

ACTA ETHNOGRAPHICA HUNGARICA

Volume 62 Number 2 2017

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Financial support for the translation and proofreading of the studies
in the 2017 volume was provided by grant number NKA 106113/00269.



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Organic Farm, Organic Food Steps Towards a Sustainable Agriculture (with Hungarian and Slovenian Examples)

An Introduction to the Thematic Block

Anikó Bati

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At the beginning of the 21st century, ethnographic food culture research looks at foodways not as a comparison of the individual social strata or village-town relations, but focuses rather on consumption habits. Among the consumption groups, clearly distinguishable are those that oppose globalization, trends in the food industry and food trade, and the oversupply of supermarkets. If and when these groups seeking a health-conscious diet have the option, they try to put on their tables fresh, locally-produced products from controlled, certified farms or home-made produce and food. In consumer decisions, therefore, the origin of food, a personal, trust-based producer-customer relationship, and chemical-free, environmentally friendly production play an increasingly important role. In this issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*, we can see the functioning of this value system in everyday practice through a collection of case studies, examples of Hungarian and Slovene settlements or small communities within them. The topicality of the issue is evidenced by the fact that it was also the theme of the 2016 conference *Place of Food Production: Origin, Identity, Imagination*, organized in Germany by the largest international organization in food culture research, the SIEF International Ethnological Food Research Group. The presentations demonstrated how the global food supply affects local production and consumption, enhancing the importance of identity-forming locality, and how the specific characteristics of traditional food production oriented towards the market and tourism may be preserved. The economic and social history of this process, which can nowadays be documented with the tools of ethnographic food culture research, goes back in Hungary, for example, to the middle of the 20th century.

The large-scale reorganization of agriculture, during which the individual estates were abolished in the 1960s, has basically transformed the production framework in Hungary. Many abandoned agriculture at that time, changed their way of life, started working in cities, industries, in the service sector. In the villages, only the backyard garden endured as individual property. The purpose of small-scale agricultural production was partly to gain income, or to supplement income and to expand the unequal commercial supply. The earlier frameworks of household organization were transformed, and the pursuit of partial self-sufficiency in food production slowed down.

In parallel with women entering the workplace, they increasingly relied on in-store food supplies, not only in cities but also in villages.

After 1990, following the regime change, another major restructuring of ownership took place in agriculture in line with the market economy framework. Land became a real private property once again. Agricultural cooperatives were abolished and many lost their jobs. Due to the structural transformation of agriculture, production declined sharply by 50% in the 1990s in Hungary. However, very few returned to the former form of agriculture as independent farmers. The knowledge required for independent farming has been either lost or has become outdated in recent decades. After 1990, many family farms were unable to rebuild because they did not have the necessary capital. Only a narrow stratum of small-scale farmers emerged, but their survival is still fairly uncertain today. Their numbers have declined steadily in recent years.¹

One of the long-term viable solutions to the quandary of Hungarian agriculture which started in the 1980s and intensified with the political regime change in 1989 may be a shift towards sustainable farming (KAJNER et al. 2013). Sustainable agriculture is the re-production of resources, which has a positive impact on the natural environment, assists in the survival of rural communities in multiple ways, and improves the quality of life through food production. Ethnographer Anikó Báti's study, *From Hernádszentandrás to BioSzentandrás. An Example of a Sustainable Bio-farm in Hungary*, presents an organic farm in a disadvantaged village in Hungary² as a sustainable agricultural initiative. (In colloquial Hungarian, as a prefix in complex words, bio³ and eco are used as equivalents of the English word 'organic' in the names of farming methods and products, but clarification of the terminology would go beyond the thematic framework of this journal, so we will not discuss it here.) One of the peculiarities of the small-scale

¹ Between 2000 and 2013, the number of individual farmers in Hungary declined from 900,000 to 500,000. Most of them produce only for their own consumption, only approx. one third sells their products on the market. MAGYAR MEZŐGAZDASÁG 2016. [Hungarian Agriculture 2016] https://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/agra/agrarium2016/agrarium_2016_04be.pdf (accessed December 10, 2017).

² In today's Hungarian agriculture, chemical-free, environmentally conscious farms are present in a much smaller proportion. Much of their products are shipped abroad in the absence of a domestic solvent market. (See also: MAGYAR MEZŐGAZDASÁG 2016. [Hungarian Agriculture 2016] https://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/agra/agrarium2016/agrarium_2016_04be.pdf, accessed December 10, 2017). This trend is a serious obstacle, for example, in the reform efforts of school cafeterias. In the survey providing an international overview (WILLER – LERNOUD 2016), the figures for Hungarian organic farming for 2014 (the main crops grown organically are cereals, plants harvested green and oilseeds) are as follows:

organic agricultural land: 124,841 hectares

organic share of the total farmland: 2.7 %

organic producers 1,672 person

organic vegetable land: 1,854 hectares

organic share of the total vegetable land: 4.2 %

³ Organic farming in Hungary first gained ground in the 1980s. In 1983, the first non-governmental organization, Biokultúra Klub [Bioculture Club] was founded, followed in 1987 by Biokultúra Egyesület [Bioculture Association], which was succeeded in 2005 by Biokultúra Szövetség [Bioculture Alliance]. They focus on environmentally conscious approaches and healthy lifestyles, the propagation of organic farming, and the promotion of eco-product consumption. They organize fairs, events, and informational lectures, prepare publications, and operate a web site. BIOKULTÚRA 2017 <http://www.biokultura.org/hu/> (accessed December 10, 2017).

agricultural enterprise under examination is that the local government is the entrepreneur who has established the vegetable and fruit garden and the processing plant by relying on local resources and by means of grant moneys. The study reveals that sustainability not only affects agriculture but also includes improving the living conditions and the social situation of the settlement, as well as the rational use of resources. An important condition of success, however, is the broad acceptance of basic principles such as conscious consumer habits, the adaptation of the structure of production to local conditions, and a background of long-term economic policy and necessary financial resources. The fieldwork-based study presents the process of the organic farm's development and market-based sustainability, and the role of the garden in the life of the community.

In the decades following World War II, the earlier practice still continued in Hungary, albeit in a decreasing degree, but due to unsteady food supplies, both rural and urban households sought to supplement their food reserves with their own vegetables and fruits. The cultivation of small gardens was a popular recreational activity for many people. After the political regime change, and with the establishment of supermarket networks, everyone had access, regardless of the season, to not only domestic but also foreign agricultural products. Thus, more and more people gave up cultivating privately owned or rented gardens. By contrast, as a quasi-protest against the habits of consumer society, in Budapest, for example, community gardens in urban spaces have been continuously established since 2012,⁴ within the framework of urban agriculture. In 2017, there were approx. 60–70 such gardens in operation nationally.⁵ In these communal gardens, the goal is not only environmentally-conscious, chemical-free gardening and fruit and vegetable production for one's own consumption, but also community life (GYÖRGY 2014) and the transfer of basic horticultural knowledge. Ethnography Ph.D. candidate Gergő Hajba's study based on participant observation, *Aspects to the Understanding of the Social Dynamics of Organic Food through the Example of a Community Garden in Budapest*, presents the operation of a metropolitan community garden in the VIII. district. A community garden was established five years ago on an empty private lot between two buildings as a neighborhood initiative. The main research question was: how do the gardeners express what they know about organic foods, and how do they integrate it all into their foodways in the urban space? (In fact, general knowledge of organic foods is still very limited and incomplete in Hungary, and scientific data about this is even more sparse.) The study highlights self-production as the main value indicated by the informants, even though they receive criticism from outside the community regarding urban pollution and other challenges. Although the circumstances are very different, one of the key elements of the community's operation, the preservation and transfer of knowledge related to agricultural work, is of the same importance as in the rural example presented in the study by Anikó Báti.

⁴ The first community garden opened in 2012 with 26 beds of approximately 5 m². The initiator, the launcher of the entire movement, Gábor Rostás, was president of the Municipal Gardens Association. See also: VÁROSI KERTEK 2017 [Urban Gardens 2017] <http://www.varosikertek.hu/ot-eves-az-elso-kis-pesti-kert/> (accessed December 10, 2017).

⁵ There is no exact figure on the number of community gardens in 2017, this is just an estimate. See also: VÁROSI KERTEK 2017 [Urban Gardens 2017] <http://www.varosikertek.hu/ot-eves-az-elso-kis-pesti-kert/> (accessed December 10, 2017).

Eco-villages have been created as an attempted solution to the ecological crisis induced by consumer society, where the goal is not only a sustainable and eco-friendly farming but also community building, the preservation of traditional knowledge, and the transfer of collected personal experiences and information. It is in this respect that Judit Farkas's study, *'There are no recipes'. An Anthropological Assessment of Nutrition in Hungarian Eco-villages*, is related to the previous writings. As a cultural anthropologist, Judit Farkas has been studying the topic in Hungary for 10 years, focusing mainly on social phenomena and food culture. In her current article, she documents the eating habits of a small community of newcomers – partly agricultural scientists, botanists, horticultural educators – within a Hungarian village. We get an insight into the details of the attempts at self-sufficiency that include cultivated and wild plants – and the possible interpretations of these – based on the author's participant observation fieldwork.

Up until the first half of the 20th century, foraged wild plants and fungi were regularly present in traditional foodways during various seasons of the year, regardless of the social layer, although in varying quantities. Béla Gunda's work (GUNDA 2011) summarized the ethnographic findings of collecting and using wild plants. In the peasant household, they were not only consumed as food, fed to animals as feed, but also used as a medicine or as storage equipment, and they were also used as a magical tool for spells. Due to intensive cultivation and weed control, however, the natural collection points have disappeared, and horticulture and the commercial supply of foodstuffs caused the place and role of wild plants in the Hungarian kitchen and medicine to have diminished since the second half of the 20th century. Biologist Andrea Dénes gives a detailed overview of the foraged species that are commercially available in the markets of a city in Southern Hungary with favorable environmental conditions in her study, *Wild Plants for Sale in the Markets of Pécs Then and Now (Baranya, Hungary)*. Starting from a current-day example and also surveying the Hungarian ethnographic literature on the topic, she shows how the supply of wild plants has changed. These products are merely delicacies today, their role in diet minimal. They are nonetheless a good indicator of the exciting (from the perspective of research) extremes that manifest in consumer habits and current trends in commercial supply. For example, a previously forgotten spice has become so popular today that its natural habitats need to be safeguarded from excessive, less environmentally conscious foraging.

During the mapping of the living cultural heritage of Slovenia, the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology of the Research Center of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts paid special attention to food culture in 2009–2011. Cooking and eating habits and associated customs can carry a wide range of knowledge both at the family level and at the widest community level, as a kaleidoscopic impression of ethnic, local and regional traditions. Maja Godina Golija's study, *The Growing Importance of Local Pumpkin Seed Oil Production in Slovenia*, shows through the example of pumpkin seed oil, which was not so prestigious in the Slovenian kitchen 200 years ago, how today's consumption patterns have changed as a result of influences of health-conscious diet trends,⁶ as well as tourism. Pumpkin seed oil has now become an important expression of local identity in the northeastern part of Slovenia. The product is also protected

⁶ On the topic, see, for example: TÖRÖCSIK 2011.

within the European Union with a Protected Designation of Origin trademark. The dark-colored, locally grown oil, which has a unique flavor and is beneficial to health, had previously only appeared on the tables of the lower social strata. In the Mediterranean cuisine, it was used as a dressing for salads and vegetable dishes, similarly to olive oil – just a cheaper version of it. Nowadays, however, pumpkin seed oil is also conceived of in and outside the region as a local specialty, an ethnic marker in food culture, such as among the Slovenes living in the Porabje [Vendvidék] region of Hungary. Today it is used not only in salads but also in cooking, and it has even made its way into confectionery and chocolate as a flavoring. The author describes the past and present of the production of pumpkin seed oil, highlighting the changes that have been induced by changes in consumption patterns, mainly as part of today's taste change and healthy diet. It also points out that although the Hungarian-Slovenian political border virtually divides the region under examination, it does not constitute a cultural border. Through fieldwork in Slovenia and Hungary, the identity-shaping importance of food emerged. The study fits in with the line of research which, during the aforementioned conference organized by the SIEF International Food Research Group (in which the author serves as vice president), presented at an international level a number of similar examples of these processes, in which each food or its way of production is given a prominent role in the formulation of self-identity, and around which festive occasions and festivals are also organized.

Many of the elements of traditional peasant farming knowledge accumulated over the centuries, previously considered to be outdated, still live on in the reform attempts of agricultural production seeking adequate responses to environmental challenges since the end of the 20th century. In many cases, communities need to be re-educated about this from the outside. The peasant roots of farming called *organic* today are in most cases not openly discussed, visible only through the eyes of ethnographers, as reflected in the above-mentioned studies. For this reason, documenting and interpreting recent phenomena is an important task of ethnographic research.

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Her research topic is changes in contemporary food culture. She conducts fieldwork in the 20th district of Budapest and the northern parts of Hungary, and studies school canteens, festive and everyday food and eating habits, cultural background, and lifestyles. She has written two monographs and several scientific articles and papers, especially on food culture. She is editor-in-chief of *Életmód és Tradíció* [Life Style and Tradition], a book series of the Institute of Ethnology, and she edited numerous ethnographic books. Since 2013 she has been editor of *Ethnography*, a journal of the Hungarian Ethnographical Society. She was the Secretary of the Material Culture Section of the Hungarian Ethnographical Society (2009–2015), and since 2015 she has been the Secretary of the Hungarian Ethnographical Society. She is a member of the SIEF International Ethnological Food Research Group, and has regularly participated in its conferences since 2012.

From Hernádszentandrás to BioSzentandrás

An Example of a Sustainable Bio-farm in Hungary

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Abstract: Sustainable agriculture is the re-production of resources, which has a positive impact on the natural environment, assists in the survival of rural communities, and improves the quality of life through food production. The job opportunities can also positively influence the population retention of the communities. The study seeks to answer why a farming community in a traditionally agricultural area may have to re-learn the foundations of crop production on a social agricultural farm created by the local government. In this case study based on my fieldwork, I present the operation of an organic farm established with the help of external resources and specialists as a sustainable agricultural model, its effect on community life, and briefly referring to food culture and lifestyle changes that occurred in Hungary in the second half of the 20th century.

Keywords: social agricultural project, rural community, local governance, sustainable rural development, food culture

In the 21st century, sustainability has become the keyword for production and consumption systems responding to global challenges, such as the depletion of natural resources, environmental pollution, famine, etc.,¹ which has been present in the Hungarian government's rural development concepts since accession to the European Union. The main objective is to bring about harmony between farming, consumption, and the environment. Sustainable agriculture means the re-production of resources through sound management, which has a positive impact on the natural environment and biodiversity as well, assists in the survival of rural communities in multiple ways, and improves the quality of life through food production. It combines technological innovations with the knowledge of traditional husbandry. In addition to the ecological

¹ Sustainability as a term in the 1981 book by Lester R. Brown, head of the Worldwatch Institute, *Building a Sustainable Society*. According to his theory, in a sustainable society, development needs to be in harmony with the needs of society, the growth of the population, and the utilization of natural resources, while also reducing harmful environmental impacts (BROWN 1981).

benefits, however, the impact on society is also significant: with the creation of job opportunities, the population retention of communities can be positively influenced (CSETE – LÁNG 2005:9–10; CSURGÓ – MEGYESI 2015).

In Hungarian agriculture, one of the long-term viable solutions in the search for a way out that started in the 1980s and intensified after the regime change could be a move toward a sustainable economy. Sustainability affects not only agriculture; it includes improving the living conditions of the community, improving its social situation, and a rational use of resources. An important condition of success, however, is the broad acceptance of basic principles such as conscious consumer habits, adapting the structure of production to local conditions, and a background of long-term economic policy and necessary financial resources. Problems need to be addressed at global, regional and local levels.

This study presents a successful example, the village of Hernádszentandrás in northeastern Hungary, and the organic farm created there (Hernádszentandrás 2016). In the case study, I look at the operation of an organic farm that was created through the involvement of external resources and specialists as a sustainable agricultural model, on its effect on community life, and I briefly refer to food culture and lifestyle changes.

Food production, which at least partially contributes to self-sufficiency, had to be re-learned and, along with innovations that aid progress, the foundations of the market-oriented farmstead were created from this starting point. The purpose of establishing the organic farm was to provide the population with low-cost, high-quality food, as well as provide jobs. The available resources (land, manpower) have been put in the service of sustainable development (BÁTI 2017).

The basis for the study was my fieldwork: in May–June 2016, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the mayor and program participants about their work and their eating habits. I was able to observe the daily operation of the organic farm. Through casual conversations, I was able to form a picture of the villagers' assessment of it. The articles published in the media about them were also used as sources to learn about their work.

HERNÁDSZENTANDRÁS IN THE RECENT PAST

Most of Hungary's territory is well-suited for agricultural cultivation; this is especially so in Hernádszentandrás and its surrounding areas, where both high-quality soil and irrigation water are available (ÜVEGES 2012). For centuries, farming was the basis of livelihood for a broad layer of society. The political, economic and social changes of the second half of the 20th century² changed this situation. After 1948, industrial development became the main guideline of national economic policy, for which the financial resources were siphoned from agriculture. Land ownership was abolished, collectivized. Many abandoned agriculture at that time, changed their way of life, started working in cities, industries, in the service sector.³ The number of people working in agriculture declined steadily. As part of the national process, it was a turning point in the history of

² For the history of Hungary, see: ROMSICS 2016; for the food culture, see: KISBÁN 1995.

³ For the changing rural society, see: HANN 1980, 1983:69–92; LOVAS KISS 2002, 2013; SÁRKÁNY 2005a:148–157; VALUCH 2005:135–159.

Hernádszentandrás as well. Families making a living through farming sought to have their children educated, and these young people did not return as workers. About 10% of the population of the village was employed in the industry, commuting between their place of residence and their workplace daily or weekly, but the majority worked in the agricultural cooperative or its side branch, the light industry. Women's employment has also become common practice, which has fundamentally transformed the organization of households. Hernádszentandrás, like other villages in the region, slowly lost part of its population, ageing gradually.

The prestige of peasant life diminished. Traditional peasant society began to decay: the knowledge and skills required for independent farming, the value system, the forms of behavior, the earlier norms, family, kinship and neighborly collaborations gradually lost their significance and have not been passed on to the next generations.

The basis of large-scale agriculture replacing family farms from 1960 was mechanization, modernization, and the use of chemicals. Workers were wage-earners. Experts with skilled training and college education became increasingly important in the management of work. However, in addition to large-scale agriculture, a system of backyard, small-scale farms also emerged in the 1970s. For this, the land was leased from the agricultural cooperative. Although backyard farms were primarily used to provide families with self-sufficiency, the produced goods were an important additional income and material source in the 1970s and 1980s. It allowed them to buy prestige goods – though not land, like their ancestors did, but consumer goods, electric machines, cars, new houses.

After 1990, following the political regime change, another major restructuring of ownership took place in agriculture in line with the market economy framework. Land became a real private property once again. The state compensated the former owners with securities corresponding to the size of their holdings, which they could use for land acquisition. Agricultural cooperatives were dissolved, many lost their jobs. The backyard farm system also ceased to exist. Because of the structural transformation of agriculture, production fell sharply, by almost 50% in the 1990s.⁴

However, only a few returned to the earlier forms of agriculture as independent farmers; most villagers faced a crisis. Many family farms were unable to rebuild because they did not have the necessary financial capital. The small parcels that could be reclaimed could not be cultivated in modern and economic ways. The knowledge required for independent farming has been lost or outdated in recent decades. Only those were able to build a viable farmstead that had sufficient expertise, financial and contact capital to buy cheap land and machinery for cultivating. Because of this, many do not cultivate their lands themselves today but have them cultivated by tenants. Only a narrow layer of small-scale farmers emerged, but their survival is still uncertain. Their numbers have declined steadily in recent years, both in the region and across the country.

⁴ 1.4 million households were engaged in agricultural production in 1991. The number of these declined to 618,000 by 2007, and to 482,000 by 2013. Half of the farms produced products only for self-consumption, and an additional 32% sold beyond their own consumption. See more: ASZTALOS MORELL 2015.

After 1990, industrial production was also in crisis – a significant part of the factories was closed down in the surrounding big cities.⁵ The commuting population of the village returned as unemployed. At the same time, local industrial production units – side branches of the cooperative farms – which mostly employed female workers, such as sewing workshops, also ceased to exist, further increasing the number of people struggling to make a living. Thus, by 2000, a significant portion of the population of Hernádszentandrás – most of them under-educated – no longer wanted to make a living in agriculture but were unable to find a job elsewhere.

HERNÁDSZENTANDRÁS TODAY

The population size of Hernádszentandrás – like other settlements in the micro-region of the Encs District – has been under 1000 both in the past and in the present; currently there are 445 inhabitants. 70-80% of active earners (about 100 people) are unemployed today; the problem is similar in the wider community. The proportion of Roma population before 1990 was 5-10%, now this figure has increased to 40%.

From the second half of the 20th century, there was a significant population exchange: the children of the former farmers moved to the city, but the houses left behind were occupied by new, mostly Roma families from the surrounding villages, who represented a partially different lifestyle even compared to the Roma already living here, such as not tending the gardens around their houses. Today, the families that have inhabited the village for generations and could revive the value system of traditional peasant farming are in the minority. Poverty has affected both Roma and non-Roma families. By the 2000s, there was neither financial nor intellectual potential left in the village that would have initiated or encouraged a shift from the low point and towards integration into the market economy.

From the 2000s, the fate of the village became uncertain not only because of an unemployed, increasingly aging population, but also because of the unpredictable economic policies of changing governments, which had an adverse impact on agriculture. These made the survival of small villages almost impossible. The problems of livelihood have to this day not been resolved by rural development policy.

“The biggest crime of the social policy of the last 20–25 years is that we talk about poverty, but basically self-reliance has fallen completely into disuse. ‘Do it for yourself, for your own advancement.’ Jobs are not created by the Good Lord. Only if many organic processes are built upon each other can it become sustainable. The poor receive almost as much aid as those who work 8–10 hours, and they use it all up. It does not encourage them to cultivate their gardens so they might spend less. (...) I find that the villagers got too comfortable, which played a role in the situation being what it is today. It is not very fashionable to work, to tend the land. Young people say, they sure won’t work the land. Basically, they have an aversion to weeding. That’s a lowly job. (...) You have to make it fashionable, give it some marketing to promote a good cause: to address the young generations. They must be involved in a thousand ways in the world

⁵ See more: SÁRKÁNY 2005b:143–151; SÁRKÁNY – HANN 2003:117–141.

of tastes, plants, animals, and agriculture; that will bring them back to earth. It can provide a very important pulse, function for these small communities. This is the way out. Most small settlements with agricultural value need to build the future on this. By simultaneously carrying out all activities that are organically related to the community, development, job creation. (...) Without investments, villages will not find themselves.” (Mayor of Hernádszentandrás, interviewed by Anikó Báti, 2016.)

Government measures, however, occasionally triggered erosion and negative processes, for example, by consolidating primary schools in small settlements. In Hernádszentandrás, the school was closed in 1994, and children have been taking public transport to attend school in the neighboring village. Furthermore, there is a lack of a local kindergarten, medical care, pharmacy, post office, library. The Reformed Church was the only cohesive force in the village in the early 2000s. There were no civil organizations or entrepreneurs to initiate innovation.

As the first step towards renewal, between 2002 and 2004, it was necessary to mold the disintegrating population of Hernádszentandrás into a community: a youth circle, sports club and communal village festival were organized to revive their traditions. Year after year, a growing number of community festivals and events have been featured in the program, and today their number has reached 25. Among these are the Hernád Festival, which is a multi-day event, where local dishes and specialties, for example, symbolize togetherness. In 2005, the village's past and roots were compiled in a monograph (ÜVEGES 2012). A foundation was created, which was joined by even those who moved out of the village earlier, in order to support community development with their knowledge, contact networks, and financially. They set up a scholarship to assist young people, established a Sure Start House, a special nursery-kindergarten and study hall which actively involves parents, and an after-school day-care center where children can learn foreign languages and music alongside their daily homework preparation. These initiatives had a very positively reception, they were a good starting point for self-organizing, but their social impact (putting a halt to migration and population decline) has not yet been able to produce measurable results in the short time since inception.

The task of reorganizing the village, the establishment of a market-oriented agricultural enterprise without a precedence was taken on by the local administration,⁶ the local government and its young leader, the mayor. The young man in his thirties studied political science at the university and saw a professional challenge in applying his knowledge to “rejuvenating” his home village. He has been involved in the operation of the local government since 2002 – he also played a significant role in the establishment of the above-mentioned civil society – and was elected as mayor in 2006. He and his family – who have lived here for a long time, have done significant farming in the past, and now contribute to village life with their education and knowledge – are the drivers/key people in its development. To fulfill his dream, to become a local leader accepted by the community, beyond the family roots, the mayor tried to invigorate community life, to personally participate in everything, so, for example, he also proved to the village's elderly women that despite being a man, he was able to prepare his personal favorite dishes, including the local specialties.

⁶ For social agricultural projects and public work organized by municipalities and civil societies in the region, see: ASZTALOS MORELL 2015.

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE BIO-FARM

The most widespread tool of local economic development (KABAI – NÉMETH 2012) was also used in Hernádszentandrás:⁷ the aim was the production and sale of local products and organic vegetables (AGÓRA 2016; BIOSZENTANDRÁS 2016). In 2007, the starting point for the development of the bio-farm program was the availability of high-quality soil and free manpower. In addition to its administrative tasks, the local government sought to create jobs in an entrepreneurial capacity.⁸ Based on their own resources, they applied for external financial resources to commence a sustainable development in the village's economic life. It was designed to allow the organic farm to become independent of external aid over time, to operate on a market basis, and to become independent of the governance of the local government as well.



Figure 1. The gate of the Hernádszentandrás/BioSzentandrás bio-farm. With the motto: “Like a big family.” Hernádszentandrás, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Anikó Báti)

⁷ Like in Hernádszentandrás, the complex plans for landscapes and villages like Markóc, Rozsály, Túrkeve, Tunyogmatolcs and Panyola are conceived and executed by local governments, mayors, in other cases NGOs, associations, or foundations. In Göncruszka, for example, the church community's apiary generated enough income to set up a school, augmenting human, economic, natural and social resources at the same time. KAJNER – LÁNYI 2013:16.

⁸ Farmsteads relying on local resources and initiated by local governments developed in a variety of structures using similar concepts. Fundamentally, their goals were the same: to provide work and income, inexpensive, high-quality food for those who were permanently in a disadvantaged position. Because of grants and organizational frameworks, today there is quite a variety of praxes in operation. As a result, terminology in sociological and economic literature is not unified for these farmsteads. For an overview, see: KABAI – NÉMETH 2012.

They received a grant from the European Union to launch the project. December 2010 saw the establishment of the bio-farm, and the organization of the workforce and professional training began. The location of the forming, planned farm within the flood protection ring – which, after its construction, redefined the previous image of the landscape as many of the previously cultivated areas, vineyards and meadows remained outside of it – was designated in the inner part of the village. The land used was only 6000 m² at the start, primarily owned or rented by the local government. The program provided the participants with the raw materials, equipment and tools needed to grow the plants.

In the first year, they grew 23 kinds of garden vegetables and greenhouse plants in three plastic tunnels. Most of the produce grown was given to the workers, in proportion to their work, and only a small proportion made it to buyers. In 2012, according to an agreement with the employees, 70% was intended for sale on the market, while the remaining 30% continued to be given to workers as in-kind contribution. Since then the organic farm has gradually evolved every year. Upgrades were done by means of additional grants, and the sales revenue was also fully reinvested in the project, from which they financed the purchase of various tools, seeds, market research and other services, as well as infrastructure development.⁹ In 2012 they grew vegetables on 12,000 m², in 2016 on as much as 25,000 m², as well as 500 bushes of berries (jostaberry [*Ribes nidrigolaria*], black currant [*Ribes nigrum*], blackberry [*Rubus subg. Rubus*], 30 types of herbs, and lavender on 2,000 m². In addition to the open-field cultivation, work is going on all year round in 9 plastic tunnels and a 150 m² heated greenhouse. During the summer, irrigation is solved by means of a drip system covering the entire garden. In 2015, fruit trees were planted on another 1-hectare area. With the help of experts, cultivars were chosen to preserve the old gene pool typical of the landscape.

In the construction of the organic farm, they received professional advice from Matthew Hayes, an English agricultural engineer working in Hungary. During the professional training, the basics of organic gardening were acquired through the curriculum of the Szent István University of Agricultural Sciences in Gödöllő. An agricultural engineer living in a nearby town took the lead both in the preparations and the daily work of the garden. From these, the participants of the program learned the basics of chemical-free farming in several courses. They also received professional help in production control and plant cultivar selection from the Ecological and Agricultural Research Institute for Practical Research and Development of Organic Farming. Their wide-ranging network of contacts includes even the Hungarian affiliate of Greenpeace, who also became consultants for the project.

⁹ The secret of the success of the program is the efficient and tireless financial coordination. The sums received from grant applications are many times the budget the state grants for the operation of the local government. (On the revenue side of the municipality, HUF 21 million, while expenditures are HUF 44 million. [In 2016, 1 € = 315 HUF.] “And here everything is on the minimum. Even the mayor’s salary is 149,000 HUF gross”, says the mayor.) The farm was built from a combination of four EU grants. The success in finding grant opportunities is evidenced, for example, by the fact that in 2015 the project received HUF 316 million in funding. These sums were spent solely on development, while for employment they used the public works program between 2012 and 2015. Nonetheless, there are constantly about 6-8 people who are involved as volunteers. However, the 3-year public works program was cancelled by 2016, so only the farm’s own revenue can be used for this purpose.



Figure 2. The treasures of the bio-farm. Hernádszentandrás, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Anikó Báti)

The program was primarily developed for the disadvantaged, under-educated and permanently unemployed, but anyone could join. When the bio-farm was launched,¹⁰ nearly 30 of the villagers joined voluntarily, and even some from the surrounding settlements. The composition of the group was heterogeneous in terms of age (16 to 72 years of age), social status and ethnic affiliation. Those who joined assumed the burden of working in the garden for the first few years without pay, in their own free time. They got acquainted with new plants and the basics of organic gardening in weekend seminars.¹¹ Raising awareness was key: some had already cultivated their backyard garden, but there were many people who had just started gardening, which was also a prerequisite for participating in the program, striving for organic farming there as well, mostly by reviving traditional peasant knowledge of farming.

“Even the profession is divided on this issue [i.e., how much of organic horticulture is built on traditional peasant farming knowledge]. Devotees of this new wave of organic frenzy deny that it has anything to do with peasant culture. I see that 90% of it is the carrying on or re-learning of peasant knowledge. And 10 to 15% is new knowledge, (...) for example, defensive mechanisms

¹⁰ In Hernádszentandrás, the terms bio-garden and formerly model garden were used to describe the organic farm. The name ‘garden’ is very fitting – as I use it in the study – because, on the one hand, it refers to the small size of the cultivated parcel, and on the other, to its location within the boundaries of the village, although in the literature the currently accepted terminology is eco- or organic farm.

¹¹ Biocultivation means chemical-free production, using only natural substances for pest control: the juice of nettle, horsetail, and comfrey, or cow’s milk; or, for example, by planting plants in a way that they would eliminate each other’s pests.

that our ancestors may not have known. It is a great challenge in itself to re-learn what was lost. (...) We also want to make gardening fashionable, and we can use modern tools (such as the Internet) as well. Obviously, there is an exaggerated version of this, where every urbanite that has never seen soil is running around in pimped-out rubber boots. But let them – I'd rather they buy rubber boots than not have rubber boots at all. So health-conscious agriculture, production and food production is becoming fashionable." (Mayor, interviewed by Anikó Báti, 2016.)

Today, there are altogether twenty employees in each sector: in production, processing and sales. The bio-farm provided an income supplement to the workers receiving unemployment benefits from the state: in the early years, they just received a share of the produced goods for their own kitchens, but now there is so much revenue that they are able to pay more and more workers an annual, fixed salary. In the future, this trend will grow stronger because, based on market fundamentals, in addition to agricultural production, their crops can now be processed and these products can also be sold throughout the year.

Those who did not join the initiative may have thought that the enterprise was inherently doomed to fail. Although, seeing the present success, they may be jealous of the permanent employment opportunity of the workers throughout the year. "They are envious of all the praise we receive," one of the employees said proudly. In the village, there is a mixed opinion of the bio-farm. Some people appreciate that they were able to come together and boost the life of the village with it. There are, however, those who look down on it and do not understand the whole thing: "My garden is organic, too, I do not use a pesticide because it is expensive, but it does not have as many weeds as they do," said a village woman in whose eyes – as she is not aware of the principles of bio-farming – the weeds between the rows of cultivated plants are not ground cover but a pest. It is very significant that the common goal, the successes, and the positive feedback have all had a constructive impact on both the participants of the program and the wider community, but at the same time doubts, failures, and conflicts that arise from the different work culture have also regularly emerged. These situations were usually solved by the mayor on a daily basis.

In addition to the managerial work of the mayor (seeking financial resources, coordinating the work, presenting the results) and the chief horticulturists, the key member of the project is the sales manager. Through her training and professional experience, she is also familiar with product development, sales, customer relations and employee relations. The key to their common success is that they built their own brand very consciously, which features the name of the village, and thus Hernádszentandrás became BioSzentandrás. Their motto is, "Like a big family." They continuously conduct market research, map the demands of custom buyers and restaurants, adjusting the annual planting schedule of the farm to them. These requirements are a big challenge for the farm. This is far from the level that a peasant farm or a social farm could easily assume. For example, the sales manager has to know two weeks in advance what and when will be ready in the garden so that the ordering restaurants could adjust their menus accordingly.

The range of products being sold is constantly expanding, incorporating employees' ideas and their own knowledge, beyond the advice of professionals. For example, one of the Roma workers can make wicker baskets, an activity that is a family tradition for him. His idea that their products be offered in these baskets at the fairs and that the baskets

themselves be sold as handicrafts was a great success. Based on the idea of a woman who used to be a seamstress, they now also produce small souvenirs stuffed with lavender, thus enhancing the BioSzentandrás brand.

The center of product sales is the building whose name is remarkably “All that,” i.e., all that is related to sales. Vegetables ordered by customers and collected from the garden are carefully picked, weighed and wrapped here, because only the best-quality goods are sold. Since the summer of 2015, the storage of the vegetables that are otherwise sellable for 24 hours has been aided by a cold storage. The slightly defective, rejected vegetables from the garden end up as waste and are placed in the compost pile in fairly large quantities. There is no real solution yet for utilizing goods that are less than perfect. In this respect, peasant farming represented a completely different view, where nothing was wasted. However, the sales manager is looking for solutions, with restaurants and buyers who in developing new recipes might use the less standard, previously wasted goods, such as a larger-leaved spinach or lettuce that cannot be sold.



Figure 3. Fresh, weighed, packaged vegetables and herbs. Hernádszentandrás, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Anikó Báti)

The annual order and structure of crop production are significantly different from the earlier peasant traditions; in this case, it is the constantly changing market demands that determine the pace of planting. This survey and market research are the responsibility of the sales manager. She is negotiating with the buyers, planning next year's production



Figure 4. Handcrafted, locally produced wicker baskets in which products are offered at fairs. Hernádszentandrás, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Anikó Báti)

schedule and the crops grown based on their needs. Approx. 70% of the yield is sold through their regular partners, but they have many casual customers, too, and sell products through their webshop as well. By 2016, the bio-farm became the permanent supplier for four restaurants, two of which are in the category of fine dining! Their demand is the decisive measure of the level of production and sales. The highest quality goods from the bio-farm are also their trademark goods, which they need throughout the year, occasionally overriding the cyclical nature of production. The scheduling of works in the garden is largely determined by their needs. For example, in the place of the spring onion pulled from the ground, they will immediately plant the next one, to keep it in stock. The 30 kinds of herbs and many types of leafy lettuce are also primarily there to meet their needs. Farm workers and villagers did not even know much of them, never having had used them before.

In September 2015, a well-equipped, modern processing plant and bio-kitchen were also built, and named the “Taste House.” By selling products made from vegetables and fruits processed here, they will be able to finance the paychecks throughout the year. To build the processing plant, the 140-year-old building of the former school was modernized from the inside. Some of the employees had worked in horticulture before, but after completing further training, they took on the job, which was a great advancement for them, and of which they are very proud. With modern machines, 10-12 products such as marmalades are made, but there is also a 10-cell solar-powered food dehydrator. For



Figure 5. “Taste House” processing plant in the 140-year-old building of the former school. Hernádszentandrás, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Anikó Báti)



Figure 6. “Taste House” is a processing plant with state-of-the-art technology. Hernádszentandrás, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Anikó Báti)

example, they make ketchup, eggplant and onion chutney, pickles, jam from rose-hips harvested in the forest. The latter became a popular commodity through the revival of old peasant traditions and practices. Recipes have been developed collectively, incorporating the ideas of the workers. They are constantly experimenting with flavors and products. For example, thinking of people with diabetes, they try to use stevia [*Stevia rebaudiana*] as a sweetener instead of sugar. This plant is still a novelty in Hungary. It has come to the bio-farm, among the cultivated plants, as a part of health-conscious nutrition. Among the participants in the program, some have family members living with severe diabetes, so they know the dietary problems of those with the disease, and they suggested using it. Stevia can be a solution for them as a natural sweetener. They are working on recipes with food engineers so that this new plant could be included in their processed products as well. They do not use preservatives in the processing plant; the process and method of cooking is much like peasant cooking. At the same time, however, they all work very precisely, using the latest kitchen technology.



Figure 7. A wide range of products from “Taste House” in the showroom. Hernádszentandrás, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Anikó Bádi)

Thinking of BioSzentandrás and with the leadership of the mayor and the sales manager, they are trying to design the local economic development as a complex system. Besides the production of garden vegetables, they would like to enter the wider market with higher-priced goods sellable all year round, to create their own brand, and to ensure the continuous operation of the processing plant by organizing the small-scale farmers of the surrounding small villages as external suppliers. The building of commercial networks and partnerships has also been successful, as not only their fresh vegetables and herbs but

also other products are sold in more and more places, locally and in surrounding big cities, even in Košice in Slovakia. The success of the project has made the settlement attractive to businesses. When I was there, during my fieldwork in 2016, a private contractor was just beginning to set up a vegetable and fruit processing plant targeting international markets, in collaboration with the BioSzentandrás project. All this will mean more jobs and more opportunities for farmers to sell. Such developments are not only profitable for economic reasons, they also contribute to preserving local values, traditions, and farming patterns, strengthening identity, and even generating tourist attraction (KABAI – NÉMETH 2012).

NEW MATERIALS ON THE TABLE

In the households of the examined group, the range of raw materials used was expanded with salads and herbs. Greater emphasis is placed on health-conscious nutrition – the impact of mass communication is clearly demonstrated here – but at least as important is the fact that they do not have to spend money on their chemical-free vegetables and fruits. Thus, living expenses can be significantly reduced. Their motives, therefore, are not primarily influenced by a conscious consumer behavior, a resistance to a globalized food market – as could be presumed based on the literature. A complete exploration of recent changes in food culture and consumption patterns would exceed the planned scope of this study, and further, targeted fieldwork is still needed. Let me simply address the topic of raw materials used. Another topic to be considered in the future is whether the pursuit of self-sufficiency as a practice can become more common beyond the circle of those involved in organic gardening.

All project participants cultivate their backyard garden, some even have a plastic tunnel, and the pursuit of self-sufficiency is becoming increasingly important in their life strategy. This activity gained momentum with the opening of the bio-farm; although many people used to cultivate their land, the use of organic gardening methods was less conscious. It should be noted, however, that all this, as a reduction of expenditure, is not the strategy of the most disadvantaged families within the village.

Many of the new types of vegetables and herbs discovered in the bio-garden have appeared in the food culture of the examined community as well. Employees of the processing plant are at the forefront of incorporating innovations. They are the ones who have learned not only the production of raw materials but also their uses, so they have the utmost insight into the processes. Everyone also utilizes the theoretical and practical skills learned in the seminars at home, such as using their home-grown ingredients to make, together, ketchup and jam according to the new recipes.

They strive to innovate within familiar, known frameworks and recipes so that new elements can be integrated into the eating habits of the family and thus be more easily accepted. For example, from the stem of the Swiss chard, it is also possible to make a favorite dish of Hungarian cuisine, *pörkölt* [stew], which is served with gnocchi or boiled potatoes, just like the meat version. In the families studied, the older men were the most hesitant, while the children and the young women were delighted with the innovations. Getting to know a wide range of garden vegetables, the menu was expanded in Hernádszentandrás with a new element in the Hungarian food culture: fresh salad. The circle has been expanded with the addition of arugula, Swiss chard, etc., which are novelties next to the long-known lettuce

but feature on the menus of restaurants. Never before have they tasted mizuma salad, or various sprouts, even spinach was unknown. They were surprised at the fact that what they knew as weeds,¹² others consumed as salads. These ingredients are clearly, consciously considered as part of a healthy diet. Salads have become alternatives to high carbohydrate garnishes, pastas and potato dishes. This conscious approach and taste change reflects primarily the impact of the bio-farm's supply, which is well suited to the aspirations of healthy nutrition that are present in the public consciousness but less common in practice.

After the change of regime, in Hernádszentandrás a clear and significant decline in living standards and changes in consumption patterns can be documented at the level of food culture.¹³ With the abolition of the agricultural cooperative, the opportunity to get cheap, high-quality feed for their animals was eliminated, which was part of the annual allowance of the cooperative's workers. This change has led to a decline in animal husbandry at the level of individual households. It was no longer efficient to keep animals, as it was cheaper to get the meat from the store. Today there are hardly any pigs, geese, ducks, and many do not even keep laying hens, they just buy eggs from the store. There are some who get a fattened pig from the neighboring town – where the cooperative survived after the reorganization – and slaughter it and process it at home. Many people buy fresh milk from that same village as well. The shops of nearby cities offer fresh red and white meats, eggs at any time, reliably accessible, pushing the pursuit of self-sufficiency into the background.

However, the bio-farm has an inspirational effect on animal husbandry, too. The tiers that were built on each other in traditional peasant economies, plant cultivation and animal husbandry, still complement each other in the present. In addition to cultivating a garden around the house, many have also revived animal husbandry, incorporating garden wastes into the feed. It is also a sign of health-consciousness, because they consider the quality of meat important – as opposed to commercially available goods. Some of the new herbs (thyme, rosemary, lovage, tarragon, coriander) are, in fact, not new at all, their use has just receded in the past 50–60 years, but now, having gained a new momentum, they are enjoying a renaissance in the Hungarian kitchen, complemented by the flavorings of Mediterranean cuisine. The workers take them home from the bio-farm to try them out:

“They ask why it is like this. I say, because I put that spice on it. Mostly they accept it, or say it was delicious but don't do it again.” “The new spices are best with fried meat.” “I put the oregano in the tomato dish, the two kids absolutely did not eat it. So I'm doing it without it, the traditional way, so that everyone would eat it.” (Three employees of the “All that” house, interviewed by Anikó Bádi, 2016.)

With the new spices, new recipes and cooking methods have also appeared. Such a method not used so far is, for example, marinating meat before baking, which is also a healthier way of preparing meals.

“There are new recipes. There are things in which I would not have put [green spices] before, but now I would not leave them out. Herbs for roasted meats. It used to be only ground pepper.

¹² For example, pigweed [*Amaranthus Retroflexus*].

¹³ For changes in consumer seed harvest on a national level, see: TÖRÖCSIK 2012.

Now these, if you have to marinate. These herbs are indispensable for that. We did not even used to marinate the meat.” (Worker at the “All that” house, interviewed by Anikó Báti, 2016.)

Home-made syrups could be healthier alternatives to soft drinks, and their novel ingredients also come from the bio-farm. They make syrup from lemongrass, mint, lavender. These drinks show up at the programs and demonstrations organized by the village and the bio-farm, and they are met with great cheer.

Within the studied group, several people make home-made compote from cherries, apricots or plums, even the ones who do not work at the processing plant. The latter group stressed, however, that they are still following the practices of earlier decades, although they have heard about the innovations at the plant: they continue to use preservatives, and for thickeners they use mainly sugar and not the apple pectin used at the plant.

THE BIO-FARM IS MORE THAN A FARM

The gates of the bio-farm are open to both buyers and visitors. They seek to introduce the concept they represent, the importance of a health-conscious lifestyle, to as many people as possible. They organize “planting, gardening days”, BioSzentandrás activities for families and school groups, where they can gain insight into the basics of chemical-free farming, get acquainted with new plants and flavors. The program also includes a guided tour of flavors, not just for external guests, during which they can get acquainted with the vegetables in the bio-garden, the products of the processing plant, which tomatoes are good for what, for example; but the organizers themselves also learn, because the guests offer up good ideas and opinions about recipe or product development as well.

The accepting, open spirit represented by the project, and the community-building role of the initiative are very well illustrated by the fact that on these “planting days” healthy and disabled children can work together in the garden, getting to know each other, helping each other. The garden is also a permanent supplier to a restaurant in the nearby metropolis which is operated by people with disabilities.

As for the future, their goal is to expand the range of goods they produce, the number of neighboring farmers they associate with as suppliers, as well as the number of shops involved in their sales. They would also like to further develop the range of services related to the bio-farm, such as taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the popularity of gastro-tourism. The production, processing and sales system has now been fully developed. The local government will try to minimize its coordinating role in the future, once the business is fully operational on a market basis.

The BioSzentandrás project extends far beyond chemical-free farming. The village as a whole started to develop, too, the infrastructure was significantly renewed: piped water was introduced, canal and telephone networks were built, and there are not many neglected, uncultivated yards anymore. The project is of utmost importance not only from the perspective of local economic development and job creation – it could also be the key to the future of the village’s community, too. An initiative that serves as an example for the villages of the region. It was the aspects of community building, thinking in systems, and sustainable development that made it stand out in a line of similar initiatives. In 2013, the BioSzentandrás project brought Hernádszentandrás a “Prix Territoria – Développement

Local” innovation award for which nearly 500 settlements were in the running. And in 2015, in the “European Social Innovation Competition” launched by the European Investment Bank, the BioSzentandrás project was selected from 350 entrants to be among the final 16.

The sales manager formulated the secret of their success in the following way:

“Perhaps the key to the system is that those who are here represent a human value. We appreciate those who are here. It’s very hard to work in a system where we cannot afford to pay yet, but our goal is to make enough sales to pay everyone’s wages for their work. (...) People can see that the goods are selling. And they are surprised that, Good God, we have sold so much again! The buyer comes, pays in cash, and pays for more than one month’s wages. This is a great value. They know that what they create, what they are working for is valuable. (...) It moves me forward to see growth. For example, when we go to a product demonstration, I’ll bring the feedback back to [the employees].” (Sales manager, interviewed by Anikó Báti, 2016.)

The consumption of traditional, local products and foods is one of the most significant food trends in Hungary and worldwide (LYSAGHT 2017). The project fits in with the new developmental direction in which sustainable agricultural production also serves to preserve and build the local community. “...small businesses and family farms are usually more diversified and less environmentally detrimental, employ gentler technology, build more on local knowledge, their specific energy demand is less, they depend less on global networks, and last but not least, they employ proportionately more people than their size” (KAJNER et al. 2013:11). These include the communally cultivated gardens of housing complexes, or the eco-villages.¹⁴ Producer and consumer communities, produce markets (KISBÁN 2017a, 2017b) are being built between cities and their agglomerations based on the personal relationship between the producer and the buyer, the commitment to ecological sustainability, and the opposition and objection to the global commodity supply of supermarkets.

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¹⁴ See, e.g.: Farkas, Judit: „Nincsenek receptek.” A magyar ökofalvak táplálkozásantropológiai vizsgálata [“There are no recipes.” Nutrition Anthropological Survey of Hungarian Eco-Villages], http://tabula.neprajz.hu/neprajz.07.16a.php?bm=1&as=418&kr=A_10_%3D%222015%2016%281-2%29%22 (accessed August 1, 2016.); and the papers of Gergő Hajba, Judit Farkas in the current volume.

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See biography of **Anikó Báti** at the end of guest editors' foreword: Organic Farm, Organic Food. Steps Towards a Sustainable Agriculture (with Hungarian and Slovenian Examples), at page 275.

Aspects to the Understanding of the Social Dynamics of Organic Food through the Example of a Community Garden in Budapest

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Abstract: Due to the results of my recent anthropological analysis conducted in a community garden in Budapest my aim is to highlight the keypoints, dynamics, and community demand on the organic food production. In this paper I present the main discourse topics, acts and behaviours that surrounds crop cultivation and defines what the community members consider as organic. Organic is a social construct, and as such, thinking about this issue is multifarious. While contributing to this issue with specific considerations, at the same time I try to measure the importance of organic food in urban context.

Keywords: organic food, community gardening, community research, participant observation, urban anthropology, social dynamics

THE ISSUE OF GLOBAL FOOD

The food that we eat is an essential component of our lives and cultural identity. Social science turns its attention towards this fundamental resource of our everyday lives in the early 1990s. In this time period, processes and new contexts of global transformation made it necessary to reconsider the philosophical basis of the issue of provisions. Questions of food appear in the cross-section of numerous global challenges that are most markedly present around the millenium, such as the negative effects of climate change, the reduction of Earth's biodiversity, or the monocultural, extensive exploitation of natural resources (BRUCKMEIER 2015:6–8). Meanwhile, the production, distribution and function of food itself is becoming increasingly subordinated to the profit-driven laws of motion of the capitalist market economy, and consequently, the commodity profile of foodstuff becomes more emergent. The means and methods of production, logistics of food, and market pricing are predominately determined by external actors and companies, thus in terms of access it means a hegemonic authority position (BIEL 2009:3, 75). David Hess argues that food production has been subjected to the trends of global markets, therefore the place of production and consumption of food does not necessarily denote the same geographic space, and the access and distribution of food

is an unequal and doubtfully verifiable process which drastically increases the potential risk of social inequalities (*ibid.* 34–50). This extensive monocultural production driven by a profit-oriented approach causes excessive dependency relations between production regions and global markets (HESS 2009:34–38, 137). Food itself is not a self-evident entity anymore, but more like a service characterized by global features that is the interest of monopolies; on the other hand, it is an endpoint of non-transparent operations of global food chains. Furthermore, food is an important factor of consumer society which has been surrounded by the questions of places of origin, ways of consumption, control exercised over production, food forgery and treatment. Because from the point of view of individuals these above-mentioned global food chains form a kind of invisible network, global risk as a factor appears in discourses of food (BECK 1992:36–42, 69).

SOCIAL SCIENCE INTERESTS IN NUTRITION

Research interest in food-related social studies are excessively varied and fragmented. Generally these topics may be interpreted along the questions of quantity, quality (FARKAS 2016:86), different ways of access and pursuits of conscious consumption, risks of food production, community practices of control, and alternative food-related practices. Thinking about food and many patterns of consumption are also political in nature. Responses to global trends are not only created by individuals but also appearing in different levels of society: the demand of re-interpretation of our relationship with food is present amongst consumer groups and alternative networks, subcultures, different kinds of communities, even at the level of settlements and regions. One such alternative way is the discourse about organic, healthy food and short food supply chains (CSURGÓ – MEGYESI 2016:167), the history of which, according to Sólyom, is only one or two decades long (SÓLYOM 2016:6). An essential element of these initiatives is that wider control over victuals is placed in the hands of individuals and communities (FARKAS 2016:86), so that issues of responsibility and risk encoded in food chains can be eliminated to some extent. Reconsidering the access and affording adequate amounts and qualities of food would also bring a decrease in phenomena such as malnutrition, lack of healthy food, and starvation (ROSEGRANT – CLINE 2003:1917). Sociological research focused mainly on Eastern European countries and rural areas and consumer groups has shown that organic farming and food production is a little-known, novel phenomenon that takes local economic structures into account in different ways and measures (BILEWITZ – SPIEWAK 2016:147; KÓNYA 2016:3–5; LAKI 2016:8; NISTOR 2015). Organic farming in Hungary has lost some of its significance since 2004 as it does not get any significant consideration in state aid policies. Hungary exports approximately two-thirds of its organically produced but unprocessed food. The major purchasing market within the country is the population of Budapest; nevertheless, its significance is negligible in total. According to the results of a focus group-based sociological research in the Carpathian Basin, the reason for this lack of interest is mainly due to higher consumer prices of organic products compared to the food in the chain stores (BAKÓ 2016:94; LAKI 2016:26), i.e., organic goods are mainly the privilege of the wealthy social layer. Laki also mentions that in the Hungarian language *öko*- and *bio*- are synonymously used prefixes, which are equivalent to the English word “organic” (LAKI 2016:2).

THE RISK FACTOR

The global dependency relation mentioned above is also one of the speech topics and reference points of lifestyle movements related to urban agriculture and neighborhood initiatives that enhance locality. Although Hungary was the first country in Europe that rejected the use of Genetically Modified Organisms in agricultural production in 2006, some major incidents related to food issues gained public interest and a wide range of press coverage that reflect the risk encoded in dependence relations. For example, one of the major food panics was the aflatoxin scandal that erupted around the Kalocsai Fűszerpaprika Zrt. in 2004. A Year earlier when it came out that a year earlier the company supplemented its lacking average yield of Hungarian seasoning paprika with South-American imported paprika. The shipload was damaged and the imported peppers were delivered in wet, fungal environment. Later, the Laboratory Center of Veterinary and Food Control of Bács-Kiskun County revealed that, as a result, the imported food was contaminated with aflatoxin (NÉBIH 2013:8). A similar situation was triggered by the Asian dioxin-contaminated guar gum scandal (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2015), or in local aspects, another major case: a company in Ócsa. For years, the company has been re-labeling and redistributing expired foodstuffs that were received from supermarkets for the original purpose of liquidation (PEST MEGYEI FŐÜGYÉSZSÉG 2015). While this study was underway, a routine inspection of NÉBIH [National Office of Food Security] in a food chain store in Hungary stumbled upon spring onions from Italy in which the chlorpyrifos (used for soil disinfection and as an insecticide) levels exceeded the health limit by nine times. A few hours later a community garden in Budapest posted a short announcement on its Facebook timeline with the related article and the following message: “This is also the reason why your own [vegetable] is better, because you know where the seeds and seedlings are coming from!” In what extent does community gardening provide reasonable alternatives to eliminating such global risks? This question can be answered by examining the community’s thinking about organic food. According to Nistor, community gardening can be categorized from a certain point of view, as an endeavor to decrease, or at least to balance the importance of food chains in purveyance (NISTOR 2015:132).

