

CREATIVITY AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Vlad Glăveanu, Institute of Social Psychology, LSE

✉ v.p.glaveanu@lse.ac.uk

Creativity has traditionally been considered an individual level phenomenon. This doctoral research aims to unpack the **social and cultural dynamics of creativity** and takes the example of folk art as a community level manifestation of creativity. An exploration of Easter egg decoration in urban and rural Romania reveals the mechanisms of a craft-world found at the intersection between **folklore, religion and art**.

The **creativity of everyday life** is a major area of interest for **socio-cultural psychology**. In this theoretical framework, New Artefacts emerge in the relation between Self (creator) and Others (community), both in dialogue with existing knowledge, symbols and norms.

How to study folk art creativity? This project uses a qualitative methodology: interviews with adults from urban and rural settings (different professional groups), as well as direct observation of egg-making processes. Children are asked to draw and then discuss their drawings.

Geometrical shapes are typical for Northern Romania.

FINDING It is the variation of themes and the skilfulness required by this work that are considered “creative”.

The “net” is an example of a simple and common decoration element.

FINDING Children start with simple models and, in time, guided by adults, engage in more creative forms of decoration.



Black, used in Ciocănești village as background colour, is considered a symbol of eternity.

FINDING Creative expressions in folk art are part and parcel of traditions and expressive of local identities.

Wax decoration is traditional in Romania. This procedure often entails the help of other family members.

FINDING Creative practices are based on a network of collaboration.

If creativity is a **social, cultural and psychological process** then we need to:

- cultivate dialogue and increase awareness about the power of joint activity;
- understand the role of community for expressing creative potential;
- combine tradition and innovation in developing creative action;
- draw on local cultural resources in educational practices to foster children’s creativity.