanian Folklore], vol. 1: Theory and Method, vol. 2: Texts and Interpretations (edition by Nicolae Constantinescu and Alexandru Dobre, “Grai și Suflet - Cultura Națională” Printing House, Bucharest, 1998), and *Folclor românesc* [Romanian Folklore], vol. 3 (edition by Nicolae Constantinescu, Adrian Stoicescu and Rodica Zane, Foreword by Nicolae Constantinescu, University of Bucharest Printing House, 2007). He restituted a part of the folklore collections and editions authored by the ethnomusicologist Constantin Brăiloiu in the series *Constantin Brăiloiu: culegător și editor de folclor* [Constantin Brăiloiu: Folklore Collector and Editor] (edition, foreword and notes by Nicolae Constantinescu and Adrian Mihail Șerban, Etnologică Printing House, Bucharest, 2017 - vol. 1, 2018 - vol. 2, 2019 - vol. 3).

Colleagues and disciples paid homage to the Professor in the volumes *Exigențele și utilitatea lecturii etnologice: in onorem Nicolae Constantinescu* [Exigencies and Utility of Ethnological Reading] (edition by Narcisa Alexandra Știucă and Adrian Stoicescu, University of Bucharest Printing House, 2012); *Profesorul Nicolae Constantinescu - prestigios donator de carte* [Professor Nicolae Constantinescu – Prestigious Book Donor] (edition by Gheorghe Deaconu, Ioan St. Lazăr and Elena Stoica, „Antim Ivireanul” Library – ”Mihai Pop” Ethnology Section, Vâlcea County Center for the Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture - Fântâna lui Manole Printing House, Patrimoniu Printing House, Golești, Râmnicu-Vâlcea, 2023), and *Termeni și teme actuale în științele etnologice: un repertoriu comentat. In onorem prof. univ. (e) dr. Nicolae Constantinescu* [Current Terms and Themes in Ethnological Sciences: a Commented Repertoire. *In onorem Emeritus* Professor Nicolae Constantinescu] (coord. Ioana-Ruxandra Fruntelată, Mihaela Bucin, Florența Popescu-Simion, Muzeul Literaturii Române Printing House, Etnologică Printing House, Bucharest, 2024).

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lui Manole Printing House, Patrimoniul Printing House, Golești, Râmnicu-Vâlcea, 2023), and *Termeni și teme actuale în științele etnologice: un repertoriu comentat*. In honorem *prof. univ. (e) dr. Nicolae Constantinescu* [Current Terms and Themes in Ethnological Sciences: a Commented Repertoire. In honorem Emeritus Professor Nicolae Constantinescu] (coord. Ioana-Ruxandra Frunteală, Mihaela Bucin, Florența Popescu-Simion, Muzeul Literaturii Române Printing House, Etnologică Printing House, Bucharest, 2024).

Constantinescu's academic excellence gained recognition by awards such as "Sim. Fl. Marian" Award of the Romanian Academy for the volume *Relațiile de rudenie în societățile tradiționale: reflexe în folclorul românesc* [Kinship in Traditional Societies: Reflection in Romanian Folklore] (1987), the "Ethnos" Cultural Foundation Award in 1999 for the contribution to the promotion of Romanian folk culture in national and international University and academic milieu, and "Perpessicius" Award of the National Museum of Romanian Literature for critical editions in 2010 (for the Anthology *Basme populare românești* [Romanian Folktales], 2 volumes edited by Nicolae Constantinescu, Iordan Datcu and A. Gh. Olteanu, Romanian Academy, National Foundation for Science and Arts, Bucharest, 2008). He collaborated to the *Enzyklopädie des Märchens* (*Encyclopedia of the Folktale*), a most prestigious academic instrument meant to enhance research of folk narratives. Kurt Ranke initiated the *Encyclopedia of Folktale* and an international scholar team affiliated to the Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen worked to complete it. Nicolae Constantinescu is author of the article on Professor Mihai Pop in the tenth volume (*Band 10 Nibelungenlied – Prozeßmotive*, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2002. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110908305>).

Professor Nicolae Constantinescu organized the 30<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Ballad Conference at the University of Bucharest in 2010, under the auspices of the International Society of Ethnology and Folklore. He was a member of the International Society of Folk Narrative Research, of the International Association of South-Eastern European Anthropology, of the Association of Ethnological Sciences in Romania (Asociația de Științe Etnologice din România), among other prestigious memberships.

Nicolae Constantinescu brought an essential contribution to the professionalization of Romanian ethnology. He played a decisive role with respect to the building up of Ethnology BA and MA programmes in Romanian Universities. In addition, he reshaped the ethnological language and concepts achieving to avoid the "narrow territory of facile conformism" (as he asserts in one of his studies) and to integrate into the international academic trends of thought. By taking a close look at his "inner own folklore", the Professor created a mode and model of "reading" folk poetic creation and the traditional kinship networks. Not least, he engaged his work and academic prestige to promote a "school" on contemporary folklore and set up standards for the next generation of Romanian ethnologists who entered the profession at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century.