GLOBAL CHALLENGES, OLD-NEW RESPONSES: THE URBAN AGRICULTURE

Although there is a significant amount of scientific literature on the subject of organic food, relatively few studies deal with the community dynamics of this phenomenon, namely, how the community’s ideas of organic food emerge in motivations, speech situations, practices, and value preferences. My aim is to contribute to the discourse on the issue of aliment in order to enrich our knowledge of the meaning of organic food through a study of a specific community garden in Budapest where I conducted my research for more than a year and a half. I examine what self-produced food means and symbolizes to community members, and what are the topics surrounding the idea of organic food in a community garden. Furthermore, I am interested in how community gardening practices reflect the challenges of food security and global food production. Laki summarizes her own sociological research on the topic by stating that a proper definition of organic food is

rather cumbersome. The groups interviewed in her research circumscribed organic mainly through reference points and sortable features (LAKI 2016). Organic food has been defined as such preservative-free and chemical-free vegetables, fruits and cereals in which the natural resources and the soil have been utilized in a sustainable manner in the processes of production. One of the basic principles of the community gardening movement is to enable urban dwellers to grow fresh and healthy food within urban conditions, and through the pretext of horticulture, to develop strategies of cooperation and deepen their social relations as well. According to András Lányi, contemporary communities are not only replacing interchangeable automatisms of the capitalist world order, but they also offer frames to understand our global world by creating the scenes of different discourses (LÁNYI 2015). Lawson argues that the purpose of community gardening is not horticulture itself, but a kind of stimulating milieu for the circulation of various practices and related theories that go beyond gardening (LAWSON 2005:11). Taking care of edible crops has an inherently different importance amongst community members, and in many cases newcomers have no previous experience in crop cultivation (LEVKOE 2013:594), therefore the analysis of motivations and attitudes towards community values can also tell us a lot about the dynamics of organic food discourse. A key segment of thinking about organic food is consciousness, i.e., the deliberation concerning re-localization, production, and usage of food. As I mentioned earlier, organic food cultivation is a political act as well. I will discuss its symbolic significance in the last chapter.

Urban agriculture is a heterogeneous concept: a variety of horticultural activities and a wide range of interests, as well as a common denominator of visible and invisible patterned activities, such as guerrilla horticulture, suburban gardening, organic farming, vertical and roof garden cultivation, balcony gardening, community gardening, and the main type of green projects of various organizations or municipalities as well. Summarizing different definition experiments, these practices can be characterized by being a special part of the urban fabric, goals, economic activity, products, ways and conceptions of intervention (MOUGEOT 2000:6–9). Urban agriculture looks back on centuries of history, and its significance grows during and after different crisis periods, in order to reduce food shortage among urban populations, reorganize neighborhood relations and build reciprocal networks (HALWEIL – NIERENBERG 2007:49–50; NOVO – MURPHY 2005:330–334; PUDUP 2008:1229). Urban agriculture appeared in the forefront of academic interest around the 1990s as a form of activity that can contribute novel solutions to the dilemma surrounding food safety among populations of urbanized areas (BRYANT 2012:5–6).

If we take a more generic overview of active community gardens, despite their similar objectives, a wide variety of differences appears in terms of geographic location, participants, social composition, individual interests, power positions and operating principles (top-down or bottom-up projects), community rules and horticultural profiles. The community gardening movement in Hungary appeared foremost in Budapest. This phenomenon emerged between 2011 and 2012 under the auspices of the Kortárs Építészeti Központ [Contemporary Architecture Center] and the Városi Kertek Közhasznú Egyesület [Urban Gardens Non-profit Association], that are practically independent from each other (ROSTA 2013:8, 175–176). Since then dozens of formal and informal community gardens have been built in downtown districts and suburban zones, as well as in agglomeration areas.

THE RESEARCH SITE: GRUNDKERT COMMUNITY GARDEN



Figure 1. The west side of Grundkert with parcels and raised beds. Budapest, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Gergő Hajba)

My results are mainly derived from following the everyday life and events of a community garden by the fantasy name of *Grundkert*, a garden situated in the VIII. district of Budapest (officially named “Józsefváros”) where I conducted anthropological research since late November 2015. The bottom-up nature, seemingly diverse social composition and prominent online representation of the community were essential aspects in my choice of the research site. My primary method was participant observation, so that I could map the dynamics of community discourses and small momentums of social life. I have been cultivating a raised bed of about 2 m² in the garden since the spring of 2016.

The garden area is approximately 700 m² and it is located on a vacant lot enclosed by two building blocks. The southern side from Apáthy István Street is bordered by a wall made of chipboards with a small green gate in the middle. On the north side the garden is adjacent to a large empty plot that functioned as a parking lot until March 2017. There are 28 ground parcels (up to 7–9 m² each) and 12 raised beds (up to 2–2.5 m²) in the garden (Figure 1). There is no electricity or water on the plot. A small quantity of water for irrigation comes from a rainwater-collecting system behind the composting toilet. A larger amount of water comes from a fire hydrant on Szigony street, which is then stored in plastic barrels placed along the northern border of the plot, according to an agreement with the Metropolitan Waterworks. Before the beginning my community research, I had barely any experience in horticulture or plant cultivation, therefore I had the opportunity to observe the methods by which the community offers patterns of knowledge to newcomers. The community’s most important food-related gatherings



Figure 2. The researcher captured on photograph with community members. Budapest, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Zsolt Nagy)

are seed and seedling exchanges and Wednesday's „kifliparty” (crescent roll party). At crescent roll parties, besides informal conversations, a shared meal plays the main role, wherein vegetables needed for sandwiches are collected from the garden and shared by members of the community. Besides horticultural activities, garden parties and spontaneous gatherings, I also followed the community's activities beyond the “fences,” by participating in (club) events targeting a broader audience, debate nights, film screenings, and I followed the discourses in the group's private digital platform (Grundkert closed Facebook group). Most importantly, I analyzed the “virtually cultivated” plot of the community, the Grundkert Blog, which promotes urban gardening, and which can be interpreted as a special self-representation of the community. This online site provides useful readings about plant cultivation, short interviews with community members, scientific educational articles, and mostly photographs of community life, events, garden works, and common practices. The community thus not only constructs its own remembrance and identity but also expresses its cultural convictions to the public, making horticultural activity and community life attractive. According to Horst, such permanent documentation of events makes community practices visible, which is not only a practical dimension of sustainability or green thinking but also highlights the co-operative nature of urban agricultural practices. In her interpretation, the descriptive activity of the researcher present in the field and the self-reflective practices of community members are operating in a quite similar range, thus the sharp borders between researchers and community members fade (HORST 2015:55–56). This seems to be an appropriate ascertainment particularly when digital assets such as photos and video recordings are made by community members – if the researcher is involved in the community work,

he or she will inevitably become a part of the representation (Figure 2). In the beginning, my data consisted of informal and unconventional individual and group conversations, written communications, unstructured interviews, e-mails with community members, online group discussions, which were then followed by recorded semi-structured conversations, and topic-focused personal and online interviews. Although I emphasized my research intent and, therefore, to some degree, my outsidership, I initially found it preferable to discuss topics that community members found important themselves, so that I could measure the scopes of discourse horizon (HARDMAN – LARKHAM 2014:7). In my opinion, considerations of food safety and community perception of organic food can be captured by the encountering of different knowledge registers, such as motivations and personal goals about gardening, viewpoints about the importance of plants cultivated in urban contexts, and plant cultivation methods (usage methods of soil and chemicals).

*“NO, I WILL NOT MAKE A LIVING FROM IT...
I JUST WANT TO WATCH IT GROW.”*
MOTIVATIONS AND VALUE PREFERENCES

Inquiring about the motivations of gardening, I was curious about what initial concepts can be registered amongst the gardeners, and if the importance of demand for healthy food is demonstrable. In my opinion, the first of the three most striking tendencies is when the individuals intend to change their own environment within a framework of a certain group, tailoring the image of the city to fit their imagination. Through this intention, the need of community and, less frequently, healthy food have been expressed.

“I started community gardening because here in the VIII. district, where the largest coherent green area is the top of the pool table, well, I felt like, how good it would be to have a plot of land where I can relax, and I can get busy with vegetables and other people as well... I can look inward. At home, my plants already outgrew the balcony, so there is now a place to cultivate them... it is so good that here they can be planted in open air” (Hajba notes, 2016).

“Originally I was interested in community issues, but it is good to be able to brush up on the horticultural things. I try to cultivate my own tomatoes, strawberries and herbs” (Hajba notes, 2016) (Figure 3).

“My dream has come true by joining the community. My husband asked me if we could join the company, I was eager to own a small garden. In a season, we produce up to twice as many vegetables as the two of us can consume ... of course not every kind... but basic things, such as tomatoes, peppers... and those are quite healthy, too” (Hajba notes, 2016).

“You know, for me it’s also important that what I eat should be healthy... not just things like, yeah, it should be cheap or easy to access in shops. (...) Sometimes I go to Spar or Lidl at the corner, and there are those vegetables on the shelf. For example, I buy the raddish there. But I wouldn’t buy tomatoes because I have my own here. These are quite different, I devoted my time to take care of these” (Hajba notes, 2016).

In addition, gardeners who belong to the older generation and mostly have rural roots are adapting to urban life but retain previously learned patterns from their earlier forms of life, they also express the naturalness of plant cultivation. From this perspective, the



Figure 3. Cherry tomatoes growing in raised beds. Budapest, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Zsolt Nagy)

issue of food is interpreted more through this condition and less by the pretense of change and the politics of participation. Last year, the youngest member of Grundkert community was eleven years old, while the oldest was 85 (Hajba notes, 2016), and the majority of gardeners were between the ages of 25–45. During conversations with the gardeners of the elderly generation, it was common to find that they maintain a kind of relationship with farming since their childhood, thus crop cultivation is not interpreted in the light of different theories, but rather in terms of gratifying this natural need of planting.

“I’m getting older, my age is over 80, but it’s still so good to get out a little bit for some fresh air, to work with plants... so beautiful! (...) I was a village girl, gardening and plant cultivation was a regular thing for us. I live here in the block of flats at the opposite side [Tömő street, which is the northern border of the garden], the balcony is already so full with plants, so I was happy because of young people coming and doing a garden there, it is very good that they are so interested in gardening. (...) The vegetables are very healthy (...) I hear so many times on TV and radio about what kinds of bad things are happening, unbelievable... maybe that’s why it is very good that a small group is up to doing something here, isn’t it?” (senior community member, Hajba interview, 2016).

“I’ve lived in Dunaharaszti for almost 50 years... I like to deal with plants, for me it’s quite natural... sometimes I also water the common parts and flowerbeds” (senior community member, Hajba notes, 2016).

Most of the new members do not have any knowledge about horticulture or lack the in-depth knowledge of the guidelines displayed in the community’s representation:

“I don’t care about horticulture as much because it is not really my interest, it’s the community instead. Of course I take part in common tasks with pleasure, but to dig, to pull out weeds and to bend all day... nah, I do not like to do that. But being together, thinking together, learning to cooperate is a great experience and much more important.” (Hajba notes, 2017)

“Although I already consulted with some of you guys a couple of weeks ago and I was able to join this closed Facebook group, I still owe you a brief introduction that I would like to make now. I wasn’t born here but I’ve lived in the capital city for a few years now, and I couldn’t spend a season without planting at least a couple of tomatoes/peppers/beans on my balcony as a hobby. I would like to elevate this hobby to a higher level by getting my own parcel and assisting in common tasks.) For this reason I would like to ask for your help or support (and, of course, the main question is whether there will be any free parcels). I am a happy owner of half a vineyard in Mohács, so I have a basic knowledge of horticulture, but of course I would like to learn (for example, this chemical-free plant protection is almost brand new to me)” (from the closed Facebook group forum, 2016).

THE SOURCE OF ALL ROOTS: ELEMENTS OF RISK-TAKING AND THE IMAGE OF ORGANIC FOOD

From new members just joining the community to former members and people who are not yet members, motivations and basic interests vary, but most of them lack a “green” concept and simply desire to reconsider a relationship with their environment within the demand for fresh food and vegetables grown by them. Whatever the underlying motivation, the essential part of plant cultivation is to obtain appropriate seeds or seedlings. Therefore, my primary aim is to highlight the mechanisms of trust and dynamics of knowledge about healthy, organic food, that is: what are the community’s risk-mitigating strategies for gardening, ranging from the local risk to the urban environment, and what kinds of trusted seed procurements and plant care procedures are considered to be desirable?

The proprietor of building sites in this area (VIII. district) is the implementer of the Corvin Project (a local urban rehabilitation program), Futureal Development Holding Ltd., a real estate developer and investor company, so it was essential to have an agreement about the long-term use of the vacant lot for community gardening. The grounds had been filled with good quality soil by the company, free of charge. An important issue that corresponds with food safety considerations, namely, whether vegetables (and fruits) grown in urban community gardens can even be considered healthy, is one of the first questions always asked by visitors and “outsiders” (Figure 4). During the past year, several people expressed their doubts about soil contamination and the flue dust content of the air. An outstanding entry was published in 2012 on Grundkert Blog, because horticulturists expressed the need to give uniform answers for such questions:

“One of the most basic qualms about urban gardening is that emitted exhaust fumes and smog are poisoning the crops. Of course it is always possible to have qualms about everything. We are extremely good at explaining why we are not doing something or why such things don’t work. This is particularly true of (re-)innovative and, in some respects, taboo-breaking activities, such as the cultivation of urban gardens. Such arguments do not take into account the amount of toxins in vegetables grown in traditional agriculture transported here from far away to be on the



Figure 4. Guiding visitors at the Night of Community Gardens. Budapest, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Margit Szakács)

shelves of stores. Actually, trees with consumable fruits should not be planted in broad lanes along main roads, nonetheless in practice we often see fruit trees at arm's length from our cars" (Grundkert Blog, 2012).

During another conversation, the afforested nature of the garden and the surrounding streets has been mentioned as a security option to prevent air pollution:

"The good thing is that such high trees shade the street from the side of SOTE [the buildings of Semmelweis University of Medicine], I am sure it improves the quality of air. This [points to the tree in the middle of the garden] was also a good idea to leave untouched, even though I remember some people complained that it shades some of those parcels next to it" (Hajba notes, 2016).

Another gardener simply summed up the topic of our conversation about air pollution: "Well, actually we are not that close to the main road" (Hajba notes, 2016).

In some cases, the results of laboratory measurements at the former site of Grundkert (initially along Práter Street, and then next to Corvin walkway) are mentioned, where the heavy metal content of the tested spinach and other vegetables was well under the health limit. When the results came out, the community made the following statement in a blog post:

"Last fall we tested our harvested goods to dispel common doubts about urban gardening – or to crumble in sorrow and despair over the weight of poisoning ourselves and our friends if such results came out. Well, they didn't. Compared to the limit values specified by the European

Commission Regulation No. 629/2008/EK, the heavy metal content was not even gaining on the health limits in our plants. Tomatoes, potatoes and spinach were sent in to be examined, by the way. We would like to say thank you to Wessling Ltd., who, appreciating the social impact of the issue, performed the analysis free of charge. So... next time, if someone offers you spinach from GrundKert, it will be no use referring to the disease ‚Itai-itai’ :)” (Grundkert Blog, 2013).

During another conversation, a gardener concluded the possibly emerging sources of danger with the following: “I rather trust smallholder’s merchandise in the market, which is not taken under so many examinations, and I prefer to eat vegetables grown here in our garden compared to the vegetables you can buy in shops. The hell knows where it came from, and what kinds of chemical treatments happened to those...” (Hajba notes, 2017).

At the time of the garden’s establishment, members of the community were supposed to set up horticultural guidelines and community rules. Among them, a permanently recurring debate, are the idea of garden composting, the desirability of chemical-free crop production, and a “*my parcel, my horticultural imagination*” concept. This short online debate that happened before my community membership is a good example of the appearance of these demands:

- “Has the question of chemicals been discussed, by the way? I saw it was an issue in previous mails, but has the decision been made? Are organic substances allowed or nothing at all?”
- I think organic ingredients can be used.
- Great. I hope that nothing will be needed, but better to be afraid than...
- In my opinion, yes, they can, but it would be good to make a consensus about this issue” (from closed group forum discussion, 2012).

A general mistrust about chemical treatment procedures can be detected, mentioned by several gardeners. At the launch of the garden, the community brought up the need for chemical-free crops, or using only certain chemicals and unpelleted seeds from reliable sources. Once, during a garden inspection, the coordinators made a list of neglected or abandoned pieces of land. Passing by one of the parcels, they saw several presumably pelleted seed bags from a store placed on sticks to indicate the types of seedlings. At the next community meeting, though not mentioning names, the coordinators warned the plot owner to avoid planting such seeds. At the same time, I witness several joking comments about chemically treated plants, especially when fruit crops have unrealistically increased or the plants were too aesthetically pleasing in light of the actual season:

“Wow, she already has such huge strawberries?! (...) They are beautiful. I am sure she was cheating with some stuff. [Turns to the owner of the plot.] Your strawberries are beautiful. I just said to Gergő, you must be cheating with some chemical stuff? [laughs]” (Hajba notes, 2016).

“I don’t use any chemicals or such stuff, I would like to experiment what results I get without those. The taste of tomatoes purchased in store are not even close to these that grow here. (...) For example, I was really surprised that the parsnip has such an intense, pungent taste, that’s even a bit much for me” (Hajba interview, 2016).

Last year an elderly lady that lives on the nearby street joined the community. She comments regularly in the closed gardener Facebook forum. Sometimes she shares

web content that is related to gardening practices, such as propagatory readings, and alternative plant cultivation procedures. According to the members of the community, sometimes these articles refer to “*dubious*” resources. Last summer, a popular issue was what kind of practice should the community choose of the many options, what is the most environmentally friendly intervention to protect the plants from Southern green stink bugs [*nezava viridula*], aphids, snails, other kinds of bugs, and weeds. The above-mentioned elderly community member shared an article about the alternative use of vinegar: “Vinegar used as an acid functions perfectly as an herbicide. Acetic acid dries the parts of the weeds which grow above the soil. In most cases it was faster and more useful than other herbicides. Be careful not to spray it on living plants because it may harm them” (TUDÁS FÁJA MAGAZIN, 2016).

The comments under the article show an ambivalent attitude towards the usefulness of vinegar:

“- Well, I think it’s not so useful and we can burn our plants with it. At least we will have fewer weeds with fewer pests, but fewer live breeds as well. The weeds must be stubbed, then plants must be sprayed against pests.

- There are also many practices other than chemicals against pests that we don’t use on the site, but they are still protected against insects. (...) an interesting thing is when the moles suddenly appeared in our village, everything was eradicated, but nothing here. Of course, it was not accidental they left only the stems of the plants untouched” (from closed forum conversation, 2016).

Sometimes the Grundkert community organizes seed and seedling exchange events, because most community members believe that the best quality seeds come from their own plants, mainly from the previous one or two seasons, but plant exchange is also desirable if they do not have the opportunity to grow several crops simultaneously. I believe that, in the case of external seed sources, the most trusted entities are organic farms, small producers, but seeds from the Plant Diversity Center (NÖDIK, also known as Gene Bank, in Tápiószéle) seem to be reliable as well:

“I already ordered from NÖDIK once, but this time I missed the deadline. I got some seeds already from last year... NÖDIK represents a very good quality, many people recommend them” (Hajba interview, 2016).

“Back when Grundkert first opened, we had seeds from Krishna Valley of Somogyvámos and from NÖDIK, since then I have seeds from seed exchanges and got some (...) here, this is flax from Kishantos (a closed organic farm surrounded by political conflicts), a symbolic one still living here in Grundkert” (Hajba notes, 2016).

“Everyone else has his/her own resource references, I know good places and companies to get some. We plan to invite Valeyrac Exotics to the Grundkert seed exchange, they have chemical-free, local-variety types of seeds and they also offer specialites in their catalog” (Hajba notes from group conversation, 2015).

It seems that healthy food, environmentally friendly cultivation and chemical-free production are collective preferences of the community, such qualities having a normative function but appearing in varying degrees at the level of individual knowledge. However, these guidelines and values can be acquired through community dialogues, social events,

and exchanges (of experiences). The sources of knowledge and the experiences gained in horticulture or gardening activities are also various, but members of the older generation are considered by most of the gardeners reliable sources of knowledge.

Last May, community members opened a discussion about ways of using an empty parcel, and three possible outcomes emerged: the parcel would be given to a newcomer on the waiting list; following the example of another garden, a common parcel with herbs would be created; or making it into a children's parcel for strawberries, because, as one of the members who initiated the voting said: "considering the chemical treatments of the strawberries sold in shops, it seems to be a very good idea." The voting resulted in equal votes for the first two options, while the idea of children's parcel was discarded; nevertheless, none of the options were realized until the spring of 2017, when a new candidate was able to start cultivating the plot.

Although gardening guidelines are similar, plant management has raised a number of practical problems in the garden, such as the presence of Southern green stink bugs that have caused significant damage to tomato production, or the use of fluid fertilizers for plants that are not growing fast enough. My questions brought to light the fact that community members were involved on different levels in this issue; however, there was consensus on the desirability of intervention, at least in terms of pests:

"Well, I didn't think about it as much lately. Because community members don't use fluid fertilizers, neither do I. Furthermore, I don't buy soil in the supermarket, there is a huge amount of good quality soil as well, you just have to shovel it here. (...) but at least it would be necessary to spray plants to defend them against Southern green stink bugs, because I heard those have no natural enemy, maybe the winter freeze will eliminate them. Or not" (Hajba interview, 2016).

Eventually the community voted at a garden event to use eco-friendly sprays. The precondition of using the chosen material was to remove as many stink bugs manually as the plot owners are able to, because, as the coordinators said: "This is the only way it is considered to be effective."

Whether soil renewal and recycling of green waste should be parts of organic plant cultivation is a subject of agreement as well. Accordingly, composting has been taking place at the current site of the garden for two years now; there are 5 open-top pallet boxes, one for composting human excrement, and the other 4 for green garden and kitchen waste for community members. However, the question of how and what to compost emerges frequently, as there are regularly kinds of materials that should not be in compost boxes. Concerning proper composting practices, gardeners held a self-organized conversation event with experienced gardeners. The list of compostable and non-compostable materials printed on A/4-sized pages had been attached to the wall behind the compost crates as a reminder. A few people who live in the neighborhoods but do not cultivate plots in the garden take part in composting as well, since there is no possibility of placing communal organic waste bins near the blocks of flats. This role of the Grundkert community in composting can be explored in the following explanation of a member:

"I think an open compost lift built from the side of the street would be a good idea: a hole with a tube through which you can throw your compost in to the garden even if you are not a community member. (...) Outside, it would be displayed how to compost and what kinds of

materials you should or shouldn't throw in. (...) The thing is, this would fill up our compost boxes within a short period of time" (Hajba notes, 2016).

DEBATES AND OPINIONS: DIFFERENT THEORIES AND DIVERSE PRACTICES

A conflicting area of many convictions and opinions is the handling of compost. Some community members think it needs processing (like rotation, watering, or colonization of earthworms), while others find it unnecessary: "Why would you water compost? You would only influence a process that nature does anyway. Watering it is completely unnecessary. (...) Come in instead and eat something" (Hajba's notes, 2016).

It seems that the elements of knowledge corpora oscillate around various themes (e.g., soil treatment or composting), and in some cases, they differ. Community gardens can be seen as alternative economic models, environmental politics, and as laboratories of the rethinking of the relationship between man and city. In some cases, community gardens see their objective as being the foundation of alternative concepts (permaculture, sustainability, de-growth thinking). The effects of these thought circuits, however, are far from being unified; some concepts are used synonymously, depending on the context (e.g., sustainability, blue economy, environmental awareness, green thinking), as they accumulate in the discourses of the community, and as mentioned before, they hold a different significance for every individual. The gardeners are either involved at different depths in the theoretical backgrounds of the initiations, or they do not find it a primary consideration. For example, a few weeks ago an exchange of thoughts unfolded during which a parcel that had been idle since last year was being dug up by the members of the community. Not having anything else to do, I also took part in the activity. In one corner of the parcel grew spinach, and in the opposite border some marjoram had survived the winter. The primary reason for digging it up was weeding, another was to make the borders of parcels more distinguishable. A member of the community who just joined the workflow said the following: "But why are you digging it up? In permaculture cultivating, they don't dig up the soil because it would, um, it brings the fertile soil to the surface and the dry layer falls to the bottom and the plants don't grow that fast and it drains the soil, too."

Another member of the community, who is experienced in gardening activities, added the following lines to the momentary uncertainty: "I think here, in the Eighth district, on an, I don't know, 9 m² parcel, we won't argue whether it is permaculture or not, whether we should dig or not, because it doesn't matter. If it was a long-term issue and of a bigger area, that's something else" (Hajba notes, 2017).

However, another community member gave voice to the importance of sustainability while sharing his experiences:

"If sustainability begins with food, then I would obviously like to know more about the production and processing of sustainable and healthy food. To follow the process from the seed to the plate. And if others already own this knowledge, then the formula is quite simple, one just needs to visit them and learn from them! So far, I thought this kind of knowledge is something new and you have to travel to find it. I visited projects in Western Europe because of that. A project located in Innsbruck [Austria] (Waldhüttl Mentlberg), which combined the idea

of community gardening with the housing of Romany people working in the city, had a great impact on me” (Grundkert blog, 2015).

Hence the desirable patterns of caring for plants and food grown in the garden, such as not using chemicals, purchasing seeds or seedlings from small-holder networks or communities who consider themselves ecologically conscious, and the need for soil renewal. Although elements of knowledge and practices do not always go hand in hand, and the consensus is not absolute, what is more important is to evolve the strategies that lead to it.

THE SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE OF ORGANIC FOOD

Conversations often reveal that horticultural activities are not, or only to a certain extent, viewed as economically viable activities by most gardeners, in the light of the resources used and the time devoted to cultivation. However, the framework of community horticulture, i.e., the issue of healthy food and environmentally-friendly gardening, can create the perceptual space for such topics of conversation, wherein behavioral patterns, consumer habits, opinions, and individual differences can be expressed. Therefore, the values and attitudes represented by the community should be understood more as a guideline rather than a general narrative that all members share. Nevertheless, the role of sampling as a result of this endeavor is very significant for the members, especially when it is about transferring knowledge of crop cultivation culture to underage people.

“Gardening is also important because, you know, they come here and see it all. Local people who are totally out of the green: youngsters, the elderly generation... I personally think young people are extremely important, because at least it can be shown to them how tomatoes or whatever is growing: this way and this way, and not on the shelves of supermarkets” (Hajba interview, 2016).

“We’re completely separated from reality, from material dimensions... If it’s about a smartphone, we’re amazingly inventive, there’s a compact everything in our pocket, but I think it’s also important to know where the chow comes from and what’s going on until it reaches our fridge at home” (Hajba notes, 2016).

The Grundkert community is currently working to establish an association, in order to create a legal self-representation, tendering resources, and to be a facilitator of community organizers. There were several long discussions about whether the community should expand its activity beyond the garden gates or not. With a different emphasis but the same goal, members expressed their intentions. Tutoring young people as an achievable goal emerged once again:

“My personal goal is to... to infest children with the pleasure of gardening. Primarily families with children can be addressed through all these kinds of creative things, like what we did last year on IKEA’s Family Day. We would make small pots from coir and a plant inside them. Children were able to bring home their small gardens created there (...). Of course, the coconut fiber is imported so it’s not such an eco-friendly thing, but that’s not the point now...” (Hajba notes, 2017).

Thus, community horticulture is an activity that points beyond simply acts of cultivation and measurable harvest (LEVKOE 2013:588), for example, to the importance of civil group activity/engagement, and the opportunity to learn and practice democratic values, which unfolds in community discourses.

“Obviously, being chemical-free is just one element of the pursuit of consciousness... every forint spent is a vote for something, therefore I always try to be informed about things I buy, where it comes from, and who I am supporting by buying it” (Hajba interview, 2016).

“People have ridiculous needs and they just cannot give up on things... And if we don’t have a need for something, then ads simply create it. (...) One of the chimeras of consumer society is that all vegetables and fruits are always available. Always, everything and immediately, totally ignoring the fact that these things have seasons! No wonder it tastes grotty, is overpriced, and needs to be treated with chemicals. This is a chimera. No better word to describe it” (Hajba notes, 2016).

“I didn’t get into the spirit of these things so much, it just feels good what we do, essentially I think this is what community gardening should be about. (...) Maybe there are things that cannot be considered sustainable all that much. For example, we use tap water for irrigation. Mostly. Is that even sustainable?” (Hajba notes, 2016).

“In my opinion, we are ‘low level players’ in the cultivation game to decide whether it sustainable or not, but it is still a good thing that we are here together instead of sitting home in front of the TV or the computer” (group conversation notes, 2016).

On the whole, organic food production in the community garden is not only a more or less functional risk-mitigating strategy, but it raises awareness of and reflects on the aforementioned dependency relations, while at the same time it brings the criticisms of consumer society forward.

“BEYOND THE PARADISE” – A BRIEF SUMMARY

From the potential health risks arising in the community garden, through various plant cultivation methods and the convictions attached to them, I lead back the examination to the level of abstractions, namely, the underlying meanings of horticultural activity. These activities can be viewed as precedent actions set against contemporary consumption patterns. Many community members commented on the gaps in the garden’s food production, as well as the economically unprofitable aspect of the activity. Although the majority of food produced in the garden is used individually, and smaller amounts are used as exchange material or for charitable purposes (for example, all the crops for the Shelter Association), my research data is somewhat incomplete for lack of quantifying the crops in terms of individual nutrition. Most epidemiological studies or health science researches typically ascribe the most importance to the quantity of food produced in community gardens, where the essence of the initiative is to improve social conditions, most of which are top-down projects materialized in larger areas. These initiatives cooperate with local governments and qualified gardeners (who are also coordinators of the projects), with a stable financial background. These results may vary in different gardens, or considering advantageous or disadvantageous seasons; nevertheless, these researches



Figure 5. One fifth of my personal tomato harvest in September. Budapest, Hungary, 2016. (Photo by Gergő Hajba)

point out the drawback of local and healthy food production: the local trap. The concept of local trap, *inter alia*, implies that urbanization, neighborhood revitalization, and locality studies anticipate that local, autonomous initiatives which strengthen democratic values are able to solve global challenges and social problems while actually ignoring the context of individual needs (CUMMINS 2007:356). For example, the dynamics and proxemics of the needs of a city-dwelling family of 5 do not necessarily coincide with geographical locality. From the practical aspects of everyday life, it is possible that the primary location of acquiring food is closer to the workplace than to the place of residence. According to Lawson (though she states this as an American

sociologist, where fast food meals are a nutritional option for the social layer with scarce resources), if (community) horticulture is only about the food grown locally, then in many cases it would be cheaper and easier to go to the store or fast food restaurant (LAWSON 2007:15). In the community garden I presented, the food produced is in fact an appurtenant benefit rather than a priority objective of community action. It comes into being in the framework of cooperation strategies and dialogues towards the previously stated norms. By examining motivations, my study pointed out that for the majority of the gardeners, the intention of environmental transformation and the establishment of social relationships play a decisive role, in which organic food has less significance, yet it definitely provides the framework of actions. Although the food produced is suitable for avoiding a number of global risks, they are replaced by local risks arising from the urban environment (CUCCO – FONTE 2015:23), of which I have identified several types of action models: on the one hand, the use of preventive practices (presentation of laboratory test results, chemical-free cultivation, soil melioration); on the other hand, risk taking, that is, gardeners prefer to take responsibility for their own crops rather than for global goods from food chains with barely any transparency. The sources of reliable seeds and seedlings needed for organic food are usually derived from small-scale initiatives and communities considered to be green, and the elements of image of organic food are outlined in plant cultivation procedures: chemical protection, soil renewal, environmentally friendly behaviors. Although there are numerous external and internal factors that affect garden crops, the demand for organic food is indisputable, regardless

of the social status of the participants. In this case, the demand is also political by nature: the criticism of consumer society, with which most members raise their consciousness of the dangers of the above-mentioned dependency relations, and draw attention to the desirability for some kind of reflection.

There is certainly a need to pursue this line of inquiry further, investigating such topics as describing other dimensions of gaining consciousness, or expounding individual consumer patterns; nevertheless, a tendency is emerging in small communities: people with different social backgrounds and interests, with the exception of economic or utilitarian considerations but with a considerable “additional benefit” (Figure 5), are engaging in dialogues about their material world and their attitude towards their food, within the discourse of community gardening. Organic food is a social construct with flexible boundaries, and as such, thinking about it is not unified. Nevertheless, I think taking these considerations might widen the horizon of dialogues about organic food.

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“There Are No Recipes”

An Anthropological Assessment of Nutrition in Hungarian Ecovillages¹

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Abstract: Nutrition, as a fundamental human need as well as a manifestation of a social and cultural function, has always been the focus of ethnographic and anthropological research. Various concepts – sometimes radically different and at odds with each other – have emerged in modern societies to define food that can be considered safe. These include various nutrition-related movements. Like all social movements, these movements also act as a signaling system: they emerge as a reaction to a societal problem, and the problems they reflect as well as the attempts to formulate solutions also indicate the social dilemmas of the era. Such is the thematization of ecological crisis in recent times.

The ecovillage is a specific type of settlement created in response to an ecological, economic and social crisis. The pursuit of an environmentally friendly way of life and self-sufficiency is also reflected in the food culture of ecovillagers, providing an interpretation of safe food deeply embedded in the ecological discourse. The study presents the considerations that govern the foodways of ecovillagers and how these manifest in practice (from farm to table), analyzing it in a framework of interpretation that places the ecovillages in a broader social context. First, the author briefly presents the ecovillages and the specific community being studied. Next, she sets forth the risk and crisis concept providing the framework of interpretation, and outlines the food movements that respond to it. Finally, she turns to the description and analysis of the specific ethnographic material, the modalities of preparing for an ecological crisis, the relationship and significance of biodiversity and gastrodiversity, and demonstrates the role attributed to the community as an institution in this process.

Keywords: nutritional anthropology, food movements, biodiversity, gastrodiversity, ecovillage

¹ The author is greatly indebted to all ecovillage dwellers for their kind support of her research, and would like to express her gratitude to Eszter Kisbán and Anikó Bádi for their precious comments on the paper. An earlier version of the material was published in: *Tabula Online* 2015 16(1-2). http://tabula.neprajz.hu/neprajz.07.16a.php?bm=1&as=418&kr=A_10_%3D%222015%2016%281-2%29%22

Nutrition, as a fundamental human need as well as a manifestation of a cultural and social function, has always been the focus of research in cultural anthropology. Essential risks related to food, such as the issue of sufficient quantity and appropriate quality, are just as important in tribal groups as they are in industrial societies. Various concepts – sometimes radically different and at odds with each other – have emerged in modern societies to define food that can be considered safe. Studying these discourses represents a real promised land for contemporary food culture research, indicated by the wealth of scientific literature accumulated on this topic.

A substantial part of the literature consists of studies of various trends and movements associated with nutrition. As all social movements, food movements also operate as a kind of signalling system in society: on one hand, movements emerge basically as a reaction to a societal problem, and the problems they reflect as well as the attempts to formulate solutions also indicate the social dilemmas of the era (see HABERMAS 1981; SZABÓ 1993). On the other hand, however, the dynamics and thematic or methodological innovations of these movements point out the newly emerging problems of the life history of the movement in question. Such factors most recently include the thematization of the ecological crisis and the problematics of local and global approaches.

A special type of settlements, the ecovillage can be seen as a kind of answer to ecological – as well as economic and social – crisis. Ecovillagers, in general, usually want to set up a human habitat that adapts to its natural environment in the most efficient way and with the least harm possible. In order to achieve this, they farm without chemicals, try to use environmentally sound technologies in building, waste management, sewage treatment, and renewable energy resources. The main objectives include earning a living, trading and recreating locally, implementing autonomy and self-sufficiency to the extent possible, and creating a cooperative community based on a close texture of human relations (see BORSOS 2016; GILMAN AND GILMAN 1991). These ambitions, to set up an environmentally friendly life form close to nature, are reflected in their food culture as well, providing a specific interpretation of safe food deeply embedded in the ecological discourse.

I have conducted cultural anthropological research in Hungarian ecovillages for nearly ten years. In the course of my research, I took part in many community and family meals, saw a number of kitchens, larders, pens and vegetable gardens, purchased home-made food and produce, witnessed the bartering and giving away of produce and finished products, and so on.

In this study, I attempt to demonstrate which kinds of ideological considerations govern the eating habits of ecovillagers and how these ideologies manifest in the practices of an actual group of people, from the farm to the table. All this is analyzed in an intellectual context, putting ecovillages into the broader perspective of social sciences. First ecovillages as such are introduced in a nutshell, and then the actual community that is the subject of this study. Subsequently, the risk and crisis concepts that provide the framework of the interpretation are explained, and the food movements that provide the answers to all the questions raised are outlined next. Finally, the actual ethnographic material is described and analyzed, the different modalities of preparing for an ecological crisis, the significance and connection between biodiversity and gastrodiversity, and the role of the community as an institution in this process is demonstrated.

ECOVILLAGES

The concept of the ecovillage has become widely used by the 1990s, but the first such initiatives emerged in Western Europe and the United States in the 1970s. The international network of ecovillages, Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), was founded in 1994.²

The Hungarian ecovillage movement started after the political transition in the early nineties. Hungarian ecovillagers are usually middle class urban intellectuals, motivated not so much by economic reasons but rather by the desire to develop a better life in terms of morals, culture, or ideology. They are characterized by wanderlust, the critique of urban life, and the idea of a kind of counter-world. In terms of their motivations, they are mostly distinguished from the other village-bound migration streams by the wish to create a lifestyle based on ecological commitment different from the mainstream. This approach does not manifest only in their relations with the environment – it penetrates all aspects of individual and community existence. In terms of their objectives, they differ from others who move to villages in the assumption of the role model approach: many want not merely to implement a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, but also to hand down the experiences and know-how thus acquired.³

Ecovillages are multi-colored. There are common goals, but the means and degrees of success of implementation are various. It then follows that you cannot generalize them. An outline of the aforementioned efforts was important to pointing out the fundamental common features. However, if you were to get close to the nutritional approach of ecovillages and enter their larder, pantry or kitchen, sit with them at the table, you would never find two households alike (just like in Hungarian society as a whole). This is why I chose a single eco-community; by presenting them, I wanted to illustrate the potential definitions in the food culture of ecovillages.

The studied community does not constitute a stand-alone village community; its members moved into an existing Hungarian village in Transdanubia. The settlement itself is a 400-strong economically deprived dead-end village, where locals and ecovillagers are accompanied by other urban emigrants.⁴ Members of the eco-conscious group did not move in all at once; they attracted each other gradually, starting in 2003. Each of the families familiarized themselves with the potentials of the land and the village before moving in, and the loess-based hill range, the surrounding forests, and the water supply in the area seemed to be appropriate for implementing the planned community. Similarly, the affordable and existing unmodernized houses provided a great benefit for them, lending themselves easily to conversion in accordance with the ecological principles. And, in particular, the presence of an emerging community committed to the so-called *permaculture* – to be explained later – was of particular importance.⁵

² For more information on the history and roots of the ecovillage movement, see BATES 2003; FARKAS 2017. A short summary of ecovillage research is provided by WAGNER 2012.

³ The Hungarian ecovillage movement is united by the *Hungarian Network of Living Villages* (MÉH), see: www.elofaluhalozat.hu.

⁴ According to the estimate of the mayor, currently approximately 40% of all incomers are urbanites. More on the village, locals and newcomers, see: FARKAS 2016a.

⁵ For the motivation and process of moving to the countryside, see: FARKAS 2016b.

In the main study period (2010–2014), the group consisted of 8 households, with the adults in their thirties and the children ranging from a couple of months to 14 years old.⁶ The diets of the households were greatly influenced by the marital status of those living in it, which also caused their diversity: a single young man living under very simple circumstances in a wine-press house lacking all infrastructure, a single mother raising her children alone, families with toddlers, and a childless young couple could all be found among them. Some of the school-aged children attended the local primary school, while secondary school students commuted to a neighboring town. The diets of the families living here were furthermore influenced by the income level and taste of the family members, as well as the strictness of their ideology by which they insisted on the ecological principles and the notion of self-sustenance.

In order to capture this diversity, I attempt to describe their foodways along three core values and principles that have a dominant impact on the life of the community: 1) the concept of crisis, 2) the ecological principle, and 3) the community as a goal.⁷

CRISIS, RISK, FOOD MOVEMENTS

One of the key motivations of ecovillage organization is the vision that the present processes in the world are unsustainable and self-destructing, and a complex social, economic, moral and spiritual collapse is coming. In their minds, these processes, hand in hand with the global capitalist economic system, will finally cause a collapse by ruining the natural environment, depleting resources, and maintaining unequal distribution and social injustice. The reaction to these uncertainties and sense of danger is a radically new lifestyle experiment, an alternative risk management through the ecovillage concept, its lifestyle components and community approach. I'd like to emphasize that this is only one aspect of the ecovillage idea. The love for and desire to protect nature, living in harmony with nature and being part of a community in the countryside are equally important considerations. Their lifestyle is seen as an experiment of how to be as autonomous as possible, how to gain independence from the economic, infrastructural and social meshwork. Nourishment as a fundamental human need has a key role in this effort; this is the area where self-sufficiency is most intensively implemented and experimented with.⁸

⁶ The composition of the community has undergone a lot of changes in the last three years. Several families initially studied moved out, and there are others who moved back. The paper focuses on a stable period of the group, when the life of a closely cooperating and relatively clearly defined set of people could be scrutinized more thoroughly. The reason why they are still considered a community in spite of the continuous changes is that in an attempt to adapt to contemporary social processes, the concept of community in social sciences goes beyond the notion of people living together for a long time and through many generations and makes community a social institution subject to free interpretation (for a Hungarian summary, see TÓTH G. 2002). In fact – at least at this time – they defined themselves as a community. By the way, as mentioned earlier, this was the most stable period of the group, characterized more by newcomers and close cooperation.

⁷ Although it would be illuminating to study the food culture of the village as a whole, such an attempt surely exceeded the limits of a single paper. The topic is intended to be developed further at a later stage, focusing on the impact eating habits and related practices in the eco-community (gardening, community events, training courses) have on the village.

⁸ They are quite aware of the fact that their current lifestyle cannot be seen as self-sufficient.

Striving for self-sufficiency has several reasons, all closely related to safety and risk: ecovillagers believe that self-produced food makes them independent of industrial agriculture, the food industry and trade, all of which would cause the supply of food to people in case of an eventual collapse impossible. On the other hand, self-produced foods are considered to be healthier, purer and more risk-free.

Concerns related to nourishment have always matched the approach to risk in any society.⁹ The emergence of the issue of risk in the literature of nutrition is not new, since an appropriate amount and quality of food is of essential importance in all societies. In their work, Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil – having introduced the reader to the historical context of the concerns about food and nourishment – maintain that the two most important sources of harm throughout history was the lack of food (i.e., starvation) and diseased food. According to them, modern societies experience various risk factors related to nourishment just the same. However, while in former times religion, tradition and culture defined unanimously what was safe and what was not, in modern societies people are left to their own devices to make a decision related to their food. The disappearance of traditional forms of risk assessment and management, which offered a uniform pattern to everyone, put a much larger burden of decision-making on the individual and generated anxiety (BEARDSWORTH – KEIL 1997:150–160).

Of course, risks associated with starvation and infected food have not disappeared from modernity and Western countries; on the contrary, they were accompanied by further risk factors and dilemmas. Christian Coff, Michiel Korthals and David Barling refer to new developments in food culture research and associated technologies, which represent a challenge to traditional eating habits (see, for instance, unhealthy conventional diets such as foods causing various diseases). Also, the more recent ethical issues emerging in the course of food production are considered to be an important choice, such as sustainability, the working environment and livelihood of the producers, the use of biotechnology and nanotechnology, animal rights, or research ethics (COFF et al. 2008:9).

Besides striving to remain local, ecovillages are also connected to the change which tries to provide an answer to the problems above in the wider sense. Such a change occurred in the Hungarian context more recently, sprouting confidence-based distribution systems (Community Supported Agriculture groups, vegetable box communities, see: Szatyor, Évkerék Ökotanya, Nyitott Kert), the *local food* or *heritage food* movement, and so on (see also: GRASSENTI 2013, 2014; KLEIN et al. 2014; LYSAGHT 2012; SINISCALCHI 2013). In other words, the members of the Hungarian ecovillage movement think it was important enough that some of them join these networks: the vegetable boxes produced by Évkerék Ökotanya contain goat cheese, Racka sheep yoghurt and oven-baked bread made of organic cereals from one of the ecovillages, and the local food items list of a Pécs (Baranya county) group regularly features products from the Gyűrűfű ecovillage nearby (goat cheese, honey, soap). Yet, the members of the community being studied deny entering the organic food market deliberately; for them, self-reliance is the priority. Some projects, gardening courses and seed saver operations relate to the Hungarian food movements to a certain extent, but they do not intentionally take part in the urban and market segment. Nevertheless, they are tied to the discourse of the movements outlined

⁹ For cultural determination of risk see BECK 2003; DOUGLAS 1992; DOUGLAS – WILDAVSKY 1982.

above through a number of threads, and they fit in the context of the food movements because of the same problems brought to the forefront and the problem solving attempts which are – albeit different to an extent – fundamentally similar.

In the next chapters, we look at the food culture of an actual community belonging to the Hungarian ecovillage movement.

DIVERSITY IN THE GARDEN AND IN NOURISHMENT

The response ecovillages provide to the specter of crisis is closely related to ecological principles, the framework of which is specified in this actual community by a specific lifestyle (and the inseparable farming system associated with it): permaculture. The group studied used to be a base for domestic permaculture,¹⁰ distinguished from the other permaculture initiatives by their close community in the same physical habitat. The term ‘permaculture’ is derived from *permanent agriculture*, invented by Bill Mollison in the 1970s (MOLLISON 1978). For lack of space, the ambitions and history of this method cannot be covered here, yet a few elements must be discussed in order to understand the eating habits of the studied group.¹¹ The main goals include: replicating ecological processes of nature in human habitats and production; dramatic reduction of consumption; energy saving and recycling; creating self-reliant systems (garden, food, energy, community, etc.); covering own needs from own resources to the extent possible; providing multiple functions by one element and securing each function by multiple elements of the system; preferring and reinforcing mutually beneficial and symbiotic relationships; diversity; consideration for the welfare of all living things and the landscape as a whole instead of that of humans only. The principles above – according to the concept – generate practices that serve as preparations for the future through ecological sustainability. These principles dominate their foodways as well. As a young woman put it: permaculture is much more than merely *just picking up food in the garden*. It is a lot more: a lifestyle, a world view, with community as an essential ingredient (K. E. 2009).¹²

As presented above, the households in the community represented a variety of structures. This is true for the forms of livelihood as well. With a view to the ecological principles, group members tried to earn a living without commuting. Success stories included a telecommuting information technology expert, or people employed by the local council. One young woman was the employee of the local government before taking maternity leave, and later the government subsidy she received for the children

¹⁰ See more in FARKAS 2017:80–82. The members of the community which is the subject of this study misinterpret the permaculture concept to some extent. In fact, permaculture is nothing more than a design system aiming at “the set up and maintenance of a consciously designed and agriculturally productive artificial ecosystem with the diversity, stability and resilience (resistance to external impacts) of the natural ecological systems. Man is integrated in it with the landscape, which provides food, energy, shelter and other tangible and intangible assets in a sustainable way” (BORSOS 2018:208). [added by reviewer]

¹¹ For more on this, see the homepage of the Hungarian Permaculture Association: <http://www.permakultura.hu/index.php> (accessed January 22, 2015). A number of texts in social sciences were also produced on permaculture, see, for instance: VETETO – LOCKER 2008.

¹² Quotes from interviews are identified by the initials of the responders and the year of recording.

represented a part of the family’s income. The husband worked in the public works program and raised some income from odd jobs. Formerly their revenues were topped up by selling produce, but later this activity was abandoned. Another man also took odd jobs in the village (from farming to oven-making), and combined with selling self-grown produce (honey, vegetables, fruits), this constituted the income of the family. Another single man obtained some income from odd jobs as well, but he was also active in barter, working for food, for example. Another family’s main source of income was the subsidies received after each child, and in yet another household people mainly lived on formerly accumulated reserves along with maternity allowances. Still others in the community are unable to carve out a livelihood locally and spend part of the week away. Typically, group members sustain themselves on a shoestring budget, and a substantial part of their consumption accounts for home-grown vegetables, fruits and cereals, in some families even milk and eggs (the three families living here for the longest time lead the group in this respect). Cutting back consumption is also an integral part of their livelihood, following the principle of voluntary simplicity: being content with more simple means, they purchase the least things considered unnecessary.

All group members had their own kitchen garden, and most of them had farmland with cereal crops. House gardens were maintained by the residents themselves, but due to the layout of the street, some lots also had garden parcels facing the street, which were sometimes tilled jointly. Farmland was also partly farmed jointly to produce cereals (wheat – *Triticum aestivum*, barley – *Hordeum vulgare*, millet – *Panicum miliaceum*, oat – *Avena sativa*, Triticale – *Triticosecale*). Communal work, however, does not mean communal ownership; land was privately held, and those who agreed to work it jointly, grew wheat, millet, barley, etc., on the land of one, the other, or the third, respectively. Scheduling who worked together with whom in any one year was the outcome of the needs, joint discussions and, certainly, former experiences. There were not too many farm animals: only two families raised chickens, and one family had goats and cattle.

Both their farming and the organization of their everyday life were dominated by the desire to provide each important function by multiple components, and to associate each component with as many functions as possible. The latter is most commonly explained by the example of the chicken (maybe because Mollison himself used the same for explaining multiple benefits): a chicken is kept not only for its meat; other parts, such as feather, manure, eggs are also used, and it may pick up pests in the garden. Additionally, such a chicken not only provides multiple benefits but also lives under proper circumstances, which fits well the principle of strong respect for natural elements.

A component of the crisis vision is that resources providing our basic needs are in dramatically short supply and may vanish altogether. Unless a suitable replacement is found, this may lead to severe problems, such as food and energy crises. Therefore, besides growing their own food, members of the community also produce a lot more varieties of plants compared to the mainstream, trying to capitalize on the many kinds of uses they provide. Furthermore, their nourishment includes raw materials which – although put in the forefront by reform diets and in certain fashionable gastro-styles – are basically unknown in mainstream foodways. These include wild-growing species and plants that are considered weeds in a conventional garden. “This is how we create the resilience of the system; if one of the products fails, the rest would still meet our needs. This way our dependence is reduced and the chance of disasters minimized” (P. K. 2013).

In other words, biodiversity is extended to agricultural diversity, including gardens, orchards and, eventually, the kitchen.

In one of their books, two Hungarian sociologists, the Kapitánys (KAPITÁNY – KAPITÁNY 2007), highlight the reliance on the strength of tradition, the emergency activation of knowledge elements acquired in childhood or otherwise, the experiences handed down by the community but forgotten in the meantime, and the emergence of formerly proven cultural habits and procedures as those related to survival strategies. They include, among others, ingenious food-making practices, the rediscovery of substitutes, the food of the poor, and traditional meals. Since, as mentioned several times, the dominant component of the ecovillage concept is preparation for a crisis situation, the survival strategies the Kapitánys referred to also characterize ecovillages and feature in their foodways. Such practices in the studied group included the mapping of edible fruits and wild plants in the surroundings, the broadening of the knowledge base of edible wild fruits and weeds, and the keeping and consumption of these plants (i.e., *Chenopodiaceae* – *Chenopodium album* and *Chenopodium hybridum*, chickweed – *Stellaria media*, dandelions – *Taraxacum officinale*, purslane – *Portulaca oleracea*, Korean perilla – *Perilla frutescens*, burweed – *Arctium lappa*, etc.). Raw materials and food-making techniques that were less valued in peasant cultures and eventually abandoned were revitalized with the intention of overcoming temporary difficulties (see, among others, BÁTI 2010; GYÖRFFY L. 1978; SZABÓ L. 1991). The same practice was established in ecovillages, but with a different ambition: on the one hand, to be prepared for long-term, distant difficulties which are not yet existing in the present; and on the other, to apply the ecological principle of biodiversity in close connection with the former.

According to Eszter Kisbán, “[taste] includes subjective judgement of the food and at this point tradition and habit may temporarily be a real physiological impediment to the enjoyment of strange tasting, looking, or permanently forbidden, otherwise immaculate food items through the transmission of a system of conditioned reflexes” (KISBÁN 1982:203). A typical example is the consumption of plants known as weeds. This is demonstrated by not only the aversion of mainstream society to such foods, but, according to my own experiences, also by the reaction of interested audiences at the training courses meeting this specific lifestyle and eating habits for the first time, for whom it was a real adventure nibbling a piece of chickweed or some purslane leaves. The analysis of the green salad ingredients collected from the garden was a recurring moment during communal meals. Outsiders frequently looked at those meals as if they were eating the exotic meals of some distant, faraway land.

It is well known that gathering was an important component of vernacular foodways¹³ (and, to an extent, in urban eating habits as well, such as the custom of mushroom gathering). Later it was abandoned and it has become a hallmark of poverty: certain kinds are surrounded by social taboos (rubbish-sifting), or associated with poverty (snail gathering, corn and grape grazing, lime blossom gathering). At the same time, some elements of gathering have been revaluated in the contemporary trends of recycling, as in the world of

¹³ For the summary of gathering and use of wild plants (forest fruits, berries, leaves, seeds, herbs), see: GUNDA 2001:14–41. Other references: ANDRÁSFALVY 1964; BENCsik 1983; BÓDI 1983; GAZDA 1970; GUNDA 1948, 1977; JUHÁSZ–MOLNÁR 1971; PÉNTÉK–SZABÓ 1985; SOLYMOS 1984; VIGA 1986, 1993; ZSUPOS 1987.

second-hand shops, recycled art, furniture scavenged off the street and renovated, or the renaissance of wild garlic and elderflower collection. Gathering all these – and a number of other – plants represents a supplementary source of nourishment in ecovillages and has yet another important role: mapping the sites, broadening the knowledge base, getting ready for the crisis. This does not mean that people go out to the fields to consume these plants on a regular basis, but that they gather them occasionally, during excursions, for instance. One day my host wanted to show me something on his corn field and, incidentally, mulberry was ripe on the nearby alley of mulberry trees. We combined business with pleasure and started the day with a fruit breakfast by making a detour to the fruit trees. Another time, collecting tours were organized when the plant or produce in question was ripe, specifically to collect the fruit (cornel, elderberry, horse chestnut, etc.).

Their diet regularly contains raw materials that are also present in reform nutrition, with the difference, however, that – at least in a couple of households – they produce them themselves. Living, fruit bearing specimens of millet, chickpea (*Cicer arietinum*), sesame (*Sesamum indicum*) or grass pea (*Lathyrus sativus*) could be seen in the gardens (triggering awe in visitors who thought them exotic), known to most of us only in the seed form, in bags or pouches from the stores.

Besides revitalizing forgotten produce and foods, a couple of households experimented with growing and consuming new, non-native and less known plant species and varieties as part of diversity enhancement and adaptive gardening.¹⁴ Some of them may be familiar from exotic vegetable shelves of reform shops, such as sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*), artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*), Peruvian groundcherry, goldenberry (*Physalis peruviana* and *Physalis pruinosa*) or yam (*Dioscorea batatas*), and others, presumably, are unknown to most of us, such as skirret (or sugar root, *Sium sisarum*) or yacon (Peruvian ground apple, *Smallanthus sochifolius*). A significant role in this experimenting is played by the fact that some of the dwellers are qualified agricultural engineers, biologists, botanists or horticulturists. Consequently, they know not only the production technology but also the cultural history of these plants by heart, including mineral and vitamin content. The proverbial argument ‘it used to be eaten a long ago’ was supplemented here with scientific information. Two of the gardens and a jointly worked demonstration orchard were operated as a kind of gene bank, and there are households (3) where approximately 400 kinds of plants can be found in the garden. Besides augmenting biodiversity, this versatility allows a very varied nutrition and nourishment as well (gastrodiversity).

The various ways by which products are stored (in larders, pantries, cellars carved out from loess walls)¹⁵ and preserved (home-canning, dehydration, drying) extend this diversity and abundance beyond the vegetation period, from late autumn to early spring. The group is characterized by a kind of provisionment approach, a part of which is seed catching, i.e., sowing and/or storing the seeds collected from their own plants.

“There are no recipes, because we cook what we find in the garden. We start by looking at what we have.” This response was repeated several times during a three-day

¹⁴ Garden experiments using plants adapting to drought and climate change.

¹⁵ They deliberately refrain themselves from freezers – because of the energy wasting operation thereof –, and only half the households have refrigerators. Instead, the storage and preservation methods applied in peasant cultures and – earlier on – in the local food culture are used.

course where attendants wanted to learn the recipes of dishes which they found special.¹⁶ Locals tried to use what they could produce, in the spirit of striving for self-reliance. Although most of the vegetables and fruits eaten came from their own garden, there were some differences depending on life situation and needs: those who did not commute had more time and energy to be spent in the garden; those with more extensive experiences grew food supplies with greater certainty, while the ones who did not want to eat only seasonal food purchased products from the shops, etc. One of the families raised animals (cattle, goats, hens, ducks) so they could meet their needs in terms of milk, cheese, meat or eggs. The others used to buy milk from a local farmer up the street, but when the cow of the family mentioned above started to lactate, they preferred to buy from them. Cooking oil was purchased from an oil press nearby, while honey – after the local beekeeper moved out – was procured from other ecovillages or received as a gift. At one point they tried to grow and process their own cereals, but this attempt failed after a few years: ultimately, there was not enough stamina to perform the hard work (threshing, grinding) of growing and processing grain crops.

At the same time, products bought in stores could also be found in a great portion of the households. This is particularly true for families with children, where chocolate, yoghurt, tropical fruits, or Nutella were common, but there were also families who purchased cheese, other dairy products, flour, pasta, and, of course, salt and sugar in the shops (locally or in the neighboring community).¹⁷ Because of the divergent ways nourishment was organized, it is very difficult to generalize here. However, the governing consideration in their choices was to consume predominantly their own produce or raw materials received from the members of the community, and even beyond this, when it came to shopping, they tried to purchase local and preferably organic products. Over the years, producer-consumer relations with villagers or producers in other communities nearby were developed, based on favorable experiences and a high degree of confidence. This is how they found a proven flour procurement location in the small town nearby, a source of cooking oil in another settlement, a dairy farmer up the street, and so on.

My experiences so far demonstrate that a kind of intermediate adaptation strategy – which does not make life unbearable or too difficult – was chosen instead of rigidly

¹⁶ At one of the lunches, red mountain spinach (*Atriplex hortensis*), chard (*Beta vulgaris* var. *cicla*), a variety of spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*), artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*) and Peruvian yacon (*Smallanthus sochifolius*) were put on the pizza base, on another occasion pan-fried root vegetables (yacon – *Smallanthus sochifolius*, two or three kinds of batatas – *Ipomoea batatas*, purple potatoes – *Solanum tuberosum*, carrots – *Daucus carota* subsp. *sativus*, oxalis tuberosa plant (uqa in Quechua) – *Oxalis tuberosa*) and dehydrated tomatoes (*Solanum lycopersicum*) were served as the main course, accompanied by a green salad consisting of four or five types of lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*), spinach (*Spinacia oleracea*), Botany bay spinach – *Tetragonia tetragonoides*, Malabar spinach – *basella rubra*), dandelion leaves (*Taraxacum officinale*) and other ‘weeds,’ decorated with pot marigold petals (*Calendula officinalis*) and borage petals (*Borago officinalis*). Everything came from the kitchen garden of the host. The quote above also gained a wider interpretation: it was applicable to both the setup of one’s own garden and to the lifestyle experiment as a whole.

¹⁷ Peasants hardly spent any money on food up until the end of the 20th century. In the spirit of self-reliance, if something did not yield enough (because of natural calamities or war), it was not purchased, but simply omitted from the diet (for more on this, see the summary of BÁTI 2010, and an actual example in FÉL – HOFER 1997). Such unilateral stockpiling is not typical for ecovillages.

following the principles.¹⁸ The multi-faceted difficulties and eventual moving out of some of the members was explained in the community by their fanatically frugal lifestyles. No consensus or a common set of rules have been established about the correct dividing line between exaggeration and neglecting the principles, or in other words, the definition of the proper extent of adaptation. There was an intention in the early history of the community to formulate a common set of principles, to define where they want to head, but this was not implemented in the end.

It might have become obvious by now that members of the community eat mainly self-made food, from local or own sources to the extent possible. You might witness the high value placed on self-produced and 'home-made' products in mainstream society as well, *local*, *home-made* and *own* being all magical words that attract a specific type of consumers. Such attitudes are associated with a certain amount of nostalgia: yearning for the old, the vernacular, the rural, the natural, interest cast in an idealized rural 'other.'

Domestic ecovillages organize a three-day-long ecovillage meeting twice a year, once in summer and once in winter, which are also attended by interested parties other than ecovillagers. Meals are eaten communally, including potluck meals for breakfast and dinner, when everybody would bring something to the communal table. Potluck meals serve as a presentation and exhibition of one's own food products and represent a good occasion for boasting. Everybody tastes and praises the foods, recipes change hands. If the food is made of one's own raw materials, its value is even higher (that is, bread and cakes made from own grain, honey, fruits, cheese home-made or at least originating from a local farmer or crafter). Put 'mass products' bought from shops on the table is uncommon. You would not be scorned for it, but food of this kind will be marginalized, to say the least. Then there are some famous food items, such as the nut bread of one ecovillager, which is always in high demand at the meetings.

In addition to nostalgia, such home-made, local products bear an additional significance in the minds of ecovillagers: they fit the ecological model well. The basic approach of ecological principles is thinking in systems and cycles, considerate and restrained consumption of local resources, and recycling.¹⁹ Home-made bread, cheese, locally produced eggs, meat, marmalade, syrup, brandy, etc., using environmentally friendly methods fit this principle well.

¹⁸ A similar attitude is reported by Philip Vanini and Jonathan Taggart from a research conducted in 11 Canadian ecological communities: while localization and sustainability are important, enjoying the small pleasures of life seems to be equally important in the community studied by them, and instead of following the environmental ideology at any cost, a kind of pragmatic, merry approach was seen – which, however, is still a far cry from mainstream society's concept of a comfortable, good life (VANINI – TAGGART 2014).

¹⁹ Recycling is an important component of households anyway, including the kitchen: no food is discarded, leftovers are eaten up or used again by giving it a new form as much as possible. Just a few personally observed examples: the rice side dish was left over one day and was revived as rice pudding with fruit on the next; my host baked a walnut stuffed spiral in the oven from the leftover pasta of the 'Baumkuchen' baked on the campfire the previous night. Vegetable and fruit remnants (stem, peel, etc.) go to the compost heap, to get into the earth and contribute to producing food next year. Water is also handled with care and returned to the circulation: chemical-free wash-up water is used in the garden. Of course, the recycling potential of leftover food is not reserved for ecovillages, the exception being that the principle of economizing which was believed by our forebears is substantiated here by the ecological ideology.

At the same time, products made of one's own source materials by hand are assigned a certain spiritual quality as well. A young woman, when relating how quickly she sold out of her products on the local market (marmalade, vegetable creams), put it this way: "We have a spiritual relationship with the product, and this is perceived by people, this is the reason why they buy it" (B. R. 2010). In other words, metaphysical and spiritual contents are also present in thinking about food. Kandel and Peltó include the so-called *organic-motive*, preferring organic and natural food as opposed to any kind of synthetic products. With respect to our topic here, the *mystic motive* seems just as important, that is, the symbolic attributes of food which determine its choice. For instance, raw food is thought to have a stronger life energy, or the importance of yin and yang balance in macrobiotic diets (KANDEL – PELTÓ 1980:335). A closely related observation is that symbolism has a specifically great significance in healthy nutrition movements: they maintain that modern food is over-processed, contaminated and lacking essential nutrients, while healthy food bears the signs of naturalness, and is tied to tradition and folk wisdom. The latter are 'clean and natural' foods, representing a balance against the stressful, destructive, unhealthy modern lifestyle.²⁰ Healthy food movements create and formulate the connection between the cultural and the natural in the language of symbolism and along the aforementioned approaches (KANDEL – PELTÓ 1980:335). Ecovillage narratives frequently refer to the opposition pairs of vegetables and fruits picked freshly from your garden versus those purchased from the department store. Healthy food is in its natural state. In this respect, the main hazards are not represented by biological risk factors such as viruses, bacteria or fungi, but rather pesticides, additives, preservatives and other chemicals and 'non-natural' starting materials (GMO). In the words of Deborah Lupton – and with reference to the artificial man created by Frankenstein – *frankenfoods* (LUPTON 1998:92). Clean/unclean issues are formulated in this context as sprayed/non-sprayed and natural/unnatural counterparts. Visitors coming for a training course or just to see the place are exhilarated by the exciting new freedom of just picking a piece of fruit or vegetable from the plant and – following the example of their hosts – eating it without washing. The raw food item consumed directly from the garden thus loses its former unclean (sprayed, dirty, unwashed, not prepared) property and becomes connected to nature (the earth, the plants) without any mediator – a key idea in ecovillages. Similarly, guests see it as crossing a boundary and a new type of freedom when they taste plants they considered earlier as weeds and not food.²¹

EATING AND COMMUNITY

Sustainable nourishment for ecovillages is closely associated with their relationship to the land, hands-on experiences, the transfer of traditional knowledge and techniques into practice, and community as such. All this is based on mutuality and cooperation

²⁰ Clean is meant by the authors as culturally construed cleanliness, and the concept is used in this paper in the same meaning. For more on this, see DOUGLAS 1966.

²¹ Alice Bombrin, studying the nourishment of ecovillages, also found this was important: "Eating the fruits directly from the plant is another way to break down mediations and to create a most direct horizontal way to relate through the consumption of food" (BOMBRIN 2015a:472).

(see BROMBIN 2015a, 2015b).²² Besides common efforts to produce food, meals bear a specific significance. Communal meals are practiced not only at the ecovillage meetings but are also an important part of the everyday life of the studied community. When the group was most active, members regularly ate dinner together, rotating hosts, and a number of local traditions grew out of this. Such dinners were also ‘potluck parties,’ and in addition to food, everyone also brought glasses, plates, utensils, which were then taken back home to be washed, sparing the host both the preparations and the cleaning up. Throughout the years it was observed that these communal meals played the role of a sensitive indicator as to the state of the community: harmony and tensions, respectively, were clearly indicated by the joining, re-joining, or dropping off of members, and by the occurrence/omission of those meals.

An additional community institution related to food – also organized in other Hungarian ecovillages – is the concept of *komatál*, i.e., the community assistance of a new mother in confinement and her family.²³ After a while, new mothers were helped out not only by the members of the closer community subject to this study, but also by other newcomers from the broader community. Members of the group shared the work and discussed who, when, and what kind of warm food should supply. (Or even who would undertake the job of washing or taking care of the older children, etc.) This commitment was voluntary, and even the elderly participated, who no longer needed any *komatál* but might be rewarded in some other way.

In fact, great significance is attributed not merely to communal eating but also the process by which raw materials are grown and make their way into kitchens and onto plates. Community existence and all kinds of common activities, such as joint production and processing, are all interpreted as a method of preparing for the crisis outlined above. As mentioned, attempts were made at communal grain production, including further workflows (harvesting, threshing) done collectively. Marmalade was prepared collectively, tomatoes canned, etc. Since ecological principles require that machinery be phased out (see FARKAS 2015), the importance of human labor increased and led to the need for communal work (either because the given work cannot be accomplished alone, or because work is more fun when done together). Similarly, barter and swapping are seen as tightening human relations. The subject of the exchange may be produce (vegetables, fruits, eggs, milk as raw materials, marmalade, syrup, honey, etc., as processed food), tools or labor. Or even an exchange of courtesies, as seen in the case of the ‘*komatál*.’ Their combination is also common: one of the families needed a lot of labor for their big garden, a single man had no income, so the former provided food and accommodation to the latter in exchange for his workforce for years. There is no traditionally developed set of rules for such services and counter services in this new, intentional community.²⁴ In

²² The importance of community is emphasized in the definition of permaculture found on the home page of the Hungarian *Permaculture Association*. Permaculture is “a natural lifestyle protecting nature; *Living human communities*; A global solution to the environmental problems” (emphasis added). BAJI, no date. <http://www.permakultura.hu/index.php> (accessed January 21, 2015.)

²³ ‘*Komatál*’ or godmother’s pot: a standard custom in peasant culture when female relatives and friends bring food to the new mother in confinement and her family, as long as she is not able to supply herself and her family. For ethnographic references, see: KISBÁN 1997:557; KNÉZY 1975; SCHWALM 1989.

²⁴ Ecovillages are so-called *intentional* communities, i.e., they were created by the conscious efforts of larger and/or smaller groups.

an exciting period of community development, there were many discussions about how to determine the units of measurement in the barter or exchange process, such as, how many zucchinis are worth one kilogram of home-made muesli.

CONCLUSION

It is well known from the anthropological literature on nutrition that food plays an important role in drawing boundaries and enabling communication across borders, whether they are boundaries between social groups or human and non-human (natural, supernatural) entities. It is also well known that food, as a symbol, provides information about world view and lifestyle as a whole (see APPADURAI 1981; BOMBRIN 2015a, 2015b; DOUGLAS 1966; GOODY 1982; LÉVY-STRAUSS 1966). This also means that how and from what sources food is prepared indicates relationship to the environment, pointing out and at the same time influencing how the natural and social environment is perceived and understood.

It is not too surprising, therefore, that the sensitivity characteristic of ecovillagers in their thinking and relations with nature is also manifested in their nourishment, from farm to table. 'Clean food' raises the notion of pure nature, aiming at the attainment of a clean nature, a natural and just life.

Hopefully this study helps the reader understand that food and meals are indeed able to reflect the world view of their makers, as a medium of the principles which they try to follow. At the same time, the given conditions and current situation of the families require some flexibility in handling the principles and the various methods of adaptation. The dialogues, judgement, thinking about boundaries and norms are just as interesting as the actual study of nourishment. Taken together, a world view focusing on a sustainable future and the practices of nourishment deeply embed the ecovillages and each of the ecovillagers in the discourses on the actual criticism of globalization.

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Wild Plants for Sale in the Markets of Pécs Then and Now (Baranya, Hungary)

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Abstract: Based on ethnographic and botanical sources as well as observations between 2012 and 2015, we have data about the sale of 130 species of wild plants in the markets of Hungary's fifth largest city. Most species, 98 of them, were sold as bouquets or wreaths, as ornamental plants. Sources reported sales of 67 wildflowers in the past, while between 2012–2015 they offered a total of 57 species in ornamental bouquets at the market but only 23 of the species sold in the past were among them. The main reason for changes in the wildflower species is that several species have become protected and hence their sale prohibited. Based on the available data, only 30 species of herbs and edible plants gathered in the wild were sold – 10 species as wild vegetables, 6 species as flowers, and 18 species as fruits. Today, of the edible wild species, mostly wild fruits and wild onions are available on a regular basis. Because the sale of medicinal plants became regulated very early on, their sale in the markets is not common, available mostly through wholesalers and already processed. Even today it is mostly edible herbs that are available in the market. During the 4 years of observation, they also sold 38 mushroom species in the markets of Pécs as forest products.

Keywords: wild food plant, wild fruit, wild vegetable, collection of medicinal plants, sale of wild plants, foraging, ethnobotany, open market, traditional ecological knowledge

INTRODUCTION

Wild plants collected in the wild are sold at the markets partly as cut flowers, bouquets of wildflowers, and partly as medicinal, herbal or edible plants. The use of nature's goods and the sale of wild plants in the market are not as common nowadays, but it seems to be reviving in Hungary. Considering a number of European countries (DOGAN et al. 2013; DOGAN – NEDELICHEVA 2015; ŁUCZAJ et al. 2012, 2013), it can be established that it is traditionally in Mediterranean countries that the market sale of wild plants has endured, and, according to recent research, the use of wild plants is still significant in several regions of Transylvania (DÉNES et al. 2014; PAPP – HORVÁTH 2013), and there is data about the market sale of numerous wild fruits (e.g., blueberries, wild strawberries) and wild vegetables (nettle, sorrel, docks, pilewort, coltsfoot, hop shoots) as well as wildflowers

(e.g., dogtooth violet, liverwort, fritillaria) (BABAI ex litt. 2015; BARTHA 2015; DÉNES ined. 2015; SZÉKELY ex litt. 2012). Elsewhere in Europe the use of forest products and consequently their market availability have declined. The sale of mostly mushrooms, wild fruits, and a few wild vegetables have persisted in the twentieth century, but their rediscovery in the 21st century can be observed in almost all countries. The situation is the same in Hungary – aside from forest mushrooms, only a very few species gathered in nature are being used today as they were used in the past, and data about their sale are few and sparse. The market supply of freshly foraged herbs has been suppressed in the last decades by readily accessible drugs and a good healthcare system, while the emerging demands were met through organized sales of processed herbal supplements. Wild plant foods – especially in a country with an increasing number of fertile lands due to the cultivation of lowlands and hill countries – have also been almost completely suppressed, their sale not very common. As ornamental plants, wildflowers appeared on the market only about a century ago, after World War I, and by the end of the century they were sold in bulk each spring. Due to environmental protection laws at the end of the 20th century, their supply has declined, and by today the varieties of sold species have largely changed. 20 years after the regime change, I observed for 4 years the wild plant supply of the markets of a major Hungarian city surrounded by a diverse natural environment, rich in forests and grasslands, yet with markets that are some of the most expensive in national standards.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the study of today's practices of wild plant sales in Pécs, I frequented the markets of Pécs from 2012 to 2015, along with its farmers' markets and occasional fairs (e.g., Christmas market). I found the most wild plant sales in the market hall hosting the largest vegetable and flower market in Pécs, so I visited it on a daily basis in the more important periods of wild plant sales (spring, fall, holidays). During the four years, I spoke with 28 sellers, getting to know more and more about their gathering and selling practices, and I also asked three market supervisor about their prior observations. The longest-employed supervisor was able to look back on the last 20 years. Data of species sold that was observed by me at least once and/or mentioned in interviews and easily identifiable has been entered into the summary table (Table 1) as an unpublished source marked Dénes 2015 ined. Data of past wild plant sales in Pécs – especially for the period between 1940 and 1980 – was compiled from information found in botanical, ethnographic and environmental conservation literature, as well as in the ethnographic repository and photographic database of the Janus Pannonius Museum. The data from this period is sporadic, but despite this, we can learn a lot from the practices of the time. I supplemented my own observations with information from five colleagues from Pécs, all of whom have worked or are still working in environmental conservation and who were able to look back over the last 10–20 years. I received data from László Wágner (WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.), Sándor Völgyi (VÖLGYI 2015 ex litt.), Balázs Kevey (KEVEY 2015 ex litt.) Gábor Nagy (NAGY 2015 ex litt.), and Géza Vágner (VÁGNER 2015 ex verb.).

The study site is Pécs, Hungary's fifth largest city, a regional center and the seat of Baranya County. The population is over 145,000 today. The city that has existed since

Roman times is situated in the southwestern foothills of the Mecsek Mountains, at the junction of three geographic regions: the Mecsek Mountains, the Baranya Hills, and the Dráva Plain. The proportion of natural habitats in the region is high. The city is bordered on the north by unbroken forested lands, and on the south by sometimes still swampy, flat areas. The flora of Pécs' surroundings is one of the richest of our domestic landscapes in terms of its absolute and relative number of species (WIRTH et al. 2010:71–72). The county is also home to Hungary's most forested lowland landscapes, the Dráva Plain. In the spring, nature awakens here first in the country, thus the very first willow catkins and wild garlic bouquets are available in the markets of Pécs. The ethnography and history of the markets and fairs of Pécs until the middle of the last century are described in a study by Imre Dankó (DANKÓ 1965). In the past, the marketplaces were the city's large public spaces, and Baranya's diverse, multi-ethnic population sold their goods here, but Pécs' weekly fairs may have had an even larger agglomeration. Today the city operates a market hall, and three smaller marketplaces, but several other private, occasional farmers' markets and craft fairs also operate to serve the demand. According to KIRÁLY (2011:89), Pécs' markets are mentioned among the most expensive domestic markets because the products almost always came from afar – in the past, mainly from producers on the Great Plain, currently also from abroad. For a long time, Bulgarian gardeners settled in the vicinity of Pécs at the end of the 19th century also supplied the city with local vegetables, but today local producers are present on the market in very small proportions.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF WILD PLANT SALES

Wildflower sales in Hungary

The sale of wildflowers as cut flowers appeared in towns during the difficult period after World War I. Primarily they sold early spring species because they were popular as the first signs of spring after a dark and cold winter in the city, and thus brought a modest income for the vendors. Well-known domestic botanists of the early 20th century took stock of the wildflowers sold on the streets and markets of several big cities. PÉNZES (1926a, 1926b), RAPAICS (1932) and BOROS (1924, 1947) all describe the condition and species of wildflower sales in Budapest. PÉNZES (1926b) lists 89 species of wild plants in the markets of Pest. MÁTHÉ (1938) in Debrecen and TÍMÁR (1953) in Szeged both recorded the practices of wildflower sales in the respective cities' markets. Adolf Olivér Horvát, a botanist from Pécs – having had recorded sales of 61 species gathered in the wild – published a study in 1940 and again in 1942 about the wildflowers sold in the markets of Pécs. According to the studies of VIGA (1986:69–70), for example, the women of Cserépfalu in the Bükk mountains were “*making a living*” by gathering forest products all year round, and they would even go pick snowdrops near Pécs:

They started their gathering “in the early spring with the snowdrop, then came the violets, mushrooms, lily of the valley, mushrooms again, then raspberries, herbs (Christmas rose, belladonna, chamomile, centaury, black locust flowers, agrimony). The herbs were purchased by the village trader – they themselves did not really use them. But the rest they took to the market themselves. The gathering of snowdrops became fashionable in particular after World

War II, although already quite a few people did it before the war (...) they pick snowdrops especially for Women's Day and Mother's Day, collecting them in the surrounding woodlands of the Bükk mountains, but they would also go to pick flowers in the remote Transdanubian forests (Pécs, Villány, Kaposvár, Dombóvár, Nagykanizsa), then bring the "harvest" to be sold in the markets of the capital, sometimes Eger and Miskolc."

I myself saw the process of making bouquets out of snowdrops gathered in bulk and piled high on tables pushed together in the waiting room of the Villány railway station near Pécs in the '90s. Snowdrops were popular not only in Hungary but also in the neighboring (then) Czechoslovakia, with bouquets delivered even by air to large cities (Új Szó 1973). The weekly magazine *Hét*, referring to Dunacsúny, wrote in 1976 that there were "some people who even bought cars from [the proceeds of] snowdrops" in the village dubbed "*Hóvirágfalva*" (Snowdrop Village), but the people living there did not mind because "no other village in the country has such a beautiful name" (SCHNEIDER 1976).

Initially botanists were less worried about the mass gathering of wild plants, but later they became more and more worried (ARADI et al. 1975:35; BOROS 1968; MOLNÁR V. 2014:41–45; NÉMETH – SEREGÉLYES 1982). The demand for wildflowers increased, especially for those blooming in early spring before the cultivated species, and became more than just a supplement to meager incomes, and thus more people got involved in the wildflower trade. Several species were declared protected by a 1982 act, the first of its kind in Hungary, in order to prevent further environmental damage caused exactly by wildflower gathering.¹ Despite their protected status, some protected species still appeared on the stalls. I've also regularly seen colorfully painted feather grass (*Stipa*) sold at Baranya's famous pilgrimage site, Máriagyűd in the 1990s, and in those years the more common, protected flowers of the Mecsek also appeared in the markets of Pécs. For some species, their sales increased to worrisome degrees, so in 2001 WWF Hungary launched a campaign called "*Let the wildflowers live.*" In their brochure, they analyzed the contemporary situation, and they concluded that several protected species of plants were being sold in the metropolitan markets, and of the non-protected ones, the snowdrop was being threatened by the tremendous demand for it on International Women's Day (March 8), when most men gift their female friends, female relatives with a bouquet of snowdrops. On this day, and a few days before, many millions of snowdrops were put on the markets. As calculated by the conservation organization, just from Nagykanizsa, arriving by train, nearly 73 million snowdrops made it to the markets in the capital (KERÉKI 2001). Snowdrops were eventually declared protected in Hungary in 2005. In those years, rangers often checked the markets and flower shops. They informed, warned, posted posters, and market supervisors did not allow the sale of snowdrops and other protected species, so now we can say that protected species are very rare in the markets, and certainly not in large quantities.

¹ 1/1982. (III.15.) OKTH Regulation – Hungarian Bulletin 1982, No. 14.

Historical overview of the market sales of edible wild plants

Researchers of foraging economies considered the use of wild plants in Hungary to be most significant until the early 20th century. Nature foraging was better preserved in landscapes that were less suitable for agricultural production but richer in natural habitats and forests, or even in rocky and arid mountainous landscapes (GUNDA 2001, ÚJVÁRI 1957). According to ethnographic and ethnobotanical sources, one could find some 216 wild plant species as food or herb on the tables of Hungarians living in the Carpathian basin (DÉNES et al. 2012:383). In the opinion of VIGA (1990:89),

“...foraging basically serves self-sufficiency, and foraged forest products become a commodity in larger quantities primarily with the development of the social division of labor. Their real customers are city/town markets, possibly nearby micro-regions that lack certain typical fruit or plant species due to different geographical conditions. However, these materials rarely serve as basic provisions, but rather appear in the markets of cities or other regions as a delicacy, a ‘specialty,’ and it is exactly their ‘otherness’ that gives them value.”

Of the forest foods, it was mainly wild fruits, juniper, pine and cumin seeds, but mostly mushrooms that made it to the markets from the regions where foraging was “an inalienable part of traditional culture” (VIGA 1990:91). The earliest data is about the market sales of the water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) occurring in the swamps along the great rivers. In 1902, Lajos Zoltay listed among the occupations in Debrecen from 200 years ago the “*seller of water chestnuts*,” of which at that time there was only one at the market in Debrecen (ZOLTAY 1902:23). Chervil (*Chaerophyllum bulbosum*) and corn salad (*Valerianella*) were sold in eighteenth-century Debrecen markets, or at least at the time this was recorded by student poets (ORTUTAY 1977). Also known are early sales of the ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) in the markets of Pest (VESZELSZKI 1798:151). There is also mention of the sale of the sap of the birch (*Betula pendula*), birch water, in the 1700s; Ferenc Rákóczi, in a letter from 1760, mentions birch water, which “is not more expensive (...) than the Tokaj harvest” (KISS 1929:4). Birch water was brought from the Nyírség to the Great Hungarian Plain, too, by itinerant vendors (KISS 1929:4), and water chestnut was also sold along the Tisza, Danube, and Dráva (ANDRÁSFALVY 1965:16; GUNDA 1956:23; NAGY 1917:839; PETRIKOVITS 1943), and in Baja even in 1980, when Ortutay (1981) documented in a striking photo the water chestnut-selling women of Baja. Along the Dráva, in Baranya, elders still remember the vendors of water chestnuts from Cún, whose products sold out of carts they themselves have tasted as children (DÉNES ined 2015).

RESULTS

The wildflowers of the flower market of Pécs in the past and today

In light of available data, so far a total of 98 wildflower species (including shrubs and trees) have been sold as ornamental plants in the markets of Pécs (Table 1). The most complete record of sales has been published by Adolf Olivér Horvát (1942:60–61),

listing 61 species, including several that are now protected. The lady orchid (*Orchis purpurea*), the pheasant's eye (*Adonis vernalis*), the spiny and spineless butcher's-broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*, *Ruscus hypoglossum*), feather grass species (*Stipa* sp.), and the since extinct cottongrass (*Eriophorum* sp.) have all turned up at the market. There is little data available from the next period. From the 1980s to 2005, sales of 19 species is known with certainty. They sold, among others, snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*), lily of the valley, species of mistletoe (*Viscum album*, *Loranthus europaeus*), catkin (*Salix caprea*), and rosehip (*Rosa canina*) bouquets, but the protected dogtooth violet (*Erythronium dens-canis*), butcher's-broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*), leopard's bane (*Doronicum* spp.), and in small bouquets even the primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) made an appearance in the market. By now the species sold have been to a large extent replaced. In the last four years, 57 species have been tied into bouquets in the market, but only 23 of the species were the same as those sold a long time ago. Still sought after today are bouquets of violet (*Viola* spp.) and lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*) (Figure 1), and sometimes meadow sage (*Salvia pratensis*), woodruff (*Asperula odorata*) (Figure 2), or oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) also get mixed into bouquets of garden flowers. Seemingly late discoveries, of the summer wildflowers the hoary cress (*Lepidium draba*) and cypress spurge (*Euphorbia cyparissias*) (Figure 1), both easily gathered from roadsides, are sold by many, and they have been incorporated into Biedermeier bouquets (Figure 3) supplemented by vividly colored garden flowers. Many other common species also appear on the market, just-blooming or colorful species, shrubs and trees, too, such as black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), spindle berries (*Euonymus* spp.), Chinese lantern (*Physalis alkekengi*), and bladder campion (*Silene vulgaris*). The leaves of ivy (*Hedera helix*) and horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), and many grasses (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Briza media*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*) are only supplemental "greens" in the bouquets. Many are selling the green shoots of the Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) as "horsetail" (Figure 4). At Easter the catkins of the pussy willow (*Salix caprea*) (Figure 10), before Christmas the yellow mistletoe (*Loranthus europaeus*) and white mistletoe (*Viscum album*) are an inevitable mass commodity (Figure 4). Bouquets of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and rosehip (*Rosa canina*) wrapped with ivy or pine boughs (Figures 4–5) have long been popular at this time – there are people who have been selling them for 20 years. Today, as in the past, part of the winter supply is the colorfully painted cutleaf teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*) (Figure 6) and bushgrass (*Calamagrostis epigeios*), but even the milkweed's (*Asclepias syriaca*) dry "parrot beaks" may be incorporated into bouquets nowadays (Table 1).



Figure 1. *Euphorbia cyparissias*, *Lepidium draba* and *Convallaria majalis* on the market. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 2. Selling of *Asperula odorata* bouquets as ornamental plants. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 3. Hoary cress and cypress spurge sold by many, and they have been incorporated into Biedermeier bouquets. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 4. *Cytisus scoparius*, *Rosa canina*, *Loranthus europaeus* and *Viscum album* on the Chrstitma market. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 5. Bouquets of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) wrapped with pine boughs. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 6. Colorfully painted cutleaf teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*) and very first willow catkins (*Salix caprea*) at the end of winter on the market. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)

The wild food plants of the markets of Pécs

In Baranya County, sources have recorded 47 wild plant species used as food (BORSOS et al. 76:4; FÜVESY 1997; GUNDA 1956:23; KISS 1980:20–21; Z. KISS 1994:178–179; MÜLLER 1973; NAGY 1942:269–273; NYILASSY 1951; VÁRÓCZI 2011; ZENTAI 1966:185–186). Data about sales of far fewer species have survived. Based on all available data, a total of 30 edible wild plants turned up in Pécs markets. 10 species of plants were sold as vegetable (green leaf, young shoot), 6 species were offered for their flower, and 18 species collected in the wild were available as fruit or seed. Of the wild fruits, it is especially blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*), rosehip (*Rosa canina*), and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) sales that appear to be continuing to the present day. Based on the data from the ethnographic interviews from the 1950s in Zengővárkony (NYILASSY 1951:15, 47–48), of the forest fruits, the wild strawberry (*Fragaria* spp.) was most often gathered and taken to the market. A then 82-year-old informant said that even earlier, in the time of her mother, they sold wild strawberries in markets. At ripening time, they set out for the woods at 2 in the morning and picked them sometimes until 4 in the afternoon. The next day they took them to the local or to the Pécs market (NYILASSY 1951:48). Nowadays wild strawberries can be found only rarely, as a delicacy, picked with the stem, bound in small bouquets. On the other hand, rosehips and the jam made from them, the hecsedli, have been in demand throughout the times. There is demand for the wild blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) today, and it has been a long-time favorite, at least according to Kovács Jánosné, a former collector: “the blackberry is a very valuable fruit, they pay for it well” (NYILASSY 1951:47). Of the wild fruits, in addition to the above, the Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*) and the hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are sought after, but there is no data about their former sales (Figures 7–9).

Of the 10 wild vegetables sold, the wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*) is the most common in the markets of Pécs (Figures 8–9). The nationally soaring career of this species over the past decade began in the vicinity of Pécs. The first Orfű Wild Garlic Festival, held in 2004, is considered to have caused the increased interest in wild garlic (BARINA 2014; MÉSZÁROS B. 2015), so much so that due to the plant now being gathered “by the tons” (FEHÉR – VARGA 2013), conservationists are considering having the wild garlic declared protected (BARINA 2014; TEMESI 2014). There are no traces of its sale in the past, and not a lot of data in the county about its consumption. What is certain is that the people of Nagyváty gathered and consumed it (NAGY 1942:270, 307). Nonetheless, wild garlic is common in the natural forests of Baranya County. Since about 10 years ago, its sale has often started in early February and lasted up until early June. In the four years of observation, of the relatively thin leafed wild onions, two species (*Allium scorodoprasum* and *A. vineale*) were often available in the winter and early spring as “wild chives” and “wild garlic” (Figures 8–10). Their barren, winter-spring leaves were regularly sold by two vendors. Pilewort (*Ranunculus ficaria*) was rarely available (Figure 9), but there is a demand for its restaurant delivery (VÖRÖS ex verb). I have only seen hop shoots (*Humulus lupulus*) in the market once, purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) was supplied by order by a vegetable vendor. Chickweed (*Stellaria media*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and fresh nettles (*Urtica dioica*) were sold alone, and mixed with garden salad leaves.



Figure 7. Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*) and the blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) are sought after, but there is no data about their former sales. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 8. Fresh rosehip (*Rosa canina*) fruit and semifinished rosehip concentrate were sold every year on the market. Pécs, Hungary, 2012. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 9. Blackthorn, rosehip and Turkish hazel on the market. Pécs, Hungary, 2012. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 10. Marika is a reliable source for many species of edible wild plants at the market. Pécs, Hungary, 2012. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 11. Selling *Allium ursinum*, *Allium scorodoprasum* and *Ranunculus ficaria* as wild vegetable on the market in spring. Pécs, Hungary, 2012. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 12. Willow catkins (*Salix caprea*) and wild garlic (*Allium scorodoprasum*) bouquets are available in the markets of Pécs. Pécs, Hungary, 2015. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)

Herbs for sale

Foraged herbs were less likely to make it to urban markets in the past, and today it is still very rare, mostly because selling fresh or dried herbs in bulk or in bunches is prohibited by relevant rules. In the past, they collected them to satisfy the needs of the family, but there were some who bought them from itinerant vendors or from local herbalists: “We never pick the teas, the Gypsies bring them” (Widow Szűcs Józsefné, in NYILASSY 1951:54). Only the best-known, time-tested herbs were sought after in the Pécs markets: “Chamomile, linden I collect, but I will not sell it, it is not valuable (...) I’ll also pick centaury, and sell it too (...) in the market, in clumps like the ‘Mecsek tea’ (*Melittis melissophyllum*). But it is not as expensive, because only those buy it that have stomach aches and are convinced that it is good. And the ‘Mecsek tea’ (*Melittis melissophyllum*) is not just medicine” (Kovács Józsefné in NYILASSY 1951:57). In Hungary, the organized acquisition, processing, and trade of herbs (TÉTÉNYI 1995:504–505) began very early, in 1904, with the foundation of the Research Institute of Medicinal Plants in Cluj, which still operates today. There are few data about market sales of herbs, such as Tamás Grynaeus’, which commemorates the last herbalist woman in the Szeged market (1964). Today the herbalist man of the Pécs market sells packaged, labeled herbs, tinctures and ointments in compliance with the law (as I saw in 2012–13, he now has an independent shop near the market). In the case of herb sales in Pécs markets and fairs, we have data about 10 species (Table 1). The ‘Mecsek tea’ or bastard balm (*Melittis melissophyllum*) used to be very sought-after, was repeatedly brought to market, purchased by Pécs pharmacies, as well as bought by the quintals by consumers (NYILASSY 1951:6–7, 30, 50–55). It is no longer sold. Linden flower also used to be collected; ethnographer László Mándoki documented its sale in 1970 at the Pécs market with a photo (Figure 13). Today, it is rarely for sale at the market. Similarly, only once in a while did dried nettles, ribwort plantains, oregano, thyme or the wild mint appear among the market goods. Those who might order them can find a vendor who collects and delivers them on demand. Of the flowers of wild plants, one could occasionally get fresh elderflowers, black locust flowers, and dried mallow flowers (Figure 14). Jam made from dwarf elderberries (*Sambucus ebulus*) was also sold (Figure 15), but the most common for tea and jam alike were fresh haw and rosehips (Figure 16) (Table 1).

Mushrooms for sale

This study focuses on the sale of wild plants, but mushrooms played an important role at all times in forest foraging and in the market sale of forest products. The market sale of mushrooms has been a longstanding and safely continuing activity primarily in the cities of Transdanubia and the central mountainous regions, of which we have data from Pécs (Figure 17). In the Pécs market, they mainly sold the more frequent mushrooms known and sought by the customers, whereas today only those are sold that are allowed by Hungarian law.² Many of the wild plant vendors also collect and sell mushrooms. It

² 107/2011. (XI. 10.) VM ordinance

was so in the past, too. The “*Mushroom King*” of Zengővárkony – as he was called in the village – foraged for and sold mushrooms, herbs and wild fruits. Started by necessity, he had been doing it for 22–23 years by the time of the 1951 interview, and made a good living with it. “I have a knack for mushrooming like for a profession, though it is very burdensome” (NYILASSY 1951:1–2, 10–17). Today, sales of mushrooms and the necessary inspections and monitoring can only be resolved in the Pécs market hall. In the four years of observation, they sold 38 species of mushrooms. Porcini (*Boletus*) species are in highest demand, along with chanterelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*) and Scotch bonnets (*Marasmius oreades*). The mushrooms arrive to the Pécs mushroom markets mainly from Baranya County and the neighboring Somogy County, but local mushroom vendors also ship to the city markets of the Great Plain that is less rich in fungi; I have encountered mushroom merchants from Pécs at the markets of Szeged and Baja as well.

Wild plant sales practices

Wild plant sales in Pécs are seasonal, but the season adapts to customer needs beyond the collection period, especially in the case of wildflowers. In periods of greater demand there are more vendors, and vendors normally selling other goods will supplement their goods with popular seasonal species, most often wild garlic. According to approved license applications at the Pécs market hall, forest products (wild plants and mushrooms) were sold by 55 vendors in 2015. Among the edible wild plants, fresh wild garlic and wild fruits are sold most. Several wild vegetables were only sold by two vendors over the four years. Of the 28 interviewees, six were selling more or less continuously – four flower and two vegetable vendors. Their stocks almost always included wild plants, sometimes they did not even sell anything else. 13 people were selling wild mushrooms or plants only seasonally, but never garden produce: “in the spring wild garlic (...) when I run out of mushrooms in the fall, I go mistletoe picking.” Occasional vendors (nine people) sold the most sought-after wild garlic and wild fruits, or else Christmas and wildflower ornamental bouquets. The foraging site is Baranya County. Most of the collectors/sellers are not from Pécs, but commute from a nearby settlement. Some bring their goods themselves by bus: “(...) write this, honey, that old granny brings two bags, and takes back two bags of what she doesn’t sell.” Several have been selling wild plants for a long time, 15, 20, even 25 years. Most of them mentioned rosehips as the longest-collected plant. The supply of wild plants also showed differences from year to year during the four-year observation, thus a trend could not be determined as it was dictated primarily by the amount of crops. In 2015, for example, the Cornelian cherry grew very well, many were selling it, whereas in previous years it was not at all on the market. In 2014, no hawthorn or blackthorn grew in the area, thus there was not a large supply of these on the market, while in 2013 more than 15 vendors were selling them. And in 2013 the just-sprouted wild garlic was permanently covered with snow, thus the sales started very late.



Figure 13. Selling of lindenflowers on the marketplace. Hungary, Pécs, Photo: László Mándoki. Photo Archive of Janus Pannonius Museum / Lsz. 19978; 1970.



Figure 15. Selling dwarf elder (*Sambucus ebulus*) marmelade on the market. Pécs, Hungary, 2012. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)

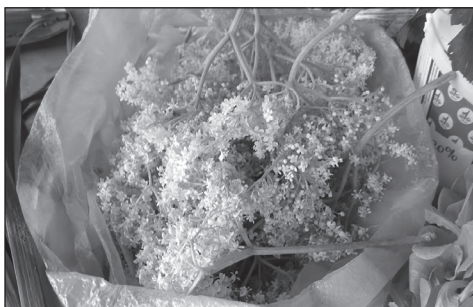


Figure 14. Selling of *Sambucus nigra* flowers for syrup and for tea. Pécs, Hungary, 2012. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 16. Hawthorn, blackthorn and rosehip on the market. Pécs, Hungary, 2012. (Photo by Andrea Dénes)



Figure 17. Selling of fresh, wild mushrooms in the 1970s on market of Irányi Dániel square. Hungary. Pécs, Photo Archive of Janus Pannonius Museum / Lsz. F1608.

DISCUSSION

Wild plant sales are clearly present today in the markets of Pécs and have been in previous periods, too, but mostly only edible wild fruits and wildflowers sold as ornamental plants were offered. In Hungary today, there is very sparse data about the market climate of other cities, so there is no possibility for comparison, but it is surmised that Pécs combines a number of conditions that is favorable for the market accessibility of forest products. Its natural environment rich in forests is suited for foraging; there is a big enough demand for legal mushroom sales in its largest market, thus many people turned to forest product foraging and sell other species outside of mushroom season. There is demand for their commodities because wild plants, aside from being a specialty, can also be offered cheaper than the largely non-local and therefore more expensive flowers and vegetables.

Wild plant collecting – as well as selling – has long had and still has its real experts, specialists. One such specialist was the “Mushroom King” of Zengővárkony who collected wild fruits and herbs for decades (NYILASSY 1951:1–2,10–17), or Aunt Eta, a vendor in the Pécs market who is the “last woman to collect flowers and fruits in Bisse in the foothills of Tenkes” (SZABÓ 2012). Today it is Irénke who makes the most inventive bouquets of wildflowers and stems, creating decorative table ornaments and garlands out of seemingly nothing, or a decorated “Christmas tree” out of the long branchy shoots of the Scotch broom. Marika is a reliable source for many species of edible wild plants at the market (Figure 10). Wild onions, pilewort, elderflowers and others can be obtained from her both fresh and processed, conserved. Purslane can be obtained from Miklós, who brings it from his chemical-free garden. There are some who specialize in rosehips, following family tradition, grandparents who practiced rosehip-collecting and processing for 40 years. Although the majority of the vendors selling wild plants and mushrooms, in part or in full, exercises this activity with a re-learned knowledge, they almost always possess a certain family- or community-related sensibility rooted in the past for knowing wild plants and mushrooms and for forest foraging. Often it was the grandparents, the parents, or other relatives that collected, used, and occasionally sold wild plants and mushrooms. The old Gypsy man who sells wild onions, pilewort, and mushrooms and says he himself likes to consume these and gives advice about their cooking probably does not get his information about these species from the Internet. But nowadays gatherers and vendors probably glean and learn from each other, too. If a species is selling well, next time more vendors will offer them. To many of them, the sales proceeds are an important and necessary supplement or primary income. In Zengővárkony in the 1950s, there were “those who lived off of the forest” (NYILASSY 1951:9), and there are still some today.

From the market supervisors’ and customers’ perspective, the sale and purchase of edible wild species happens almost completely on a confidential basis. Looking back over the last 20 years, market supervisors remember seeing, aside from mushrooms, only rosehips (*Rosa canina*), mulberries (*Morus*) and blackberries (*Rubus*) in the market, as the wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*) only appeared about ten years ago. But while they are qualified to inspect all forest mushrooms brought to the market, they have not been trained to recognize wild plants, so they do not inspect, for example, the bunches of wild garlic to make sure no other similar and potentially poisonous wild plant got mixed in.

Although they have good intentions, what they do not recognize and do not know for sure is edible, they cannot allow to be sold. They fear that in the case of the most sought-after wild plants in the market, the hope of increased revenue may result in less care, coupled with a less attentive gathering.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Babai Dániel, Gyenei Gábor, Handler Gábor, Kárpáti Ferenc, Kevey Balázs, Nagy Gábor, Németh Ibolya, Orbán Imre, Székely Annamária, Vágner Géza, Völgyi Sándor, Vörös Kálmán, and Wágner László for providing data, and Kőszegi Gábor, Burján István, and Sárközi Katalin for their help with ethnographic resources.

Table 1: List of wild herbs sold in the Pécs market in the past and today, indicating the period of the sale and the sold parts of the plant
Abbreviations: O: as an ornamental plant, F: as a food plant, M: as an herb, r: rare, ex litt: ex litteris (written communication), ex verb.: ex verbis (oral communication), ined.: ineditum (unpublished communication)

Scientific name	Hungarian name (in parentheses the name used at sale)	English name	Before 1980	1980- 2005	2012- 2015	Plant parts sold	Data source
<i>Acer campestre</i> L.	mezei juhar	field maple			O	branch with fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Acer tataricum</i> L.	tatár juhar	tatarian maple	O		O	branch with fruit	HORVÁT 1942:60, DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Adonis vernalis</i> L.	tavaszi hérics	spring pheasant's eye	O			shoot with flower	HORVÁT 1942:59
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> L.	vadgesztenye	horse chestnut			O	fruit, seed, leaf	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Allium scorodoprasum</i> L. & <i>Allium vineale</i> L.	kigyóhagyma / bajuszos hagyma/	rocambole & crow garlic / wild garlic			F	barren shoot with leaves, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Allium ursinum</i> L.	medvehagyma	wild garlic			F, M	leaf, fresh, dried flower (r), green fruit (r), pickled	DÉNES 2015 ined.; WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> L.	illatos borjúpázsit	sweet vernal grass			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Arabis turrita</i> L.	tornyos ikravirág	tower rockcress	O		Or	stem	HORVÁT 1942:61; DÉNES 2015 ined.

<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> (L.) P. Beauv. Ex J. Presl & C. Presl.	Franciaperje	false oat-grass	O		O	shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60, Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Aruncus dioicus</i> (Walter) Fernald (Syn. <i>A. sylvestris</i> Kostel)	erdei tünderfűrt	goat's beard	O		O	shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Asarum europaeum</i> L.	kereklevelű kapotnyak	asarabacca	O		O	leaf	Horvát 1942:59
<i>Asparagus officinalis</i> L.	közönséges spárga	asparagus	O		O	shoots with leaves	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Barbarea vulgaris</i> R. Br.	közönséges borbálafű	yellow rocket	O		O	shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i> L.	sóska borbolya	common barberry				branch with fruit	Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Brassica napus</i> L.	olajrepece	colza				shoots with flowers	Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Briza media</i> L.	közepes rezgőfű	quaking-grass	O		O	shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60; Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Buglossoides purpureocaerulea</i> (L.) I M Johnst.	erdei gyöngyköles	purple gromwell				shoots with flowers	Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Calamagrostis epigeios</i> (L.) Roth.	siska nádtippán	bushgrass	O		O	shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60; Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Campanula persicifolia</i> L.	baracklevelű harangvirág	harebell	O		O	shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60

<i>Cardamine bulbifera</i> (L.) Crantz (Syn. <i>Dentaria bulbifera</i> L.)	hagymás fogasír	coral root	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59
<i>Castanea sativa</i> Mill.	szelídgesztenye	sweet chestnut				O, F	seed	Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Centaureum erythraea</i> Rafn.	kis ezerjófű	common centaury	M				shoots with flowers	Nylassy 1951:50, 57
<i>Cerasus avium</i> (L.) Mönch	madárseresnye	wild cherry	F			F	fruit, jam	Borsos et al 1976:4; Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Cytisus</i> sp. <i>Chamaecytisus austriacus</i> (L.)	buglyos törpezanót	Austrian broom	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Convallaria majalis</i> L.	májusi gyöngyvirág	lily of the valley	O	O		O	shoots with flowers	Dénes 2015 ined.; Nylassy 1951; Szabó 2012:10; Volgyi 2015 ex litt.
<i>Cornus mas</i> L.	húsos som	Cornelian cherry		F		F, Or	F: fruit, jam, O: shoots with flowers	Dénes 2015 ined.; Szabó 2012:10; Wágner 2015 ex litt.
<i>Corydalis cava</i> (L.) Schweigg. & Körte	odvas keltike	corydalis	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.	közönséges mogyoró	hazel				F	fruit, seed	Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Corylus colurna</i> L.	török mogyoró	turkish hazel				F	fruit, seed	Dénes 2015 ined.
<i>Cota austriaca</i> (Jacq.) Sch. Bip. Syn. <i>Anthemis austriaca</i> Jacq.	nehézságú pipitér	austrian chamomile	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60

<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> Jacq. & <i>Crataegus oxyacantha</i> L.	egyibés és cseregalagonya	oneseed hawthorn & midland hawthorn	O			F,M,O	O: shoots with flowers, fruit, F: shoots with flowers, fruit, fresh, dried	Horvát 1942:59, DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Cyanus segetum</i> Hill. (Syn. <i>Centaurea cyanus</i> L.)	kék búzavirág	cornflower	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i> (L.) Link (Syn. <i>Sarothamnus scoparius</i> (L.) Wimm. ex W.D.J. Koch)	közönséges seprőzanót	scotch broom				O	shoots with leaves	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Dianthus giganteiformis</i> subsp. <i>pontederiae</i> (A. Kern.) Soó	magyar szegfű	Hungarian carnation	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Dictamnus albus</i> L.	körislevelű nagyzejerőfű	burning bush	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59
<i>Digitalis gamidiflora</i> Mill.	sárga gyűszűvirág	yellow foxglove	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Dipsacus laciniatus</i> L.	héjakútmácsonya	cutleaf teasel	O	O		O	shoots with flowers, stem	Horvát 1942:61, DÉNES 2015 ined., WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Doronicum columnae</i> Ten. (Syn. <i>Doronicum caucasicum</i> Vis.)	keleti zergevirág	Leopard's bane	O	Or			shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59, DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Doronicum hungaricum</i> (Sadler) Rehb. F.	magyar zergevirág	Hungarian doronicum	O	Or			shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59, DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Dryopteris filix mas</i> (L.) Schott	erdei pajzsika	male fern	O			O	leaf	Horvát 1942:60, DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Echinops sphaerocephalus</i> L.	fehér számarkenyér	great globethistle				O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.

<i>Eriophorum</i> sp.	gyapiúsás faj	cottongrass	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Erythronium dens-canis</i> L.	európai kakasmandikó	fawnlily		O			shoots with flowers	KEVEY 2015 ex litt.; Vágner 2015 ex verb.
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i> L.	csíkos kecskerágó	european spindletree				O	branch with fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Euonymus verrucosus</i> Scop.	bíbireses kecskerágó	spindletree				O	branch with fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined
<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i> L.	farkaskutyatej	cypress spurge				O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> L.	közönséges bükk	european beech				O	nut cupule	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Ficaria verna</i> Huds.	salátaboglárka	fig buttercup				Fr	leaf, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Fragaria vesca</i> L. & <i>Fragaria viridis</i> Duch.	erdei szamóca és csatogó szamóca	wild strawberry & green strawberry	F			Fr	fruit, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.; Kis 1980:20; NYILASSY 1951:15, 47, 48.
<i>Galanthus nivalis</i> L.	kikeleti hóvirág	snowdrop	O	O			shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59; KEVEY 2015 ex litt.; NAGY 2015; SZABÓ 2012:10; VÖLGYI 2015 ex litt.
<i>Galium odoratum</i> (L.) Scop.	szagos müge	sweet-scented bedstraw	O			O, Mr	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; Horvát 1942:59.

<i>Galium mollugo</i> L.	közönséges galaj	false baby's breath	O			shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Galium verum</i> L.	tejoltó galaj	yellow spring bedstraw	O		O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; Horvát 1942:60.
<i>Hedera helix</i> L.	közönséges borostyán	english ivy			O	leaf, shoots with leaves	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Helleborus odoratus</i> Waldst. & Kit. ex Willd.	illatos hunyor	hellebore		O		shoots with flowers	VÖLGYI 2015 ex litt.
<i>Hepatica nobilis</i> Mill.	nemes májvirág	hepatica		O		shoots with flowers	KEVEY 2015 ex litt.; NAGY 2015.
<i>Humulus lupulus</i> L.	felfutó komló	common hop			Fr	spring shoots, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i> L.	közönséges orbáncfű	common St. Johnswort			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Juglans regia</i> L.	királydió	walnut			F	nut, meat	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Knautia arvensis</i> (Briq.)	mezei varfű	field scabiosa	O			shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Larix decidua</i> Mill.	vörös fenyő	european larch			O	cone	DÉNES 2015 ined.

<i>Lepidium draba</i> L.	közönséges útszéli-zsázsa	whitetop				O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> (Vaill.) Lam	régi margitvirág	oxeye daisy	O			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942.
<i>Lilium martagon</i> L.	turbánliliom	martagon lily	O				shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Linum austriacum</i> L.	hegyi len	asian flax	O				shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:59
<i>Loranthus europaeus</i> Jacq.	európai sárgafagyöngy	European mistletoe	O	O		O	shoots with fruit	BORSOS et al. 1976:4; DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:61; WÄGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i> L.	közönséges lizinka	garden yellow loosestrife	O				shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Malus sylvestris</i> (L.) Mill.	vadalma	european crab apple		F			fruit	BORSOS et al. 1976:4
<i>Malva neglecta</i> Wallr.	papsajtmályva	dwarf mallow				Fr	flower, dried	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Melittis melissophyllum</i> L.	méhfü (helyi neve: mecseki tea)	bastard balm	M, O				shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60; NYILASSY 1951:6–7, 30
<i>Mentha longifolia</i> (L.) Nath.	lómenta	horsemint				O, M	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.

<i>Morus alba</i> L.	fehér eperfa	common mulberry		F	F	fruit, fresh, jam	DÉNES 2015 ined.; WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Muscari botryoides</i> (L.) Mill.	epergyöngyike	common grape hyacinth	O	O		shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:59; KEVEY 2015 ex litt.
<i>Muscari neglectum</i> Guss. ex Ten.	fürtös gyöngyike	starch grape hyacinth		O		shoots with flowers	KEVEY 2015 ex litt.
<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i> L.	mocsári néfelejcs	water forget-me-not	O			shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i> Scop.	takarmány ballacím	sainfoin	O			shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Orchis purpurea</i> Huds.	bíboros kosbor	purple orchis	O			shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:59
<i>Physalis alkekengi</i> L.	zsidócsersznye	strawberry groundcherry			O	shoots with fruit	DÉNES 2015
<i>Pinus nigra</i> J.F.Arnold	feketefenyő	black pine			O	cone, shoot with leaves	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> L.	erdeifenyő	scots pine			O	cone, shoot with leaves	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> L.	lándzsás útifű	narrowleaf plantain			M	leaf, dried	DÉNES 2015 ined.

<i>Platanus acerifolia</i> (Aiton) Wild	platán	London planetree			O	fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L.	kővér porcsin	green purslane			Fr	shoot with leaves, fresh, pickled	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Primula vulgaris</i> Huds.	szártalan kankalin	common primrose	O	O	Or	shoots with flowers, root plant	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:59; KEVEY 2015 ex litt., NAGY 2015; VÁGNER 2015.
<i>Prunus avium</i> (L.) L.	zsélnicemeggy	wild cherry			Or	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Prunus cerasifera</i> Ehrh.	cseresznyeszilva	cherry plum			Fr	fruit, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Prunus spinosa</i> L.	kökény	blackthorn	F	F	F	fruit, fresh, jam	BORSOS et al. 1976; DÉNES 2015 ined.; SZABÓ 2012:10; WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Pulsatilla grandis</i> Wend.	leánykőkörcsin	pasque flower		O		shoots with flowers	KEVEY 2015 ex litt.
<i>Pyrus pyrasier</i> (L.) Burgsd.	vadkörte	wild pear	F		Fr	sruit, fresh, dried, vinegar, jam	BORSOS et al. 1976:4; DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Quercus cerris</i> L.	csertölgy	turkey oak			O	fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Quercus pubescens</i> Willd.	molyhos tölgy	downy oak			O	fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.

<i>Quercus robur</i> L.	kocsányos tölgy	pedunculate oak			O	fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Quercus petraea</i> (Matt.) Liebl.	kocsánytalan tölgy	sessile oak			O	fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Ranunculus acris</i> L. (<i>Ranunculus</i> spp.)	réti boglárka (boglárkafajok)	meadow buttercup			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Robinia pseudacacia</i> L.	fehér akác	black locust			Fr, Mr	flower, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Rosa canina</i> L.	gyeplő rózsza	dog rose	F, O	O, F	F, O	O: shoots with flowers, leaves F: fruit, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:60; 61; KIS J. 1980:23; NYILASSY 1951:43–45; SZABÓ 2012:10; WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	földi szeder	blackberry	F	F	F	fruit, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.; NYILASSY 2015:46–47; SZABÓ 2012:10; WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Rumex acetosa</i> L.	mezei sóska	sorrel			Fr	leaf, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i> L.	szúrós csodabogyó	butcher's broom	O	O		shoot	HORVÁT 1942:60; NAGY 2015; SZABÓ 2012:10; VÖLGYI 2015 ex litt., WÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Ruscus hypoglossum</i> L.	lónyelvű csodabogyó	Spineless butcher's broom	O			shoot	HORVÁT 1942:59

<i>Salix caprea</i> L.	Kecskefűz	pussy willow	O	O	O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:59; VÁGNER 2015 ex litt.
<i>Salix cinerea</i> L.	rekettyefűz	grey willow			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Salvia nemorosa</i> L.	ligeti zsálya	salvia	O		O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Salvia pratensis</i> L.	mezei zsálya	meadow clary	O		O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i> L.	földi bodza	dwarf elder			Fr	fruit, jam	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L.	fekete bodza	european elder			F	flower, fruit, fresh	SZABÓ 2012:10; VÖLGYI 2015 ex litt.
<i>Scilla vindobonensis</i> Speta (& <i>Scilla</i> spp.)	ligeti csillagvirág	scilla		O		shoots with flowers	NAGY 2015; VÁGNER 2015
<i>Silene vulgaris</i> (Moench) Garcke	hólyagos habszegfű	maidenstears	O		O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Silene coronaria</i> (Desr.) Clairv. ex Rechb. (Syn <i>Lychnis coronaria</i> Desr.)	bárányos kakukkszegfű (szűnyogvirág)	Rose campion	O		Or	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Silene viscaria</i> (L.) Jess. (Syn. <i>Viscaria vulgaris</i> Bernh.)	enyves szegfű	Sticky catchfly	O			shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60

<i>Solidago gigantea</i> Aiton & <i>Solidago canadensis</i> L.	magas aranyvessző és kanadai aranyvessző (mimóza)	giant goldenrod & canadian goldenrod			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Sorbus domestica</i> L.	házi berkenye	service tree	F		Fr	fruit, fresh, dried	DÉNES 2015 ined.; NYILASSY 1951
<i>Staphylea pinnata</i> L.	mogyorós hólyagfa	bladder nut			O	fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Stellaria media</i> (L.) Vill.	tyúkhúr	chickweed			F	spring shoot	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Stenactis annua</i> (L.) Cass	egynyári seprence	Daisy fleabane	O			shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Stipa</i> sp.	árvalányhaj	Feather grass	O	O		shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; HORVÁT 1942
<i>Tanacetum corymbosum</i> (L.) Sch. Bip.	sátoros varádics	Scentless feverfew	O			shoots with flowers	HORVÁT 1942:60
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> Weber & T.	pongolya pitypang	dandelion			F	leafs, fruit in syrup	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Thymus</i> sp.	kakukkfű	thyme			F, M	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Tilia cordata</i> Mill. & <i>Tilia platyphyllos</i> Scop.	kislevelű hárs és nagylevelű hárs	small leaved linden & large leaved linden	M		M	flower	DÉNES 2015 ined.; MANDOKI 1970 (JPM fotótár 19978 sz. fotó)

<i>Trifolium alpestre</i> L.	bérci here	clover	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Typha angustifolia</i> L.	keskenylevelű gyékény	small reed mace	O			O	shoots with fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.; Horvát 1942:60
<i>Typha latifolia</i> L.	széleslevelű gyékény	reedmace	O			O	shoots with fruit	DÉNES 2015 ined.; Horvát 1942:60
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	nagy csalán	stinging nettle				F, Mr	shoots with leaves, fresh	DÉNES 2015 ined.
<i>Viburnum opulus</i> L.	kányabangita	guelder rose	O			O	shoots with flowers, shoots with fruit	Horvát 1942:60
<i>Viola alba</i> Besser	fehér ibolya	violet	O			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; Horvát 1942:59
<i>Viola suavis</i> M. Bieb	kék ibolya	violet	O				shoots with flowers	Horvát 1942:59
<i>Viola odorata</i> L.	illatos ibolya	Sweet Violet	O			O	shoots with flowers	DÉNES 2015 ined.; Horvát 1942:59
<i>Viscum album</i> L.	fehér fagyöngy	mistletoe	O		O	O	shoots with fruit	BORSOS et al. 1976:4; DÉNES 2015 ined.; Horvát 1942:61; WÄGNER 2015 ex litt.

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The Growing Importance of Local Pumpkin Seed Oil Production in Slovenia

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Abstract: Food represents a significant segment of human culture. It is not only a component of the material world and a means to satisfy basic biological needs, but also plays an important role in the economic and social life of the individual and community. Until the middle of the 20th century, the food culture of the Slovene population strongly depended on regional origin. Pumpkin seed oil has a special dietary role and a long tradition among the inhabitants of North-East Slovenia and the cultivation of oil seed pumpkins and production of pumpkin seed oil in the region was already mentioned in 18th century. Slovene pumpkin seed oil is of high-quality and is processed according to the traditional procedure. Since 2005, Styrian-Prekmurje pumpkin seed oil has been protected in the European Union with the Geographical Indication-PGI.

Nowadays, the pumpkin seed oil is also becoming an important expression of regional affiliation and a notable factor of economic development in Prekmurje, Porabje and Štajerska, especially significant for tourism, catering and the production of traditional rural products.

Keywords: pumpkin seed oil, food culture, Slovenia, economic development, tourism, heritage

INTRODUCTION

The production, preparation, and consumption of food are among the most basic of human activities and are associated with those rare cultural goods that are produced on a daily basis (WIEGELMANN 2006:13). In past centuries, when the majority of the European as well as the Slovene population depended on their own food production, most of their economic activities were connected with it. As late as the 1940s, the renowned Slovene ethnologist Rajko Ložar wrote that most of the activities on Slovene farms were related to the provision of adequate quantities of food. Agricultural activities for the provision of other basic goods and the sale of farm products were therefore of lesser importance (LOŽAR 1944:192).

The food consumed by the majority of the Slovene population was distinctly seasonal and regionally diverse by the end of the 1950s, when the purchasing power and the standard of living started to gradually increase (GODINA GOLIJ 2006:51). A part of the

rural population then moved to urban centres and obtained employment in industrial plants, thereby increasing the percentage of daily commuters travelling from rural areas to jobs they obtained in nearby industrial centres. These changes had a marked impact on the lifestyle of Slovene families, influencing their daily rhythm and also their food culture. Families became gradually dependent on store-bought food. Their daily meals were undergoing significant changes, and regional differences in the food culture of the Slovene population began to diminish (GODINA GOLIJ 2008:97). Due to better infrastructure and means of communication as well as migration, certain regional specialties in the local food culture gradually filtered into the cuisine of other Slovene regions or started to become culinary attractions served in restaurants and other catering establishments.

One such regional specialty is pumpkin seed oil. Due to its dark colour and very distinctive, unique taste, it had been despised for several centuries as low-quality oil by the majority of Slovenes, who preferred light cooking oils. It was used mainly in the eastern part of Slovenia, primarily in Prekmurje, Štajersko, and Porabje. During the last four decades, however, pumpkin seed oil was gradually included in the cuisine of other Slovene regions, which was largely because of its reputation for being, much like olive oil, quite beneficial to health, infusing certain dishes with a highly distinct flavour that could not be replaced by any other oil.

METHODOLOGICAL STARTING POINTS OF THE RESEARCH

Even though older ethnological sources and literature mention a great variety of oils that were once used in Slovenia (LOŽAR 1944:204; NOVAK 1960:174), such as poppy-seed, linseed, rapeseed, olive and pumpkin seed oil, the skill of oil-making and the types of oil consumed by the Slovene population have not yet been adequately researched. The only exceptions were a handful of studies, published in the last two decades, on the production and use of olive oil in Istria and Primorsko, written by Zora Žagar (ŽAGAR 1985). These were mainly a result of the increased interest in the production and sale of olive oil on the market, the needs of tourism, and the promotion of local cuisine and cultural heritage. Ethnologists from this region have also participated in the renovation and revitalization of an old olive mill, the *torklja*, in Sv. Peter in Istria, where a number of other events take place in addition to the demonstration of olive oil production. In the promotion of local cuisine and cultural heritage, other types of oil are represented to a much smaller extent, and important objects, a testimony to their production and great economic importance for the local community, are unfortunately in a state of increasing decay. Only rare individuals who work to preserve this part of cultural heritage are aware of their importance for the cultural heritage and culinary tradition of a given region (KOCBEK 2008).

In view of this, I have decided to study and present a still thriving element of intangible heritage typical of the North-Eastern part of Slovenia, namely the heritage associated with the production and use of pumpkin seed oil. My research was carried on within the framework of the Living Heritage research project conducted by the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology of the Research Centre of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts (ISN ZRC SAZU) in the period between 2009-2011. The primary goal of the researchers working on this project was to identify and investigate a unit of the intangible cultural heritage of Slovenia in accordance with the UNESCO Convention for



Figure 1. A field with pumpkins. Pomurje, Slovenia, 2017. (Photo by Maja Godina Golija)

the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, ratified by the Slovene Parliament in 2008 (KRIŽNAR 2010:10). In agreement with this convention, food i.e. the preparation of dishes and food products, their consumption, and their inclusion in rituals, customs, and social events is one of the areas of the intangible cultural heritage that contains a high level of human creativity and knowledge. As part of intangible cultural heritage, food culture is namely of considerable importance for the lives of family members and the community; for the consolidation of their ethnic, local, and regional identities and for the preservation of cultural diversity (GODINA GOLIJ 2012:95). Based on these definitions, it has been ascertained that, in addition to some other elements of the Slovene food culture, pumpkin seed oil corresponds perfectly to the following desired characteristics of intangible cultural heritage: a high level of technical knowledge and skill; specific formulas, use in regional cuisine, a connection with certain beliefs and knowledge of folk customs, but also an increasing importance of food culture heritage in emphasizing ethnic and regional identity and in tourist development.

Pumpkin seed oil is particularly important in various forms of sustainable tourism, which is based on local tradition, geographical features, and ethnological heritage. In accordance with the related findings of ethnologists in other European countries (KÖSTLIN 2010; TELLSTRÖM 2006; TSCHOFFEN 2010), it is possible to say that in Slovenia interest in local agricultural products, foodstuffs and recipes for the preparation of traditional dishes is on the increase. This is mainly due to growing interest in food of higher quality that is produced locally, in healthy diet, and in a balanced lifestyle in accordance with local possibilities and geographical features.

My ethnological research on pumpkin seed oil included fieldwork, which started in the region of Štajersko in 2010. In addition to a modern oil factory, the village of Fram

has one of the oldest pumpkin seed oil mills. The plant, which dates from 1750, is now abandoned and in increasing decay. I have conducted narrative interviews with the heirs of its original owners as well as with the current pumpkin seed oil producers in Štajersko. In 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2017, I studied the production of pumpkin seed oil in the area of Pomurje. Semi-guided interviews were conducted in Petanjci, Tišina, Sv. Jurij ob Ščavnici, and Krog, where I talked with pumpkin seed oil producers, oil mill owners, and farmers who grow oilseed pumpkins for their own needs. By applying the method of participant observation, I monitored different phases of the preparation and production of pumpkin seed oil. In 2013, 2014 and 2015, I also conducted fieldwork among Slovenes in Hungary. In the villages of Orfalu/Andovci, Alsószölnök/Dolnji Senik, Felsőszölnök/Gornji Senik, Szakonyfalu/Sakalovci, Apátistvánfalva/Števanovci, and in the town of Szentgotthárd/Monošter, I conducted semi-guided interviews on the traditional food culture of Slovenes living in this area and on the production and use of pumpkin seed oil in local Porabje cuisine. I amassed an extensive amount of photographic material depicting the production of pumpkins and the hulling of their seeds, the production of pumpkin seed oil in oil mills, its sale in oil plants, shops, and fairs; and its promotion. In addition to field research, I studied relevant archival data and newspaper articles, pictorial sources, web data, and ethnological as well as historical literature.



Figure 2. Peeling pumpkin seeds. Krog, Slovenia, 2013. (Photo by Maja Godina Golija)

In the course of my research on pumpkin seed oil as an important component of the food culture of the population of Štajersko, Pomurje and Porabje, I proceeded from current theoretical starting-points claiming that pumpkin seed oil is more than just food that satisfies people's basic needs, being an element of material culture with significant ethnological relevance. This provides an insight into the economic, social, and cultural

importance of pumpkin seed oil and shows its significant role in identifying and preserving national and regional identity, and in the perception of health and sustainable development (BUCHLI 2002:17).

A GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST

The growing of pumpkins and their use in the local diet spread throughout Prekmurje, Porabje and Štajersko in the 17th century, along with the cultivation of maize. Pumpkins were especially popular because they could be planted in the interim between two other crops. According to sources, the extraction of pumpkin seed oil was initially a task associated with farming, and it was not until the mid-18th century that archival sources mention the first oil mills that produced pumpkin seed oil for sale. The aforementioned oil mill in Fram was cited as the oldest mill for the production of pumpkin seed oil in Slovenia. In the 19th century, Fram already had three oil mills (ŽIŽEK 1978). The famed pumpkin seed oil mill in Slovenska Bistrica was established in 1904.¹ Since oil production in these factories exceeded domestic needs, pumpkin seed oil was also exported to more distant Austrian provinces.

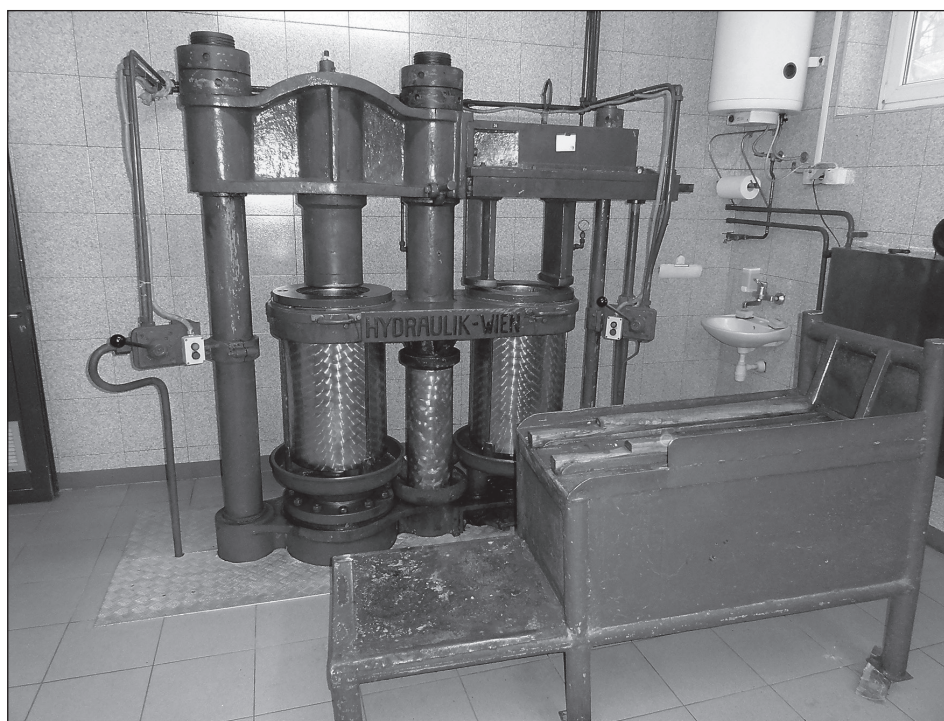


Figure 3. Old hydraulic press for producing pumpkin seed oil. Fram, Slovenia, 2010. (Photo by Maja Godina Golija)

¹ <http://www.gea.si/en/about-us/history> (accessed June 5, 2017.)

In the past three centuries, the production of pumpkin seed oil was therefore largely a domestic agricultural activity that gradually developed into a craft and, subsequently, the broader, specialized production of oil (BOGATAJ 1989:85). By the late 19th and early 20th century, the economic importance of the production of pumpkin seed oil had increased. As a result, the share of arable land in north-eastern Slovenia for the production of pumpkin seeds for oil increased as well. In 1875, as much as 0.82% of the arable land in Štajersko and in a part of Prekmurje was cultivated with pumpkins. By comparison, during the same year and in the same areas, 0.30% of arable land was planted with rape, 3.17% with legumes, and 8.21% with potatoes. Most of the arable land in these two regions, however, was sown with cereals: 16.79% with wheat and 16.61% with rye (BLAZNIK 1970:265).

Most of the pumpkin-oil mills still operating in Prekmurje and Štajersko were established in the early 20th century. In addition to their regular activities, many local millers also started to produce pumpkin seed oil. Such smaller oil mills have been organized as family businesses, and the third or fourth generation of family members now continue this work. One such example is the famed Kocbek oil plant in Stara Gora near Sv. Jurij pri Ščavnici, which has been in operation since 1929. G. K., its current owner, told me in 2010 that oil production was initially launched by his grandfather, who was a miller by profession. He then gradually expanded his milling business to include the production of pumpkin seed oil and concentrated solely on its production following the Second World War.

Due to the flourishing production of pumpkin seed oil in Štajersko and Prekmurje, there was already an increasing shortage of domestic pumpkin seeds – the *bučnice* – in the 1920s and 1930s. Additional seeds were imported from other parts of what was then the Yugoslav monarchy, especially from Croatia and Serbia. Pumpkin seed oil from Štajersko and Prekmurje, renowned for its high quality, was also sold to Kranjsko and neighbouring Austria, where it was used quite frequently.² Prior to the Second World War, the famed food retailer Julius Meinl from Vienna, Austria annually purchased three to four wagons of pumpkin seed oil from Fram for his commercial network. My informant, K. P., told me that pumpkin seed oil from Štajersko was especially popular with the merchants from the Austrian cities Graz and Leoben. The oil was dispatched there by the so-called Southern Railway from the railroad station in Fram.

During the early 1980s, oil producers began to use a special, locally grown variety of pumpkins, the so-called *buča golica* (*cucurbita pepo* var. *styriaca*), which has swiftly replaced older varieties. Whereas a great deal of time was once required for the preparation of pumpkin seeds, the new pumpkin variety makes it possible to significantly shorten this process because its seeds are merely dried, but not hulled.

The majority of Slovene pumpkin seed oil mills operate in Štajersko and Prekmurje, where Slovenes from the region of Porabje (in Hungary) take their pumpkins for processing. Most of the pumpkin seed oil is now sold on the Slovene market, but it is also exported to Austria, England, Ireland, and even the Baltic states. Pumpkin seed oil from Slovenia, called Štajersko-Prekmursko Pumpkin seed oil, has been protected by the European Union with a designation of Protected Geographical Indication since 2004.³

² <http://www.oljarnafam.si/en/production-of-edible-oils/> (accessed May 31, 2017.)

³ <http://www.slomedia.it/stajersko-prekmursko-bucno-olje-ze-15-slovenski-proizvod-zasciten-v-eu/2> (accessed May 23, 2017.)



Figure 4. Dried pumpkin seed. Fram, Slovenia, 2010. (Photo by Maja Godina Golija)

METHODS OF EXTRACTING PUMPKIN SEED OIL AND THE TRADITIONAL FORMULA

Pumpkins, which were used for the production of oil as well as feed for poultry and pigs, were planted throughout Slovenia, but not in the quantities found in Štajersko, Prekmurje, and Porabje. They were either planted among corn or as the main crop in the field. Until the 1980s, the use of dried and shelled pumpkin seeds (*bučnice*) of lighter colour was still widespread. Since these had to be extracted from the centre of the pumpkin by hand, which was a time-consuming task, they were replaced by the so-called *golice* pumpkins. Their introduction greatly simplified the oil-making process. B.G., an informant from Fram, thus described the now obsolete process:

“Since 1982, we’ve been using the seeds produced by the *golice* pumpkins. In the past, however, we had to extract the white seeds manually, wash and dry them in order to separate the seed from the hull more easily, and transport them to a machine that sorted them in four sizes. The seeds were then crushed under a rough-hewn stone. Another machine separated the hulls from the seeds and then transported the hulled and cleaned seeds to the rolling mill for grinding.”

Most of my informants stated that the old, manual process produced a much tastier oil that also had a better colour. Since the hulls had been completely removed, the oil was a shade lighter and had a fuller taste whereas now the entire seed is ground, thus producing a different taste and colour.

In the subsequent phase of production, ground seeds are mixed with an optional combination of water and salt to produce a creamy substance, which is then blended in a mixer to start emitting oil. The resulting mass is poured into a pan and roasted at 96 degrees Celsius for approximately forty minutes. The mass has to be constantly mixed to prevent it from burning. Roasting pans are installed with special knives which ensure that, the mixture does not stick to the bottom, despite high temperatures. When the roasting process is completed, the mixture is compressed under high pressure (about 350 bar). Extracted oil is then poured into tanks, where it remains for approximately two weeks to clear and produce sediment. The oil is then pumped into clean tanks and left there to purify for up to three weeks. The completely purified oil is then bottled and stored in a cool and dark place, where its shelf life is one year.



Figure 5. Roasting pumpkin seeds. Stara Gora pri Juriju ob Ščavnici, Slovenia, 2011. (Photo by Maja Godina Golija)

Hydraulic presses were used in many locations prior to the Second World War. Pumpkin seeds were also roasted at a much higher temperature, generally at 120 degrees or more, which the current legislature prohibited in order to protect human health.

The oily remains of the pressed and roasted mass are called the *prga*. Pressed into flat cakes and extremely nourishing, they were once used by farmers to feed cows and pigs, but also in fisheries. Before the Second World War, these were even exported to Czechoslovakia, Italy, Germany, and Hungary.

PUMPKIN SEED OIL IN TRADITIONAL SLOVENE CUISINE

Pumpkin seed oil has been the most widespread and commonly used oil for seasoning dishes and salads in Northeast Slovenia over the last two centuries. White vegetable oil and olive oil were very expensive for most people as they were imported from distant Slovene and foreign regions. They were almost inaccessible to the majority of the population and were therefore used very rarely or not at all.

Pumpkin seed oil is mentioned by Velko Novak in his detailed study on the food culture of the rural population in the Prekmurje region entitled *Ljudska prehrana v Prekmurju* (NOVAK 1947:93). The oil is cited as being an important ingredient of the regional cuisine. Novak claims it was used for seasoning salads, potatoes, head cheese (or brawn) and beans.

Prior to major changes in the traditional cuisine of North-East Slovenia in the 1960s, pumpkin seed oil played a special role, especially in preparing meals during the spring and summer, when gardens and fields were full of lettuce and vegetables. These meals were prepared with pumpkin seed oil, vinegar and other condiments, resulting in a single meal, usually at lunch time. In the spring, locals picked dandelion and lamb's lettuce, seasoned it with pumpkin seed oil and added potatoes to make a rich single meal to be enjoyed with bread. In summer, they used pumpkin seed oil on cucumbers, boiled green beans and different types of lettuce, in autumn and winter, when fresh vegetables and lettuce were scarce, pumpkin seed oil was used to prepare dishes with beans, boiled potatoes, sauerkraut and black radishes. Pumpkin seed oil was also added to cooked meat, young cheese and cottage cheese (KOZAR – MUKIČ 2014:122; NOVAK 1947:17).

In Porabje, the Hungarian region populated by Slovenians, pumpkin seed oil has played a significant role in past centuries. Therefore, Slovene farmers from the area strove to cultivate enough pumpkins to produce sufficient quantities of oil for their personal use. I. D., from the village of Števanovci, said: "Until the end of the 60s, we had an oil mill in Gornji Senik, where we would take pumpkin seeds to be pressed into oil. We dried them and shelled them at home in the winters from around 6th of January to 19th of March."

In the region of Porabje, as in Slovenia, pumpkin seed oil was used for seasoning salads, sauerkraut and beans (ČABAI 2000; KOZAR – MUKIČ 2014). Beans with pumpkin seed oil was considered the food of beggars for a long time in this region because of its ability to satiate quickly. A combination of Sauerkraut and beans seasoned with pumpkin seed oil was even more popular among Slovenians in the region. They call it *straušanca* and they still prepare it on special occasions as their typical dish (KOZAR – MUKIČ 2014:122). They also prepare it for the annual "Porabski dnevi" event held at the Lipa Hotel in Monošter.

According to several sources from the region, pumpkin seed oil is the one ingredient that separates the cuisine of the Slovenians of Porabje from Hungarian cuisine, which does not incorporate pumpkin seed oil in traditional dishes. Slovenians in Hungary see pumpkin seed oil as an important indicator of their national identity, which, along with other cultural elements, separates their community from the mainstream Hungarian one. In the course of my fieldwork in 2014, a Slovene source from the Porabje region told me: "Pumpkin seed oil is used in kitchens all the way to Monošter, and that is also where Slovenians live."

Today, as there are no pumpkin seed oil mills left in Porabje and the border is open and easily crossed, the local people take dried pumpkin seeds using their own vehicles to oil

mills in Prekmurje, especially the ones in Križevci and Petišovci. There they can exchange their pumpkin seeds for pumpkin seed oil for their own personal use. The ones who do not have enough oil can also buy Slovene pumpkin seed oil in supermarkets in Prekmurje.

In North-East Slovenia, pumpkin seed oil has stayed at the forefront of all types of oil used for cooking in Styria, Prekmurje and Porabje. It is used in the preparation of traditional dishes and salads as well as new culinary masterpieces (BOGATAJ 2000:222). Its special flavour and colour are what separates it from other types of oil, and pumpkin seed oil is becoming more and more popular in the gastronomy of other Slovene regions as well as abroad.

NEW PRACTICES IN PUMPKIN SEED OIL EXTRACTION AND USAGE

Having played an important role in the everyday and festive diet of the Slovene population in Styria and the regions of Pomurje and Porabje for two and a half centuries, pumpkin seed oil has also spurred some new practices over the last two decades with regards to its production in oil mills and its use in contemporary cuisine. These practices represent an incentive for the local economy. The introduction of *golica*, a new pumpkin sort, has drastically changed the traditional production of pumpkin seed oil as well as its typical colour, flavour and quality. A simpler and shorter way of preparing pumpkin seeds and pumpkin seed oil has encouraged the abolishment of what was once a common and widespread farming activity; scraping out pumpkin seeds, drying them and shelling them during winter evenings. Today, the preparation of pumpkin seeds from the *golica* pumpkin takes far less time and effort, and it does not require as much teamwork.

The procedure for roasting pumpkin seeds to extract oil has seen major changes in the last ten years in accordance with European and Slovene laws. The seeds are no longer roasted at temperatures above 100 degrees Celsius. Due to growing interest among European and domestic consumers in cold pressed vegetable oils, pumpkin seed oil producers have tried to find the recipe for extracting pumpkin seed oil via low temperature seed roasting i.e. cold pressed oil production.⁴ The Kocbek foil mill in Stara Gora, near Sveti Jurij ob Ščavnici, is at the forefront of these endeavours and new pumpkin seed oil production methods in Slovenia. Its owner, G. K., told us that the mill has developed a method for cold pressed pumpkin seed oil production based on years of experience and many attempts. This method involves pumpkin seed roasting at just 40 degrees Celsius, preserving a higher mineral, microelement and vitamin content in the pumpkin seed oil. Because of lower temperature seed roasting, the oil has a different, lighter colour and a subtler flavour. It is offered as a gastronomic specialty in the finest restaurants and shops in Slovenia and abroad (KOCBEK 2008:6).

In addition to the new pumpkin seed oil production method, Slovene cuisine has over the last decade introduced several recipes that use pumpkin seed oil for food preparation in novel and previously unknown ways. In the past, the pumpkin seed oil was predominantly used for seasoning salads, legumes and root crop dishes, whereas today, chefs from North-East Slovenia have prepared recipes for new main dishes and

⁴ <https://www.domacedomace.si/blog/bucno-olje-razlika-med-toplo-in-hladno-stiskananim-bucnim-oljem/> (accessed May 30, 2017.)

desserts with pumpkin seed oil. These dishes are a welcome addition to the established culinary offering in this area and a contribution to a broader selection for visitors of the region. New pumpkin seed oil dishes worth mentioning are: fried trout in pumpkin seed oil sauce, pumpkin seed and pumpkin seed oil spread, pumpkin seed oil pasta, pumpkin cream soup with pumpkin seeds and pumpkin seed oil and bread with pumpkin seeds and pumpkin seed oil. Nowadays, it has become very popular to use pumpkin seed oil in desserts, which is something new in Slovene cuisine as pumpkin seed oil in the past had been used solely for salads and main dishes. Vanilla ice cream with pumpkin seed oil is also a very popular dessert these days, as are pumpkin seed oil rolls, cakes and cookies. At Christmas 2012, M. P., a chef and cooking instructor from Maribor, surprised everyone with a recipe for outstanding chocolate pralines with pumpkin seeds and pumpkin seed oil.



Figure 6. New products with pumpkin seed oil: chocolate, biscuits and pasta. Kocbek, Stara Gora pri Juriju ob Ščavnici, Slovenia, 2011. (Photo by Maja Godina Golija)

Along with restaurants and tourist centres that serve new pumpkin seed oil dishes in the Prekmurje region and in Styria, some of the oil mills selling pumpkin seed oil have also started to sell new products with this oil. The Kocbek oil mill has started making chocolate with pumpkin seeds and pumpkin seed oil and pasta as well as cookies with added pumpkin seed oil. Recently, people have also started to discover the healing effects of pumpkin seed oil, which has positively affected sales in Slovenia and abroad. We need to point out the positive effects of vitamin E and plant sterols, which inhibit ageing processes and which, as antioxidants, positively affect the cardiovascular system and

inhibit cancerous growths, especially in the case of prostate cancer.⁵ Swedish ethnologist Tellström discovered that modern consumers appreciate the authenticity of foods, the way they are connected to healthy natural ingredients and traditional production methods (TELLSTRÖM 2006:61), and this also applies to pumpkin seed oil and its use today. A balanced ratio between cultural heritage and innovation guarantees the market success of these authentic products.

CONCLUSION

Pumpkin seed oil is a relatively new ingredient in the Slovene diet, which has been for more than two centuries limited to only a small part of Slovene ethnic territory. Due to its specific taste and colour, it represented an ingredient which was in the past often despised and rejected by the majority of Slovenes. Despite the fact that pumpkin seed oil is merely an addition to dishes and salads and that it is only used in smaller quantities for the preparation of various dishes, in recent decades it has become increasingly important as a component of Slovenian food culture as well as an element of Slovenian intangible cultural heritage. In the present, an increasing interest in pumpkin seed oil closely related to the tourist industry can also be observed. In this regard, this simple rural product has become a significant factor of development in certain locals, thereby manifesting that it should not only be regarded as an important element of the intangible, but also of the material world on local and international levels. As a fragment of cultural heritage, pumpkin seed oil is also important for the local or ethnic identity of the Slovenian population. Ethnologists and anthropologists have already discussed that national dishes and typical regional food ingredients play a significant role for local communities, minority groups or for people living abroad (BUCHLI 2002; GODINA GOLJA 2014; MILLER 2010; MLEKUŽ 2015). As for pumpkin seed oil, it can also be detected that it has become important as a part of local and national identity, especially for the Slovenian population living in Hungary. In the Porabje region, Slovenian people understand pumpkin seed oil as an important sign of their national culture and tradition. It conveys messages about socialization, social inclusion and exclusion, the drawing of boundaries, and the overstepping of them (DOUGLAS 1982).

In addition to this symbolic role the production and sale of pumpkin seed oil are also an important factor in the economy of Prekmurje, Štajerska and Porabje, where it has become an integral part of different festivals, for instance the Pumpkin Festival in Őrség, as well as of tourist offers in health resorts in North-East Slovenia. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the changing processes of the significance of pumpkin seed oil for the local population and tourism. Its present importance for tourism, the catering industry and in the production of traditional local agrarian products and food, coincides with an increased interest in the autonomy and autarchy of European regions, a healthy lifestyle and the protection of nature (KÖSTLIN 2010:44).

It can be said that nowadays local rural products are the result of two distinct and contradictory processes: on the one hand, market demand for organic and traditional

⁵ <http://vizita.si/clanek/bilke/preizkusite-bucno-olje.html> (accessed May 31, 2017.)

food, and on the other, the rediscovery of local food products as a global phenomenon. Traditional food products, including pumpkin seed oil, converge in the general process of heritagisation, in which past elements are rediscovered and reinvented (GRASSEN 2011). All these practices play a significant role as means of local development and as bearers of collective territorial identities, which are also becoming increasingly important in Slovenian peripheral regions.

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Collective Vertigo

Roger Caillois' "Théorie de la Fête" Toward Contemporary Music Festivals in Poland and Hungary

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Abstract: This paper is an attempt to apply Roger Caillois' "théorie de la fête" to the contemporary music festivals in Poland and Hungary. The French ethnologist suggested that modernity does not provide the opportunity for collective vertigo, marginalizes the festival, and transforms it into a possibility that is difficult to achieve. According to the results of my ethnographic fieldwork, the festival is a place of rest, fun, elation, rewarding belonging to a community, or even freedom at different levels. For many participants, it is a holiday in its purest form; a festival whose subject is music, but whose purpose is mental rest. In this context, the concept of festivalization should be redefined. In the analyzed cases (Jarocin Festival, OFF Festival, and O.Z.O.R.A. Festival), festivalization is not reduced to specific, collective forms of consumption; it also means the possibility of creating specific space-times of rest and freedom.

Keywords: festival, Roger Caillois, music, festivalization, Hungary, Poland, audience

INTRODUCTION

It goes without saying that festivals are one of the more interesting elements of European culture and a manifestation of its traditions (BURKE 2009; ELIADE 1957; FALASSI 1987). As noted by Swedish ethnologist Owe Rönström (2011), "festival began to be used as a generic term for a large array of celebrations that carry few or no religious connotations (...) The world has been festivalized." This process contains different threads. On the one hand, Rönström continues, homogeneous festival events carried out by people with similar cultural competencies and similar strategies of reception or consumption continue to exist. These types of festivals, however, are a minority. Contemporary fairs, meetings, days, fetes and celebrations – often labeled as festivals – consist of taking walks, eating, drinking, smoking, and small talk. It is about being on holiday, outside work, and spending leisure time. This process has transformed the festival into a specific popular meeting place addressed to all recipients, offering every type of music and a huge variety of non-musical attractions and activities.

Rönström underscores the link between the festival industry and the tourism industry. After all, festivals create attractions for tourists and the tourism industry provides consumers with these attractions. This feedback loop results in a huge number of festivals that attract people to countless places around the world, especially during the holiday season. It requires the connection of festival locations with a network of motorways or airports, which are used by both the artists and the audience. The complex web of meanings and functions of modern festivals means that they can be seen as a “vessel of meaning” (a term coined by the Norwegian social anthropologist Fredrik Barth). Like other phenomena of the postmodern and capitalist world, festivals have a dichotomous structure.

Rönström’s statements are accurate. Even a cursory look at a national, regional and even a local calendar confirms that festivals have become a prominent feature of cultural life in today’s social space. Festivals are organized by public institutions, local governments and non-governmental organizations. Cities adapt their investment plans to them (e.g. by speeding up the construction of access roads), as well as class schedules in schools and universities (as was the case in Polish and Ukrainian cities which hosted the matches of the European Football Championship in 2012), and adjust their regulation of road traffic, trade, marketing, the sale of alcohol, etc. Financially, organizationally and culturally speaking, the festival has ultimately become a kind of autonomous institutional entity (RICHARDS – PALMER 2010). George Steiner suggests that the effect of this process is a rapid increase of festivals, as well as the organizing of ‘festivals of festivals,’ the number of which has reached the point of absurdity (STEINER 1996).

THE FESTIVALIZATION SYNDROME

In the 1990s, the concept of “festivalization” arose in relation to processes in the autonomization of festivals and their hegemony in cultural policy. It was introduced by the German sociologists Hartmut Häußermann and Walter Siebel in the 1993 article “Die Politik der Festivalisierung und die Festivalisierung der Politik,” which concerned practicing “festivalization policy” and “politics through festivals.” The concept itself was used in the context of “festivalization of urban policy.” The authors refer to major sports and cultural undertakings, which were so-called catalysts of urban development in many European countries. In this context, they invoke consecutive Expos (Vancouver 1986, Seville 1992), summer Olympic Games (Munich 1972, Barcelona 1992), Universiades (Sheffield 1991), and the FIFA World Championship (Italy 1990). Häußermann and Siebel claim that in all these cases, urban policy, and especially urban planning policy, was instrumentalized, and subordinated to these single, gigantic events. The concept of “doing politics through festivals” correlated with to the idea of the city as a stage, popular among urban planners in the 1970s: the festival is dominant; it subordinates all other ideas and initiatives, resulting in expensive and ad hoc designed spaces (legal, financial, infrastructural, habitual), created mainly for tourists and the business class.

Häußermann and Siebel’s original concept was later repeatedly redefined (LAVILLE 2014; STEINBRINKA et al. 2011). P. Louis van Elderen, using a slightly different formula, stated that festivalization consists of “temporary transformation of a place into symbolic space in which the public domain is claimed for particular forms of consumption” (VAN ELDEREN 1997). Such conceived festivalization began to combine previously

separate spheres: food and shopping, education and recreation. As a result of progressive homogenization, distinguishing between consumption, entertainment and education became very difficult within the logic of festivalization. Mumbai and Singapore successfully organize “shopping festivals,” and in many other cities such forms of boosterism and festivalization are practiced as “edutainment” and “shop-a-tainment” (MALCZYK 2010; RICHARDS – PALMER 2010).

In this light, many researchers argue that there exists a crisis of the model of urban cultural policy: “It is important to acknowledge that festivalization only becomes a possibility with the realization of the ‘world-class’ city: global in outlook, investor-‘friendly’ and a national hub for business; a site with political profile and cultural cachet, and a destination favored by tourists” (EISENHAUER et al. 2014:40). Festivals are often strategically conceived with the purpose of promoting a “distinctive city” (JOHANSSON – KOCIATKIEWICZ 2011:18).

The perspective of classic anthropology was significantly different. In early anthropological studies, the festival was treated as form similar to a ritual framed by inverted and temporary abnormal reality (DURKHEIM 1912; MAUSS 1906). In this view, many anthropologists observed how the norms and rules of everyday life were suspended during festival time. In the study of “primitive” or tribal festivals, situations of excess, disorder and temporary chaos have been interpreted in relation to communities’ mythical pasts. Key contributions to the anthropological field included Arnold van Gennep’s (1960) idea regarding rites of passage, and Victor Turner’s (1969) concepts of liminality, anti-structure and *communitas*. On the other hand, Jean Duvignaud argued that the most classic analysis of festivals goes back to Émile Durkheim, who distinguished between the sacred and profane, writing about “collective effervescence” as the supreme moment of the solidarity of collective consciousness (DUVIGNAUD 1976:13).

CAILLOIS’ “THEORY OF FESTIVAL”

I would like to place my analysis in a slightly different context. Certain findings of the French anthropologist and philosopher Roger Caillois are, I think, adequate. I have in mind views from two of his works: *L’Homme et le sacré* from 1939 and, to a lesser degree, *Les Jeux et les hommes: le masque et le vertige* from 1958. In these texts, Caillois suggested the original “theory of festival,” which can also be applied to the analysis of modern festivals (CAILLOIS 2001). In my opinion, Caillois’ idea of the festival is currently realized in the midst of multi-day music festivals. In this article, I use the concept of the festival in relation to contemporary, repeated practices of collective, multi-day gatherings in one place with the aim of experiencing music. I treat the concept of the holiday, however, as a very general category, also adequate in relation to sacred rituals.

Caillois was a French anthropologist, sociologist and literary critic. He studied at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, where he came into contact with famous thinkers such as Marcel Mauss and Georges Dumézil. Caillois published extensively in a variety of fields e.g. comparative mythology, the sociology of religion, theory of play and games, and even the evolution of the detective story. He was also co-founder (along with Georges Bataille and Michel Leiris) of the *Le Collège de Sociologie* (HOLLIER 1979) and editor of *Diogenes*, an interdisciplinary academic journal founded by UNESCO. The

first edition of *L'Homme et le sacré* was published in 1939 by Presses Universitaires de France. The second, revised version was issued in 1946 by Gallimard. Lucian Febvre, French historian and co-creator of the Annales School, wrote in his review of *L'Homme et le sacré* that it is a small but fantastic book, containing a clever and clear theoretical proposition (1951).

In his *Théorie de la fête*, Caillois appealed to Émile Durkheim's opposition of the sacred-profane and Marcel Mauss' descriptions of tribal *fête*. His concept assumes that the festival is universal in nature and constitutes an important element of all cultures. Caillois associated the festival with the existence of a mythical space-time, in which the festival was to act as a catalyst for the rebirth of the world, recovering its vitality and power. Seen as a return to the sacred, the festival revealed and updated the differences between the secular and the sacred. Referring to many examples – Inuit winter festivals, the Kwakiutl potlatch, Indigenous Australian and New-Guinean rituals, remittances from the Vedas and the rules of Chinese culture – Caillois connected the festival with the sphere of the sacred, religious ritual, and the tribal life cycle.

The most interesting aspects of his description of holidays, however, concern social practices. Caillois defines a holiday/festival in terms of “collective euphoria and vertigo” (2001:97), a “paroxysm of society, purifying and renewing it simultaneously” (2001:125). To emphasize the uniqueness of the event, he created a string of oppositions distinguishing everyday life from holidays: “dual continuity/intermittent explosion,” “daily repetition of the same material preoccupations/powerful inspiration,” “tranquil labor/fever of climatic moments,” “social dispersion/social concentration” (2001:99). The clear distinction from the ordinary and the everyday is additionally reinforced by other holiday practices. Caillois states that during the holiday “normal” rules are suspended, and “excess constantly accompanies the festival” (2001:101). Freedom of manners is recommended, and “dietary and sexual sacrilege” (2001:116), “forbidden and extravagant behavior” as well as “contrary acts” (2001:122) are accepted. Caillois argues that the holiday “connotes a large conglomeration of moving and boisterous people. These massed gatherings eminently favor the creation and contagion of an exalted state that exhausts itself in cries and movement” (2001:97). Participants share the feeling of elation expressed through spontaneous shouts, gestures and reflexes.

Although *Théorie de la fête* refers primarily to tribal societies, Caillois pointed to some of its elements also being present in contemporary (urbanized and industrialized) culture. Carnival cycles, get-togethers, libations, and even rural wakes used to be a holiday. Currently, it is difficult to find a time dedicated to holidays, which would be characterized by collective bewilderment and exultation. One of the examples he analyzed was vacation time. Caillois saw this as a kind of extension of the holiday. Another relevant example was the category of the “Traveling Fair” (2001b). I will refer to this example below. However, according to the French researcher, none of these examples fully realized the idea of the holiday: “The festival is then succeeded by the vacation (...) it is always a time of free activity, of interruption in the pattern of work, but it is a phase of relaxation, not paroxysm” (CAILLOIS 2001:127). In summary, Caillois was convinced that modernity does not provide the opportunity for collective daze; it marginalizes the holiday and transforms it into a possibility that is difficult to achieve.

THE FESTIVAL AS A FIELDWORK SITE

I conducted ethnographic fieldwork at three outdoor music festivals: the Jarocin Festival and the Off Festival in Poland, and the O.Z.O.R.A. in Hungary. Each has its own characteristics and history; they share, however, music as the main medium attracting several thousand people for a few summer days in one particular place.

The Jarocin festival, a rock music event launched in 1980, is the oldest among them. The city of Jarocin is situated in the rural part of the Greater Poland region in western Poland and has around 25 thousand inhabitants. During the 1980s, the festival was a cultural sensation – the biggest rock festival not only in Poland, but also in the entire Eastern Bloc. Every year, it attracted several thousand people, who could demonstrate sub-cultural values, dress and behavior for several days. The festival took place, of course, with the consent of the Socialist government, which did not fully understand its liberating potential. Surveillance of the audience, led by the secret service, brought caricatured effects in the form of reports describing sub-cultural groups akin to naive descriptions of exotic tribes (LESIAKOWSKI et al. 2004). The name of the festival quickly became a symbol of freedom and attitudes alternative to Socialist ideology. The transformation that began in 1989 redefined the meaning of the festival. The organizers first tried to change its format in the vein of other commercial festivals, but in the face of street riots and permanent conflicts between the audience and the police, the festival was held for the last time in 1994. It was reactivated in 2005 and currently seeks to connect with its former importance and status as a “mecca of sub-cultures” (KULIGOWSKI 2015). The festival draws audiences from all over Poland.

The OFF Festival has existed since 2006 and is organized by renowned Polish musician Artur Rojek. It is now held in Katowice, an agglomeration of more than 300 thousand inhabitants which used to be the former industrial center of Silesia. In the years 2006–2009, the festival was held in the nearby Silesian city of Mysłowice, whose authorities no longer wanted to support it financially. The main premise of the festival is to present international alternative music, as well as little-known performers, often operating outside of the mainstream. OFF quickly gained wide recognition in Poland, but also among music critics, who awarded it with the European Festival Award in 2012. Stereotypically, the OFF Festival is associated with hipster attitudes and practices. Its audiences come from not only Poland, but also other neighboring countries (Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia).

The O.Z.O.R.A. Festival has been organized since 2004 in the buildings of what used to be a farm in the central part of Hungary, in a village of the same name (Ozora). However, its origins date back to 1999 and involve a total eclipse of the sun, which was experienced by 20,000 people to the accompaniment of psytrance music and its many genres (ST. JOHN 2010: 1–17). Today, the festival attracts fans of psytrance music, offering them all-day performances, yoga and meditation practice, lessons in Capoeira, Pilates, Aikido, Tai Chi, Chi Kung, lectures on naturopathy, culinary traditions, spiritual wisdom and even festivalization (led by the author). It should be noted that organizationally and financially O.Z.O.R.A. relies on the activities of people from outside of Hungary, namely post-hippie communities from the Indian Goa and the USA. The festival is stereotypically associated with the availability of drugs and widespread nudity, and has been dubbed the “Hungarian Woodstock.” The audience of O.Z.O.R.A. is in a large part international (mainly from Western Europe).

Given the stereotypical images of these festivals, they are associated with different groups: Jarocin with punks, OFF with hipsters and O.Z.O.R.A with neo-hippies. These images are created by media reports (television, newspapers, websites) as well as by the organizers themselves. There is, in this case, a two-way flow of images and symbols that form as a result the public image of the festivals. It should be noted that the audience in Jarocin comes from Poland, the audience in Katowice from Central Europe, and the audience in Ozora from all over Europe.

I conducted ethnographic research with a group of associates at all of these festivals in 2015, using classic methods in the form of interviews (qualitative data) and surveys (quantitative data), as well as photos, video recordings and elements of field recording. It was not my first experience doing research work at festivals – previously, I had also conducted research at the Berlin Love Parades (practicing the idea of love) (KULIGOWSKI 2004), the Serbian Guča Trumpet Festival (practicing nationalism) (KULIGOWSKI 2014), and the Canarian carnival in Santa Cruz de Tenerife (practicing tradition) (KULIGOWSKI 2016). I would like to emphasize that ethnographic fieldwork during the festivals comprises specific experiences. According to Alice O’Grady (2013), the researcher should be open to “embodied knowledge” and an “auto-ethnographic flow.” In this case, the classic formula of participant observation did not work. I would argue that the anthropologist can no longer be seen as an observer recording cultural or social facts and processes but must be seen as “an active, situated participant in the construction of account and representations” (TURNER 2000:51). In relation to ethnographic fieldwork, it is claimed that all positionings and all perspectives are partial; every description and interpretation are partial truth (CLIFFORD 1986:7).

Consequently, in the course of my fieldwork, I was rather an “emotionally engaged” anthropologist than a “coolly dispassionate observer” (TEDLOCK 1992:xiii). I practiced permanent “collaboration” with music, dance, giant crowds of people, different sounds, colors, and smells. I was in flow and, perhaps too many times, I flowed. On the other hand, many times I experienced “frustrating reality” because “I often find myself anxious and edgy at the point where those around me were experiencing the opposite feelings of immersion, pleasure and play” (O’GRADY 2013:31). For this reason, I tried to use the “horizontal method of research” (THOMPSON 2009:134) in which the researcher is situated alongside the festival participant and the gap (or “frustrating reality”) between me and my collaborators is diminished.

From my perspective, in the context of the festivalization phenomenon, the commercialization of festivals and their domination of political culture, an important problem is the perspective of their audiences. I confined my ethnographic research on festival audiences to several topics, amongst which the motivation for festival participation had its own place. I spoke with men and women about why they participated in a specific festival and why they had decided to spend their money, energy and time on it. Participation in multi-day music festivals requires financial, logistical and organizational preparation. University and school students planned their holidays according to festival dates, as did professionals. Sometimes individuals performed this coordination only for themselves, but normally groups of friends or family coordinated their festival attendance together. In most cases, not only the price of the ticket or festival pass were taken into account, but also the cost of transport, accommodation, food, souvenirs etc. Participation in a multi-day music festival was not a spontaneous decision, but was rather undertaken well ahead

of time and thoroughly planned. Sometimes a trip to a summer music festival was treated as the focal point of holidays upon which other plans were made. The motivations behind a specific individual's decision to participate in a festival are, in my opinion, crucial in the attempt to describe and understand their meaning.

Fieldwork during festivals entails several important consequences: (1) research is carried out within only a few days (2) the research is conducted in the presence of many people; (3) the context of the research includes many practices, such as listening to music, being in a group of friends, spontaneous music-making, eating, drinking and resting. All these factors surely influence the course of research and its results (e.g. not being able to verify some information, or not being able to observe my interlocutors in situations outside of the festival). On the other hand, the circumstances of the festival create a specific type of relationship, more spontaneous and open. One of the guiding principles is honesty and openness in expressing your views and talking about yourself. From the point of view of the researcher, this is extremely valuable. The aforementioned festival situation is based on the principle of cultural intimacy (HERZFELD 1997), which becomes tangible in the form of a temporary community. It is significant that the participants of festivals themselves feel and express the need for such a community:

"There is a nice connection between people at festivals. The point is that I always leave Jarocin richer by at least a few good friends. And to a large extent I think that is most important. The music comes next." (Darek, 47, Jarocin)

"What does the festival give me? I think it's this feeling that I'm in a crowd – a community that is standing or dancing and listening to music and having great fun." (Janek, 19, Jarocin)

An examination of the festival audience gives one the opportunity to explore a diverse realm of values. During a festival, morality, love, friendship, the meaning of life – things that are rather hard to talk about in other circumstances – become natural themes. As suggested by Simon Frith, music "has been an important way in which we have learned to understand ourselves as historical, ethnic, class-bound, gendered, national subjects. This has had conservative effects (primarily through nostalgia) as well as liberating ones. What music does (all music) is put into play a sense of identity that may or may not fit the way we are placed by other social forces" (FRITH 1998:276–277). As I have mentioned, in this article I will focus on the motives that induce people to participate in festivals. Is it a kind of longing, perhaps unconscious, for the holiday as understood by Caillois? Or is it rather a specific type of vacation, without the "paroxysm," yet with elements of freedom and escape from the routine of everyday life?

FROM VACATION TO FREEDOM

Each participant of a music festival can certainly identify with Caillois' detailed description: "They are separated in space by porticoes, hedges, ramps, luminous signs, posts, flags, and all kinds of decorations that are visible from a distance and which demarcate the boundaries of a consecrated universe. In fact, once the frontier is crossed, one finds himself in a world that is peculiarly more crowded than that of ordinary life. It is a world of excited and noisy throngs, a debauch of color and light, of ceaseless and exhausting motion to the point of



Figure 1. Jarocin Festival, Jarocin, Poland. (Photo by: Waldemar Kuligowski, July 2015)

satiety, in which one may easily accost others or try to attract attention to oneself and which is conducive to freedom, familiarity, boastfulness, and debonair impudence. All this adds a peculiar atmosphere to the general animation” (CAILLOIS 2001:33). Caillois described in this way the separate space of the Traveling Fair. Nothing stands in the way of applying this description to festival towns, which are, despite some differences, similar to each other and repetitive in many of their elements. This pattern is also implemented at festivals in Jarocin, Katowice and Ozora. In each of these places, the everyday is beyond the boarder built from gates, flags and lights. The visual aspects were visually enriched especially at O.Z.O.R.A. Participants greeted a huge gate with the words “Welcome to Paradise.” The festival zone was full of wooden figures, masks, fluorescent paintings, spatial installations etc. Many people told about “psychedelic space”: “This is amazing part of nature. Here music is always. And everything is lit up.” (Hana, 23 years old, O.Z.O.R.A.)

In Alfred Gell’s (1998) vocabulary, these were “agents” of the festival’s atmosphere, message and values. Many participants treated them as very important symbols or even spiritual “totems”; they were also tools to create an effect being “on edge of the real” (as Yemanja wrote in the festival newspaper “The Ozorian Prophet”).

The motivations of the audiences studied in the aforementioned three locations are similar. Regardless of their age, gender and place of residence (country, city size), what dominates is a longing for rest, relaxation and detachment from everyday life. Here are some typical comments:

“I come to here to de-stress, to ‘recharge my batteries’ and then return to the humdrum reality of struggling for existence. This is how I treat it. I knew long before that I was going, and I only checked which bands were playing here three days before I left.” (Darek, 43 years old, Jarocin)

“I come to the festival on Thursday, I leave on Monday, leaving behind my job, Warsaw, the city, traffic jams, newspapers, television, the Internet, and I don’t care about anything. I am



Figure 2. Jarocin Festival, Jarocin, Poland. (Photo by: Waldemar Kuligowski, July 2015)

alienated from life and all I do is have great fun. I'm in a great mood. It is the most important thing - it's the essence of the festival." (Rafał, 42 years old, Jarocin)

"Well, there is such a fun atmosphere all the time, you can really fool around, not doing anyone harm. There is also this freedom; you can walk in slippers all the time. That is a value in itself, for sure. Usually the weather is nice too, and the festival happens to take place in a rather charming place." (Kuba, 25 years old, OFF)

In this context, the music festival functions like a vacation, or a form of leisure. It is a holiday destination with an unusual and extraordinary program: instead of a hotel and tourist attractions, there is the small festival town and music. An additional advantage could also be a "charming place." What dominates – similarly to a holiday – is a relaxed atmosphere and a lack of haste, a poignant example of which is the ability to "walk in slippers all the time." The festival audience is made up in a large part of those who seek pleasure and satisfaction, "sensation gatherers," as described by Zygmunt Bauman (1993). These values are provided to them by the festival line-up as well as the festival infrastructure: sophisticated dishes in the food court, comfortable accommodation, the possibility to use services, such as a barber, massage or a tattoo parlor, access to additional cultural activities (meetings with writers, exhibitions, film screenings, panel discussions, lectures, etc.).

Detachment from everyday life is also expressed through behavior and dress. In Jarocin, there are people, mainly young men, with spiky hair, which is referred to as a "Mohawk" (Irokez in Polish). These hairstyles are prepared especially for the festival; they



Figure 3. O.Z.O.R.A. Festival, Ozora, Hungary. (Photo by: Waldemar Kuligowski, August 2015)

are not worn either at work or school. Another attribute of the festival are heavy, leather boots (“glany” in Polish slang), once produced for the military, currently purchased in specialized shops. The quintessence of participating in the Jarocin Festival is dancing the “pogo.” This spontaneous dance, involving bouncing off other people, jumping up while lifting your knees, is accompanied by very fast music (Figures 1-2). In Katowice, the dominant dress code consists of fancy headgear (hats, berets, scarves) and t-shirts with significant symbols or inscriptions. Surely this is not how the majority of the OFF festival participants dress every day. The emphasis on stylization is so strong that even one of the students working with me changed her hairstyle in the salon at the festival. Ozora, in turn, attracts people fond of “ethno” and “tribal” fashion (Figures 3-5). Feathers in the hair, necklaces with animal tusks, jewelry made of stones and wood, colored trousers and huge tattoos inspired by ethnic designs (mainly Native American and Maori) are the main elements of the festival style. The most prized practice made possible through participation in the O.Z.O.R.A. Festival are the many hours of dancing to the music played by the changing DJs. The often repeated opinion is that the dance – performed alone, often with closed eyes – allows one to completely free oneself from everyday life.

Another important motif for the festival turned out to be freedom. Many participants understand freedom not only in the terms of escape from work, routine and responsibilities. Rather, they speak about a state of mind:

“I feel pure freedom here. I can feel the positive energy of the people, music and place. I can get away from everything negative. It’s great!” (Krista, 32 years old, O.Z.O.R.A.)



Figure 4. O.Z.O.R.A. Festival, Ozora, Hungary. (Photo by: Waldemar Kuligowski, August 2015)

“I was just thinking that, yes. I just feel free here, because it’s as if problems disappear here. I function differently here. I really feel free here. It is so... I feel a bit silly about it. Because it’s as if very little is needed, and exactly... I do not know how to understand it, but yes.” (Ania, 32 years old, OFF)

The audience at each of the studied festivals looks for freedom in several different areas: politics, art and spirituality. In Jarocin, freedom is associated primarily with the possibility of expressing political opposition, which is closely associated with the image of the festival created in the 1980s. The role of the former state police has been taken over by security guards from a private company. Their work is observed and commented upon. Each instance of behavior by employees of the security company which could be interpreted as violence or a restriction on the freedom of the participants is immediately challenged. Moreover, the audience spontaneously reacts to the statements made by performers which relate to political issues or are a commentary on current events. The old editions of the festival are often mentioned, as are punks’ clashes with the police and the problems performers had with censorship. This context gives rise to the statement that the modern editions of Jarocin Festival after 2005 “are not the same as before,” that the festival “died” and became similar to other “ordinary” festivals. Festival newspapers, however, are full of references to punk aesthetics, and the city center boasts a statue of a leather boot (“glan”), which clearly indicates which profile is desired by the festival’s organizers. Its uniqueness is supposed to grow out of its sub-cultural past.

In Katowice, freedom is invested mainly in the sphere of music and its reception. The OFF Festival provides, as asserted by its participants, access to little-known



Figure 5. O.Z.O.R.A. Festival, Ozora, Hungary. (Photo by: Waldemar Kuligowski, August 2015)

music bands, representing niche genres. Participation in this festival gives a sense of participation in an exclusive, even elitist event. In the program of 10th edition of the festival, the opening text by the organizers, entitled “Ten years of swimming upstream,” reads thus: “Every edition is a celebration of alternative music (...). It’s a celebration of freedom, imagination and individualism.” It is often stressed that the music played at OFF is “difficult” and requires that one be competent enough to receive its message. We can say that the dominant attitude here is a certain type of musical snobbery (Figure 6). “These are not random people – said one of the participants – they came here to listen to ambitious music.” It is linked to a popular attitude of listening to music alone, yet surrounded by a crowd of people. Freedom at the OFF Festival is associated with three values: a refined music, personal experience of the music and the organization of the festival, which ensures the impression of intimacy. The word “OFF” in the name of the festival is therefore regarded as its symbolic essence, both in terms of music content, as well as to the audience, which self-defines itself in this way.

In the context of these two festivals, the O.Z.O.R.A. Festival creates an event of the most complete character. Organizers refer directly to the tradition of New Age and hippie ideology. They use slogans, such as “sound of universe,” “Goa state of mind,” “redefining the ancient tribal ritual for the 21st century” (the titles of articles from “The Ozorian Prophet”). There is a gate leading to a separate area of the festival which says “Welcome to Paradise.” According to these slogans, the participants of the festival associate freedom with a state of mind and spirit, which is expressed through many hours of uninhibited dancing, the possibility of meditation, taking psychedelic drugs and a particular way of dressing, and more generally, a lifestyle (the festival area is open to the public for



Figure 6. OFF Festival, Katowice, Poland. (Photo by: Waldemar Kuligowski, August 2015)

several weeks, during which many people lead a normal life there, often with family and children). Participants often say that O.Z.O.R.A. is a “festival with the message.” Depending on the given individuals’ country of origin, the message is associated with Hungary (Viktor Orbán’s criticized governments) or with the modern world as such.

The main motivations for participation in music festivals involve, therefore, the need for rest and relaxation as well as the search for an area of freedom – political, artistic or spiritual. The audience at each of the three festivals described above was specifically motivated by these reasons, although to varying degrees. There is no doubt that the organizers of the Jarocin, OFF and O.Z.O.R.A. festivals have partly created these needs. Evoking the legend of the libertarian and sub-cultural festival (Jarocin), creating the image of a festival with difficult music for a competent public (Katowice), and promoting the festival as a psychedelic “state of mind” (Ozora) are the key strategies of the organizers. They have both an ideological and a marketing dimension. The map of European festivals is currently so dense that every organizer is forced to seek out a new formula that will allow them to differentiate themselves from the competition. In this aspect, there is often a conflict between authenticity and commercialism. The audience of the festivals in Jarocin, Katowice and Ozora has accepted the strategies of the organizers, treating them as authentic.

This does not mean that it is impossible to find values other than relaxation and freedom among the motivations of the participants attending the festivals. Many people openly talk about the festival as an opportunity to have fun, often involving alcohol or drugs, or as an opportunity for casual sex. Here are two common opinions (the second of which contains quite an original image):

“For me it’s rest, although it’s common knowledge that you drink from morning to morning. Yesterday we finished about half past seven in the morning. But we’re alive, we’re breathing. There’s a group of friends, it’s fun, and that’s what it’s about. We have recharged in safe company, without aggression, completely relaxed. We came here to rest.” (Jajco, 48 years old, Jarocin)

“To feel the festival, you have to wake up in a tent at eight in the morning, you have to feel the stench of the porta-potty, you have to feel the dust and sand in your teeth, and the general fatigue and several-day intoxication. That’s how real rock ‘n’ rollers do it, real to the bone. I know what I’m saying. They should create a festival-scented Christmas tree air freshener for cars.” (Rafał, 42 years old, Jarocin)

CONCLUSION

Do the above motives of music festival participants allow them to be considered a realization of Roger Caillois’ holiday? In my opinion – in terms of the attitudes of their audiences – festivals can indeed be considered holidays, as defined by Caillois.’ Firstly, the festival is a holiday at the level of the description of practices. A holiday is, as Caillois remarked, a collective event full of noise, shouting, and spontaneous gestures. Modern festivals are no different. The dominant practice there is to be among an enthusiastic crowd, crossing the norms of behavior, the desire to “use”, both in terms of consumption and emotion. The experience of a “collective vertigo” is expressed during festivals in ecstatic, sometimes hours-long dancing sessions. Elation is often accompanied by the consumption of alcohol and other drugs. What people look for at festivals is the freedom of manners, allowing for the acceptance of “dietary and sexual sacrilege” and various “contrary acts.” Binge drinking, drug use, ecstatic dancing till one loses strength, stylized outfits and hairstyles, casual sex and the atmosphere of enthusiasm and elation – “That is the very law of festival” (CAILLOIS 2001:97–98). The rules of the festival are contrary to the rules of everyday life.

Secondly, the festival is a holiday at the level of the description of values. As I indicated, many participants treat their attendance at festivals as detachment from everyday life. This creates a sense of continuum: from being on vacation, through leisure time, to experiencing freedom in the political, artistic, and spiritual dimensions. Festival freedom is seen as a medium for strength and energy recovery, a free expression of one’s identity, views and lifestyle. The values associated with participation in the festival are treated as unique and impossible to realize elsewhere.

At both the level of practices and values, contemporary music festivals exhibit many similarities to Caillois’ *Théorie de la fête*. As Caillois emphasized, holidays/festivals “constitute an interruption in the obligation to work, a release from the limitations and servitude of the human condition.. the moment in which the myth or dream comes alive” (2001:126). Although they use different words, festival participants perceive contemporary music festivals in the same way. It is therefore possible and useful to update the concept of the French anthropologist as it allows for the placement of the phenomenon of the festival in a different context. Of course, there is a fundamental, typological difference between tribal societies and their holidays and festivals. In my opinion, however, the “possibility of festival,” in Caillois’ terms, today is provided first

and foremost by music festivals. For thousands of people, the festival is a place of rest, fun, elation, belonging to a community, or even freedom at different levels. For many participants, it is a holiday in its purest form; a festival, the subject of which is music, but the purpose of which is mental rest. It is also reasonable to use the modern concept of myth in relation to festivals: in Jarocin, it is a libertarian myth formed in the past; in Katowice, the myth of artistic value, while in Ozora, the myth of free existence.

In this context, the concept of festivalization mentioned above requires redefinition. In the analyzed cases, festivalization is not reduced to specific, collective forms of consumption. It also means the possibility to create specific space-times of rest and freedom. In other words, festivalization is a possibility of festival. The organization of music festivals is consistent with the philosophy of fragmented culture, in which different groups can express their identities and practice their lifestyles, even if such a possibility lasts only for a few days. Finally, we find in it yet another feature of Caillois' holiday: festival paroxysm; ecstasy and madness are predictable, short-term and reversible. From the festival, one must return to everyday life.

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Waldemar Kuligowski is a professor at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (UAM). Recently, he has been acting as a member two committees of the Polish Academy of Sciences: The Committee of Cultural Studies and The Committee of Ethnological Studies. He is also an editor-in-chief of "Czas Kultury" [Time of Culture], a Polish socio-cultural quarterly. He is a member on the editorial boards of the scientific journals: "Slavia Meridionalis" and "Historia i Kultura" [History and Culture]. He has conducted fieldwork in Poland, Germany, Uzbekistan, Spain, Serbia, Hungary, and Albania. His research interests focus on the theory of culture, reflexive ethnography, globalization, the anthropology of motorway and festivals and festivalization.

The Elimination of the Tibolddaróc Cave Dwellings; Non-Gypsies in the CS Housing Program¹

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Abstract: This paper presents the case of the elimination of cave houses in Tibolddaróc in the socialist era with the help of the affordable housing program implemented by the 2/1965 ÉM-PM regulation. The housing program aimed to eliminate poor living condition in slums where Gypsy* and non-Gypsy people lived. Contrary to popular belief, 30% of the people living in the settlements “not complying with social requirements” were non-Gypsies, according to the settlement survey of 1964. Most surveyed non-Gypsy dwellers lived in cave houses, barracks, miner colonies or family houses. To provide a comparison, the author found it important to investigate the case of cave-dwellings in Tibolddaróc, where a well-definable group of non-Gypsies were accepted into the affordable housing program. In addition to demonstrating the elimination process in the locality, the author describes the discrepancies in the execution of the affordable housing program as compared to the original plan aimed at the Gypsy population. Furthermore, the paper reflects on the role of the socialist regime and its responsibility in the favorable or detrimental outcome of the elimination program.

Keywords: socialist era, forced assimilation policy of gypsies, affordable housing program, cave houses

* Proof-reader’s note: The term “Gypsy” was the standard expression denoting the ethnic group in question in the historical period examined in this study. Today, the same ethnic group is generally designated with the term “Roma”.

¹ I owe thanks to Dr. András Hajnáczy, in addition to the residents of Tibolddaróc, for without them this study would not have been possible. This paper was first published in 2013: A tibolddaróci barlanglakások felszámolása avagy nem cigányok a CS-lakás programban. *Valóság* 56(10):80–98.

On the hillside standing at attention
 the damp, mouldy, stank, dark cellar caves,
 announcing for centuries accusation,
 darkness from their dumb miserable graves.
 Frightened, startled children's quiet crying sighs
 in the walls and corners sits silent.
 This is where we past! For everyone's eyes
 yesterday's history exposed, defiant...²

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study, is to present the story of the elimination of cave dwellings in Tibolddaróc during the Socialist period. The township included non-gypsies in the CS Housing program (CS = *csökkentett értékű, csökkentett komfortfokozatú*, decreased value, decreased comfort level), which may seem surprising in light of the academic literature to date. Despite the perception in academic circles, thirty percent of those living in “*settlements with unacceptable social circumstances*” were classified in the 1964 settlement survey as not being Gypsies. That is to say that non-Gypsies were included in co-directive number 2/1965. (II. 18.) by the Construction Ministry and Finance Ministry CS housing program. The non-Gypsies documented during the survey typically lived in cave dwellings, parade barracks, mining colonies or servants' housing. Furthermore, it often happened that both Gypsies and those classified as non-Gypsies lived together in slum settlements.

In light of the statistics mentioned above, I felt it important to study the elimination of the Tibolddaróc cave dwellings, because a well definable group of non-Gypsies in the township were included in the social housing program. That is to say that those living in the Tibolddaróc caves can be viewed as control group. In addition to the examination of the settlement elimination it made it possible for me to seek an answer to the issue of whether a substantial difference appeared in the execution of the CS housing program in the examined township compared to the initiatives affecting the Gypsy populace. To put the question another way, to what degree did the prejudices relating to the Gypsy populace deform the execution and results of a social housing program. The latter approach is important because via the examination of the Tibolddaróc cave dwellings the CS housing program can be examined without the factors of ethnic conflicts and prejudice. In other words, the focus can be placed on the CS housing program itself, thus placing the social housing program at the centre of this approach rather than discrimination facing the Gypsy populace.

In the course of my research, I examined documents kept in the National Archives of Hungary, the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County archives and in the mayoral office of Tibolddaróc. Furthermore, I engaged in two weeks of on-site research in the township, during which I conducted eight half-hour interviews in addition to surveying numerous cave dwellings and taking photographs of them.

² Detail from “Tibolddaróc” poem by Gyula Borsodi, September 25, 1955, translated by Andrew Mile. In: SZALAY – G. NAGY 1988:4. Gyula Borsodi (a.k.a. Gyula Pléh) (1925-1990), journalist, broadcast reporter, teacher, agricultural expert. He worked as a staff member of the Hungarian news agency MTI and the daily newspaper Észak-Magyarország (Northern Hungary).

ABOUT CAVE DWELLINGS

Artificial cave dwellings and farm buildings have been created in several parts of Hungary in rocks or loess walls according to the given environment. In the northeastern parts of Hungary, at the foot of the Bükk Mountains and in Zemplén, the caverns were carved into rhyolite tuff, near Budapest and in the mountains of northeastern Transdanubia, in the Gerecse and Vértes Mountains, into limestone. The caverns, whether revealed during a boom in stone quarrying or intentionally constructed, served as a temporary and later permanent accommodation for the miners and later the residents of settlements surrounding the mines.

At the turn of the 20th century, in the Budafok area near Budapest and in the Kőbánya area on the Pest side, cellars carved into limestone were created not only by quarrying activities but also for grape production. The cellar systems that have formed over the centuries were from the end of the 19th century also used as a wine storage by wholesalers. In the 1870-80s, phylloxera destroyed a large part of the vineyards, and the former cellars received a new function. At the end of the 19th century, the mining, manufacturing and construction industry needed a mass workforce, which they recruited from among poor agrarians. The new settlers created hundreds of cave dwellings from the cellars that lost their function due to the phylloxera epidemic, some of which were in use until the middle of the 20th century. In Budafok and Tétény, pits were dug into large flat surfaces of limestone, thus forming the inner courtyards from which several apartments opened. In 1896, English traveler Ellen Browning was reminded by the living conditions of the 2500 cave-dwellers living in the Budafok promontory of the Granada Gypsies, but she



Figure 1. Cave house carved into rhyolite tuff in Sirok (1939) (FORTEPAN: 11485) http://download.fortepan.hu/_photo/download/fortepan_11485.jpg (accessed January 8, 2018.)



Figure 2. Cave house carved into loess (1932) (FORTEPAN: 58227) Photo of Lajos Horváth http://download.fortepan.hu/_photo/download/fortepan_58227.jpg (accessed January 8, 2018.)

was surprised to find that the apartments were cleaner and more livable than she had imagined, and she became enthused about renting an apartment for herself.³

The cave dwellings in Bükkalja reveal the high level of expertise of the builders, having provided living conditions that met the needs of the era. Although most of the dwellers came from the impoverished layers, in some settlements even wealthier families lived in such constructions.

Caves built into loess walls have long existed in many parts of the country, mainly in the hills of Transdanubia, on the banks of the Danube, and on the shores of Lake Balaton. Like the caves carved into stone, the mining of the sand used for construction also created the caves used as cellars and dwellings. Although these caves were used mostly by poorer people (e.g., in Somogy), vineyard farming occasionally provided a higher standard of living, therefore in many settlements they preferred to move to such a habitat. Along the Danube, settlements and streets were built in this way. Houses carved into loess are less timeless than those carved into stone, thus most of them are now ruined.

Throughout the 20th century, the inhabitants of cave dwellings were gradually replaced everywhere by the poorer layers due to phylloxera, industrialization and social changes. In the second half of the 20th century, during socialism, the leaders of the settlements sought to eradicate the cave dwellings for social and health reasons.

Some of the stone cave dwellings now serve as museums, tourist accommodations, and artist colonies. Such a replica of a cave dwelling can be visited at the Skanzen Open Air Ethnographic Museum in Szentendre. A small museum in Budafok and Szomolya can also be visited. In Noszvaj, the abandoned cave dwellings are used by sculptors as an artist colony.

³ HOLLÓ 1998.10.

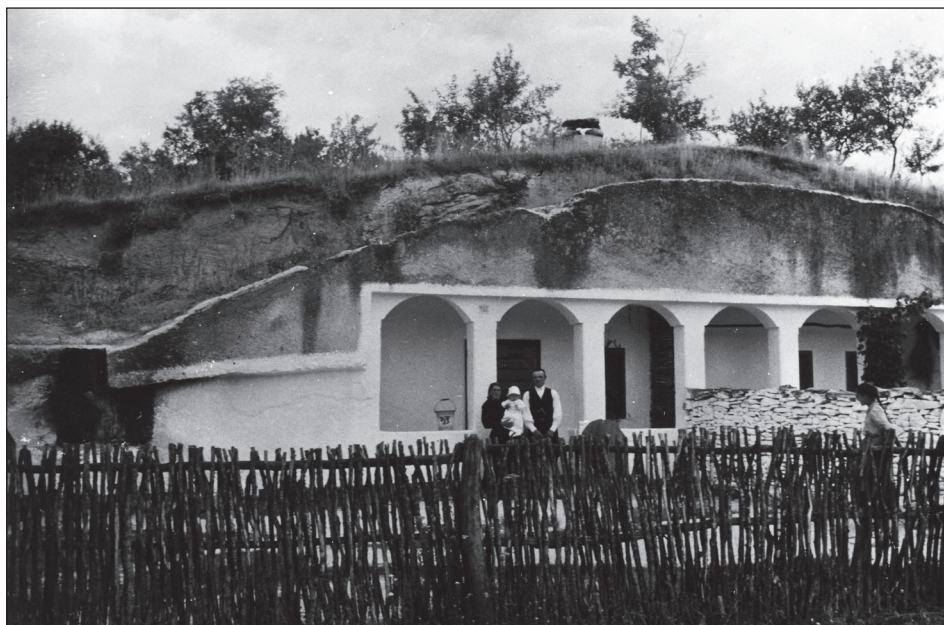
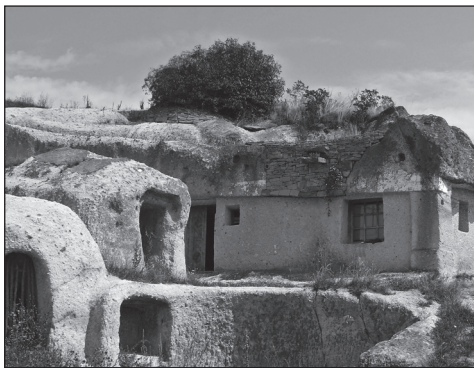


Figure 3. Cave house in Noszvaj (1935) (FORTEPAN: 130112) Photo of Károly Nagy http://download.fortepan.hu/_photo/download/fortepan_130112.jpg (accessed January 8, 2018.)



Figure 4. The living room of the cave dwelling museum in Szomolya. www.szomolya.net (accessed January 8, 2018.)



Figures 5-6. Noszvaj cave dwellings used as an artist colony (fotó: wikimedia)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Noszvaj#/media/File:Noszvaj,_cave-dwellings.jpg (accessed January 8, 2018.)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Noszvaj#/media/File:Barlanglak%C3%A1sok_Noszvajon19.jpg (accessed January 8, 2018.)

PREVIOUSLY

“Caves in the Bükk Mountains. Ottó Herman, [...] just as on the Heves side of the Bükk, a whole system of cave dwellings were discovered on the Borsod (side). The cave dwellings are inhabited by good Hungarian people.”⁴ – as reported to the sensation of the public by the *Természettudományi Közlöny* (Natural Sciences Journal). Ottó Herman was the first to academically approach the cave dwellings on the south side of the Bükk. He did not publish the findings of his research, but the journal he kept during his field work preserved his collected knowledge for later generations (BAKÓ 1977:77).⁵

A few years later, the first academic discourse appeared, penned by Zsigmond Bátky in the columns of the *Néprajzi Értesítő* (Ethnographic Notice). This short text, entitled *Cave Dwellings in Borsod County*, contained ethnographic and topographic data and presented the cave dwelling of Szomolya, including photographs (BÁTKY 1906:216–217). Moreover, it provided some reference to the time when the cave dwellings on the south side of the Bükk were dug: “It is said that they came into fashion 60-70 years ago through residents moving in.”⁶

In the fifth volume of the 1922 monograph by Dezső Malonyay, entitled *The Art of the Hungarian People*, he summarised the knowledge to date of the cave dwellings in Hungary. The short article had data concerning the cave dwellings at the foot of the Bükk Mountains, in addition to photographs, which seem mainly to have been taken from the study by Zsigmond Bátky (MALONYAY 1922:197–202).

⁴ Természettudományi Közlöny, 1901. XXXIII. volume 377. book, 54.

⁵ Ottó Herman’s journal can be found in the Néprajzi Múzeum (Museum of Ethnography) collections under the code: EA 000182/4. Ottó Hermann examined the Bükk cave dwelling twice, on 20 December 1900, and in July 1901.

⁶ Ibid 216.

Cave dwellings in Bükkalja in light of the 1930 census (MEZEY 1934:212)

Settlement name	Dwellings			Population		
	Total dwellings by number	Cave dwellings		Total population by number	Cave dwellers	
		By number	Total population in %		By number	Total population in %
Andornak	172	2	1,16	789	3	0,38
Bogács	515	3	0,58	2278	12	0,53
Cserépfalu	500	12	2,40	2077	36	1,73
Cserépváralja	213	50	23,47	973	216	22,19
Kács	169	22	13,01	818	114	13,93
Kristály	295	76	25,76	1470	366	24,89
Noszvaj	406	70	17,24	1249	249	19,93
Ostoros	454	120	26,43	1925	450	23,37
Sály	403	55	13,64	2043	270	13,21
Szomolya	502	188	37,45	2204	866	39,29
Tibolddaróc	453	215	47,46	2439	1459	59,82
Total	4082	813	19,92	18265	4041	22,12

The circumstance of cave dwellings became more widely known to the general public through the example of Tibolddaróc in 1929, with the help of the daily paper *Magyar Jövő* (Hungarian Future). The author of the published article painted a relatively positive image of the cave dwellings in Tibolddaróc: “1,150 souls live in 168 cave dwellings in Tibolddaróc, in the most primitive of circumstances. (...) The inhabitants are attached to the cave dwellings and do not desire properly built homes (...) the inhabitants, in terms of development and lifespan, do not fall behind other residents of the village (...) they cling to the cave dwellings, where their ancestors lived.” Quoted by (BAKÓ 1977:31–32)

In the 1930's, the *Zöld Kereszt* (Green Cross) journal published several studies dealing with the social and public health situation in the model township Mezőkövesd. Among these, a 1934 article by Margit Mezey, entitled *Cave Dwellings*, stands out. In contrast to the author of the Hungarian Future article, Mezey brutally confronts the readers in great detail with regards to the world of the cave dwellings in the Mezőkövesd township: “Their lifestyle is primitive, and limited to achieving only the basic necessities. (...) The damp, airless caves are a den for rachitis, and glandular tuberculosis is common in

children, who are often anaemic and of weak build.” (MEZEY 1934:214) Furthermore, the author of the study tries to indicate the weight of this problem by calling attention to the fact that more than eight hundred cave dwellings were found in only fourteen of the thirty villages in the Mezőkövesd township surveyed during the 1930 census. In the attached table, it was evident that the majority of cellar dwellings were noted in Tibolddaróc. Almost a third of the cave dwellers in Mezőkövesd township lived in Tibolddaróc, and more than a fourth of the cave dwellings were located there (MEZEY 1934:211–222).

In the 1930s, 60% of the population lived in cave dwellings carved into the side of the vineyards above the village of Tibolddaróc. The cave dwellings of Tibolddaróc gained publicity in the mid-1930s through the mediation of the Minister of the Interior, whose initiative stimulated the influential personalities of the era, politicians, various companies and organizations. The charitableness of the statesmen was influenced not only by their social sensitivity but also by the recognition of the propaganda value of the action. As a result of the country-wide donation drive, many houses were built for the cave-dwellers of Bükkalja. Courtesy of the Révai Institute of Literature, a whole colony, twenty Miklós Kozma-designed model houses were built in Tibolddaróc (CSÍKVÁRY 1939:123–124). “Mikszáthfalva” opened on September 24, 1936 for 40 families.⁷ The dedication ceremony was combined with a rotund press conference.⁸ Zoltán Szabó, an influential sociographer and folk writer of the era, strongly criticized the initiative for its propaganda character and its shortcomings, both in the journal *Magyar Szemle* (Hungarian Review) and in his book *Cifra nyomorúság* (Flashy Penury, 1938). He gave a detailed account of the status of the cave dwellings in Tibolddaróc, which he mainly based on the Green Cross journal’s report. In addition, his book also gave readers a glimpse of the conflicts taking place during the construction of Mikszáthfalva (SZABÓ 1986:84–93). The writer drew attention to the fact that the parcel selected for the construction of the houses and plots was bought from the owner at a very high price. The landowner “made a significant profit from the fact that they needed his land for this social initiative. Of course, it did not even occur to him that his estate also contributed to the fact that the people of Daróc were living in such a state, because more than half of the land around the village is occupied by large estates, so they should have some social duties in that regard” (SZABÓ 1986:91).

Residents of the newly built houses had to pay twenty *pengő* a year for thirty years, which put a heavy burden on the residents involved. The residents were not allowed to furnish the houses with any of their “scrappy” furniture – they had to have furniture made by a carpenter in Mezőkövesd for serious prices. In addition, the heating and higher taxation of the houses meant an unpredictable burden for the beneficiary families, while

⁷ According to the original concept, Mikszáthfalva would have been built in the southern area of Somogy County, along the Dráva river, almost like a pioneer settlement, largely in part to the Révai Irodalmi Rt. [Révai Literary Rt.]. (SZABÓ 1937:151–158)

⁸ Some of the headlines: Megszületett Mikszáthfalva a borsodi „Abesszinia” helyén [Mikszáthfalva is born in the place of Borsod’s Abessynia] *Függetlenség* 1936, September 25. 3., Tibolddaróctól Mikszáthfalváig! [From Tibolddaróc to Mikszáthfalva!] *Új Nemzedék* 1936, September 25. 7., Felépül a borsodi barlanglakók első új lakóhelye: Mikszáthfalva [The first new residence of the Borsod cave dwellers is built: Mikszáthfalva] *Pesti Hírlap* 1936, September 25. 4., Falu épült... [A village was built...] *Függetlenség* 1936, September 25. 1.

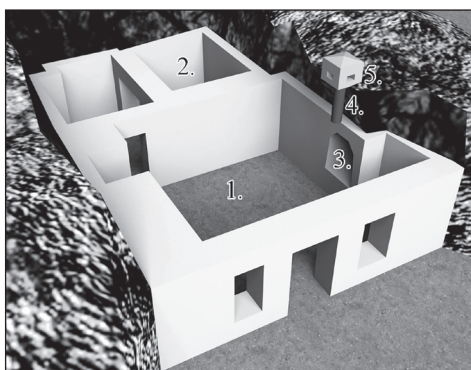
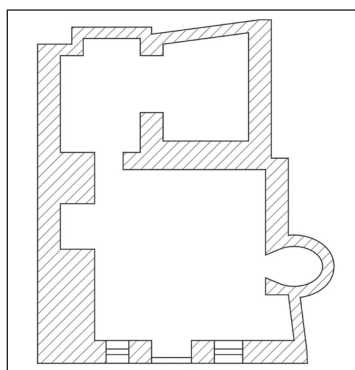


Figure 7. Layout and reconstruction drawings of apartment "A" (desing by Bence Koós based on the author's research)

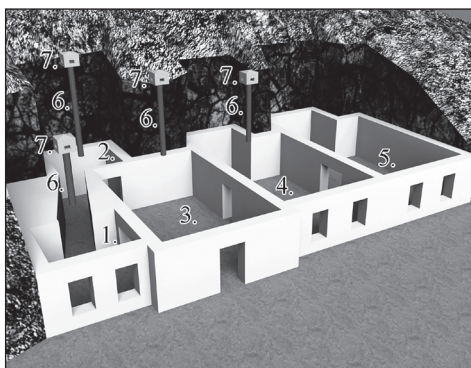
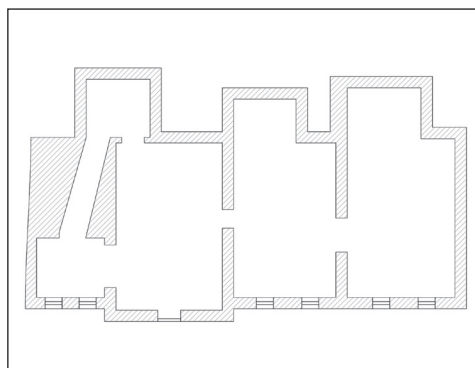


Figure 8. Layout and reconstruction drawings of apartment "B" (desing by Bence Koós based on the author's research)

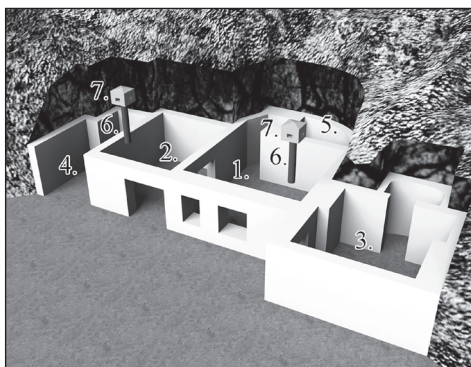
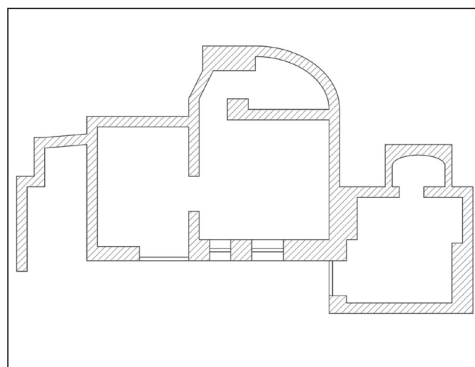


Figure 9. Layout and reconstruction drawings of apartment "C" (desing by Bence Koós based on the author's research)

the cave dwellings were taxed at much lower rates, and the heating was also cheaper as the rock held the heat well. That is why the abandoned cave dwellings were blown up by the county authorities, so that the residents of the Kozma model houses would not return to the cave dwellings.

The initiative did not solve the fundamental problem of the cave dwellers at all. On the one hand, only part of the cave dwellers was able to move to a more humane environment, and on the other hand, the reason causing them to move into the earth dwellings did not disappear. Without land reform, they did not acquire land, so the monopoly of the large estate remained, and the wages paid for their day labor were not sufficient to meet their daily needs (SZABÓ 1986:91–92). Zoltán Szabó summarized the main feature of the construction saddled with serious propaganda as follows:

“Beggars are dressed in better clothes, the poor of Tibolddaróc receive houses that eradicate poverty instead of shouting it like cave dwellings. [...] Because – and this is the saddest part – Tibolddaróc and others are not curiosities, cave dwellings are not exotic specialties of penury. They are an expressive form in the shape of a dwelling of the life manual labor affords the agricultural poverty” (SZABÓ 1937:156).

Surprisingly, despite the serious publicity, the first volume of the work entitled *The Ethnography of the Hungarians*, published in 1941, only had a few lines about the cave dwellings at the foot of the Bükk. Like the monograph entitled *The Art of the Hungarians*, it also relied on the study by Zsigmond Bátky (BÁTKY et al. 1941:146–148).

THE 1961 PARTY DECISION

On the 20th of June, 1961, the Political Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party Central Committee issued the decision entitled “Various tasks in connection with the improvement of the circumstances of the Gypsy populace”, which, among other such directives, made it a goal to eliminate Gypsy settlements. The political committee’s decision estimated the Gypsy populace to be 200,000 and classified them into three categories in terms of “integration”.⁹ In the given period, integration was taken to mean what today would be termed assimilation, a form of integration where culture would have been maintained did not even occur to higher bodies.

The single party state’s decision subtly portrayed its image of an acceptable and useful Gypsy, which looked like the following: “The integrated Gypsy has reached the general economic and cultural level of the populace, has abandoned the Gypsy way of life, and lives dispersed (among the majority population).”¹⁰ About those “*in the process of integrating*”, in addition to those Gypsies who “*have not integrated*”, it stated that they mainly live in Gypsy settlements, or wander, that is to say they live apart from the non-Gypsy populace. Furthermore, according to the documentation, in terms of employment and schooling, the latter two groups were characterised as having a “*low cultural level*”

⁹ MNL OL M-KS-288. f. 5/1961/233 ö. e.

¹⁰ MNL OL M-KS-288. f. 5/1961/233 ö. e.

and “*being a burdensome existence on society*”.¹¹ In classification, it was obvious that a defining factor was the type of housing, from which the given degree of assimilation (wandering Gypsy – living separately in a Gypsy settlement – dispersed among non-Gypsy populace) could be deduced. Therefore, the desired result was that the population of Gypsy settlements be dispersed among the non-Gypsy populace.

The party decision officially stated that the Gypsy populace was not to be viewed as a nationality (national minority)¹², and therefore they were condemned to assimilation, a tool of which was to be the elimination of Gypsy settlements labelled as hotbeds of epidemics (BERNÁTH 2002) and crime (HORVÁTH 1963:74–80; PURCSI 2004:74–80).

In addition to the intention of forced assimilation, the other important reason was to hide from the eyes of “*capitalist media agencies*”¹³ the fact that in Socialist Hungary masses of human beings were living in slums well under the minimum standard of living.

Along with the factors listed above, the true problem was pushed to the back, namely the fact that a significant portion of Hungary’s Gypsy populace were living in unacceptable and decidedly unhealthy circumstances, about which the party decree wrote the following lines:

“The number of Gypsy settlements is 2,100. As a rule, these are unhealthy, located in areas which are almost unapproachable from autumn to spring (forests, next to marshes) and where the inhabitants live in dwellings unfit for human inhabitation, in some cases in huts cut into the ground. The communal infrastructure of Gypsy settlements is extremely low and the levels of public hygiene frightening. The non-existent or poor water supply, the lack of outhouses and the neglected environment make for a hotbed for various communicable diseases.”¹⁴

¹¹ MNL OL M-KS-288. f. 5/1961/233 ő. e. This quoted statement is more informative as relates to the attitude of the authorities towards the Gypsy populace and is also informative for future generations rather than giving factual information on the situation of Gypsies.

¹² See further: (HAJNÁČSKY 2015a, 2015b)

¹³ MNL OL XXVIII-M-8 1d 3.

¹⁴ MNL OL M-KS 288. f. 5/1961/233 ő. e. According to Gabriella Lengyel, the quoted passage, in contrast to other portions of the party decision, gave an accurate description of the circumstances at a Gypsy settlement: “The description of settlement circumstances, though, is perceptive and realistic, and this should be noted in favour of the author.” (LENGYEL 2006:71) The Gypsy research done under István Kemény in 1971 also confirms the accuracy of the quoted passage. The following passage is from the conclusion on the general situation at Gypsy settlements: “The settlement’s houses are built by the Gypsies themselves, from daub or loam. They do not dig foundations and the walls are not insulated. The floors are earth, the doors and windows are bad, as most come from demolition sites. The rooms are 9-12 square meters in area. The dampness coming from the walls and floor penetrates and rots away clothing and what few and poor furnishings there are. The defective doors and windows are the sources of strong drafts, and the small size of the windows means airing out cannot be done properly. The roofing is often deficient, and so the rain falls in, and even where it is not deficient, it still soaks through. Heating is provided with a cooking range, which only warms as long as the fire is burning. Mould is common, the air is heavy and musty smelling. Colds are common, as are rheumatism, illness of the joints, tuberculosis and asthma. The lack of healthy drinking water and outhouses as well as garbage strewn about all lead to many infectious diseases, dysentery, typhus, and liver infections. The number of those with intestinal worms is high, 90 percent of the children are infected. Infant mortality is more than twice the average of the non-Gypsy populace.” (KEMÉNY et al. 1976:26)

The vice-president of the Hungarian Revolutionary Worker and Peasant Party, Gyula Kállai, issued the following directive, no. 1-72/1961, on November 8, 1961, concerning the party decision in relation to the Gypsy settlements, to the councils affected:

“Steps must be taken that those Gypsies with regular employment asking for housing be judged equally with others asking for housing. Gypsies seeking to build their own homes need to be assisted more than previously (...) Until the elimination of the Gypsy settlements, a greater degree of attention needs to be paid to increasing communal services. Health inspection and education work needs to be increased.” (HAJNÁCZY 2013:245–246)

The source mentioned above gives witness to two shocking facts: a lack of knowledge among the upper leadership of the single party state given that the free allotment of housing posts had been ended by a government directive¹⁵ in 1957, and secondly, the fact that the Gypsy populace was not only “forgotten” during the land allotment (BÁRSONY 2008:229–231), but also in the granting of council housing.

The Political Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party Central Committee put the execution of the 20 June 1961 party decision on the agenda for debate. The proposal debated at the meeting dealt especially with the lack of results in the elimination of Gypsy settlements, the background to which was the end of free housing grants and the fact that only a fraction of the those living in Gypsy settlements could meet the requirements for the offered OTP (National Savings Bank) loan. For this reason, the Political Committee instructed the Construction Ministry and the Finance Ministry to prepare a plan on how the Gypsy populace could receive preferential credit conditions for “*simpler houses*” and furthermore to provide them with “*simpler furnishings*”.¹⁶

The plan prepared by the ministries, entitled *Plan for the improvement of living conditions of the populace living in Gypsy settlements*, came before the Political Committee on 12 November, 1963.¹⁷ During the debate on the proposal, one of those present agreed with the criticism of the Construction Minister, who made the following observation:

“I hold it necessary to amend the proposal with a suggestion that the planned benefits be given to those workers who live in unhealthy or cityscape-defacing temporary housing and who meet the required conditions, and who, because of their social circumstances, are unable to improve their living conditions through their own effort. Lacking this amendment, the benefits given the Gypsy populace would not be available for the non-Gypsy populace living in similar circumstances and this could lead to tensions.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Gov’t directive 35/1957 (VI. 21.) concerning regulations on the sale of housing plots. In: *Törvények és rendeletek hivatalos gyűjteménye 1957* [Official collection of laws and directives 1957]. Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1958. 292. The allotment of free housing plots was made possible in a 1951 directive. In: Directive no. 155/1951. (VII. 14.) M. T. concerning regulatory questions on the building of individual family homes (Közigazgatási rendszám: 3.270.) (Törvények és rendeletek... 1952:259–260.)

¹⁶ MNL OL M-KS-288. f. 5/1963/293 ö. e.

¹⁷ MNL OL M-KS-288. f. 5/1963/319 ö. e.

¹⁸ MNL OL M-KS-288. f. 5/1963/319 ö. e.



Figure 10. Family photo in the yard of the cave house in Tibolddaróc in the early 1960s (In author's possession)

The passage in the quoted document resulted in non-Gypsies being included in the CS Housing program, with the good intent of avoiding any possible tensions between the Gypsy and non-Gypsy populace. Later sociological study results clearly show that a significant portion of the non-Gypsy populace felt the support lent the gypsy populace in this area to be unjust anyway, despite what had been hoped (PÁRTOS 1979:45–69; TOMKA 1991:8–36). In part due to the aforementioned factors, the stereotypes concerning Gypsy housing culture became widespread, the symbolic one in reference to how “Gypsies burn hardwood flooring”.¹⁹

GOVERNMENT DECISION NO. 2014/1964

As a result of long discussions and organisational work by the respective ministries, the president of the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers Peasants government issued decision no. 2014/1964 on 4 May, 1964, concerning the “*the elimination of settlements with unacceptable social circumstances*.”²⁰ The proposed decision was the first such document which made it a goal to eliminate the cave dwellings, similar to the Gypsy settlements, within the framework of the CS housing program: “Of the 200,000 Gypsies in our homeland, about 140,000 still live in 2,100 Gypsy settlements. 25,000 homes would be needed for the housing of these individuals. Furthermore, a few thousand families live in circumstances akin to those at the Gypsy settlements, for example in cave dwellings,

¹⁹ The stereotypes of the given period were shared by some of the researchers still referenced today. (DIÓSI 1981:83; ERDŐS 1989:132)

²⁰ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 2014/1964 (367d)

parade barracks; their housing also has to be taken care of.”²¹ In the socialist period, most of the cave dwellings in question were not occupied by Gypsies (BAKÓ 1977; GERELYES 1987; MEDNYÁNSZKY 2009), that is to say basically that non-Gypsies were included in the social housing program created for Gypsies. The name of the government decision name reflected the fact that it extended the scope of the directive to include non-Gypsies. In place of Gypsy settlements the term “*settlements with unacceptable social circumstances*” was used in the documents issued by the party organisations, under which they denoted “*Gypsy, cave, and other similar housing settlements*”.²²

In July 1964, the Implementation Committee of the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Council debated as the second item on its agenda the report entitled *The situation of the Gypsy populace in our county*. According to the minutes, the reception of the government decision²³ for the elimination of the settlements was especially good.²⁴ The decision was partly seen as a possible way to end the cave dwellings: “According to the head of the construction-transportation and water department, government directive no. 20145 will provide a mode and possibility to solve the situation of the cave dwellings.”²⁵ Surprisingly, at the Implementation Committee meeting, where members were supposed to be discussing the situation of the Gypsy populace, the initial comments and then the rest reveal that the topic primarily tabled was the situation of non-Gypsies living in the cave dwellings.

As an amendment to decision no. 2014/1964 (V. 4.), the Hungarian Revolutionary Worker and Peasant Government issued decision no. 3162/1964 on 29 April 29, 1964, the first point of which proscribed the following: “The Construction Ministry, through its appropriate council bodies, should survey in detail those settlements falling under gov’t decision no. 2014/1964 and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, and the National Planning Office decide upon the pace of their elimination. This work must take into account the factor of tourism.”²⁶ The background to this might be that the top authorities did not have exact data on the number of settlements, their types and their distribution within the country. Furthermore, the earlier council reports only provided data about Gypsy settlements, in which they did not describe slums and cave dwellings inhabited by non-Gypsies.

In the interest of implementing the government decision, the Construction Ministry composed circular no. 17/1964, which ordered the councils to list all the settlements falling under the government decision. During the survey, the ministries only gave brief instructions on what was necessary for something to be classified as a settlement and whom was to be considered a Gypsy.²⁷ Government directive no. 17/1964 only wrote that: “in the interest of executing the decision, those settlements falling under its scope where at least five homes are located need to be surveyed and listed.”²⁸ In addition, the respective councils also needed to denote which of the four categories the given settlement belonged

²¹ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 2014/1964 (367d)

²² MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 2014/1964 (367d)

²³ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 71/1964

²⁴ “The Implementation Committee accords great significance to government decision no. 2014/1964./V.4./, the implementation of which will fundamentally improve the situation.” MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 71/1964

²⁵ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 71/1964

²⁶ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 3162/1964 (351d)

²⁷ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 2014/1964 (367d)

²⁸ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 2014/1964 (367d)

to: “Gypsy settlement”, “mixed settlement”, “cave settlement”, and “other settlement”. In defining the Gypsy populace, the authorities did not even proscribe this much; the classification was completely entrusted to the respective council (KERTESI – KÉZDI 1998:297). This was the reason for the imprecision to which Tünde Virág called attention in her book entitled, *Kirekesztve* (Excluded); several townships that, according to reliable sources, had Gypsy settlements, had none according to the 1964 survey (VIRÁG 2012:124).

According to the 1964 Construction Ministry survey, 222,160 individuals – 55,425 families – lived in 48,966 homes of some sort in “settlements without acceptable social circumstances”²⁹, among whom 70 percent were Gypsies, while 30 percent were classified by the respective councils as being of non-Gypsy decent (KOVÁCS 1975:19–23).

The number of settlements with unacceptable social circumstances in 1964

County	Number of homes	
	Total ³⁰	Cave dwellings ³¹
Baranya	1,608	-
Bács-Kiskun	1,408	-
Békés	873	-
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	4,792/4,350 ³³	253
Csongrád	1,801	-
Fejér	1,025	-
Győr-Sopron	463	-
Hajdú-Bihar	2,417	-
Heves	2,375	170
Komárom	755	23
Nógrád	2,941	-
Pest	2,362	195
Somogy	1,287	-
Szabolcs-Szatmár	3,161	-
Szolnok	2,508	-
Tolna	1,401	-
Vas	685	-
Veszprém	4,268	-
Zala	739	-
Counties in total	36,767	601
Budapest	12,199	-
Total	48,966	601

²⁹ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 2019/1969 (494 d)

³⁰ (Bencsik 1988:31)

³¹ (Berey 1991:37)

³² (Hajnáczky 2013:270)

From the above chart it is obvious that, with the exception of Budapest, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County was surveyed as having by far the largest number of unacceptable settlement buildings. In addition to pressure from higher bodies, this is the reason why the elimination of settlements became a burning issue in the county. Due to all of the above, the MTVB made the government decision a point on its agenda in April 1965, in addition to the execution of the 17/1964 circular. According to the proposal prepared by the Construction, Transportation, and Water Department there were 43,50 types of housing of some sorts, where 5,006 families and 23,793 individuals lived in “*settlements with unacceptable social conditions*.” (HAJNÁCZY 2013:270) The report summarised the survey of the settlements thus: “These settlements do not even meet the minimum health standards. Toilets are missing, running water, electricity and connecting roads do not exist. It would not be practical for these settlements to develop. Due to their bad reputation and because of city planning and tourism perspectives, it is desirable that these settlements be eliminated and ended.” (HAJNÁCZY 2013:270)

The implementation of the CS Housing program did not actually begin until co-directive 2/1965 (II. 18.) by the Construction Ministry and the Finance Ministry entitled “*The elimination of settlements with unacceptable social conditions*” on the implementation of government decision no. 2014/1964 (V. 4.) was issued. The directive stated the possibilities for the elimination of these settlements, in addition to going into detail on the modes of housing construction with preferential loans and their conditions. The necessary 100-150 square fathoms (1 fathom = 3.6 metres squared) was to be ensured for free by the respective councils from state owned lands. The houses were to be built by the construction cooperatives charged, or by small tradesmen according to the architectural plans and budgets provided for free by the Construction Ministry. Those individuals were eligible to participate in the CS Housing Program who lived in the area defined by the directive, had at least two years of employment, had an income of more than 1000 forints a month, and had 10 percent of the approved construction costs. If those targeted met the above conditions, they received up to 90 percent of the building costs in an interest free loan, which had to be repaid in equal amounts over a period of thirty years. After five years of continuous employment, 5 thousand forints of the remaining debt was forgiven; after 10 years 8 thousand, and after fifteen years of continuous employment 12 thousand.³³

THE ELIMINATION OF THE TIBOLDDARÓC CAVE DWELLINGS

Tibolddaróc is a village in the Mezőkövesd agglomeration in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, at the foot of the Bükk Mountain, that had a population of 2,444 in 1960. More precise data about the number of people living in cave dwellings is not available from this period; the only point of reference is that they lived in nearly sixty dwellings carved into the earth. The cave dwellings were inhabited by the poorest layer of the village,

³³ Construction Ministry and Finance Ministry co-directive 2/1965. (II. 18.) ÉM-PM on the elimination of settlements with unacceptable social conditions. In: *Törvények és rendeletek hivatalos gyűjteménye 1965* [Official collection of laws and directives 1965]. Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1966:368–371.



Figure 11. Chimney hatch in the ground surface, 2011. (Photo of Tamás Hajnáczy)

usually by solitary elderly people and families with many children, where it was not uncommon for some of the children to be taken into custody by the state. Since the 1960s, the population of the settlement has declined steadily, the primary targets of emigration being the county industrial centers and Budapest. The background of the aforementioned is that a significant portion of the population of Tibolddaróc, considered to be an agricultural village, worked in the cooperative, but when it was mechanized, many people lost their livelihood. There were not many job opportunities in the village apart from the cooperative, so those who did not take up commuting were forced to move. The number of commuters reached 250 at the time, all of whom found employment in industry and in mining (Kiss 1982:41–42).

The cave dwellings of Tibolddaróc were on seven levels of the so-called hillside area at the outskirts of the town. The current remains of the cave dwellings today, recollections, and the writings of ethnographer Ferenc Bakó (Bakó 1977:31–34) indicate that the size and shape of these homes carved into the ground was quite varied. Dug in the relatively easily worked rhyolite turf, the size of these residences ranged from having one room to several rooms, a pantry and a kitchen.

In the kitchens – which most dwellings had – there was a cooking range or an open fireplace cut into the stone and plastered with clay. An exit for the smoke was made by drilling chimneys through the stone, the surface opening of which was usually covered with a chimney top carved from stone, or through a chimney pipe from the stove exiting through the exterior wall. With the exception of the pantry, every room had a chimney passage through which the stoves used for heating the rooms could release the smoke. Heating the cave dwellings was very cheap, as the stone held the heat excellently. The walls of the cave dwelling were plastered thickly with cob and painted with lye. There



Figure 12. Open fireplace, 2011. (Photo of Tamás Hajnáczy)

were even places where the wall was painted with colour or had a pattern rolled into it. The floors of the rooms were also covered in cob and then pounded smooth, after which they were painted black, so to speak, with coal.

The 1961 party decision, and the vice-presidential directive 1-72 on its implementation did not cover the Tibolddaróc cave dwellings as they were not occupied by Gypsies. Therefore, a few years passed before the town council made the elimination of the cave dwellings, the construction of garbage collectors or toilets a priority task.

It was in the first half of the 1960s, in January of 1963, that the Tibolddaróc council first began to deal with the conditions of the cave dwellings. The report on the health condition of the village inhabitants gave account of the unhealthy circumstances of the shore area, amongst which was the danger of epidemic.³⁴

A passage from a report a few months later summarises the untenable conditions in the cave dwellings:

“The council faces an important and untenable health problem. It is well known to all that the shore area cave dwellings have no garbage collection bins. The garbage, animal and human excrement are strewn all over the place by the inhabitants. In this case the last (...) complaint was made to the Health Ministry by a resident of Vörösmarty Street. During the inquiry, the neighbours and others living farther away also strew their waste about. Water streaming down takes the waste into the garden and even into the house.”³⁵

The remaining archival sources and recollections make no mention of Public Health and Epidemiology Station employees executing forced bathing as they did at Gypsy settlements, where health officials regularly conducted disinfection procedures, and often without cause, claiming prevention (BERNÁTH 2002; BERNÁTH – POLYÁK:38–45).

To solve the public health situation, the town council’s implementation committee made a decision which instructed its head to prepare a plan for the construction of toilets

³⁴ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meetings minutes] 1963, January 17. Sources relating to the town can be found in the Office of the Mayor in Tibolddaróc.

³⁵ Tibolddaróc Tanácsülés jegyzőkönyv [Council meeting minutes] 1963, April 23.



Figure 13. Abandoned cave house in Tibolddaróc, 2011. (Photo of Tamás Hajnáczy)

and large garbage collectors, with the inclusion of the residents of the hillside area.³⁶ A later decision also ordered that the respective council members organise health education work in their districts as well as public meetings about the placement of the garbage collectors.³⁷ By the end of 1963, the town council had ensured 8 garbage collection areas³⁸ and one public toilet³⁹ for those living in the caves.

The image drawn from the interviews done in Tibolddaróc seems to differ from that in the archival material. Those asked, without exception, stated that the cave dwellings were painted with lye several times a year, regularly cleaned, and that the immediate environment was kept clean as much as possible. A more serious problem was the acquisition of water, since no well could be dug in the hillside area, and therefore water for cooking and bathing⁴⁰ had to be carried up to the cave dwellings in buckets. From the information we have at hand, it can be ascertained that those living in cave dwellings were not a homogenous group in terms of health and socialisation. Presumably, a large portion of those families living in the hillside area took care as best they could to create a healthier environment, though a small portion lived in “*substandard health*” conditions.

Partly taking into account the above, and that most of the cave dwellings were inhabited by “elderly individuals, those incapable of work, or large families”, the Tibolddaróc council issued a directive in 1963 which cancelled the property tax on

³⁶ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1963, January 17.

³⁷ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1963, April 23.

³⁸ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1963, August 22.

³⁹ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1963, September 24.

⁴⁰ For more on bathing habits see (JUHÁSZ 2006)



Figure 14. Cave house used as storage in Tibolddaróc, 2011. (Photo of Tamás Hajnáczy)

houses cut into the earth.⁴¹ In the interest of executing this decision, the financial officer was entrusted with listing the cave dwellings. After several modifications, the completed list contained the addresses of 59 cave dwellings and owners.⁴² The document did not have exact information on the number of cave inhabitants. Nonetheless, it can be seen that in terms of the entire country, quite a large “*settlement with unacceptable social conditions*” was located in the area of the town (KERTESI – KÉZDI 1998:297–312).

Of the projected 800 CS House allowances (KOVÁCS 1974:46) in 1965, 70 were given to the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Council. The county leadership would have liked the entire CS housing allowance to be used exclusively for the elimination of the Tibolddaróc cave dwellings. Even so, the village council did not request the entire housing allowance,⁴³ and therefore the County Council used the remaining allowance towards helping to eliminate the Sátoraljaújhely Gypsy settlement.⁴⁴ It persisted in relocating the Gypsies among the non-Gypsy populace for the purpose of assimilation: “The Gypsy populace should not be located in closed communities, but spread out so that the changed environment would have an educational impact on them.”⁴⁵ In accordance with the previous quote, the County Council carried through its decision – which came to light in the 1964 Implementation Committee meeting – that a program meant primarily to improve the circumstances of the Gypsy populace would give the advantage to non-Gypsies.

⁴¹ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1963, July 9.

⁴² Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1963, November 26.

⁴³ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, May 11.

⁴⁴ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 74/1965

⁴⁵ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 74/1965



Figure 15. Abandoned cave house in Tibolddaróc, 2011. (Photo of Tamás Hajnáczy)

In the weeks following the County Council decision on the elimination of cave dwellings, there was complete uncertainty in the town as the council had no information on how the elimination would take place or the exact time frame. Furthermore, the “horrific news” that the beneficiaries of the CS Housing Program would be Gypsies living in the Bogács cave dwellings spread among the residents.⁴⁶ In order to clarify the concerns above, the Tibolddaróc council implementation committee turned to the township’s implementation committee.⁴⁷

The further fate of the homes dug into the earth on the hillside began to clarify by the beginning of summer. The local council carried on serious propaganda work in order to convince the residents of the hillside area to take part in the CS housing program: “(...) through loudspeakers and personal talks, the attention of the cave inhabitants was called to the benefits of construction. Of course they cannot be forced; if they do not accept it voluntarily, then they will continue to live and reside in such inhumane conditions as they live now.”⁴⁸ Despite the strong propaganda, a part of those targeted were wary of taking part in the preferential loan schemes, viewing the plots of land set aside for construction as being small.⁴⁹

The council leadership of Tibolddaróc continued its fight to convince the residents, citing as a reason that within the foreseeable future there would be no other way to end the cave dwellings: “(...) we have to again call the attention of the cave residents to

⁴⁶ For more information of the Bogács Gypsies see further: (BAKÓ 1977:28–29; SZUHAY 2004:146–148)

⁴⁷ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, May 11.

⁴⁸ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, June 8.

⁴⁹ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, June 8.



Figure 16. Abandoned cave houses in Tibolddaróc, 2011. (Photo of Tamás Hajnáczy)

this very advantageous opportunity to build, because in all probability there will not be another such opportunity soon to eliminate the cave dwellings.”⁵⁰

It is obvious from the above that the town’s council wanted to improve the living conditions of those living in the shore area, and according to the academic literature and all the archival material available, its efforts to do so were especially strong. The background to this may have been that in the housing zone of the village the pressure from higher party bodies was not to relocate Gypsies, but to integrate them completely throughout the village. In addition to this, several members of the Tibolddaróc council lived in cave dwellings, which is to say that those living on the hillside had sufficient representation of their interests.

Colleagues at the Construction, Transportation and Water Department of the county council informed the Tibolddaróc council in October of the time to launch construction and of the relevant details.⁵¹ In the interest of acquiring the necessary stone, the county Construction, Transportation and Water Department fought for the temporary reopening of the Tibolddaróc stone mine⁵² in addition to ordering the following tasks for the village council: “The free plot grants must be taken care of this year, and the applications for the OTP loans must be started so that construction may start at the earliest possible date in the spring of 1965 (...) At present, the village council’s related task is to again survey those individuals who live in the cave dwellings and want to build, and the list of names has to be sent to both the township and county council.”⁵³

⁵⁰ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, June 8.

⁵¹ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, October 19.

⁵² Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, June 8.

⁵³ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, October 19.

The respective council compiled the list of names, but had to deal with several difficulties. They were not able to allot the complete CS housing allowance because there were only 41 applicants who had the ten percent private capital required, as proscribed in the Construction Ministry and Finance Ministry Co-directive no. 2/1965 (II. 18.). Furthermore, a portion of the applicants were able to collect the required ten percent and then sold the cave dwelling condemned to demolition for a few thousand forints, and so the number of cave dwellings in the hillside area was not able to fall below the expected number.⁵⁴

The council leadership, relying on the opinion of the head of the Construction, Transportation and Water Department, entrusted the Borsod County Council Construction Company⁵⁵ with the building task, even though Construction and Finances Ministry co-directive no. 2/1965 (II. 18.) did not make this possible.⁵⁶ This may, in part, have been due to the fact that the village of Tibolddaróc - like Mikszáthfalva before it - and the still inhabited cave dwellings had received public attention in the given period, and therefore the elimination of the cave dwellings and the construction of the “model” CS housing settlement was unavoidable. The government company could have been seen as a channel for the authorities to exert greater pressure so as to ensure the efficiency of the building work and the proper construction of the houses. Secondly, the fact must not be forgotten that the CS houses were built by non-Gypsies, some of whom held more important offices in the local councils. Furthermore, in the village they counted on the communal help of other villagers⁵⁷ – despite this being a hindrance to the later construction of the doctor’s house – since a majority of the residents helped build the CS houses on the basis of family relations.⁵⁸

Following the long period of organisational work, the council held the start to the CS housing construction work in the spring of 1965 to be an explicitly positive result: “It was also on the suggestion of the council members that we made a proposal in 1963 to eliminate the cave dwellings in some way. It is a great pleasure that in 1964 we had several successful discussions and foreseeably the construction of 50 homes for the inhabitants of the cave dwellings can begin this spring.”⁵⁹ During 1965, 51 CS houses were built in one area along the connecting road to Tibolddaróc, next to what was once called Mikszáthfalva. During construction, it was mainly the number I architectural plan that was used, since the social circumstances of those building did not allow for anything else. CS home plan I comprised an 18m² room, a 12m² kitchen, a 3m² pantry and a 2m² front hall.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 74/1965

⁵⁵ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 74/1965

⁵⁶ “The construction of the houses can be commissioned by construction trade cooperatives (mixed trade cooperatives having a construction division), – if the builder is a farming cooperative member, or farming cooperative building brigade – or small construction tradesmen. The construction – under responsible technical direction – can be done by the builders themselves.” In: 2/1965. (II. 18.) ÉM-PM számú együttes rendelet a szociális követelményeknek meg nem felelő telepek felszámolásáról. [Construction and Finance Ministries co-directive on settlements without acceptable social conditions] In: *Törvények és rendeletek hivatalos gyűjteménye 1965* [Official collection of laws and directives 1965]. Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1966. 370.

⁵⁷ See further: (Sík 1988)

⁵⁸ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, June 8.

⁵⁹ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1964, January 18.

⁶⁰ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 74/1965

Based on the interviews done in Tibolddaróc, it was obvious that the participants had risen above their early suspicions and were highly appreciative of their newly built houses; though living in a reduced comfort house, they were in healthier conditions than the cave dwellings.

According to the known archival material, in addition to the interviews done on site, the group of CS houses in Tibolddaróc were built differently from CS houses constructed for the inhabitants of the Gypsy settlements, with significant differences in quality, location and the discourse that accompanied the construction.

Numerous problems arose throughout the entire period of the social housing construction program, especially with regards to the shoddy quality of the CS houses for the Gypsy populace. In the background of this lay the applicants' lack of ability to represent their interests in addition to the small tradesmen's desire for extra profit (BERKOVITS 1980:18–21; LENGYEL 1982:151–152). The sloppy work of the small tradesmen might also be assumed to be due to prejudice facing the Gypsy populace, although it should be remembered that during the Socialist era numerous incidences of neglect were also apparent in the houses intended for the non-Gypsy populace (BERKOVITS 1980:65–72; CSIZMADY 2008:54). In contrast, the construction and quality of the CS houses in Tibolddaróc had no faults. The reason for this may in part be that for propaganda reasons the Borsod County Council Construction Company was entrusted with building a model CS housing area. Furthermore, the housing applicants took part in the construction work as a community, thus affecting the quality of the houses being built, and there interests were better represented due to the community involvement (SÍK 1988:118–135). In her book entitled *The elimination of settlements with unacceptable social circumstances*, Katalin Berey concluded that problems with the quality of the built CS houses could have been prevented best with communal work, but during her research she observed a lack of this factor (BEREY 1991:15).

The built CS houses were not erected on the peripheries of the village or far from the town in areas with high ground water and unfit for construction, but along the access road. That is to say that those arriving in the village, or a “stranger” passing through, would immediately see the CS houses. The CS houses built for the Gypsy populace in Gypsy settlements (FALUDI 1964:17–18; LEMLE n. y.:215) were mainly hidden from the eyes of outsiders by the respective councils.

The quoted sources are important to approach from the perspective of discourse analysis as it also calls attention to another important difference. The sources reveal that the local representatives of the authorities were especially positive about the elimination of the Tibolddaróc cave dwellings: “that the construction work can begin all the earlier”, “also the initiative of the council members”, “we happily announce”. The opposite appears in the documentation connected to the elimination of the Gypsy settlements since the councils had to deal with the question of settlement elimination under pressure from higher authorities and as a part of the system of central planning with constant reproach and evaluation. Therefore, the discourse is defined by “must” in addition to making excuses for sabotaging the elimination of the Gypsy settlements.⁶¹

⁶¹ For more on the discussion of the period see further: (FEITL 2008: 257–272; FÜZES – MÁRFI 2003; FÜZES – MÁRFI – ROZS – VÖRÖS 2005; KOZÁRY 2008: 265–274; MAJTÉNYI 2008: 456–474; MEZEY 1986: 237–318; NAGY 2010)

With the elimination of a portion of the Tibolddaróc cave dwellings the respective council had to confront the fact that the abandoned cave homes were beginning to be inhabited again within a short time. The reason for this was that the participants in the CS housing program had to have 10 percent of the building costs beforehand, sums which they were often only able to amass by selling or renting out the cave homes.⁶² Another reason for the minimal decrease in the number of inhabited cave dwellings may have been that in these earthen homes dug into the side of the hill several generations often lived together and only the nuclear family moved into the CS houses, leaving the grandparents behind.

The difficulty of eliminating the cave dwellings was also discussed by the County Council Implementation Committee, which approved the Township Council Implementation Committee secretary's suggestion that a declaration be signed by the cave inhabitants that they agree either to the implosion of their cave home or its being rendered uninhabitable following their move. Furthermore, the County Council's Implementation Committee stipulated that the Tibolddaróc council take effective measures against the re-habitation of the cave dwellings in addition to composing a directive forbidding the re-occupation of a cave dwelling.⁶³

In November 1965, the village council, in order to implement the position of the county leadership, issued decision no. 37/1965, effective immediately, which ordered the following:

"The cave dwelling shall become empty once vacated. As the cave dwellings are unhealthy, the council forbids moving into the empty cave dwellings. It orders the council's implementation committee to bring this to the attention of the populace via loudspeaker, stating that occupancy of the empty cave dwellings is hereby forbidden and that if someone does move into an empty cave dwelling despite the notification, the implementation committee will take immediate steps to ensure that the given cave dwelling is vacated."⁶⁴

The County council's position and the decision quoted above seems to have handled the issue radically, but in relation to the Gypsy settlements it was much less so: "The experience in Felsőzsolca showed that the demolition of the emptied buildings was only possible with help from armed authorities in order to stop individuals from moving into the settlement and to decrease the number of inhabitants."⁶⁵ An obvious difference is that while non-Gypsies were asked to sign a declaration and were governed by a regulation, armed authorities were mobilised for the inhabitants of the Gypsy settlement.

Later, during the elimination of the Gypsy settlements, the use of armed force was made legal by "top secret" document no. 3254/1967 issued by the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers Peasant Government (HAJNÁČZKY 2013b:30–31).⁶⁶ Moreover, this was the government that made the forced resettlement of Gypsy settlement communities possible

⁶² MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 74/1965

⁶³ MNL BAZML XXIII-2/a 74/1965

⁶⁴ Tibolddaróc Tanácsülés [Council meeting minutes] 1965, November 22.

⁶⁵ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 74/1965 In Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, in the early 1960s, before the CS-housing program the Felsőzsolca Gypsy settlement was eliminated first.

⁶⁶ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b 3254/1967 (429 d)

at the end of the 1960's, as uncovered by the 1971 Gypsy study done by István Kemény (KEMÉNY et al. 1976:27–30).

The Tibolddaróc council ordered the elimination of the remaining cave dwellings in December 1969, and within a short time began the preparatory work. It ensured 23 housing plots in the area of Mikszáthfalva in addition to a few throughout the area of the village. Furthermore, the council acquainted the applicants with Construction and Urban Development Ministry directive no. 10/1969⁶⁷ concerning the construction procedure in addition to launching talks with higher political bodies regarding construction of a new CS housing area.

According to a council report composed in 1970, there were still 25 cave dwellings inhabited in that period. It concluded the following about the homes at the hillside:

“Among those still living in the caves, there are quite a few elderly, retired pensioners, or individuals living on benefits who do not want to come down from there or move to a new home. There are younger ones with large families, who must move in order to raise healthy children, even more so since most of the cave dwellings are damp, crumbling and completely harmful to health. There are often cases of young couples getting married - not wanting to live with their parents - who move temporarily into the old cave dwelling left empty by their parents.”⁶⁸

Because of the above quoted lines, most of those living in caves could not participate in the CS housing program, as they did not have the 10 percent capital necessary for construction costs or the property purchase. Therefore, the village rejected the idea of constructing a new CS housing area and planned to solve the situation of the cave inhabitants with preferential loans for housing purchase.

The co-directive issued by the Construction and Finance ministries, no. 2/1965 (II. 18.) in 1966, amended the Construction Ministry's Communal Economics Head Office's circular that the CS housing allowance could be used for the purchase of homes.⁶⁹

In addition to the guaranteed benefits, the conditions for the CS housing-purchase program were the same as those for the CS housing program. One substantial difference between the two opportunities was that for the CS housing purchase the applicant could only receive a smaller loan (BERÉY 1991:10; KOVÁCS 1974:45). Purchasing a home instead of building one was more attractive for the villagers, despite the decreased amount of loan available, because even with that amount they were able to buy themselves a suitable home into which they could move immediately. In doing so, they could also avoid

⁶⁷ See further: 10/1969. (VI. 8.) ÉVM rendelet az építési engedélyezési eljárásról. [Construction and Urban Development Ministry directive on the procedure for building permits]. In: *Törvények és rendeletek hivatalos gyűjteménye 1969* [Official collection of laws and directives 1969]. Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1970. 385–394.

⁶⁸ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1970. February 9. A 1972 council report that details the village's public health conditions writes the following about the ill effects of cave dwellings: “There are many in the village with tuberculosis, which is an inheritance. In earlier years, many lived in unacceptable cave dwellings, which were a nest for the illness. Another factor that accounts for the high number is that even the smallest infection is kept on record until full recovery” Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1972, May 8.

⁶⁹ MNL BAZML XXIII-2a 79/1966

difficulties stemming from debt and the greater expenses and complications associated with construction. During the 1970s, most of the cave dwellings were eliminated using the CS housing purchase allowance. Within ten years, 13 CS home purchases and 5 CS home construction allowances were used by the local council and passed to the applicants.

The distribution of CS-Home purchase and construction allowances in the 1970's ⁷⁰

	CS-home purchase allowance	CS-home construction allowance
1971	2	-
1972	-	3
1973	2	2
1974	-	-
1975	3	-
1976	1	-
1977	2	-
1978	2	-
1979	1	-
Total	13	5

The CS housing and building applications⁷¹ give us a perspective on the social and health situation of the families living in cave dwellings. From the studied applications, it was observed that the parents living in the cave dwellings were raising 3-4 children.

⁷⁰ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1971, June 26; 1972, September 13; 1973, May 14; 1975, April 28; 1975, August 11; 1975, November 24; 1976, July 19; 1977, June 20. 1977, December 12; 1978, February 20; 1978, June 12; 1979, January 29.

⁷¹ Passages from the CS home construction and purchase applications:

"The named presented in their application, that they live in a cave home, which is unhealthy. That is where they are raising their 2 young children, 3 other children are in state care. If their housing situation were to change, those in state care could be raised at home" Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1971, May 25.

"He supported his request, stating that he lives with his wife and two small children in a cave dwelling, his wife is presently pregnant, their living conditions are unhealthy and their financial situation is also bad."

Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1977, June 20.

"He states that he lives with his 5 member family in a cave dwelling, which is one room and a kitchen. The home is damp, unhealthy, the children live in an unhealthy environment since their home does not meet even the most basic health requirements." Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1975, April 28.

"The named and his wife and their two small children, one 4 years old, the other 2 months, live in the Víg street caves. Their home is in a condition in which one cannot stay without a risk to one's health." In: Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1975, November 24.

It is worth noting as an extreme case that there were two families on the shore where the parents were caring for seven children. In addition to the crowding, the other serious difficulties were the highly unhealthy conditions, which resulted in children temporarily being taken into state care.

In the first half of the 1980s, four cave dwellings were still inhabited, a situation which the village council did not have an expedient solution since the financial circumstances of those living in the caves made them ineligible to take part in the CS housing program.⁷² We can gain a greater insight into this period from the sociographic writings of Gyula Kiss, which appeared in the *Borsod Szemle* (Kiss 1982:35–43). The author wrote thus about untenable conditions in the remaining cave dwellings:

“A woman was walking towards me. Across her shoulders was a rod, from the ends of which hung two empty buckets on clinking and clanking chains. She was going down for water, for those on the hillside do not even have a well. (...) What are these homes like? Most are composed of a room and kitchen, though there are ones that are “homier”, with a front hall from which the kitchen and the room can be accessed. The walls, the ceiling and the floor are bare. The air is foul, stuffy and steamy, and constantly breathing in the humid “fumes” drifting here and there makes one want to cough. (...) We look into a few houses. In some, the misery cannot be described, though even between the moulding walls there is relative cleanliness: all the family members have a separate toothbrush in a separate plastic cup sitting in row on the washstand.” (Kiss 1982:38–39)

In 1982, the County Council Implementation Committee ordered the distribution of the specific housing allowance ensured for the elimination of unacceptable settlements. The specific housing allowance was only put at the village council’s disposal if handicapped families, or families unable to work lived there and the given council was able to ensure the complete elimination of the settlement. The advantage in this opportunity was that those affected were able to receive better accommodation with minimal financial investment. Of the 32 housing allotments available for this purpose, the County Council Implementation Committee gave 3 to the Tibolddaróc council for the final cessation of the cave dwellings.⁷³

With the amount received from the county leadership, the village council began building the 3 CS homes in 1983, next to the CS housing development built in the first half of 1960s.⁷⁴ The Tibolddaróc council evaluated the moment thus: “The handing over of the 3 CS homes and the move of those living in the caves has ended the embarrassment of our community.”⁷⁵ The 3 homes constructed were the so-called “Pityu” (Stevie) development, alluding to the helplessness of those assisted, since they were unable to move away from the hillside on their own. Furthermore, the council documents and the interviews did have some criticism for the mentality of the last cave inhabitants. It mentioned their alcoholic lifestyle and their tendency to avoid work in addition to two families not being able to move into the houses built from this allowance.⁷⁶ Moreover, a single woman over eighty

⁷² Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1981, February 16.

⁷³ MNL BAZML XXIII-2/a 158/1982

⁷⁴ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1983, October 24.

⁷⁵ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1983, February 13.

⁷⁶ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1983, January 23

years of age living in a cave was placed in a home for the elderly according⁷⁷ to the central principles (Huszóczy 1983:277),⁷⁸ in addition to the frequently amended co-directive of the Construction and Finance Ministries, 2/1965. (II. 18.).⁷⁹

SUMMARY

Despite what has been written in academic literature, the CS housing program in Tibolddaróc did not reach out to Gypsies. In fact, numerous differences were experienced during the elimination of the cave dwellings in comparison to the initiatives that affected the Gypsy populace. The background to this was partly that in the studied settlement non-Gypsies were included in the social housing program, and so prejudices did not warp the progress of the program. In addition, the cave inhabitants had significant representation of their interests since there were several council members among them.

A portion of the cave dwellers lived in expressly unhealthy and untenable conditions. Nonetheless, forced bathing was not conducted in the village, whereas so-called public health officers regularly did disinfection within Gypsy settlement communities. There was no scandal with the quality of the CS houses, unlike those built for the Gypsy populace, where corruption on the part of the small tradesmen was common. In relation to the cave inhabitants, the idea of dispersing them did not even arise, which is to say it was not thought that they needed any “re-education”. In connection with the Gypsy populace, the concept of settling them in a dispersed fashion came up innumerable times, cited for purposes of assimilation and with a view toward increasing the educational impact of the non-Gypsy environment on Gypsy inhabitants. Cave dwellers were not affected by violence from the authorities and were forced by legal means to have their caves demolished, the populace of Gypsy settlements was subjected to the use of force in order to accomplish the same goal. The homes in Tibolddaróc were not built on the village periphery or areas with high ground water, as was commonplace with the Gypsy populace. The discourse that accompanied the elimination of the cave dwellings was measurably different from that which characterised the initiatives affecting the Gypsy populace, and the accusation of “destroying the new homes” did not arise in the studied village. The Tibolddaróc CS homes became an integral part of the village, many homes were renovated, enlarged or new ones have been built in their places since. This cannot be stated in connection with the settlements of the CS housing, which simply meant that more modern Gypsy settlements came into being.

All in all, it can be stated that the elimination of the cave dwellings in Tibolddaróc within the framework of the CS housing program was successful. The housing program in the studied village served as a solution to a local social problem on the local level. Furthermore, the research shed light on the fact that a social housing program’s outcome can be strongly affected by the attitude of those included.

⁷⁷ Tibolddaróc VB. ülés jegyzőkönyv [Implementation Committee meeting minutes] 1983, January 23.

⁷⁸ MNL OL XIX-A-83-b-3558/1975 (743 d)

⁷⁹ The co-directive of the Construction and Finance Ministries concerning the elimination of settlements with socially unacceptable conditions no. 2/1965. (II. 18.) and its amendments. In *Építészeti Értesítő* 1976(15):305.

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“Up” and “Down”. “Zomia” and the Bru of the Central Vietnamese Highlands

Part II.: Fleeing the State or Desire for Modernity? Reflections on Scott and Salemink¹

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Abstract: In the first part of my study, based on micro-historical data related to Scott’s hypothesis, I examined whether the Bru were native to their current territory. I came to the conclusion that the Bru are, if not “native,” at least *the oldest known* inhabitants of this area, and although their history is inseparable from the histories of the surrounding states, they are not a people fleeing from – and only partially because of – the latter. In part two, I examine the other side of the coin: the issue of state evasion, proving that notwithstanding my criticism, Scott still provides a deep insight into the Bourdieu-esque habitus of mountain-dwellers, including the Bru, and that his thesis is much more than just a “populist post-modern history of nowhere.” In the final part of my paper, I refute Salemink’s recent propositions contending Scott’s theory, rejecting his ideas about an alleged wish for inscription into “modernity” through communism and Christianity – a wish that he attributes to hill peoples.

Keywords: Central Vietnamese Highlands, Bru ethnohistory, lowland-highlands relationship, culture change, modernity, communism, Christianity

In my book *A la recherche des Brou perdus* [In Search of the Lost Bru] (2000), and in a 2008 paper (“Whoever came here to impose himself upon us, we have accepted his rule” – in French),² I analyzed in detail the conspicuously pacific ideology of the Bru, the lack of any political component in their ethnic identity. Examining the Bru’s encounters with the outside world,³ from the earliest records up until my fieldwork in the 1980s, I drew attention to three adaptive survival strategies:

First, withdrawal, avoiding contact, or eventually escape. In this regard, I analyzed in detail the prerequisites of such a withdrawal: Bru demography, abundance of land,

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to my colleague and friend, Mihály Sárkány for his comments on the first version of this manuscript, most of which I incorporated into my paper.

² For its Hungarian version, see VARGYAS 2002.

³ By “outside world” I mean the Vietnamese and the Siamese empires from the 16th to the 19th centuries, French colonization in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the Vietnamese Socialist Republic since 1945.

traditional mobility patterns including crossing state borders, and the like – all of them important points in Scott’s argumentation. I concluded that the Bru are a non-violent, introverted, shy and gentle people whose most typical behavior is avoiding confrontation and withdrawing into an “uninhabited” forest. Second, borrowing and incorporating a great number of foreign elements into their own culture, i.e., a surprising readiness for “becoming similar” to neighboring cultures and for culture change. In both tangible and intangible Bru culture, I pointed out a great number of foreign (Lao/Phu Tai and Viet) elements, proving the importance of this mimicry-like behavior, which – together with trade, a well-known means of maintaining peace and formally of great importance to the Bru⁴ – expresses the same fundamentally peaceful behavior. Third and last, a (seeming) readiness to accept any political domination over them and yet at the same time maintaining their ethnic identity.

The three strategies – despite their apparent contradictions – are different manifestations of one and the same habitus. Let us concentrate on the first and third points, which are in evident connection with Scott’s thesis and which are, in fact, a conspicuous illustration of his “weapons of the weak:” “foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on (...), these Brechtian or Schweikian forms of class struggle (...) [that] *typically avoid any direct, symbolic confrontation with authority*” (Scott 1985:XVII-XVIII, my emphasis).

Avoiding close contact, confrontation or foreign domination by withdrawing or escaping into the woods or, failing that, quick yet actually feigned submission to foreign domination is perhaps the Bru’s most typical behavior. Since the “discovery” of the Bru in the last third of the 19th century, our sources do not cease to mention the timid, almost cowardly nature of the Bru. Their earliest mention by the French Doctor Harmand, for example, says:

“I meet a lot of savages [during the first crossing of the territory inhabited by the Bru, G.V.] (...) As soon as they spot me, they hide or run away; when escaping is impossible, they pass by me without looking at me, pretending they had not seen me, but not succeeding in hiding their agitation. (...)”

“I come across a fairly large number of Moï⁵ (...) Upon my approach, they hide themselves cleverly in the underbrush, vanishing from sight as if they were ghosts, not even a dry twig cracking under their feet. (...)”

“In the evening, still alone, I run into a group of savages who, gripped by a mad terror at my sight, throw down their weapons and kneel before me.” (HARMAND 1879-80:302, 308 and 310; my translation.)

Reading the first two accounts, one might think that this could be attributed to fear, the avoidance of strangers, or the dreadful novelty of a first encounter with a white man. The third case, however, when the Bru – having assessed the hopelessness of armed resistance

⁴ The Bru were traditional middlemen with their elephants between the seaside and the Vietnamese Cordilleras.

⁵ *Moï* = old Vietnamese pejorative word appropriated by the French for the general description of mountain dwellers, something like “savage.”

– throw down their weapons and kneel before the mighty stranger, clearly shows that readily submitting to those more powerful and the bodily gestures associated with it are a deep-seated form of behavior in the Bru’s habitus. At the beginning of the French colonization, in 1905, the French governor (“résident supérieur”) of Quảng Trị, a certain Valentin, reports the following in his handwritten account⁶: “*I could hardly imagine a Mòï tribe that could be governed more easily than the Kha-Lu [i.e., Bru, G.V.] (...) Since they accepted the rule of the Kingdom of Annam without reservation, the mandarins of the province have been governing them to the fullest extent, without any problems*” (VALENTIN 1905:8–9, published in VARGYAS 2000:182; my translation, my emphasis).

Half a century later, in 1947, the Bru’s fear of foreign powers was even more emphasized by another unparalleled document, Lieutenant Barthélémy’s detailed military report, which deals with the issue of the designation and re-definition of the border between Vietnam and Laos, while giving a detailed account about the peoples living here.⁷ I quote: “The long-haired, almost naked Kha Leu, living in miserable huts that they move frequently, having no home industry and ignorant even of weaving, living only on rice produced on their clearings and on products of the forest, *perpetually resemble hunted animals. Fearful to the point of being despairing, suspicious even to the point of falsehood, they live in constant fear of the invaders, be they Annamite, Laotian or French*” (BARTHÉLÉMY 1947:10, published in VARGYAS 2000:267; my emphasis).

All this is in complete harmony with what I witnessed almost a century later among the “Vân Kiều” and “Tri” in Khe Sanh and Tchépone: the peaceful, almost timid, reticent attitude of the Bru. The following is an example of their first reaction to the foreign intruders and their instinctive withdrawal: on one of my trips between 1985–1989, talk of a Vietnamese surveying engineer came up, whom I did not meet myself but whose task was said to be the mapping of the country’s “uninhabited” areas for the purposes of a possible future Vietnamese resettlement project.⁸ Although during my stay, until the end of 1989, the plan remained merely a rumor, it still created a tense atmosphere among those who knew of it. Typically, one of the first reactions to my question,

⁶ This unique manuscript, *Rapport ethnique sur les mòis de Quảng Trị* [Ethnic Report on the Savages of the Province of Quảng Trị], is found in the Manuscript Archive of the EFEO Paris Library, under MS 378/1905. For its first French publication, see VARGYAS 2000:179–201 (Appendix I).

⁷ This 40-page document, both typed and printed, is courtesy of my colleague M. Ferlus (Paris). For its first French publication, see VARGYAS 2000:257–297 (Appendix IV). I will return to this document later.

⁸ “Internal colonialism,” or the large-scale resettlement of parts of the majority constituents from the overpopulated plains to the mountainous, “uninhabited” areas populated by minorities, was during my fieldwork (1985–1989) not yet known in the areas inhabited by the Bru. However, in some parts of Vietnam – like elsewhere in Southeast Asia, such as Indonesia – internal resettlements have become state-level policies in 1975, after the reunification of the country (cf. HARDY 2005), but the process interestingly missed Quảng Trị and was much more typical to the Central Highlands (formerly known as Cao nguyên Trung phần, now known as “Tây Nguyên”: Đắk Lắk, Đắk Nông, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, Lâm Đồng provinces).

“What are you going to do when that happens?” was “We’ll leave.⁹ We do not want to live with them.”

This evasive behavior is also confirmed by the 300- to 400-year history of the Bru – outlined in the first part of my study (VARGYAS 2016) – in which there are no known instances of armed conflict, resistance or war, neither between individual groups of Bru nor with foreign invaders, although it is known, for example, that they had been victims of the Siamese raids of the 18–19th centuries, and that they had been resettled in large numbers on the right bank of the Mekong. Likewise, there are no accounts of a potential resistance from the Bru in Vietnamese chronicles, which seems to suggest that the Kinh penetrated the mountainous region without any actual confrontation.¹⁰ Finally, the shield and the sword, devices *par excellence* of hand-to-hand combat, are characteristically absent from the weapons of the Bru – unlike their neighbors, the Katu and the Tà Ôi – only the spear and crossbow, weapons (also) used for hunting, are known.¹¹ Because

It should be noted that there is no need for artificial or violent intervention to change the demographic landscape. The process takes place spontaneously, “naturally”—but it is nonetheless colonialism. Take the example of the district capital of Hường Hóa Khe Sanh. Before French colonization, Khe Sanh was an insignificant Vietnamese *huyện* [rural district] center on the edge of the Annam Empire, in the heart of Bru country, where some half a dozen or less Vietnamese functionaries resided (HARMAND 1879-80:308ff). Colonial Route No. 9, built by the French on the site of the former pedestrian paths, gradually opened the area to strangers, starting at the turn of the century. Shortly afterwards, Vietnamese traveling merchants settled down along the road. A century later, Khe Sanh developed into a vibrant Vietnamese town, despite the casualties of about half a century of civil war: in the 1989 census, the majority of the 21,000 Vietnamese in the district lived in Khe Sanh and its vicinity. It is also worth noting that this population is roughly the same as the total number of Bru living in the Hường Hóa *district* (1989:22, 800, 1999:23, 121), and this district is one of the most densely populated.

⁹ The Bru word is *de* = “leave, abandon, go.”

¹⁰ And it was so. Li Tana (1992:129–147) expounds the fact that the Nguyen rulers of the 17–18th centuries, threatened from the north by the Trinh and expanding southward, not being able to afford to be attacked from the side or from behind from the west, that is, from the mountainous regions, have been particularly peaceful towards the people of the mountains. While in the south they pushed a policy of power – concomitant with the pacification of defeated peoples – in the west they pushed a policy of “reconciliation rather than control” (1992:131). As a result, during the two centuries in question, mountain peoples (but not the Bru) took part in only five uprisings against the Nguyen! It was also a part of the policy of reconciliation that, while in terms of traditional Vietnamese–Highlander relations tax payment was almost the only form of contact, in Central Vietnam this relationship was of a highly economic nature—that is to say, the exchange trade in which the Bru played an active role (cf. later), had a very important role; in any case, Nguyen economic policy was based on maritime and land trade, as opposed to the traditional Vietnamese farming model. The good relationship with the mountains and their inhabitants was so important to the Nguyen that they received special emphasis in the ritual-religious field through some unique rituals. Such rituals were, for example, the *mở núi* = “opening the mountains,” as opposed to the North Vietnamese *son phòng* = “defense against the mountains” ritual; or the *đi nguồn* = “going to the source,” read: “going to the mountains and collecting valuable things;” or the *lễ cúng chủ đất cũ* = “offering a sacrifice to the former [and perceived as a ghost] master of the land.” According to Li Tana, one of the distinctive features of *Đàng Trong* (i.e., the Nguyen Empire), as opposed to North Vietnam, was that the Viet were partially mixed with the mountain dwellers, or rather, lived in close proximity of each other. Despite all this, the chapter devoted to the contact between the Vietnamese and highlanders concludes that there was no intermarriage between the two populations, and that the Viet were traditionally afraid of the mountains and their inhabitants.

¹¹ It is worth noting that one equipment *par excellence* of the Bru *shaman* is the sword, which is, however, used only for divination.

of this peaceful, “friendly” behavior – which is in direct opposition to the aggressive, warlike habitus of the Katu and Tà Ôi – I thought, following and in agreement with M. Piat (1962), that the etymology of the name used for the Bru, *kalor* (Kha Leu, Ca Leu/ Ca Lu, etc.), which is still unexplained to this day, might go back to the Bru word *kalor* = “friend” (VARGYAS 2000:134–135 and 2008).

In summary, generalizing a contemporary description of the *Laotian* Bru: “The (...) *khá*¹² tribe that we encounter in this place is extremely peaceful” (MACEY 1905:31). Since the very first descriptions of them, the Bru have come across as a people who avoid contact and conflict with strangers, retreating and even fleeing in such situations, and, if that is not possible, easily surrendering to those more powerful. To quote another early French source, Captain De Malglaive:

“Oh, the violence! It is the *ultima ratio* in Kha country, as it is elsewhere. As soon as it is employed in self-defense, or by the local police force, without the intervention of strangers (who hold a direct and immediate superiority), the natives will easily submit to it. They easily recognize the supremacy of Europeans and accept their laws without resistance, provided that they leave them their personal liberty and the independence of their race on the land where they were born.” (MALGLAIVE 1902:123, my emphasis.)

This quote leads us to the following topic: what happens if (or when) this retreat becomes impossible for various reasons? Let us turn to our sources again. In Lieutenant Barthélémy’s 1947 report, the above quoted paragraph continues as follows:

“The long-haired, almost naked Kha Leu, living in miserable huts that they move frequently, having no home industry and ignorant even of weaving, living only on rice produced on their clearings and on products of the forest, *perpetually resemble hunted animals. Fearful to the point of being despairing, suspicious even to the point of falsehood, they live in constant fear of the invaders, be they Annamite, Laotian or French.* The eternal target between two great powers whom they only know by their representatives, the Annamite ‘*linh*’¹³ and the Laotian ‘*phulit*,’¹⁴ all of whom loot and brutalize them to the best of their abilities; passing from the authority of Savannakhet to the domination of Quangtri without knowing the reason, and especially without having been asked their opinion; unable to move freely as they see fit, sell their rice and buy salt and buffalo wherever they please, *the Kha Leu ask but one thing: let them live peacefully. This dream is the only driving force of their existence: in all circumstances, this is what motivates them to act.*” (BARTHÉLÉMY 1947:10, published in VARGYAS, 2000:267; my emphasis.)

Barthélémy – and this is what really matters to us – goes into further detail about the ways in which the Bru living on the two sides of the [Vietnam-Laos] border, on the geographic and political periphery, taking advantage of the opportunities, declaring

¹² *Khá* = old Lao pejorative word appropriated by the French for the general description of mountain dwellers, something like “slave.”

¹³ *Linh* = Vietnamese word meaning “soldier,” in compound words: border guard, police officer, member of any armed body.

¹⁴ *Phulit* = Lao word meaning “policeman;” the “corrupted” Lao pronunciation of the French word “police.”

themselves sometimes as Laotian, sometimes as Vietnamese subjects, moving back and forth between the two countries, try to escape tax liability or any kind of foreign dominance. First, with regard to the “nomadism” of the Bru – which he attributes to the depleted fertility of the soil on the Vietnamese side caused by the over-utilization of clearings – he talks about the continual migration of the Bru from east to west, from Vietnam to Laos, to which “the [French, G.V.] colonial authority eventually had to acquiesce, acknowledging the triumphant moment of inertia of the Kha Leu and the fact that this migration is a real natural phenomenon, impossible to eradicate or even control” (BARTHÉLÉMY 1947:13, published in VARGYAS 2000:270). He then goes on to say:

“The fact that the Kha Leu of Annam overran Laos made it impossible to make any satisfactory regulation on the Laos-Annam border issue. *For a people as independent and egocentric as the Kha Leu*, this tense atmosphere [presented earlier in the report, G.V.] burdened with constant conflicts is an ideal climate for *realizing their dream, which we already mentioned above: to achieve that the invaders leave them alone*. Further confusing the already confounding maps, but at the same time counting on each of them, *taking advantage of the benefits that both camps offer, without noting their disadvantages*, declaring to the Laotians that they are Annamites, while being careful not to be registered on the Hướng Hóa [= Khe Sanh, Vietnam] tax rosters, the Kha Leu, with their everlasting complaining, manage to make even the simplest possible situations incomprehensible. *Their sole purpose is to exclude themselves from the control of public administration representatives, whatever the administration. The Kha Leu have been playing this turncoat game with remarkable hypocrisy since the beginning*. Starting in the 15th century, although they lived in the territory of the King of Vientiane, they paid tribute to the Emperor of Annam. When a century later the Phu Tai slaughtered the ‘sadet’¹⁵ of Ban Dong village and extended their sovereignty to all mountain tribes in the country, the Kha Leu took shelter under the protective wings of the Empire of Annam. When, however, their cultivable lands diminished, they became Laotians again and migrated westward, but again became Annamites as soon as they had to pay taxes, which is higher in Laos than in Annam. Many of them moved back east when the Laotian government wanted to make them work [read: *forced labor*; G.V.] on Colonial Route No. 23 under construction at that time. And nowadays the Kha Leu, being subject to the tyranny and oppression of the Viet Minh’s secret committees, have suddenly remembered that they are actually Laotians: they talk about their Laotian Kha brothers with deep emotions and submit petitions to join them in Tchépone, but will be ready to become Vietnamese as soon as the tax collector appears. *This turncoat policy of the Kha Leu* can also be caught out in a large number of villages on both sides of the border: depending on the events, it only takes them a few moments to become loyal subjects of Annam or Laos as needed. *Caught between the anvil of Annam and the hammer of Laos, the Kha Leu believe that they can use any means to benefit from this dangerous situation—for the lowest price*. In Kha Leu country, it is not the strongest one who is right but the one who demands the least. It is beyond doubt, however, that up to the war, the authorities of Quảng Trị were far more understanding and liberal than the Savannakhet authorities, especially from a fiscal point of view.” (BARTHÉLÉMY 1947:15–16, published in VARGYAS 2000:272–273; my emphasis.)

¹⁵ *Sadet* = originally a religious-political leader in the language of the Jarai, one of the most well-known Vietnamese mountain tribes. Here, in the figurative sense, something like “local chief.”

This to-the-point, clear report contains almost all the things that Scott writes about in his book (2009): fear of contact with state powers increasingly extending their reach through distance-demolishing techniques, retreat to the geo-political periphery to avoid them, a seemingly willing acceptance of foreign authority while also wriggling out of such control, a stubborn insistence on personal liberty and independence on the periphery, a “turncoat” policy in pursuit of all these, etc.; that is, to quote him again: “foot-dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, (...) feigned ignorance (...) sabotage, and so on” (Scott 1985:XVII).

All of these “weapons of the weak” of the past described by Barthélémy and others were conclusively reinforced by my own fieldwork. In my aforementioned article (2008), in analyzing the Bru statements that suggest a seeming lack of any political component in their ethnic identity, or else its rapid shifts (“we have accepted the rule of anybody that has come here”), I found that the key to understanding it lies in two factors: on the one hand, in Bru, or generally “Montagnard,” socio-political organization, which lacks an overarching political-administrative unit beyond the level of the local group or village, “tribe” being a loose linguistic-cultural entity, and where this results in identity being primarily tied up with kinship; and on the other hand, in the center/periphery relationship characteristic of the Thai/Lao type of “feudal” political systems (*muang*), in which a relative and smooth relationship exists between center and periphery: what is center in a smaller unit, becomes periphery in a larger one. In such systems, the periphery enjoys a relatively great independence, provided that it accepts the sovereignty of the larger, all-embracing political unit and periodically and symbolically reasserts it, and that it duly pays an often symbolic tax. Given these two prerequisites, i.e., that the center does not interfere too much with the matters of the periphery while the latter does not contest the supremacy of the former, the system functions smoothly in the long run.

I concluded that the Bru, just as other highlanders, have been living *on the periphery*, albeit *within* the political systems surrounding them. In order to maintain their relative independence –and in sharp contradistinction to their aggressive, warlike neighbors, the Tà Ôi and the Katu – they have developed a “smooth” strategy. “It consists of accepting the overall frameworks of the embracing political system, arousing as little attention and causing it as little trouble as possible, remaining unnoticed, seemingly integrated, being *in* and *outside* of it at the same time” (VARGYAS 2008:363). While the identity of the ruler is evidently of no importance to them (“we have accepted the rule of anybody that has come here”), they keenly insist on their privileged liberty on the periphery of the political system. In short: “if you leave us alone, we accept you as a ruler”—meaning that “for preserving their *freedom* on the periphery, the Bru are willing to give up even their *independence*” (VARGYAS 2008:366).

To reinforce the above, I will provide a couple of examples of these “weapons of the weak” utilized by the Bru, based on a yet unpublished, more than 18-hour-long tape-recorded life history of a Bru (in Vietnamese “Vân Kiều”) man.¹⁶ The selected excerpts – which obviously represent only a small, but in terms of this paper extremely important,

¹⁶ The recordings were made in the Bru language in 1989 in Quảng Trị Province, in the vicinity of Khe Sanh/Hướng Hóa, where I had been working between 1985–1989 (for a total of 18 months). The recordings were transcribed and translated in 2007–2008. I am currently working on the publication of the entire material as a book.

part – illustrate the “shy” worldview, adaptation strategies and techniques, and the “turncoat” behavior of the Bru discussed above. I have chosen one or two characteristic details for each topic, but the reader should keep in mind that further examples could be listed for any of the statements.

The protagonist of the story, *Khôi Sarâng*,¹⁷ was born around the late 1930s–early 1940s in the vicinity of Khe Sanh. Like most of his fellow Bru, he was brought into contact with the North Vietnamese communist guerillas as a young boy. During the French period of the war, he was too young to get involved. He first married in 1959. In the same year, the South Vietnamese government imprisoned him for two years in Quảng Trị for “communist work.” After his release, between 1961 and 1965, he became chief in his native village, but worked again for the revolutionary troops. In 1965, he left the communist side and moved to the “fortified hamlet” in Khe Sanh with his entire village. From 1965 to 1968, he was a soldier in the service of the American troops. In 1965 and 1967, he underwent military training in Pleiku; in 1968, during the siege of Khe Sanh, he fled to the region of Cam Lộ where he lived in the refugee camp in the village of Kũa. He lost his entire family there, and later remarried. Around 1972, he returned to his home region, where he lived until his death (probably in 1992).

The theme that the Bru accepted any type of dominance (“we have accepted the rule of anybody that has come here” or, in literal translation, “whoever imposed himself upon us, we have accepted his rule”) runs through most of Texts 1–3. *Khôi Sarâng* again and again reaffirms what, as we saw, was the key motivation behind the behavior of the Bru in the past: respecting the superiority of those who are stronger (be they Vietnamese, French or American), submitting themselves, and assuming timidity consciously and explicitly. This behavior is obviously that of the weak, who know from experience that resistance is impossible for them. The quotes address the question of whose side the Bru fought on in the civil war in Vietnam and why.

Text 1:

KS: “That’s true. Whoever has come here, we have accepted his rule! Generally speaking, we do not like fighting. [...] We fear being killed, destroyed. If they [the Vietnamese] say they will shoot us, we have to accept that they will shoot us indeed. We, the Bru, we are not a warlike people, we do not harm each other. When we are ordered to ‘enter [join] the army,’ we enter it.”

Text 2:

KS: “We Bru all are like that! Whenever and whatever armies came here, we fought hand in hand with them.” GV: *Whenever and whatever armies came here, you fought on their side?* KS: “Whenever and whatever armies came here and needed soldiers, we entered that army. Firstly, because we got food and clothes; secondly, because it is all the same for us what country it is. We Bru do not want a home and a country.”

Text 3:

KS: “Whoever’s soldiers we were, we did it by command, but we disliked dying! We did not like it at all.” GV: *What do you mean you did it by command?* KS: “We were always ordered:

¹⁷ *Khôi Sarâng* is a pseudonym, which the delicate subject calls for.

‘somebody has to go,’ or ‘you have to go,’ and nobody could reply ‘I won’t go!’ So, we did it. One entered the army only because one was forced to do that. You could not say to the French that you did not want to.”

This last text brings us to the adaptation strategies of the Bru: the seemingly “turncoat,” “treacherous” behavior and false-compliance. Text 3 then continues:

KS: “Thus, we informed the revolutionaries of that [i.e., that they were forced to become French soldiers, G.V.]! At that time, you know, the communists were much more flexible. If you entered the French army, you entered it. Once it happened, they [the communists] talked to you this way: ‘all right, but when we fight, and you shoot, do not shoot us, shoot above our head!’” GV: *Did you really agree on this?* KS: “Yes. ‘Shoot above our head!’” GV: *That you should not shoot them?* KS: “Not at all. ‘Let somebody else shoot! Shoot above our head!’ And when we actually shot above their head, they knew immediately that in front of them were ‘good’ people! And later they inquired specifically after the name of that person, ‘who was there, who was that Bru?’”

In another example, in a text too long to be quoted here, *Khôi Sarâng* told me a story about how they once succeeded in securing themselves from both warring parties by informing them and mutually denouncing them to each other, considering themselves to be the allies of both: “We had one road for going and another for coming back.” The lesson in this is that the Bru always rally on the side of the one who is present and *immediately* dangerous, thus oscillating between the two parties according to circumstances.

It often came up in interviews what the Bru consider “nice behavior” towards them, namely, the avoidance of direct pressure, the preservation of their freedom of choice and their personal liberties – in line with the cited statements of Barthélémy and others. Text 4 gives a poignant insight into this Bru mentality:

KS: “If we accepted their [French, G.V.] rule, this was because they treated us well, and when we met them, they did not harm us. We accepted them only because of that! When they told us to have it our own way, go about our own business, wherever we want to go we could go, whatever we wanted to do we could do, whatever we needed we could get it for ourselves, nobody should do harm to anybody, or speak evil of anybody – everything was immediately all right between us! And if nowadays the Vietnamese would not hold daily briefings, if all of us could cut trees wherever we please, if we could go wherever we want, and we would not need papers and permissions for everything – everything would immediately be all right between us! Yet nothing but those ‘papers’! You can only go anywhere if you have papers, we are told again and again to not cut the trees, ‘don’t do it!’ and we obey all the time. If we would not do so, we would go to prison. (...) That’s how we are, the Bru people! And if even one of us is killed, hundreds will be shaking, we are all afraid if even one of us is liquidated! ‘You see, they killed one of us, these ones are serious!’ Yes, we are a very unfortunate people. If we had our own chief, somebody from among us, we would not endure it any more, it is not impossible that we would fight them!”

The same opinion is echoed in Text 5:

KS: “If the Vietnamese came and ordered us to fight on their side, we fought with them! If the Americans came and ordered us to fight on their side, we fought with them. If they take us to war, we fight on their side, we are in an ‘elder brother–younger brother’ relationship. But if any other country comes here and takes us into war and, what’s more, treats us well, we shall get into the same ‘elder brother–younger brother’ relationship’ with them.”

The ultimate points the interviews brought out are survival and well-being: food and clothes are of the highest value for the Bru. *Khởi Sarâng* repeatedly asserts that these are the main goals of their life, the main motives for their actions. Text 6 offers an indisputable evidence of this:

KS: “We were always ordered, ‘somebody has to go,’ or ‘you have to go,’ and nobody could reply ‘I won’t go!’ So, we did it. But if somebody had said, ‘if anybody is willing to enter the army, he should, but whoever dislikes it should not enter it’ – nobody would have entered it! But again, ‘if anybody is willing to enter the army, he should, but whoever dislikes it should not enter it, but those who enter it will not know penury’ – everybody would have wanted to enter the army! He had everything he needed, food and clothes, whatever he wanted. This is a nice life! That’s how we Bru are!” GV: *And if you had gotten food and clothes from one side, and you had gotten them from the other side, too, was it all the same to you which side you rallied on?* KS: “Yes, for us it is all the same, we rally to any of them! We are interested only in food and clothes; whether invited or not, if we live well, young and adult alike will enter the army.” GV: *Did you not enter it because you were communists in your heart of hearts, or true friends of the Americans?* KS: “No, in our heart of hearts we all want to eat and clothe ourselves well, that is how we Bru are! We would like to eat and clothe ourselves well, and wherever we will be given that, we will rally on that side immediately.”

Let us resume then. Both our historical-archival sources and my own field data clearly confirm the depth and accuracy of Scott’s analysis, and the acuteness of his conclusions. The state evasion of the Bru, the “weapons of the weak” they use in order to escape from the inevitable consequences of their contact with those who are stronger, to evade controllability, legibility and taxability, their fears and subsequent reactions, their escape or quick submission, their desires and their goals, their “habitus” in the Bourdieu-esque sense – all these fit perfectly with what Scott generally said about “Zomian” peoples. Thus, without knowing the Bru and referring to them even once, his work (SCOTT 2009) is illuminating for us, and remains – far from being just a “populist post-modern history of nowhere” (BRASS 2012) – one of the key publications that will serve as inspiration for many years to come, notwithstanding his factual misstatements, deficiencies, sweeping generalizations, exclusive wording, and all else that I argued in the first part of my paper, and all that could and should be contended (e.g., the question of “intentionality”).

Scott’s insight and depth of understanding gains importance particularly in light of Salemink’s (2015) recent writing, which reflects on and contends with Scott through a diametrically opposed proposal. “Inspired by a sympathetic but critical reading” (2015:392) of Scott, he offers “a contrasting vision of Highlander motivations and desires from the Central Highlands of Vietnam” (2015:388). He argues that “the postcolonial state in the present era of globalisation operates as much through attraction as through coercion and dispossession, and that Highlanders often do not seek to evade the state, but seek to belong to ecumenes that transcend their social spaces and embody modern universals” (2015:395). “Highlanders were often motivated by the desire to become modern, and enacted such desires by joining ecumenes that embody modern universals, in particular revolutionary and Christian ecumenes, exemplifying oppositional pathways to modernity” (2015:388). Both paths, namely, revolutionary and Christian conversion,

“(...) are predicated on an abandonment of traditional cultural notions and habitus, and on the inscription into national and transnational ecumenes. (...) Historically, Highlanders’ embrace of a revolutionary ecumene may have been an act of resistance against the states that they knew – the colonial state and the South-Vietnamese state – but it ended up tying them firmly with the state-making project in their territories of the victorious revolutionary state. (...) Highlanders’ embrace of an alternative, Christian ecumene can be interpreted as a localising move – against the towering presence of an oppressive national state predicated on another ethnic group, the Kinh – and simultaneously as a transnationalising move, in the sense of bypassing the state to insert themselves into a global community of faithful: a ‘Christian *ummah*,’ as it were.” (SALEMINK 2015:403)

It is obvious that today, in the second decade of the 21st century, in a globalized postmodern world, it would be difficult to make generalized statements like Scott’s without having them challenged by a single life history, a single person, a single agency, or a single testimony that points to an opposite example, possibility or solution. By now the Vietnamese Highlands have undergone such a social, economic, political and ethnic transformation that everything has been turned upside down compared to the past; new avenues opened for vernacular populations, their choices and constraints multiplied, and they had to face dozens of new problems, such as lifestyle changes, Vietnamese expansion, pauperization, and assimilation. For this reason, to be arguing backwards from today’s point of view, to be projecting this image onto an earlier state, is a dangerous undertaking, which, in a worst-case scenario, could turn into anachronism. What today is an undeniable fact, act or opportunity, goal, desire, motivation or aspiration, was not the same yesterday – it could not be.

In fact, Salemink does not really talk about the same period as Scott. While Scott’s analysis is, before all, historical in its scope, and he writes about pre-colonial and colonial states and the past approximately 2000 years, Salemink writes not about a postcolonial state but a “postcolonial state in the present era of globalization” (2015:395), i.e., about the last quarter of a century – at the most – of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.¹⁸ This

¹⁸ Before the *Đổi Mới*, at the time of total political isolation, we cannot speak of globalization, of the free flow of people, ideas and goods in the Highlands of Vietnam, even if communism itself is, of course, a globalized ideology.

is a fundamental difference, even if it is true that Scott “does not refrain from making observations about the present, implying that motivations that impelled ‘Zomians’ in the past may still be at work today” (SALEMINK 2015:393). However, “might still be at work today” is a conditional tense which – even if proven that it is not “at work” today – does not negate its validity in the past.

So, what about the Bru? In the foregoing, I made it clear that, as far as the Bru’s past and present *habitus* is concerned, I am in complete agreement with Scott. It would not make sense to enter into this debate had Salemink not based his opinion – at least in part – on the Bru that I have studied in depth and am familiar with and, among others, on a few of my writings, overinterpreting my data. Although I am not doubting that his analysis may be more applicable to other parts of the Central Highlands, I still have to contend with him as far as Bru feelings, motivations, desires and aspirations are concerned. In my opinion, neither the communist nor the Christian conversion meant – or did so only partially – the “abandonment of [Bru] traditional cultural notions and *habitus*” (SALEMINK 2015:403). The devil, as usual, is in the tiny details, at the expense of grand theories.

Let us start with communist conversion. Based on the aforementioned life history recording and two years of fieldwork, I dare say that “communist conversion” – if there was such a thing at all, and I will return to this – was *not* a result of a wish of being inscribed into modernity, into the wider national and transnational ecumenes beyond their own “social space,” and only partially due to a desire for goods and services associated with modernity. The means of communist persuasion among the Bru, like everywhere in the world, were “carrot and stick,” that is, promise and coercion. I will not go into the details here;¹⁹ let it suffice that when communist propaganda among the Bru began in the early 1930s, one powerful weapon of gaining ground was Vietnamese agitators – as if they were anthropologists doing fieldwork – spending many years among the Bru: living and working with them, learning their language, getting acquainted and accepted by them, familiarizing themselves with the area.²⁰ Moreover, unlike the colonists, they had the same skin color and body build as the Bru, shared a partly common historical experience, and so on. So, when the time came, and the opportunity arose, they were able to influence public opinion for their own purposes.

One way of doing this was, naturally, through promises. The hope of a better and more beautiful life is appealing to everyone, in Europe as well as in the Vietnamese Highlands. But what does that mean specifically? Politically, the most alluring promise was the – blurred and not precisely outlined – equality/independence/self-determination that the Highlanders would be given; one piece of evidence of their disillusionment with this is the poster of Ho Chi Minh and his letter of April 19, 1946 addressed to the representatives of the Congress of the Southern National Minorities in Pleiku, which to this day hangs on the walls of their huts. In the letter, which was publicly read at the conference, Ho Chi Minh referred to the Vietnamese as the blood brothers and sisters (*anh em ruột*) of the Highlands’ minorities (both in the North and South), expressly mentioning the Jörai,

¹⁹ These issues will be addressed in detail in my planned book based on the above-mentioned life history.

²⁰ It seems that the posting of communist agitators in the Highlands inhabited by nationalities was a deliberate strategic consideration on the part of the Communist Party of Vietnam well before the actual civil war.



Figure 1. Poster in a Bru house with Ho Chi Minh's portrait and his April 19, 1946 letter addressed to the representatives of the Congress of the Southern National Minorities in Pleiku.

Rhade, Sedang and Bahnar from the Central Highlands. He emphasized that Vietnam was their common country, and that the reason why the majority and minority peoples had not been close in the past was “people who sowed discord and division among us,” even mentioning at one point a Department for National Minorities.²¹

²¹ For more on the letter, see: HICKEY 1982a:392–393, for the text, see: FALL 1967:156. This letter – on account of it not being a law – was not/could not be included in the nearly 1200-page book on the Ethnic Policy and State Law of the Communist Party, published in 2000 by the Ethnic Committee of the [Vietnamese] National Assembly. However, it must be noted that it is still the standard reference in the relationship between the Vietnamese state apparatus and the nationalities, so much so that, as evidenced by the following internet links (courtesy of my friend and colleague, Csaba Mészáros), the establishment of a “Vietnamese Ethnic Minority Day” – planned since 2008 and implemented in 2013 – was also linked to the date of this letter (April 19, 1946). “The establishment of this day aims to educate expand [sic] patriotic tradition, national pride, and promote the awareness and responsibility of preserving and promoting ethnic cultural traditions and strengthening great national unity. It also aims to honour the cultural identity of Vietnamese ethnic minority groups for an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity; help ethnic groups in Vietnam understand more about each other; and assist each other in socio-economic and cultural development.” See: <https://www.talkvietnam.org/2008/04/seminar-to-establish-vietnamese-ethnic-minority-day/> <http://hochiminh.vn/sites/en-US/news/Pages/news.aspx?CatID=1&ItemID=594> <https://www.vietnambreakingnews.com/2012/10/project-on-cultural-day-of-vietnamese-ethnic-groups-2013-approved/> <http://www.vietnamtourism.com/en/index.php/news/items/6049>

Interestingly, economically and in terms of lifestyle perhaps the most painful – even mentioned in public in parliamentary and municipal elections, which I heard with my own ears – unkept promise (impossible to keep and thus irresponsible, based on obvious political calculations) was that after the “victory of the Revolution,” the Vietnamese and the Bru “will share the cars,” i.e., the motorized means of transportation, vehicles, cars will be available [freely] to the Bru, and that “nobody will have to carry loads on foot.”

Let us face it, it would be a stretch to explain these and similar desires and promises with the need for inscription into a more modern social context with an increasingly widening horizon. Even if we were to consider the attainment of political equality such a desire, in the 1930s and 1940s, communism in the Highlands of Vietnam did not at all mean a widening horizon, but rather a forced identification with a stigmatized, banned and persecuted local minority. The true appearance of the illusory idea and its international, legal, political, economic and philosophical horizons and aspects were unknown on the local and social levels not only to the mountain peoples, but even to the Vietnamese cadres who taught them. In any case, our sources have always characterized the Bru as an “independent,” “egocentric” people that firmly insist on their liberty, and in this regard communism was not able to provide them with anything new—at the most, a new tool.

Rather, it is about what we call well-being, a desire for prosperity. And, it must be emphasized, well-being is *not* equal to modernity! Well-being and the need for progress existed well before modernity; within their own means, the Bru have always tried to “evolve.” In one of my writings, right now only available in Hungarian but delivered in English at several conferences abroad (VARGYAS 2003),²² I reported on a failed experiment that took place during my fieldwork in 1988, when they tried to convert a swidden from dry-rice agriculture to wet-rice agriculture; I also presented a true agricultural revolution in detail, in which the Bru, at the beginning of October 1989, on their own initiative, in front of my eyes, switched from harvesting with bare hands (!)²³ to harvesting with a sickle—which also led to the radical transformation of their religious belief system. However, it was not a wider national or international world, or even modernity, that they wanted to integrate into; they just wanted to acquire the goods that would make them prosperous: abundant food—with less work. As far as well-being is concerned, as we have seen in Texts 4 and 6, *Khởi Sarâng* expresses in an unambiguous way the leitmotifs of the Bru’s action, which are indeed very worldly things: food and clothing.²⁴ If we add comfort (car) to this, we have the three most important things that were dominant

²² The first version of the lecture was presented in 1997 as a conference paper in Amsterdam at the 3rd International Euroviet Conference, and further developed in 2015 at the Winter School of the Ph.D. program of The International Max Planck Research School for the Anthropology, Archaeology and History of Eurasia (IMPRS ANARCHIE). For the Hungarian version, see VARGYAS 2003.

²³ However incredible, even during my field trip in Quảng Trị, the Bru have been “harvesting” rice with an astonishingly “archaic” technique not even described in the professional literature: they would run their bare hands along the stalks of rice left standing (i.e., uncut) in the clearings, and collect a handful of rice with a single tug. Though this technique is very slow and painful (as it ruins their hands), what they lost on the swings, they gained on the roundabouts: instead of the normal two-stage grain retrieval (cutting & threshing), the rice grains were harvested in a single phase.

²⁴ According to a Vietnamese proverb, the three best things in life are: eating, getting dressed, and having sex.

aspirations among the Bru up to the time of my fieldwork (1985–1989, a year and a half in Quảng Trị and six months in 2007 in Đắk Lắk provinces).

The other means of communist conversion was the “stick.” In this case, we should not necessarily think of open violence, beatings, or coercion with weapons, even though during the civil war, in more intense situations, they did occur. Rather, we should think of what Text 4 so poignantly expresses: constant bans, rules, meetings, “wishes” and “requests” voiced during them, violent means of verbal influence – I shall keep saying it until they tire of it and do it,” or stressing the “elder brother–younger brother” relationship, in which the ethnic minorities are, of course, the “younger siblings” and who, therefore, “must” respect the expectations of the “elders,” and then I have not even mentioned open threats. *Be it as it may, the “shy” habitus of the Bru discussed above sooner or later bent to the will of the Vietnamese; people everywhere ultimately subjugate themselves to the state apparatus.*

In a kinship-based society, if the elders, the leadership of the village or kinship group – in current sociological terminology, the “opinion-forming elite” – for some reason decides to affiliate with one party, in this case the communist guerrillas, the rest of the village naturally follows them, and in the essentially consensus-based framework of the decision-making mechanism, it does not even occur to anyone to go up against them and act differently. In such circumstances, the issue of “conversion” is hardly relevant: based on the aforementioned life history, I know that *Khôi Sarâng* started his “work” for the “Viet Cong” [Việt cộng] as a teenager, which by that time was considered natural in the whole region because of the long indoctrination, and *Khôi Sarâng* had been enculturated in it the same way that was customary among the Bru.

From the foregoing and from what I learned from numerous Bru stories, especially from *Khôi Sarâng*’s life history, it follows directly that the Bru, depending on the current situation and their interests, oscillated between the two warring parties. *Khôi Sarâng* himself switched camps repeatedly, eventually – when he felt let down by the communists – hiring himself out to the service of the Americans, bringing along his entire village as he was the village chief at the time. And his life history has still not ended here, because when he returned home from the fortified hamlet and refugee camp near Quảng Trị in 1972, given the new political framework, he naturally emphasized his communist history for which he was decorated; and next of kin is a social medium and cohesive force in which former political affiliation is secondary to the fact of kinship. In these circumstances, conversion to communism driven by the desire for modernity becomes an especially untenable argument.

There is one last question we have to clarify because Saleminck speaks distinctly of the present, the developments of the last quarter of a century, of the “postcolonial state in the present era of globalization,” but he considers the conversion to communism – if I understand it correctly – a phenomenon that took place in the past (though it is not exactly clear when). So, the question is this: we saw how it used to be in the past, but would someone want to inscribe himself into the communist world today? Today, communism is at best a failed historical attempt which everyone who personally experienced it hated or suffered from – except, of course, those who benefitted from the system, which were not few in Vietnam. Among the Vietnamese Highland minorities, however, there were no real beneficiaries to speak of. For the vast majority who experienced it personally, communism, politically, conjures up the most rigorous dictatorship, jail time, relocation

camps, cruelty, and torture; economically, a command economy that resulted in complete impoverishment, and agricultural cooperatives (in shifting cultivation!); ideologically, the non-stop fight against various enemies (“ideological deviants,” “traitors,” “the rich,” “colonizers,” “kulaks,” “nobles,” etc.); the total prohibition or even destruction of religious life; and finally, all the constraints on individual initiatives. Everyone who in the past 70 years ever lived or died in Vietnam, in the Highlands of Vietnam – just as in, say, Eastern Europe or the former Soviet Union – knows this from experience. And yet, if they still desired a national and even transnational world that transcends their own social space, they certainly would not seek it in communism! Let us not forget that, despite all sorts of political and economic “softening,” Vietnam is still a Socialist Republic with a single party system where the ruling party is the Communist Party—that is, the country is not a market economy-based democracy. Based on all this, I do not consider it probable that in the past 30 years there would have been a massive *voluntary* conversion to communism among the mountain dwellers (and indeed in all of Vietnam). In fact, in the past it was more of a result of indoctrination and political influence than a conscious individual decision with which to demonstrate susceptibility to a new world, to modernity. Communist ideology as a theory and the (communist) practice based on it have been two different things from the beginning.

Consequently, it is not worth drawing particular conclusions from the long introductory story that Saleminck (2015:391) calls an “ethnographic vignette:” the Bru communist cadre’s lamentations. I do not doubt that he honestly believed what he said. But I also do not think that his opinion – which, by the way, reflects an hour-long conversation during a day trip, with a single informant, in an intermediary language (Vietnamese), without the knowledge of the context (what did the villagers think of this?) – would serve as a good standard for illustrating the Bru’s goals, motivations and aspirations *in general*, especially in comparison with the richness of the sources I listed above. Contrary to what communism means to Saleminck, for the Bru, this ideology was not an exposure to the world but rather a complete isolation from it.

The situation is different with Christian conversion. There are, however, some counter-arguments that should be considered. First of all, Christian (Catholic) conversion in the Central Highlands began in the last third of the 19th century. It is not clear why, when we talk about “Christianity,” we only speak of Evangelist and Pentecostal Protestantism, which is spreading today at a truly revolutionary speed, and why it is only that we refer to in our discussions. Furthermore, the spread of Christianity (Catholicism) in Vietnam did not even really start among the minorities, but among the Kinh majority in the 17th century (Alexandre de Rhodes). Catholics today account for 8-10% of the country’s population.²⁵ How do we explain their conversion? The spread of Protestantism began later, in 1911, starting from Đà Nẵng in Central Vietnam, but mainly in South Vietnam, yet it is still partially important in terms of the whole population as it constitutes only 0.5 to 2% of the

²⁵ See International Religious Freedom Report, 2006: “There were approximately 6 to 8 million Roman Catholics in the country, although official government statistics put the number at 5,570,000. Catholics lived throughout the country, but the largest concentrations remained in the southern provinces around Ho Chi Minh City, in parts of the Central Highlands and in the provinces southeast of Hanoi. Catholicism has revived in many areas, with newly rebuilt or renovated churches in recent years and growing numbers of persons who want to be religious workers.”

population of Vietnam. Two-thirds of them, however – and this is essential – are members of ethnic minorities, both in the Northern and Central Vietnamese Highlands (Ede, Jarai, Bahnar, Koho, etc.) – a fact that definitely needs to be explained.²⁶

As far as the history of this religious denomination and Christianity among the Bru in general is concerned, all that is known about it was summarized in my 2017 Hungarian-language paper (VARGYAS 2017, English-language publication forthcoming). I will just outline its essence briefly: the evangelization of the Bru started relatively late compared to other regions. The Protestants arrived first,²⁷ and their penetration was initially carried out without European participants. We can learn from a Vietnamese-language paper dealing with the 100-year history of the Evangelical Church in Vietnam²⁸ that a certain Vietnamese pastor by the name of Ngô Văn Lái had been active in Khe Sanh in 1935, but we do not have any other information about him.²⁹ Pastor Bùi Tấn Lộc first arrived among the Bru in 1942, and his name became inseparable from the history of evangelization among the Bru.³⁰ However, the larger scale of spread of Protestantism among the Bru is certainly associated with the work of John D. Miller and Carolyn Paine Miller, who, supported by the Wycliffe Bible Translators³¹ and the Summer Institute of Linguistics,³² lived among the Bru in 1961-1975, doing Bible translation (in conjunction

²⁶ See International Religious Freedom Report, 2006: “Estimates of the number of Protestants in the country ranged from the official government figure of 500,000 to claims by churches of 1,600,000 or more. The two officially recognized Protestant churches are the Southern Evangelical Church of Vietnam (SECV), recognized in 2001, and the smaller Evangelical Church of Vietnam North (ECVN), recognized since 1963. The SECV had affiliated churches in all of the southern provinces of the country. There were estimates that the growth of Protestant believers has been as much as 600 percent over the past decade, despite government restrictions on proselytizing activities. Some of these new converts belonged to unregistered evangelical house churches. Based on believers’ estimates, two-thirds of Protestants were members of ethnic minorities, including H’mong, Dzao, Thai, and other minority groups in the Northwest Highlands, and members of ethnic minority groups of the Central Highlands (Ede, Jarai, Bahnar, and Koho, among others).”

²⁷ I eschew Catholic proselytizing here, as they first came to Khe Sanh, the center of the territory inhabited by the Bru, in 1964, and in 1968, at the time of the Tet offensive, they had to leave (together with the Protestants). See further details in Vargyas, forthcoming.

²⁸ Nguyễn Văn Bình 2011.

²⁹ In his unpublished Ph.D. dissertation on the history of the Evangelical Church of Viet Nam between 1911 and 1965, Phu Hoang Le indicates on the map depicting the situation between 1927 and 1941 (1972:259) in Quảng Trị, in the location of Khe Sanh, with a cross but without a name, a “local church manned by Vietnamese ministers”—this most probably refers to the person of Ngô Văn Lái.

³⁰ We learn of him – and not by accident – from the recently published Vietnamese-language writing on the website of the Protestant Parish in Ea Hiu (Krông Pach, Đắk Lắk Province) active among the Bru displaced in 1972. See Anonymous 2016; and also Bùi Tấn Lộc 1961.

³¹ Wycliffe Bible Translators, now known as Wycliffe Global Alliance (2011), is a Christian (Protestant) world organization whose purpose is to translate the Bible into all the languages of the world. Established in 1942.

³² The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) is a worldwide organization for the study and advancement of lesser studied languages, and for the establishment of mother tongue-based literacy. Researching these languages, besides the scientific purposes, aims primarily at translating the Bible and establishing local community development programs. SIL International, as it is known today, dates back to 1919 (William Cameron Townsend), but was formally founded in 1934. Its activity started in Asia in 1953 (in the Philippines, from where it spread to the whole of Oceania). SIL is predominantly funded by Wycliffe Bible Translators, International, and is therefore considered its “subsidiary.” See <http://www.sil.org/sil> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SIL_International

with linguistic research, plus the creation of Bru literacy)³³ and Protestant missionary work. The location of their activity was first Khe Sanh (1961–1968),³⁴ and later, when the events of the war meant that Khe Sanh had to be evacuated, near the coastal Đông Hà, in Cam Lộ and Kũa,³⁵ where they followed the civilian population escaping the war. In 1972, they participated (see HICKEY 1982:233) in the well-organized military and propaganda operation in which, at the height of the civil war, the South-Vietnamese government saved 2,300–2,500 Bru from the advancing communist troops by air-lifting them from Quảng Trị³⁶ and resettling them in the province of Đắk Lắk (see NGUYEN TRẮC DĨ 1972; HICKEY 1982b:232–233, 2002:313, 315–316). They themselves soon followed them and the retreating American troops. We have to emphasize here: the vast majority of these Bru were relocated because they were Protestants and thus considered natural allies of the Americans! From dropped hints by C.P. Miller (2016³ Kindle Locations 158–160, 172–175), we learn that in 1975, before being captured by Vietnamese troops and transported to Hanoi, they made a visit from Ban Me Thuot to Buon Jat, to hold one last worship service for their relocated Bru brethren—that is, they were in contact with the Protestant Bru (that they converted?) until the last moment.

In light of the above, and in contrast to what Salemink ambiguously writes (2015:399),³⁷ it was not *after* their resettlement in the '90s that the Bru – under the influence of the surrounding ethnic minorities – converted to Protestantism en masse, but much earlier, in the mid-1960s, and in Quảng Trị—a fact which greatly weakens Salemink's argument. The displaced Bru, having gotten stuck in their “temporary” accommodations in the formerly Buon Jat village (now: huyện Krông Pắc, xã Ea Hiu), an originally Rhade settlement, have been until recently considered a doubly stigmatized population. For one, because they were allies of the Americans, fighting with them against the Northern Communist troops; for another, because they are predominantly Protestant, members of the Southern

³³ See Bru Bible 1981.

³⁴ No biography of the Millers is publicly available: I have not found any exact or detailed biographies of them in publication or on the Internet, and I have been unable to contact them. Thus, I had to compile the data about their life from scattered sources. In my book published in French (VARGYAS 2000), I put the start of their work in Vietnam at 1958; in light of current data, this is wrong. Hickey's (2002:222–223) report reveals that they were among the last to have left Khe Sanh on January 21, 1968.

³⁵ In Hickey's writings (1982b, 1993, 2002), Cua/Kũa is used in simplified script without Vietnamese diacritics. Since this place cannot be found on the current maps of Vietnam, I am not sure of its exact spelling. In Bru it is spelled Kũa, so that is what I use.

³⁶ There are different data on the number of relocated people. Nguyen Trắc Dĩ (1972:5 and 6) mentions 2,580 people directly after the events; at the same time, he includes (1972:9) a facsimile of the congratulatory letter written by G.D. Jacobson, Deputy Assistant to the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support/Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, to Nay Luett, Minority Affairs Minister, in which Jacobson mentions 2,301 relocated Bru—as opposed to the above 2,580. Hickey (1982b:233) also reports 2,300 Bru and several Pacoh.

³⁷ “In 2007, Gábor Vargyas did research in the Bru community in Ea Hiu commune, Đắk Lắk province [...] the lifeworld of the animist Bru became disenchanted. The contrasting finding, however, was that approximately half of the Bru community had converted to Evangelical Christianity which had a strong presence among the Ede and other indigenous groups in the Central Highlands (VARGYAS 2010). In other words, those Bru inserted themselves into a (simultaneously local, national and transnational) *Christian ecumene* [italics in the original, G.V.], understood here as a politico-religious community which goes beyond the local and social and which offers an idiom, style and organisation for acting on an institutionalised hope for a radically different transcendental future.”

Evangelical Church of Vietnam (SECV), a denomination that the government only recognized in 2001, 29 years after their resettlement! Their situation only improved after the 2004 Ordinance on Religion and Belief and its 2005 Implementation Decree (No. 22), and the 2005 “Instruction on Protestantism” promulgated by the Prime Minister. But even so, during my six-month fieldwork in 2007, I was forced to do fieldwork among them under paranoid circumstances, which are too early to speak of in public: I was only allowed to go to their church at the end of my stay, following some significant negotiations, permissions and inspections. The problem, as well as the objection I made in relation to communism – namely, that the ideology and its repercussions in practice are two different things – can once again be raised here. Even though the “Christian ecumene (...) as a politico-religious community (...) goes beyond the local and social and (...) offers an idiom, style and organisation for acting on an institutionalised hope for a radically different transcendental future” (SALEMINK 2015:399), in reality, in the Highlands of Vietnam, it manifested itself in opposition to what they hoped from it (or what Salemink thinks they attributed to it). It played a role more in shrinking the Bru’s world than it did in opening it to modernity.

In the above, I reflected on Scott’s and Salemink’s theses based on my Bru material. Scott describes a socio-cultural formula and speaks of its implications. Salemink, on the other hand – operating with the concept of “modernity,” considered by many to be useless and controversial³⁸ for its looseness – examines the possibility of moving away from this concept “by joining ecumenes that embody modern universals, in particular revolutionary and Christian ecumenes, exemplifying oppositional pathways to modernity” (2015:388). Based on my own material, I argued that for (some of) the Bru, joining the above-mentioned ecumenes cannot be explained with a need to transcend their own local and social space and a desire for some elusive “modern universals,” but much rather with a desire to secure their lasting prosperity. This desire can be caught out in the behavior of the Bru well before “modernity,” and its boundaries can be pushed earlier or later—even to the time of the adoption of iron tools. The Bru, like any other population, have never been static and have always strived to increase their “development,” their well-being. Hence, the question for me is whether the traditional pattern so acutely analyzed by Scott is applicable in critical situations today, and whether there is a generational difference, a change in attitude in the habitus, goals, desires, and aspirations of the Bru. To answer this question, however, further research would be needed; my own research from 2007 seems to suggest that the traditional pattern remains in force—between and behind the scenes of communist modernity.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that modernity is a concept that is multi-faceted and changes in time. Everything I know about Bru culture is a subjective experience limited in space and time. It has been ten years since I myself have been in the field, so even I do not know all the areas inhabited by the Bru; I have spoken but with a limited number of Bru about their desires, thoughts and aspirations, so all that I wrote might just have been typical of only those Bru, and only at the time when I was there among them. Nonetheless, I have tried to faithfully convey their testimonies to the best of my abilities.

³⁸ See Goody (2004), who strongly criticizes the applications of the concept, in particular Giddens’ version, in which modernity actually becomes an “actor.”

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Ethnographic Accounts of Visitors from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to the Asian Peripheries of Russia and Their Contribution to the Development of Systematic Ethnological Studies in the Monarchy: Preliminary Results and Research Perspectives

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Abstract: The authors intend to provide an overview of the diaries, travelogues, and correspondence of Austro-Hungarians who traveled to the Asian peripheries of Russia during the Dual Monarchy. We aim to contribute to ongoing discussions on colonial discourses of otherness, as well as to the historical development of ethnographic scholarship in Europe. Travel writing, orientalism, and colonial encounters with Asian otherness are closely intermingling phenomena in the modern era. We argue that the rich corpus of visual and verbal representations of North-, Central-, and Inner-Asian peoples recorded by the subjects of the Dual Monarchy provides instructive examples of colonial encounters with non-colonizers in 19th century Asia. Furthermore, we believe that these examples will bring forth a more detailed picture of how the ideas born in the centers of German enlightenment (like *Völkerkunde*) impregnated the intellectual life of more peripheral regions in Europe. As ethnographic scholarship developed within national research traditions rather than in the frame of a monolithic, European intellectual project, our question is whether or not the Dual Monarchy provided a meaningful frame to bridge national research traditions.

Keywords: travel writing, orientalism, Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, Siberia, Central Asia, history of ethnography

Research on travel writing is an increasingly important topic in historical and anthropological scholarship (HULME – YOUNGS 2002; KUEHN – SMETHURST 2009; PRATT 1992; YOUNGS 2006). By providing an overview of the diaries, travelogues, and correspondence of those Austro-Hungarians who visited the Asian peripheries of Russia, we aim to contribute to ongoing discussions on colonial discourses of otherness, as well as on the historical development of ethnographic scholarship in Europe. Travel writing, orientalism, and colonial encounters with Asian otherness are closely intermingled phenomena in the modern era (ANDREEVA 2007; PHILLIPS 2014). We argue that the rich corpus of visual and verbal representations of North-, Central-, and Inner-Asian peoples recorded by travelers from the Dual Monarchy provides instructive examples of colonial encounters with non-colonizers in Asia in the 19th century. The research question we pose is whether or not travelers from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its predecessors, a unique political formation in Europe, had a distinct perspective on non-European peoples in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Our research points to a common shortcoming in determining who is a traveler. Commonly, a traveler is defined as a person who leaves home in order to gain something material or immaterial, or both, in another place (CLIFFORD 1997:197). This implies that the traveler proceeds voluntarily. The overwhelming majority of travelers in our study, however, embarked on their journeys involuntarily; they were Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war (POWs) captured by the Russian army in WWI who had no say in where they were taken. Nonetheless, these prisoners saw the country and met its inhabitants as they were taken to Siberian camps, and when they left the camps to work. After 1918, not all prisoners could return home immediately following their release from captivity due to the Russian Civil War. It was during this waiting period that many saw and met more Siberians, and as a result, came to know the country and its people. These accounts are of special interest for our analysis, as are those from people who voluntarily stayed longer than needed – who made the transformation from involuntary travelers to voluntary residents. Thus, we juxtapose voluntary and involuntary travelers in our study.

In this article we would like to provide a rough overview of the research perspectives this vast material provides for historians and ethnographers. In order to do so, we first outline the position the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy held among the great European powers. We argue that the monarchy, with its multi-ethnic composition and lack of colonies overseas, was a unique point of departure for travelers in the late 19th and early 20th century. We then turn our attention to a region we call “the Asian peripheries of Russia”, which was frequented by travelers from the monarchy for a number of reasons. Next, we provide a tentative classification of travelers and expeditions, and mention the written or visual records these travelers left behind. In order to provide a clearer picture of the peculiarities of travel records from the monarchy, we discuss two interlinked problems in the last chapters: the unique fieldwork and travel strategies such travelers used in Russia and beyond, and how socio-cultural backgrounds influenced the way they perceived, contacted and described non-European, indigenous peoples during their travels.

THE MONARCHY AS A MULTI-ETHNIC MIDDLE POWER LACKING COLONIES

The Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, from whence these travelers began their journeys, remained demographically a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-religious state with no majority nations during the emergence of nation states (BUREAU 1912).¹ From a legal point of view, the monarchy was a composite of pre-modern kingdoms with unbalanced power relations between nationalities that never transformed into a multinational state (BRUNNER 1962; HASSLINGER 2012). This inner structure resulted in vibrant and tense, cross-national and cross-regional relations. As a result, the political legacy of the monarchy was simultaneously considered a ‘prison of nations’ (*Völkerkerker*), as well as a flexible state forming a reasonably stable framework for the coexistence of various religious, ethnic and linguistic communities (*Völkerverein*) (WANDRUSZKA 1980).

Alongside other socio-economic factors, this inner tension limited the success of the monarchy’s foreign policy, and led to a steady decline of its power within Europe (SKED 2001). Consequently, over the course of the 19th century, when most European nation-states were attempting to establish overseas colonies, the Austrian Empire and later the monarchy, despite her colonial aspirations (BÚR 2011; RANDA 1966; SAUER 2002), was preoccupied with maintaining its unity as well as consolidating its borders and position among European powers.

However, the Austrian Empire and its predecessor, the Holy Roman Empire, had its own colonial ambitions which, at least partially, followed earlier European patterns and orientations. By the 18th century, worldwide organizations such as the “*Ostendische Kompanie*” (1722–1727) and the “*Ostindische Kompanie Triest Antwerpen*” (1775–1785), under the direct or indirect control of the Habsburgs, had come into being (CHAUDHURY 1999; MATHEW 1995). The Catholic religious orders, like merchants, provided a network for the long-distance transfer of knowledge and products (while at the same time, attempting to preserve the memory of the empire of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V [1500–1558]). The Jesuits, whose East-Central European/Austrian province was centered in Vienna, and whose most important regional *academia* (university) was founded in Nagyszombat/Trnava/Tyrnau in 1635 (SZ. KRISTÓF 2012, 2014), were of great importance. Yet, with the emergence of Great Britain and France as leading maritime (and principal colonial) powers during the 18th and 19th centuries, the explicit colonial efforts of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and its predecessors failed. Following some failed attempts in India along the Malabar Coast in connection with the activity of the *Ostendische Kompanie*, Austria’s colonization of the Nicobar Islands did not last (1778–1783), and neither did their presence in Mexico (1864–1867) or North Borneo (1878–1880) (HASLIP 1971; SAUNDERS 2013). The Dual Monarchy held a concession zone in Tianjin, China for twenty years (1899–1919) (SZUK 1904). Certain efforts were made both in circumnavigating the earth (the Novara Expedition, 1857–1859), and in exploring the Northeast Passage (the Tegethoff Expedition, 1872–1874, finding and unofficially appropriating the “Franz Josef Land” from 1873 to 1926) (RIEDL-DORN 2014; SCHEFBECK 2014). Austria-Hungary seems to have been successful, however, in one (internal) colonizing action: the occupation of

¹ The Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy was established by the 1867 Compromise. Until 1867, Hungary was a subject of the Austrian Empire, the successor of the Holy Roman Empire.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (1878–1918) (DIÓSZEGI 2001:121–125; DONIA 2008). Whether the monarchy successfully made use of its experience in managing a multi-ethnic area in this colonial endeavor is a separate question.

With stable ethnic and linguistic divisions having evolved by the end of the 18th century, the 19th century gave rise to the birth of nationalism and national integrations² in the region. The monarchy, however, retained a pre-modern character in its socio-political and economic structure; despite noticeable industrial development in the late 19th and early 20th century, agriculture remained its economic base. Shortly before WWI, “more than 60% of the people were employed in agricultural work while only 18% were employed in industry” (CULPIN – HENIG 1997:35). The dominant agricultural form of production remained “[m]anorial estates, owned by the nobility and worked by a servile peasantry” (MARKOVITS 1982:2). In this system – medieval by origin and character – ‘national’ identity rarely played a particular role for the peasants or the politically conservative, landed aristocrats who maintained an influential role in the political discourses of the empire none the less. Therefore, the urban, liberal bourgeoisie, as well as the factory workers, had a less influential role than their counterparts in the more modernized countries of Western Europe (MARKOVITS 1982:8).

The difference between Western and Eastern European nationalism is theorized in two different manners in historical scholarship. The first argues that as nationalistic passions universally spread more among townspeople than the rural population, nationalistic movements in Austria-Hungary were weaker than in other countries and had less chance to succeed. Furthermore, any demand by a nationalistic movement implicated discrimination of other nationalities, which was widely opposed in the monarchy, and, with the exception of the Magyarization policy in Hungary after the Compromise, could therefore not be pushed through (MARKOVITS 1982:8).

Other historians claim that the lack of an urban bourgeoisie (especially in Hungary) meant that any nationalistic movement initially supported by noblemen was expressed in a fairly exclusive and intolerant manner when it reached the less educated, rural population (see WOOLF 1996:22–25). Furthermore, it is argued that this exclusivity fueled ethnic and national tensions within the monarchy, and eventually led to its disintegration after WWI.

The Hungarian nationality policy, for example, was determined by the question of independence from Austria and by the secessionist movements of minorities in Hungary (NAGY – KATUS 2010; VARGA 2017:19). Consequently, political thinking in Hungary was permeated by two ideas: equality of civil rights within a territorially united and indissoluble state, and national supremacy that ensures the political prerogatives of the population professing to be Hungarian based on use of Hungarian as their mother tongue and self-identity (JÁSZI 1929). Of the various contesting concepts of nation and the related nationalisms, linguistic nationalism came to determine the nationality policy, replacing the dominant *hungarus* identity³ (MEINECKE 1908; MISKOLCZY 2012; SUNDHAUSEN 1973). This implied *Magyarization* resulted in Hungarians gaining an absolute majority

² We use the term as defined by Bálint VARGA (2017:18–19). National integration took place at three different levels, but not in equal measure: the level of subjectness in the monarchy, at a Hungarian level, and at the level of other “nationality” cultures. (HOFFER 1989:59–63)

³ A form of identity based on territoriality by which the inhabitants of Hungary identified themselves.

in Hungary by 1900 (DEÁK 2000; SZARKA 1998:33–73). The integration of other nationalities within Hungary continued at paces corresponding to their differing legal, religious and economic conditions.⁴

The question remains, whether or not this political situation and socio-economic milieu had a considerable influence on the scientific discourse of the monarchy's multinational intelligentsia, and if it added a unique perspective to its ethnographic discourses on oriental otherness that would translate racial differentiations into ethnic and cultural hegemony (ASH – SURMAN 2012:5–7; FUCHS 2003:154).

THE ASIAN PERIPHERIES OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AND THE DUAL MONARCHY

Subjects of the Dual Monarchy travelled across the globe, but for the purpose of this study we target their travel to the Asian peripheries of the Russian Empire. Beginning in the 16th century, the eastern and southern expansion of the Muscovite state (later Russia) created a large Asian territory under Russian rule and influence. It functioned in the modern era as the economic and social periphery of the Russian Empire (BASSIN 1991). This vast area includes Siberia, Central Asia, Inner Asia, Manchuria, and to some extent, the Caucasus. The importance of these peripheries cannot be overestimated in terms of Russia's history (BURBANK et al. 2007; SAHADEO 2015), and the history of European ethnographic scholarship (VERMEULEN 2015). The blurred border between the colonies and the mainland, and between territories occupied by settlers and indigenous peoples, makes it difficult to separate the peripheries geographically from the center of the Russian Empire (SCHRADDER 2007), especially in the late 19th and early 20th century when the empire was still expanding.

This territory is of special interest for three reasons. First, it was the only non-European territory visited en masse by subjects of the Dual Monarchy. These visits occurred during and after WWI when soldiers of the *k. u. k. Armee* were taken prisoner by the Russian army. Historians calculate that between 1.6 and 2.1 million Austro-Hungarian became POWs in Russia (LEIDINGER – MORITZ 1997; NACHTIGAL 1996; RACHAMIMOV 2002:38). By contrast, there were only an estimated 167,000 German POWs in Russia (RACHAMIMOV 2002:39). Austro-Hungarian POWs received decent, sometimes amicable treatment from their Russian captors, and often had contact with the local population (RACHAMIMOV 2002:46–47).

Captive Austro-Hungarians were placed in a variety of POW camps dispersed throughout the Russian Empire, including in its Asian peripheries. In East Siberia, large camps were located at *Berezovka* in the vicinity of *Verkhneudinsk* (later renamed *Ulan-Ude*), on a cliff overlooking the *Shilka* River at *Sretensk* in Transbaikalia, and at *Spasskoe* in the Russian Far East (RACHAMIMOV 2002:93). The *Berezovka* camp was one of the largest POW camps in the Russian Empire with over 27,000 Austro-Hungarian POWs (Austrians, Hungarians, and Poles).

⁴ On the connection between modernity and nationalism (see GELLNER 2009).

Officers were often separated from rank-and-file soldiers, with captive officers enjoying much better treatment than soldiers; they received a monthly salary and were not forced to work. The Berezovka camp, for example, was famous among captured *k. u. k. Armee* officers for its trade academy which offered courses that were accredited after the war. And, while enforced idleness was one of the worst conditions of Russian captivity for officers, POWs whose educational background or natural inquisitiveness prevented them from falling into desperate homesickness found ways to engage in activities with the local population. Written accounts from Hans Kohn, Edwin Dwindler and Heimito von Doderer show that their captivity opened up new possibilities for self-enhancement, language learning, ethnographic research, and self-discovery (GATRELL 2005:563). Of particular interest are the accounts of those POWs who remained in Russia after gaining their freedom – some married local women, found work, took part in the Civil War, or even did research, thus becoming voluntary travelers or even residents. However, such opportunities only became available after the war.

Among the POWs of the monarchy, the Czech and Slovak legionaries are unique for having been captured on the battlefield, deserting from the Austro-Hungarian army, or for enlisting in the legion from elsewhere. The first Czech and Slovak Legion got as far as Siberia, Manchuria and Japan (JAKL 2006; ZEMAN 1923, 1928). Unlike most other POWs from Austria-Hungary, these legionaries stayed outside the camps for quite some time, and thus had more opportunities to be in contact with the local population. Although they did not prepare for their travels in any way, their records on Siberia are of particular interest (BÉLKA 2009).

The second reason this territory is of special interest is because the monarchy was by no means a rival of Russia in Asia, and its subjects could visit Siberia, Central Asia and the Russian-controlled parts of the Caucasus without major restrictions. This was a result of the alliance between Russia and Austria until the Crimean War – together they defended the balance of the European powers as established in the Vienna Settlement, and in opposing nationalist and liberal political movements in Europe (BREULLY 2015:150). Despite tensions between Austria-Hungary and the Russian Empire in the Balkans from the late 19th to the early 20th century (DEMETER 2007; SKED 1979:119–121), among the European powers, Austria likely posed the least threat for Russia in its Asian endeavors.

Although some researchers, like the anglophile Ármin Vámbéry (1832–1913), were vehement opponents of the eastern expansion of the Russian Empire (VÁMBÉRY 1871), archival material shows that good scientific relations and close cooperation existed between Russian ethnographers and ethnographic institutes in Austria-Hungary. Between 1875 and 1925, Vasilii Vasil'evich Radlov (Friedrich Wilhelm Radloff) (1837–1918), director of the *Kunstkamera*, and Sergey Fyodorovich Ol'denburg (1863–1934), chairman of the ethnographic division of the Russian Geographical Society, corresponded intensively with colleagues all over the world, including numerous scientists in Austria-Hungary.⁵ At the beginning of the 20th century, the Russian Museum, a center of ethnographic research in Russia, sent the artifacts of an entire exhibition on fishery to Vienna.⁶

⁵ Saint Petersburg's branch of the archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences, fond 177, opis' 1, and fond 208, opis' 2.

⁶ Archive of the Russian Museum of Ethnography, fond 1, opis' 2.

Furthermore, some Russian and Austrian noble families were related. For instance, György Almásy (1867–1933), the leader of two expeditions to Central Asia in 1900 and 1908, married Vera Apraksina, who came from a Russian aristocratic family.⁷ Likewise, representatives of noble Hungarian families resided at the Tsarist court, like Count Mihály Zichy (1827–1906), who resided and worked in Saint Petersburg for nearly 50 years in the second half of the 19th century.

The third reason why Russia's Asian peripheries were often visited by travelers from the monarchy and why it is of interest here is the notion of the Hungarians' oriental origin, an idea that was widely accepted in Europe in the late 19th century. Two major (and somewhat interrelated) scholarly legacies dominated this discourse in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The first relied on the testimonies of early medieval chronicles referring to Hungarians as the relatives of the Huns (GYÖRFFY 1993). The second was based on language comparisons from the 17th century that point out lexicological and morphological parallels between the Finnish, Saami, and Hungarian languages (HEGEDÜS 2004; STIPA 1990). In Hungary, the latter legacy was strongly influenced by linguistic, and the emerging ethnological (*Völkerkunde*) (VERMEULEN 2015) scholarship coming out of Georg-August University of Göttingen (FUTAKY 2007; MUNKÁCSI 1882), where many leading Hungarian scholars had studied. Interest in the East – as a form of political resistance against the Catholic Habsburgs by the Hungarian nobility who were leading the national awakening movement (ANDERSON 2006:66–77, 92–97; SUGAR 1969) – focused on the period prior to Hungarian settlement in Central Europe. This romantic affection for the East often imported modern, Western orientalism, and attempted to locate the predecessors of Hungarian culture in the great cultures of the East.⁸ Underlying the different origin hypotheses were social (nobility vs. plebeians) and scientific (cultural psychology vs. positivist science) differences (HOFER 1989:63–66; HONTI 2010, 2012; PUSZTAY 1977, 1985; RÓNA-TAS 1978; SZÜCS 1985; VÁRKONYI 1973:372–375, 400–409). According to subsequent rumors published in Hungarian journals in the 19th century, Hungarians were not only of Asian origin, but their ancestors still resided in their *Urheimat* (TARDY 1975). These rumors resulted in public calls to carry out expeditions to Asia (K. D. 1821). Very few travelers (e.g. Sándor Körösi Csoma and Antal Reguly) managed to conduct fieldwork in Asia before the 1867 Compromise, but thereafter, the number of expeditions significantly increased.

WHO WERE THE TRAVELERS FROM THE DUAL MONARCHY?

As previously stated, many of the travelers from the Dual Monarchy reached Siberia and Central Asia, and the records they left behind on the inhabitants of Asia are of varying quality and length befitting the various scientific and social backgrounds of their authors. In order to classify this heterogeneous corpus of written and visual representations, we

⁷ István Sántha's interview with Gyömörey Zita, Almásy György's granddaughter in Vienna, 2008.

⁸ On the appearance of Western-type orientalism in architecture and decorative arts see F. DÓZSA 1996, ISTVÁN 1996, and the most comprehensive overview by STAUD (1999). On the connection between orientalism and folklore see HOFER 2009, and HUSZKA 1900.

propose a tentative classification of travelers (based on their socio-economic statuses and scientific backgrounds) rather than ordering these sources according to genre. Also, for the sake of comparison, we juxtapose rather than separate the records of Austrian, Czech, Hungarian, and Polish travelers.

A.)

The first group of travelers consists of professional researchers who visited the Asian territories of Russia to create ethnographic records. It is no surprise that the overwhelming majority of these travelers were Hungarian. Antal Reguly (1819–1858) visited Western Siberia, which was inhabited by Finno-Ugrian groups, in 1843–46 to prove their kinship with Hungarians.⁹ Twenty years after Reguly's expedition, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences financed Ármán Vámbéry's visit to the alleged Hungarian homeland in Central Asia. During Vámbéry's travels he visited the independent Khanates of Khiva and Samarkand disguised as a Sunni dervish (VÁMBÉRY 1865). These highly influential research trips not only resulted in fierce academic debates on the origin of the Hungarians, but also paved the way for further exploratory travel in Central Asia and Western Siberia.

The next generation of travelers followed either Reguly's footsteps or Vámbéry's vision of the origins of the Hungarians. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences asked Bernát Munkácsi (1860–1937) to decipher Reguly's Mansi collection.¹⁰ Munkácsi asked Károly Pápai (1861–1893), a scholar well versed in anthropological and ethnographic studies (MUNKÁCSI 1889:206–211), to accompany him. Their 16-month expedition took place in 1888–89. Munkácsi spent most of his time among the Mansi, but also carried out field research among the Khanty (KÁLMÁN 1981; KOZMÁCS 2012; MUNKÁCSI 1889; MUNKÁCSI 1943; SIPŐCZ 2010). Pápai toured the areas populated by the Mansi and Khanty, but also did research among the Selkups and Komi (NAGY 2012; PÁPAI 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891).

At this point we should mention the role of aristocrats in organizing scientific expeditions to the Orient. Count Jenő Zichy (1837–1906) conducted several extensive research trips in Russia at the end of the 19th century. He was a patron of and donor to expeditions in which archaeologists, ethnographers and zoologists worked. Alongside travelogues written under his name, a series of scientific books was published in which the results of these expeditions were presented. Among others, József Pápay, János Jankó, Gábor Szentkatolnai Bálint, Mór Wosinszky, Lajos Szádeczky-Kardoss, Béla Pósta, and Ernő Csiky took part in his subsequent expeditions. On his last expedition, in 1900, Count Zichy traveled through South Siberia, Mongolia and North East China to Beijing in order to seek out books on the ancient Hungarians allegedly written in the Roman alphabet at the imperial library.

⁹ Reguly visited nearly every Finno-Ugrian group and did research among the Finns, Estonians, Saami, Mari, Mordvins, Udmurts, Komi, Nenets and Nganasan, but was mainly interested in the Mansi and Khanty. He also collected oral poetry and linguistic data among the Chuvash – then thought to speak a Finno-Ugric tongue – and the Tatars. On Reguly's travels see BALASSA 1954; HAJDÚ 1953; KODOLÁNYI 1959a, 1959b; KOROMPAY 1971; PÁPAY 1905, 1906; SZÍJ 2009, 2013; TOLDY 1850.

¹⁰ He was not chosen at random; he had toured the areas inhabited by the Udmurts in 1885 and published several publications regarding this trip (MUNKÁCSI 1883; 1887a; 1890–1896). On his journey in Udmurtia (KOZMÁCS 2010; MUNKÁCSI 2008). On his research among the Chuvash as part of this expedition (MUNKÁCSI 1887b). On Reguly's importance for the expedition (MUNKÁCSI 1889:207–208; PÁPAI 1890:117–118) and on his impact upon subsequent research (PÁPAY 1905).

By 1877–78, the members of Count Béla Széchenyi's (1837–1918) research expedition had already spent nearly 14 months in China. Széchenyi had been working with the Austrian geologists Ferdinand von Hochstetter and Eduard Suess from the 1870s onwards. Inspired by their work, Széchenyi planned a comprehensive journey across British India, Japan and China to reach the southernmost part of the Gobi desert. He invited Gustav Kreitner (an Austrian geographer), Lajos Lóczy (a Hungarian geologist), and Gábor Szentkatolnai Bálint (a Hungarian linguist) to participate in this expedition.

The Almásy family, who had a long-standing interest in oriental studies (three generations), also carried out research trips. György Almásy's father, Eduard Almásy, was a founding member of the Hungarian geographical society. In 1900 György Almásy traveled to Kirghizia with the Austrian zoologist Rudolf Ritter von Stummer-Traunfels (ALMÁSY 1903:13–14). He returned there in 1906 with Herbert von Archer, a friend of Austrian-Irish origin, and Hungarian geographer Gyula Prinz (1882–1973). Almásy collected Kirghiz heroic epics, and in 1906 he returned to Hungary with an indigenous research assistant, *Turgan*, who resided with Almásy for three years.¹¹

A number of ethnographic expeditions carried out by subjects of the monarchy were financed by foreign patrons or research institutions. Ujfalvy Károly Jenő/Charles-Eugène Ujfalvy de Mezőkövesd (1842–1904) led several research trips to Central Asia that were financed by the French Academy, and his field notes and research results were published in French¹² (Ujfalvy 1878–1880). Aurél Stein (1862–1943) of Budapest was one of the most influential explorers of his age. The expeditions he carried out between 1900 and 1930 in Inner Asia were done in the service of the British Empire. He published several volumes on his journeys and discoveries, and most were translated into Hungarian shortly thereafter (STEIN 1909). The Smithsonian Institution commissioned Aleš Hrdlička (1869–1943), a Czech, to travel to Russia and Mongolia between 1912 and 1920 (see SPENCER 1979). His travelogues and travel correspondence are kept in the archive of the Smithsonian Institution (MONTGOMERY – CHIEN 2006).

B.)

A second group of travelers did not directly participate in or finance scientific expeditions. These travelers usually earned their living selling Oriental artifacts to European museums and by giving lectures in their home countries or elsewhere. Hans Leder, an Austrian-Silesian entomologist (1843–1921), visited the Baikal region in 1891 to collect insects, primarily for the Court Museum in Vienna. He was a member of the Russian Geographical Society and cooperated with the newly founded museum in Kyakhta (at the Russian-Chinese border). In May of 1892 he set off from Kyakhta for his first journey to Mongolia, which lasted through August of that year. He later undertook three more journeys in 1899–1900, 1902, and 1904–05, each taking him through Siberia. During his first journey to Mongolia he became interested in Buddhism and began collecting, in addition to insects, Buddhist devotional objects, of which he sold many to museums in Austria-Hungary and Germany (to the Court Museum in Vienna and the ethnographic

¹¹ István Sántha's interview with Zita Gyömörey, György Almásy's granddaughter, in Vienna in 2008.

¹² Interestingly, his books have not been translated into Hungarian. However, the travelogue of his wife (who was French) was published in Budapest in 1885 (UJFALVY-BOURDON 1885).

museums of Budapest, Leipzig, Hamburg and Stuttgart). He also travelled to the Altay region in 1900. He gave numerous lectures in Germany, published roughly twenty articles and one book (LEDER 1909), and became a distinguished expert on Mongolian Buddhism. (LANG 2010; LEDER 1908; JISL 1963; OTCHET 1891:10; OTCHET 1892:15–18; ROMANOV 1993:232, 261, 450).

Josef Troll, of Vienna, was another traveler who made his living collecting ethnographic objects and selling them, mostly to the Court Museum. Troll traveled through the Baikal region in 1885 and 1893. Later in 1893 he also journeyed through Mongolia (ÖFNER 2011:18–19).

Josef Kořenský (1847–1937) was a Czech elementary school teacher and a highly systematic traveler; before setting off on a journey he studied the available literature in detail and tried to follow a prepared itinerary. Kořenský made two trips around the world: the first in 1893–1894, and the second in 1901, which included a trip through Siberia on his return to Austria-Hungary from Japan (KOŘENSKÝ 1910). Kořenský traveled on a postal steamboat up the Amur, and by train along the Trans-Siberian railway. He published several books about his journeys. The income he earned from his published books, as well as royalties and paid public lectures, provided most of the funding for his travels (KOŘENSKÝ 1920). His collection of travel photos is preserved in the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Culture in Prague (see TODOROVÁ – CHOVAŇEČEK 2011).

Benedek Baráthosi Balog (1870–1945), a Hungarian, was a school teacher and one of the leading activists of the international Turan movement (see e.g. KISS 2015; ORMOS 2012; PAIKERT 1914). Between 1903 and 1914 he undertook expeditions to Russia and China where he worked as a semi-professional ethnographer and linguist. He traveled in the Amur region and to the islands of Sakhalin and Hokkaido to investigate local indigenous peoples. He collected small wooden ritual objects (amulets) for the leading European museums (Budapest, Hamburg, and London) in return for their financial support of his journeys (KOHARA – WILHELM 1999). Following the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks confiscated a collection which he had left with his colleague, Professor Vladimir Klavdiyevich Arsenyev, at the local historical museum in Khabarovsk (BARÁTHOSI 1929). Pieces collected by Baráthosi seem to appear in both the collections of Khabarovsk and that of the Kunstkamera in Saint Petersburg.

Finally, the Imre Sebők–Aurél Schultz Expedition was organized to study the shamanic rituals of the Buryats in the Cisbaikal region, and to conduct economic and anthropological research among them (KISS 2015:16–17; PAIKERT 1914:5–6).

C.)

As previously mentioned, a number of Hungarian aristocrats traveled to Asia to carry out self-organized, scientific research expeditions. Other aristocrats, however, crossed Siberia and Inner Asia without any clear, scientific target. Two of the earliest travelers to that area were the Hungarian noblemen József Zichy (1841–1924) and his younger brother, Ágost (1852–1925). After navigating through the Dutch East Indies and Japan, they crossed Mongolia and Southern Russia from east to west. József kept a private diary during their travels (1876–77) (ZICHY 2013). As he had no scientific ambitions, he did not intend to publish the manuscript (SLOBODNÍK 2012). His younger brother, Ágost (later a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences), however, published two short travelogues in leading Hungarian journals about their trip (ZICHY 1877, 1880). József

Zichy was not interested in finding the Oriental ancestors or ancient homeland of the Hungarians, but focused primarily on economic concerns. Attila Szemere (1859–1905), an art collector, visited Japan and China between 1881 and 1884. He did not publish scientific papers, but his travel correspondence and manuscripts are kept in the archives of the Otto Herman Museum in Miskolc, Hungary (WINTERMANTEL 1999). Count Péter Vay (1863–1948), a protonotary by papal decree, crossed Siberia in 1904 and 1917 on his way to Japan and Korea (VAY 1906; 1918). He, like other lone aristocrat travelers, did not express much interest in the origins of the Hungarians, but, according to his travel books, rather focused on local social and economic conditions.

The Austrian Erich Pistor (1873–1954), a lawyer by training, was a member of the Chamber of Commerce in his hometown Graz, and later in Vienna. In 1901 he undertook a two-year journey through Siberia, Finland, Mongolia, Japan, China, Australia, and New Zealand. He subsequently published his travel notes (PISTOR 1905), a mixture of a diary and economical notes. His main task, as a correspondent of the k. u. k. Ministry of Commerce, was to explore the markets, economic trends, and possible import-export opportunities between these countries and Austria.

D.)

A fourth group of travelers ventured to the Asian parts of Russia seeking employment. The itinerary of Jan (Eskymo) Welzl (1868–1948), a Czech traveler, is rather dubious; it is hard to describe or trace his exact route of travel, but it is likely that he reached the Arctic Ocean and worked there on a merchantmen among Chukchees and Siberian Yupiks. He never published an article about his travels, but a manuscript known to have been written by him appeared in German, “*An der Reise um die Welt 1893*”, and was published half a century after his death by Rudy Krejčí, in Czech (KREJČÍ 1997).

In 1898 Jenő (Eugene) Cholnoky (1870–1950), spent more than three months visiting silver and gold mines in Manchuria under the employment of a French mining Company (CHOLNOKY 1900:93). Later, he worked as a professor of geography in Kolozsvár/Klausenburg/Cluj and was a founding member of the Hungarian Turanian Society. His travelogue combines elements of a diary, cultural study, and scientific analysis focusing on geomorphological questions (CHOLNOKY 1900:147, 167).

The Hungarian engineer, Károly Gubányi (1867–1935), was employed by the Russian state as a constructor-engineer at construction sites along the Eastern Chinese Railway (the Russian Manchurian railway). Gubányi lived in Manchuria between 1898 and 1903. His travelogue focuses on the resolution of technical problems of railway construction and operation due to local, natural and social circumstances (GUBÁNYI 1907).

E.)

As previously mentioned, of all of the Austro-Hungarian subjects who traveled to the region, the largest group consisted of involuntary travelers, WWI POWs. More than a few Austro-Hungarian POWs captured by the Russian army voluntarily stayed in Siberia longer than was necessary. Some, usually those who married local women, never left. Preliminary archival research shows that in the Catholic church of Verkhneudinsk (Ulan-

Ude) alone around eighty such marriages took place between 1918 and 1923.¹³

Reinhard Augustin, a German-Bohemian born in 1896, was a POW from the Austro-Hungarian army who married a Russian. He became interested in ethnography whilst in Siberia and worked as a librarian in the regional museum of Khabarovsk until the Russian Civil War forced him to flee. Afterwards, he worked as a German and English language teacher in Kharbin and Manzhouli in Manchuria. In 1923, together with his wife, he moved to Austria and studied ethnology at the University of Vienna. In 1928 he obtained his doctorate with a dissertation on the traces of matriarchy in Northern Asia (AUGUSTIN 1927).¹⁴ From 1926 until the early 1930s he worked in the library of Pater Wilhelm Schmidt's *Anthropos-Institut* in Mödling, practically the Austrian center of *Völkerkunde* at that time. There he published book reviews in the institute's journal, *Anthropos*, and translated the works of Buryat ethnographers into German. In the mid-1930s he published two books (AUGUSTIN 1934, 1936) and several articles of a semi-autobiographical and semi-fictional nature – parts of which were clearly plagiarized from Vladimir Arsenyev's books – about 'his' experiences in Siberia and Manchuria.

Some POWs, like Franz Zupan (or Supan) from Temesvár/Temeschburg/Timișoara and Julius Eidler (or Aidler) from Ödenburg/Sopron, stayed and worked as medics helping the locals with their medical training until the late 1920s (Zupan/Supan) (WILMANN 1995:93–94) or early 1930s (Eidler/Aidler).¹⁵ Robert Pollitzer was a well-known epidemiologist of Austrian origin who specialized in diseases such as plague and cholera. Born in Vienna in 1885, Pollitzer graduated from the University of Vienna as a pathologist. He was captured in WWI by Russian troops and spent several years as a POW in Siberia. In 1921, he was invited by the world-renowned Chinese epidemiologist Dr. Wu Lien-teh (1879–1960) to work at the Manchurian plague control station (founded in 1912). Dr. Pollitzer became the first Russian-speaking researcher at the plague control station (RATMANOV – ZHANG FENGMIN 2015:104). He actively published studies on epidemic diseases such as plague, cholera and tularemia after WWII. He wrote monographs on plague and cholera for the World Health Organization (POLLITZER 1954; 1959), monographs on plague and plague control in the USSR (POLLITZER 1966), and tularemia (POLLITZER 1967).

An abundance of photos and travel diaries taken and written by legionaries are preserved in various Czech and Slovak archives.¹⁶ Of all the POWs, only members of the Czech legion were free to take photos and keep diaries in Siberia. Furthermore, they were allowed to take these records home. Yet, in this wealth of material, only relatively few photos capture the various aspects of Buryat Buddhism: monks, lay people, their cult structures, temples, temple complexes and interiors, e.g. altars (BĚLKA 2011) – thus capturing the state of Buryat Buddhism prior to the Bolshevik revolution.

Two Hungarian officers, Ervin Bokor and József Ballay, fell into captivity as early as 1914. They were transported to Tomsk, from whence they escaped in 1915 to Manchuria, China and Japan. By 1916 they had returned to Vienna and were interviewed by Austrian

¹³ State Archive of the Republic of Buryatia, fond 526, opis' 1, delo 3.

¹⁴ Archive of the University of Vienna, Nationale 1923–1928; archive of the Austrian National Library, Protokollzahl 819/1929.

¹⁵ State Archive of the Republic of Buryatia, fond 563, opis' 1, dela 3, 4, 11, 12, 18.

¹⁶ For details and an overview see ORIÁN 2014.

and Hungarian journalists about their adventurous travels. In 1919, Ervin Bokor published a memoir about their escape (BOKOR 1919).¹⁷ The book gained tremendous popularity and was reprinted in 1929.

TRAVEL STRATEGIES UTILIZED BY THE SUBJECTS OF THE DUAL MONARCHY IN RUSSIA AND BEYOND

A number of travelers from the monarchy left ethnographic accounts of the non-European peoples they encountered in the Asian peripheries of Russia. It is therefore important to mention the factors that enabled and assisted their successful travel to and within Russia.

First, as previously stated, despite the rather uncertain relationship between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Russia – the status of the Poles and Ukrainians was a constant source of conflict, as was that of the Balkans – travelers from the monarchy rarely, if ever, were seen as suspicious, dangerous agents of a foreign, colonial power by the Russian authorities. They neither posed a danger for the Russian colonizers, nor for the subordinated indigenous peoples. For example, Gubányi was trusted to contribute to the construction of a strategically important railroad, showing that top Russian bureaucrats considered him harmless (GUBÁNYI 1907:10–11). However, this attitude only prevailed in Russia; Europeans were often suspected of espionage among Asians in Japan and China (BARÁTHOSI 1927:27–28).

The position of Hungarian travelers (somewhere between colonizers and indigenous peoples) enabled them to maintain more or less equal standing among the indigenous peoples in Asiatic Russia. Hungarian travelers preferred to make use of their knowledge of local languages, to exchange objects, or adopt local habits in local contexts (BARÁTHOSI 1927:122–133; COUNT JENŐ ZICHY 1905:86–88; FORBÁTH 1934:19–25; GUBÁNYI 1907:10–11). They learned from both local state bureaucrats and indigenous peoples during their travels (BARÁTHOSI 1927:122–133; GUBÁNYI 1907:10–11). The establishment of relationships of an equal footing with local indigenous people, however, was only upheld temporarily and without permanent consequences. These relationships made Hungarian travelers uncomfortable, and once the relationship proved useful in resolving an immediate (emergency) situation, they no longer continued them or sought them out (BARÁTHOSI 1927:122–133; FORBÁTH 1934:19–25).

In order to win the support of local authorities, Hungarian travelers often claimed to be searching for ancient ancestors and the homeland of the Hungarian people. They explicitly distinguished themselves from other European travelers who might have religious or business interests in the region. At the same time, they ensured the indigenous peoples that they did not act on behalf of the Russian state (JANKÓ 2000). When Béla Szécheny was granted an audience with the Manchu prince of the Qing dynasty, he asked for a permit to visit Mongolia and Tibet. In his request he explained that his interests in crossing China were neither religious nor political, but purely scientific, historical, and even pious as he intended to visit the graves of the ancestors of the Hungarians and pray

¹⁷ Other memoirs (CZIRA 2006; STOFFA 1935) show that many POWs fled eastward from Russian captivity. There may be more unpublished, latent manuscripts in German, Hungarian and Czech archives written by escapees who encountered indigenous peoples in Asia.

for the Hungarian nation (SZÉCHENY 1890:xix–xxi).

During his meagerly financed, first field trip among the Udmurts in 1885, Munkácsi often depended on the goodwill and support of Russian bureaucrats, priests, or ethnographers. In order to win their support he asserted his intentions to find the relatives of the Hungarian nation (MUNKÁCSI 2008:73–74, 93). He received their support, as Pápai points out in his report, because members of Russian academic circles found it self-evident that Hungarian researchers would want to study their Siberian relatives, and therefore supported their expeditions (PÁPAI 1888:623–624).

József Geleta, a Hungarian POW (1885–1961), also benefitted from the notion of the oriental origin of the Hungarians; when he needed to acquire a permit upon entering Mongolia he mentioned the brotherhood between Hungarians and Mongolians to the Mongolian chief officer. When the officer discovered that Geleta was not a Russian, but *Manchar*, a European who was thereby not only a ‘good man’, but also a member of a sister race, he eventually granted the permit (FORBÁTH 1934:19–25).

Travelers from the monarchy built up a base of contacts through academic circles; many researchers from Austria-Hungary, especially the Hungarians, realized the elementary importance of Russian research.¹⁸ Furthermore, their Russian colleagues received them with sympathy.¹⁹ Antal Reguly became greatly popular in St. Petersburg and enjoyed the backing of Russian academic circles.²⁰ As a result, Hungarian researchers maintained intense correspondence not only with Finnish, but Russian colleagues as well (BALASSA 1952; JANKÓ 1900b 1993; KODOLÁNYI 1993; RÁSONYI 1962; RUSVAY 2005:91–98). This led to the support of two expeditions by Munkácsi and Pápai, and Jankó and Pápay.²¹ Munkácsi and Pápai’s expedition was closely followed in Russia by distinguished scientists, which is particularly surprising in light of the vicissitudes Munkácsi endured in Udmurtia.²² They received letters of credence to aid their travel, and Pápai was invited to join his Russian colleagues on an expedition to the Urals too.²³ Russian research institutions made bids to purchase his ethnographic objects (PÁPAI 1890:119). Jankó and Pápay also enjoyed the hospitality of Russian scholarly circles, as

¹⁸ Note Jankó’s statement: “His excellency Count Jenő Zichy was right in saying in his report that we had to discover the Russian literature, not the Russian Empire on our trip.” (JANKÓ 1900a:29).

¹⁹ For instance, Hans Leder was a member of the Russian Geographical Society.

²⁰ He was supported, in vain, by Baer and Köppen against Sjögren, who backed Castren (who eventually won the scholarship of the Russian Academy of Sciences). (BALASSA 1952:172–180). Reguly plotted his map with a commission from the Russian Geographical Society (BORBÉLY 1955:235–239).

²¹ This is evidenced by Pápai’s own statement: “It was beyond our hopes to find such considerate support from an allegedly hostile country in times declared to be laden with conflict. This thoughtful support made our journey possible at all, also largely facilitating it financially.” (PÁPAI 1890:120); and by Munkácsi: “In view of the political developments of recent years, it is quite understandable that we did not look forward to our assignment without anxieties and that we were pleasantly surprised to find readiness and sympathy by the academic and official circles for our cause.” (MUNKÁCSI 1889:212).

²² On his privations during the journey in Udmurtia see KOZMÁCS’s witty account: 2012:76–126.

²³ On the acquisition and advantages of the letter of credence Munkácsi writes in detail and provides a translation of the entire letter (MUNKÁCSI 1889:212–214). On Pápai’s contacts in Russia (BALASSA 1952:181–183), on his short trip to the Ural (PÁPAI 1888:620).

did Zichy's entire third expedition.²⁴

Along with the sympathy with which Russians embraced travelers from Austria-Hungary, especially Hungarians, the infrastructure of the monarchy itself enabled its subjects to carry out expeditions and long research trips by granting them entrance to Russia and China via its network of embassies (BARÁTHOSI 1927:5; ZICHY 1905:224, 253). Simultaneously, subjects of the Dual Monarchy could make use of their aristocratic network (ZICHY 1905:224, 226). Researchers who lacked this aristocratic background could establish or use the existing relationship between Austro-Hungarian and Russian scientific institutions (BARÁTHOSI 1927:5–9). It was also useful for travelers to create private business contacts, especially in the peripheral regions (BARÁTHOSI 1927:11); although the embassies organized their own scientific expeditions to study these far-off regions (GUBÁNYI 1907:18), they lacked effective influence beyond the vicinity of the capitals where they were located (ZICHY 1905:253–254). Until the October Revolution, the Hungarian network in the peripheries led to one Hungarian businessman in Vladivostok (BARÁTHOSI 1927:11; GUBÁNYI 1908:3). In the beginning of the 1900s, a Hungarian hotel, *The Austria*, had the best restaurant in Nikolsk – the administrative center of the Ussuri region. Its guests could converse in four or five languages (GUBÁNYI 1907:71). These business hubs helped travelers from the Monarchy to purchase alimentation and gain information about local conditions.

The Austrian Lloyd, a shipping company, proved another valuable institution for travelers from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Lloyd practically held a monopoly for Austrian foreign postal services and had its own steamship ocean liners. Josef Troll used the Lloyd to send his collection of ethnographic objects to the Court Museum in Vienna. The items were placed on a small vessel to Batumi on the east coast of the Black Sea, which had been captured by the Russians in 1878 and where an Austrian honorary vice consulate, which functioned as an agency of the Lloyd, was founded in 1884. From there the objects were transported with a steamship belonging to the Austrian Lloyd to Trieste, the Austrian sea port on the Adriatic coast. Troll also returned home once with one of the company's liners (ÖFNER 2011:24, 60, 94–97, 119, 138).

THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF TRAVELERS FROM THE DUAL MONARCHY

As previously stated, those who traveled to the Asian peripheries of Russia from the monarchy left behind a huge corpus of written as well as visual records. In order to better understand their works and their perspective on non-European peoples, it is necessary to outline the socio-cultural background of the monarchy's subjects.

Knowledge concerning non-European, indigenous peoples did not exist independently of the time and socio-cultural micro context in which it was born and received, and which thereby shaped its form and meaning. The distinct view Hungarian travelers had on Siberia (or any other part of the world) may have stemmed from the social and cultural circumstances they were raised in and from the political establishment of the monarchy in

²⁴ They also reported on this in the warmest tones (BALASSA 1952:183–190; JANKÓ 1900:15–39; PÁPAY 1905:357–358; RUSVAY 2005)

which they had to find their place and upon which they sometimes reflected. This is much clearer and more evident in the first part of the 19th century with the cultural movement of the Hungarian national awakening that attempted to create a distinct, scientific discourse in the Hungarian vernacular following the rather Protestant pattern of knowledge originating primarily in German universities (especially in Göttingen).²⁵ It is not so clear, however, how this view came about in the second half of the 19th century, especially around and after the Compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867. Earlier models of representation, and an explicit hostility towards the Habsburg/Catholic learning, continued to appear for some time. Even later, German (János Hunfalvy), British (Áron Vámbéry and Aurél Stein), and American (János Xántus) scholarly orientations could be detected.²⁶

We do have a clearer picture, however, on the works which were present in the monarchy concerning non-European peoples and what perspective they transmitted on Oriental otherness. In Hungary, for instance, notions about the indigenous inhabitants of distant lands arrived via travelers' accounts, peregrinating students' knowledge gathered at foreign (primarily Western European) universities, and, no less importantly, translations and adaptations of foreign (mostly Western European) works. Among the latter, schoolbooks on geography and natural history, as well as travel accounts, constituted the most important channels carrying ethnological, and early anthropological notions. Between 1790 and 1840 a whole series of works originating in the centers of Western European culture were adapted in order to supplement Hungarian science. The same kind of textual and visual strategies of *othering* appeared in East-Central Europe, i.e. in Austria-Hungary, as appeared in the representational conventions of the great Atlantic empires, Spain, France, and Great Britain; the physical and political lack of (considerable) colonies did not grant exemption or immunity from culturally biased representations.²⁷ This is especially evident and visible, as previously mentioned, in the first half of the 19th century.

Ethnographic fieldworkers and other travelers from the period were also influenced by geographical and other kinds of school books (travelogues, works of natural history, even poetry and literature, etc.).²⁸ Such works were present in schools, academic circles and also in the field, shaping their knowledge and impacting their imagination. It is thus important to know who referred to which work, in what context, and with what intention.

Aurél Stein admired and admittedly followed the travels of Marco Polo (1254–1324) and Alexander the Great (356–323 BC), frequently commenting upon them in his travel narrative. He also carried with him a contemporary French edition of Xuanzang's Chinese geography (STEIN 1986, 2010; STEWART 2014). Vámbéry's youthful fantasies were admittedly fueled by an idealized image of the East: by "travelogues and lighter

²⁵ On the Hungarian national awakening see KONTLER 1999:222–246. On the Protestant patterns of knowledge and the role of the University of Göttingen in Hungary GURKA 2003; 2010; KONTLER 2013; SZ. KRISTÓF 2011, 2013, 2017; VERMEULEN 2008

²⁶ The geography of Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859) is a considerable influence seen in Hungarian (Protestant) scholarship, ethnology/anthropology included, throughout the 19th century (HUNFALVY 1995; SZ. KRISTÓF 2014a, 2017).

²⁷ For individual analyses of these translations see SZ. KRISTÓF 2011, 2013, 2014b, 2017.

²⁸ The text that follows on schoolbooks and early anthropological stereotypes is based on an unpublished paper presented by Ildikó Sz. Kristóf at the workshop, "Representations of Indigenous Peoples of the Asian Peripheries of the Russian Empire (Northern and Inner Asia) in the Legacies of Travelers from Austro-Hungary", held at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Vienna, 22–24 February 2017.

histories” and also by the art of Byron, Voltaire, Garcilaso de la Vega, and Esaiás Tegnér (1782–1846) (VÁMBÉRY 1966:6–9; 2014). Zichy referred to Heinrich Julius Klaproth (1783–1835) and Adolf Bastian (1826–1905) as his principal authorities (ZICHY 1897). Troll read and used Francis Galton’s *The Art of Travel* (GALTON 1872), Georg von Neumayer’s book on traveling (NEUMAYER 1875), and even Baedeker’s travel guides (ÖFNER 2011:53–54). Also, Jankó was fascinated by “the [Finnish] national culture emerging out of the Kalevala”, and chatted eagerly about anyone who had ever dealt with it (JANKÓ 1993). These examples could and should be multiplied.

How exactly did these works exert their influence on the first (and perhaps, second) generation of Hungarian travelers, fieldworkers, scholars and others? How did the representations presented in such works develop and change during the second half of the 19th century? What happened to these stereotypes as fieldworkers met indigenous peoples in Siberia? Were they clung to (as Jankó did to some extent), or were they overcome? And, last but not least, how did indigenous peoples react? The answers to these questions would lead to a better understanding of to what extent the Austro-Hungarian representation of Siberia, Central- and Inner-Asia was a version of “Orientalism” (SAID 1978), or/and a sort of “cultural colonialism” (THOMAS 1994).

Aside from the influence of common scientific paradigms, other factors may have influenced the work of travelers from the monarchy. We argue that the common spaces for ethnological discourse in the monarchy enhanced communication between Austrian, Czech, and Hungarian researchers. In our preliminary research we spotted only a few occurrences of effective cooperation between researchers of different ethnic affiliation, but more thorough research may shed light on how Austrian, Czech, and Hungarian ethnological researchers have done so, or at least how they influenced each other.

In fact, a number of research expeditions were carried out with researchers of various ethnic backgrounds. For example, a k.u.k. merchant expedition to India, China, Siam and Japan was organized in 1868 involving, among others, the Austrian explorer Karl von Scherzer and János Xántus, a Hungarian scientist (or polymath). Expeditions organized by Széchenyi and Almásy also involved Austrian researchers and travelers. However, no print evidence of financial or material support or cooperation between the two national organizations, the Anthropological Society in Vienna (*Anthropologische Gesellschaft in Wien*) and the Hungarian Ethnographic Society (*Magyar Néprajzi Társaság*), has been found so far. The journals, *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft Wien* (published in Vienna from 1870 onwards) and *Ethnographia* (published in Budapest from 1890 onwards), tend to report on the expeditions and scientific results of researchers in other countries, without emphasizing their joint nature. The journal of the Hungarian Ethnographic Museum (*Néprajzi Értesítő*), founded in 1900, had more references to the content of the *Mitteilungen* than the *Ethnographia*.

The most active and prolific members of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society and/or of the editorial team of the *Ethnographia*, however, were also authors in the *Mitteilungen*, such as Antal Herrmann (who also edited a German-language ethnological journal in Hungary between 1887 and 1907), Aurél Török and Ottó Herman.²⁹ In addition, when

²⁹ It is no surprise that only these researchers (interested in physical anthropology and archeology) published in the Vienna-based journal, physical anthropology had a more central position than ethnology in Austrian ethnographic scholarship in the late 19th century (GINGRICH 2016).

an acknowledged Hungarian researcher or writer died, the obituary was published in the *Mitteilungen*, as was the case with Pál Hunfalvy. There are some examples where it is difficult, due to the melting pot effect of the monarchy, to track the author's national identity. For instance, Josef Szombathy, widely known for his role in finding the Venus of Willendorf, was an Austrian of Hungarian ancestry on his father's side (HEINRICH 2003). He worked as chief editor of the *Mitteilungen* in the 1880s.

For Czechs, the case was a bit different. Before establishing their own institution, Czech ethnographers tended to present their findings in the *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft Wien*, where the paleontologist and archaeologist, Jan Nepomuk Wodrich, was a member of the editorial team. The founding of the Czech and Slovak Ethnographic Society (Československá národopisná společnost) in 1893 did not mark the end of Czechs publishing in the Austrian journal. The fact that *Národopisný sborník českoslovanský*, the Czechs' own ethnographic journal, started only in 1906 might be the reason for, and the consequence of, the relatively close bond between Czech and Austrian ethnologists, which differed from their Hungarian counterparts' constant desire for independence.

CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

The goal of our joint research endeavor going forward is to provide a number of comprehensive case studies for the purpose of comparison. We aim to closely examine the personal backgrounds of specific travelers, the peculiarities of their travels and the impact they had on them, and, if detectable, on the indigenous people they visited, their ethnographic outcomes and value, the character of their accounts, as well as the impact they had on society in general and on the development of the discipline of ethnology/anthropology in particular.

Through this comparative analysis, for which this article serves as a launch pad, we aim to contribute to three ongoing anthropological and historical discourses. First, we plan to scrutinize the much-debated notion of *orientalism*. We argue that it is necessary to examine local phenotypes of the creation of Oriental otherness in 19th-century Europe rather than an overarching, uniform idea of orientalism – to separately examine German (MARCHAND 2010), French (HOSFORD – WOJTKOWSKI 2010), Austro-Hungarian (LEMON 2011), and even Hungarian (STAUD 1999) orientalism as instructive notions. We focus on the Austro-Hungarian and Hungarian orientalisms because they seem remarkably underexamined, and all of the above presented peculiar socio-cultural preconditions and trajectories, as well as individual endeavors and achievements that seem highly conspicuous of being able to reveal distinct forms of constructing (Oriental) otherness, which have so far not been described and deconstructed.

Second, we argue that the corpus of ethnographic accounts written by travelers from the monarchy on Russia and the neighboring regions in the 19th century are the direct successors of expeditions in the 18th century that were led by natural scientists in Siberia, whose work brought about the emergence of systematic ethnographic research (SCHWEITZER 2013) and the type of travel carried out by “*reisende[n] Gelehrten*” (SLEZKINE 1994). The ever-growing corpus of German works on the oriental subordinates of the Russian state did significantly contribute to the development and shaping of ethnology (*Völkerkunde*) in Europe (VERMEULEN 2015), including in the

Austrian Empire where it had an enormous impact on Hungarian, Austrian and Czech intellectuals (SÁRKÁNY 2012).

The example of the monarchy will contribute to a more detailed picture of how new ideas (like *Völkerkunde*) that were born in the centers of German enlightenment impregnated the intellectual life of the more peripheral regions of Europe. At the same time, we argue that *Völkerkunde/egyetemes néprajz/etnologie*, and *Volkskunde/néprajz/národopis* developed within national research traditions rather than in the frames of a monolithic European intellectual project (cf SCHWEITZER 2001). Our question is whether or not the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy provided a meaningful frame to bridge national research traditions. Thus, we may contribute to a better understanding of the spread and popularity of ethnographic scholarship in Europe.

Third, in examining the common features of the endeavors of various Austrian, Czech, Hungarian, and Polish travelers from the monarchy, and the heterogeneous corpus of accounts left behind, we are looking for traces of a common approach to non-European peoples. We are interested in how and to what extent travelers from the monarchy were endowed with a distinct cultural (THOMAS 1994) or soft (PRUTSCH 2003:36) colonial attitude towards Asian otherness.

In order to achieve these goals we revisit known accounts of those who traveled from the monarchy to the peripheries of the Russian Empire, and search for new ones, both in public and private archives, to analyze and contextualize them in the socio-cultural environment and the spheres of scholarship that existed in the monarchy and beyond. In doing so we journey to new ground, like the protagonists of our research, to expand our ethnographic knowledge as well as the history and underlying driving forces of our discipline.

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Reviews

BORSOS, Balázs: *A magyar népi kultúra regionális struktúrája. I-II* [The Regional Structure of Hungarian Folk Culture I-II]. 2011, Budapest: MTA Néprajzi Kutatóintézet. 563, 354. ISBN: 978-963-567-049-9

BORSOS, Balázs: *The Regional Structure of Hungarian Folk Culture*. 2017, Münster – New York: Waxmann. 436. ISBN: 978-3-8309-3443-1

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In ethnography, it was a long road from recognizing cultural differences in the Hungarian public consciousness to comprehending the well-described, corresponding units of the interpretation and spatial examination of regional differences in cultural phenomena. By means of the cartographic method, the diffusion of cultural phenomena, the modes and laws of their distribution became explorable in an objective way. The Hungarian material published in 1987-1992 is prominent among the European ethnographic atlases, because it made use of the conclusions of earlier works, and thematically it is one of the most varied works, investigating the largest number of phenomena. The 9-volume Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas covers the entire Hungarian language area with 417 collection points. The research focuses primarily on the folk culture of the turn of the 19-20th century, with little or no outlook on changes and recent phenomena. 634 maps were published after the collection journals were processed, but their accompanying explanatory volumes are still missing.

The Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas served as a resource for the manual of *The Regional Structure of Hungarian Folk Culture*. The first major achievement of Balázs Borsos was to produce a digital version of the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas, which made it possible to provide a quicker, more detailed overview of the data. Furthermore, he compiled two additional virtual volumes, numbers 10 and 11, and 100 additional virtual maps (for agricultural, population, geographic, historical, and economic sections), which opened up further analytical possibilities.

In his doctoral dissertation, which he defended in 2009, Balázs Borsos completed a group analysis of the digitized versions of the 634 maps, and this volume publishes the results of this work. Balázs Borsos's aim was to create a synthesized picture of the regional structure of Hungarian folk culture by building upon the data of the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas and comparing the results of computer data processing and analysis with the regional diffusion of the already established ethnographic landscapes and cultural symbols.

Thanks to the newly developed mathematical research method, the computer group analysis, which is also suitable for the processing of other ethnographic atlases, the characteristic regional stratification of 19-20th-century Hungarian peasant culture and the cultural phenomena depicted in the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas can now be traced. In defining the basic units of the study, Balázs Borsos used the concept of the cultural

region developed by Attila Paládi-Kovács: he demarcated large, medium and small regions, in some places even microregions. The studies have confirmed the levels of large, medium and small regions that have already been elaborated by the results of ethnography but not objectively clarified. At the same time, they also outlined zones that scholarship considered merely tentative, such as the Transitional large region between the northeastern part of the Great Plain and Transylvania, i.e., that the Great Plain could be divided into two regions – those under Ottoman occupation and those beyond. The analysis also showed that Moldavia does not diverge as sharply as it was previously assumed. Felföld is the large region that is most difficult to demarcate, raising many issues both in name and in territory. The concept of medium regions (or mesoregions) is new, not yet generally used in ethnography. Instead of the 26 mesoregions identified by László Kósa, 18 mesoregions can be drawn based on the group analysis of the mapped phenomena, with discrepancies in Western Transylvania and the Felföld. At this level of study, Balázs Borsos confirmed the earlier assessment that the cultural and ethnic separation of Palócföld cannot be justified, while the boundaries of the mesoregion are indicated by the dividing lines of mountains and river valleys.

Data gained from the collection points of the atlas were not always sufficient for the delimitation of the smallest sections of the cultural classification structure – the small and micro-regions – thus, to refine the picture, a different method was needed, namely, a cultural similarity test based on computer data processing. Károly Viski mentions more than 100 small regions in 1938, the Ethnographic Atlas indicates 77 small regions. Based on the research of Balázs Borsos, in Hungarian folk culture the clusterization resulted in the demarcation of 5 large regions, 18 medium regions, and 103 small regions, the latter being further refined into 31 micro-regions. Balázs Borsos also correlated these results with the cultural similarity test, as well as used the geographic and linguistic divisions, and the earlier results of relevant ethnographic studies (on the subjects of folk music, folk dance, architecture, calendar customs, hemp processing, ornamentation). Ethnography does not, however, have access to the same in-depth studies from all the examined regional units, so there is still a need to carry out further investigations based on the framework outline above and devoting more attention to the regional stratification, but the possibilities are limited, the author states, for these cultural aspects are no longer available for current studies, and historical sources may not be sufficient.

The first chapter of Volume I. of *The Regional Structure of Hungarian Folk Culture* enumerates the results of studies of the regional stratification of culture, and the ethnographic atlases summarizing them, with a European perspective. It summarizes terminology issues and problems. The second chapter describes the database, gives a step-by-step account of the preliminary steps for the development of the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas, and the process of digitization. The third chapter introduces the reader to the cluster analysis done with the help of the newly developed computer program, the interpretation, and the enormous task of evaluating the data. The difficulty of the work was due, for instance, to the fact that the shortcomings of data collection had to be addressed and corrected in the interpretation.

In the fourth chapter, Balázs Borsos steps a bit out of his line of thought: using the above research method, he also examines European ethnographic atlases. He demonstrates that the process can also be used successfully on the sample maps of the German Ethnographic Atlas to process map data.

Chapter five projects the regional stratification onto maps of administration, ethnicity, religion, demographics, agriculture, geography, dialect, and the ethnographic maps of certain cultural features. The sixth and largest chapter contains the description of all these results, the breakdown of each cultural region by level. The seventh chapter enumerates once again the problems that have emerged, the new methods that have been developed to solve them, and the solutions so far. The volume concludes with a rich Hungarian and foreign language bibliography.

Volume II. contains the annexes to the chapters of the main text, the clustering maps and tables, as well as the similarity table of settlements, and the maps of Vols. 10 and 11 of the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas. The two volumes can be opened side by side to read the main text and to keep track of data which, for lack of space, are not referred to by the author where it is not necessary.

The results of the 2011 two-volume manual were published by the author in a single-volume, abbreviated version in English in 2017. Compared to the Hungarian version, the English edition diverges only by omitting the entire chapter 6 and the accompanying map annexes. Thus, only the introductory, descriptive, and summary chapters with an international relevance were included in this volume with the cluster map and table attachments, the Atlas collection points, and the virtual chapters 10 and 11.

While writing and editing this manual, the spelling of geographic names was one of the most demanding tasks that sometimes required further consideration of the relevant rules, like, for example, in the case of ethnographic landscapes and perpetuated phrases. During the English translation, it was difficult to handle and transcribe these geographic names. To do this, the author and translator Béla Borsos used a thoroughly strategic and consistent approach.

Balázs Borsos's comparative analyses and the objective research results of his novel approach proved Jenő Barabás's expectations formulated in 1992: through the analysis of the stratification based on the entire database of the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas, previously less apparent relation systems were also revealed. On the other hand, smaller and larger cultural boundaries, drawn from partial investigations, have been confirmed by correlating them with earlier results collected by other disciplines. Beyond ethnography, Balázs Borsos's comparative, synthesizing manual can be a valuable resource, an important database for related disciplines as well.

FÖLDESSY, Edina: *Torday Emil kongói gyűjteménye/Emil Torday's Congo Collection*. 2015, Budapest: Néprajzi Múzeum. [A Néprajzi Múzeum Tárgykatalógusai / Catalogues of the Museum of Ethnography 21.] 220. ISBN 978-963-954-096-5

Tamás Régi

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Bilingual (Hungarian/English) museum catalogue, with two maps, black and white and colour object photographs from the Emil Torday collection at the Museum of Ethnography, Budapest.

Emil Torday (1875-1931) was a Hungarian ethnographer and Africanist who at the turn of the 20th century undertook three major travels to the Congo Basin. First (1900-1904) he travelled as a Belgian colonial officer, and second (1905-1907), though still financed by a Belgian trading company, as a scientific researcher in a cooperation with the British Museum, the Pitt Rivers Museum, and the Royal Anthropological Society. Torday started collecting objects in the field for these museums and working with colleagues from these institutions (Thomas Joyce and Sir Charles Read). The majority of the collected objects is still in the British Museum, while a smaller collection is at the Pitt-Rivers Museum. His third trip (1907-1909) was the most successful from a scientific point of view. The British Museum offered to buy the objects Torday collected during the trip, so he was able to finance his trip from this sum. By this time, he was a well-established scholar, much more ahead of his age, applying modern ethnographic fieldwork techniques, speaking several local languages, and his personality made him popular among the visited groups. During this last trip, Torday collected thousands of objects, visited different ethnic groups, among them some entirely unknown to the Western world. The expedition collected a huge number of objects from the Kuba, Pende and Bunda people – to mention just a few.

According to the inventory, there are 462 objects in the Torday collection at the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest, and all of them originated from the third trip. The collection is very valuable. Torday offered most of the materials collected during this third trip to the above-mentioned museums and to the Kasai Company, and, although less in number, many objects of good quality arrived in Budapest (nevertheless there is no evidence that these objects had ever arrived at the Kasai Company). The visited groups are not represented proportionately by the objects, however, as the most objects were collected from the people of the Kuba Kingdom.

Some sources mistakenly attribute the “exploration” of the Kuba Kingdom to Torday, despite the fact that there were two other researchers who described the people of the Kingdom. However, Torday was the first who described the Lele and Wongo people, also well represented in the collection. Furthermore, the Torday collection contains objects from the Tetela and Pende people who lived north and west from the Kuba Kingdom.

To begin, the catalogue offers some new biographical details about Torday; the author, Edina Földessy, through a very thorough and exhaustive background research, sheds light on some yet unknown details about Torday’s early career. The comprehensive research is featured throughout the whole catalogue, making it a primary source for future Torday researchers. As the Budapest collection is from Torday’s third trip, the catalogue devotes a longer section to this third trip. We can read more details of the circumstances of the fieldtrips, and finally about Torday’s professional career, as well as memories of the Hungarian ethnographer.

The second part of the catalogue tells us about the history of the Budapest collection and introduces the people involved with the collection. This is also a useful part for understanding the ethnographic context of the later-mentioned objects. This section is followed by the introduction of the classification of the objects, which is partly based on Torday’s categories. The catalogue classifies the objects as follows: textiles, clothing, accessories, carved wooden articles for household and personal use, pottery and articles made of gourd, weaving techniques and basketry, weapons and tools, agricultural and crafting tools, musical instruments, games and other entertainment, traditional currency, and tools of personal hygiene and healing.

Following this system, the catalogue gives us short object descriptions, each of them illustrated by colour photographs. The photographs are of good quality, full of details, and most of them depict yet unpublished objects. The descriptions are informative, catalogue-style descriptions. At the end of the book, a bibliography and an index help the reader find people and objects.

The catalogue is highly professional; the black and white field photographs and the colour object photographs provide an excellent reader experience. The publication is clearly based on a very thorough research, which makes the catalogue an outstanding book for future Torday researchers.

WILHELM, Gábor: *Sámántárgyak. Diószegi Vilmos gyűjteménye / Shamanic Objects. The Vilmos Diószegi Collection*. 2016, Budapest: Néprajzi Múzeum. [A Néprajzi Múzeum Tárgykatalógusai / Catalogues of the Museum of Ethnography 23.] 118. ISBN 978-615-5682-01-8

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First of all, I have a feeling that I need to start my review with a positive remark on the layout of the catalogue. The images are not only beautifully printed, but they are sufficiently large, so that one may explore even the small details in the background. This is the reviewer's first impression of the catalogue.

Vilmos Diószegi (1923–1972) has an international reputation as a scholar of Siberian Studies who was able to conduct subsequent fieldworks in the USSR and Mongolia after World War II, when neither Soviet, nor Mongolian scholars were permitted to study shamanism in the field. He encouraged local and indigenous intellectuals to carry out research on the religious practices of their ancestors. By helping edit their collected works in English and German, he helped Soviet and Mongolian scholars publish their works on 'folk belief' and shamanism, and thus created a basis for an international recognition of their work. He not only conducted three fieldworks in Southern Siberia (1957, 1958 and 1964) and one in Northern Mongolia (1960) among indigenous peoples of Turkic, Mongolian and Manchu-Tungus origins, but also examined the archival documents and photos and studied the local museum collections as well. His scholarly activities on Siberian (and Central Asian) shamanism ensured the continuity of Siberian studies in Hungary (from the representatives of the generation before the Revolution of 1956 to Eva Schmidt). He was a very influential person. His popular works (among others, Diószegi 1968) provided a starting point for many Hungarian scholars (including the reviewer) to travel, work and live with Siberian peoples, and also to establish a scientific career.

The next task is to determine the place of the exhibited materials in the context of the entire Diószegi legacy. The materials of Vilmos Diószegi's heritage can be found in four places: with his descendants, at the Institute of Ethnology of the Research Centre for Humanities at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (where Vilmos Diószegi was

employed between 1963 and 1972), the Institute of Musicology of the Research Centre for Humanities at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and finally at the Museum of Ethnography (where he worked until 1963). His family has kept his handwritten journals, fieldnotes booklets and letters (as well as his personal scientific library). The Institute of Ethnology owns the manuscripts of his unfinished projects (as of 1972). The Institute of Musicology archived his musical tracks (copied and collected by V. D. in the USSR and Mongolia), and the Museum of Ethnography takes care of the photos and objects (collected in Mongolia and Siberia). The present catalogue exhibits these latter, mostly collected in Northern Mongolia in 1960.

In this section I would like to review the main articles of the book. The contributors of the catalogue aim to analyze the Darkhat material from Northern Mongolia because it provides the main body of Diószegi's collection of objects. Ágnes Birtalan's contribution to the catalogue is a review of Diószegi's Mongolian terms. Her excellent work is right to criticize Diószegi for his insufficient skills in speaking (and writing) Mongolian. Her writing draws attention to the complexity of Diószegi's approach to combine ethnology and oriental studies (28–30).

Judith Hangartner criticizes Diószegi for his ethical approaches to local people and habits. Here, for the sake of Vilmos Diószegi, we need to note that science had a superior position in his view. For him, scientific interest was more important than local prohibitions, such as visiting forbidden places, touching and transporting shamanic objects (30–31). Even if, as a fieldworker, I absolutely agree with Judith Hangartner's criticism, Diószegi's approach to shamanic objects in the field was in accordance with Soviet scholars' field ethics of that period, namely, the early 1960s.

Gábor Wilhelm provides an excellent introduction to the history of comparative ethnological studies in Hungary. Wilhelm sees Diószegi in this context and criticizes him for using outdated methods (31–36), and for adopting the Soviet approach of ethnogenesis (34). Here I need to add that ethnogenesis is still an optional method even today, for example, in French ethnology, and the current works of Nikolai Ssorin-Chaikov or David Anderson are evidence that this method is not entirely outdated. This method is also important to understanding earlier works, such as Leo Shternberg's book on Northern shamanism or Mikhail Shirokogoroff's book on the origins of Evenki people. Finally, Michael Oppitz's work (on Tibetan materials) provides a positive example of how shamanism can be successfully examined in a global comparison. In his study, Oppitz relied heavily on Diószegi's comparative study of shamanic drums (36–37). I suppose Diószegi would be content with the introductory article, because it is, although in a critical manner, in accordance with his ideas, and thus the article preserves the complexity and potentiality hidden in Diószegi's materials. However, it should be emphasized that ethnic and ethnogenetic comparison is not the only method of studying shamanism, and there are many other approaches to this phenomenon.

As in all complex works relying on oriental language skills, one can find minor spelling mistakes and insufficiently clear interpretations. In this respect the catalogue is also not an exception. For example, I do not really understand why it is not clarified that Diószegi worked with Tofa shamans in 1958 (107 and 109). Also, it should have been underlined that Diószegi had never conducted fieldwork in Eastern Siberia and had never visited Nanays in the Amur region (109).

Finally, I draw attention to some questions, interesting objects, and potentials for the future. The first question is about reindeer: how did the Darkhats acquire reindeer hide and leather for their shamanic objects (101, 109, 110)? Did they use wild or domesticated reindeer hides? Were these hides taken from the neighboring reindeer-herding Mongolian Tsaatans, Buryatian Soyots, Irkutskian Tofas or Tuvan Todzhas in the Sayan Mountains? We can also find objects in the catalogue that Diószegi did not donate to the Museum of Ethnography. He held on to them, and these objects were sold to the Museum only after his death. The catalogue showcases a copy of a shamanic object (107) and another one (made upon the request of Diószegi), which is a part of a shamanic object (109). Perhaps Diószegi had personal emotional attachments to these objects, or perhaps he may have even used them (110). Finally, thinking about the potential of these materials, I wonder why Diószegi, and the contributors, did not seek the connections between objects found in a particular shamanic burial. It could tell a lot about shamanic worlds and shamanic practices, and these systems of connections could even be compared among shamans and their burials.

In summary, I need to emphasize the importance of the materials published in this catalogue, especially because, due to the relocation of the Museum of Ethnography, Diószegi's scientific collection will be unsearchable for many years. This catalogue provides a guide to Diószegi's scattered collection located in different institutions, and points at the necessity of publishing the second half of Diószegi's journals, fieldnotes booklets and letters.

SZARVAS, Zsuzsa: *Zsidó tárgyak / Jewish Objects*. 2017, Budapest: Néprajzi Múzeum. [A Néprajzi Múzeum Tárgykatalógusai / Catalogues of the Museum of Ethnography 24.] 160. ISBN 978-615-5682-02-5

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Jewish Objects, the new bilingual (Hungarian/English) catalogue of the Museum of Ethnography, edited by Zsuzsa Szarvas, accounts for all the artefacts found in the Museum with connections to Jewish culture. It is meant to be a follow-up to the 2014 breakthrough exhibit, *Picking up the Pieces: Fragments of Rural Hungarian Jewish Culture*, the ethnographic presentation and introduction of our native Jewry.

The catalogue is divided into five major sections. After the *Foreword and Acknowledgements* (7), the first section is titled *Jewish Objects at the Museum of Ethnography* by Zsuzsa Szarvas (45–59), followed by *The Offertory Book of the Bikur Holim Society of Pápa* (61–45) by Viktória Bányai and Szonja Ráhel Komoróczy. The third and main unit is the *Catalogue* itself (69–148), the fourth is the *Bibliography* (151–153), while the *Appendix* (155–159) comprises the final part.

The introductory study, *Jewish Objects at the Museum of Ethnography* by Zsuzsa Szarvas, describes the context in which the idea of the creation of the catalogue was born.

In the 19th century, neither the traditional nor the assimilated Jewish society expressed a desire to place their culture into the scope of ethnographic research. The introductory research, conducted at the beginning of the 20th century, had no success, and therefore the Museum of Ethnography showed no interest either in studies regarding Jewish culture. In the '80s and '90s, exhibitions presenting Jewish culture appeared, however, and the real breakthrough was brought on by the above-mentioned *Picking up the Pieces: Fragments of the Rural Hungarian Jewish Culture* exhibit, to which this catalogue is meant to be an addition. As mentioned before, the purpose of the catalogue is to collect and present Jewish artefacts found in the Museum – but what artefacts are those, and on what basis can they be considered *Jewish*? Because the Jewry itself is a highly stratified micro-society, 'Jewish' as an attribute becomes a loaded compact expression; therefore, using it as such may bring some risks.

Zsuzsa Szarvas discusses this in her study, while also illustrating why it is so complicated to present the artefacts belonging to the world of Jews. Finally, she takes the categories established by Tamás Raj and defines two groups: the first category contains religious-ceremonial artefacts, while the second contains Jewish ethnographic artefacts – thereby emphasizing that the rich material world of Jewish culture is synthesised by both sacred and profane elements. According to the author's line of reasoning, "the concept of a 'Jewish object' should be understood in terms of tradition and custom rather than strict regulations and laws" (46). She realizes that presenting the artefacts found in the Museum in passive categories is an individual solution based on intuitive perception and interpretation requiring further research and interpretations.

In the subsequent pages of her study, Zsuzsa Szarvas concentrates on the history of the collection by making an attempt to outline how the artefacts arrived at the Museum. First she mentions Gyula Grünbaum, a Transdanubian collector, who enriched the Museum's gallery with 52 items, after which she discusses the activities of József Lichtneckert, József Rosenstingl, and Ignác Hajnal (Holczmann). Of the relationship between the Hungarian Jewish Museum, opened in 1916, and the Museum of Ethnography, the author states: "the Jewish items assembled by the Museum of Ethnography during the initial decades of the 20th century intersected at many points with the collection taking shape simultaneously at the Jewish Museum" (49). Zsuzsa Szarvas puts an emphasis on the fact that after WWI, five items of the collection arrived from the Metal Distribution Centre. She also describes the fieldwork conducted in a Hasidic community by Miklós Rékai of Munkács, during which Rékai collected items used in their daily life and during festivities, and donated them to the Museum. The author also mentions that the core of the collection comes from the objects that were part of the *Picking up the Pieces: Fragments of the Rural Hungarian Jewish Culture* exhibit, and then, abandoning the chronological order, she describes the group of souvenir items originating from Jerusalem.

From the study we also learn that in the various collections of the Museum of Ethnography, there are 183 pieces currently attributed to the Jewish culture; furthermore, that the oldest items of the collection are two pewter plates from the 18th century, while the only piece that has a date on it (1815) is a candle holder. The item that first became part of the collection is a richly decorated walking stick from 1886; the newest ones are mezuzots and items from the International Youth Camp of Szarvas. The author underlines that the collection contains more than the 183 artefacts named and presented in the catalogue, but some of those, for various reasons, can no longer be found

there. In her introductory study, Zsuzsa Szarvas reflects on the difficulty of classification, for in time many of the artefacts lost their original function, and only careful research could identify those. Finally, she establishes eight categories the pieces of the collection can be sorted into, and presents those in a structural manner: (1) *The offertory book* (examined by the second study of the catalogue), (2) *Head coverings, ritual clothing*, (3) *Synagogue furnishing and accessories*, (4) *Artefacts associated with the Sabbath*, (5) *Festival objects*, (6) *Artefacts associated with the kosher household and ritual purity*, (7) *Artefacts associated with funerals and burial*, (8) *Souvenir items*. Although photographs are not part of the catalogue, the author includes the specifics of those found in the collection, and presents the most well-known and published photos.

The second major unit of the catalogue is the study written by Viktória Bányaí and Szonja Ráhel Komoróczy, titled *The Offertory Book of the Bikur Holim Society of Pápa*. The leather-bound offertory book of Pápa's Society for Visiting the Sick is a prominent artefact in the Museum of Ethnography's collection. Its title page displays the year 1829; the Museum purchased it from Gyula Grünbaum in 1913. The authors describe the specialities of the offertory book discovered during restoration, among which are five little pockets containing slips of paper. These papers have inscriptions, in German with Hebrew characters, of various amounts of wine. The authors assume that wine was part of the offerings, which means that donations to the Society were not only monetary in nature. The authors discuss the role and various modes of charity, underlining that Torah reading was one of the most common occasions. The last part of the study examines the offertory book from a philological perspective: the authors find that the languages used in the book carry a lot of information about the 19th century Jewish community of Pápa. They talk about a "process of linguistic assimilation:" in its first stage, Yiddish was changed to German; in the second, German was substituted by Hungarian. The spoken language during the transitional period was German, but the writing was still Hebrew. The authors conclude that the 19th century Pápa community was in this last, transitional period. At this point it is worth mentioning that there is a tasteful USB drive attached to the book cover to help with the visualization of the offertory book.

The above mentioned two studies are followed by the well-organized and richly illustrated, nearly 80-page-long *Catalogue*, which, starting with the walking stick from 1886 all the way to the artefacts of Camp Szarvas, introduces the items related to the Jewry found in the collection of the Museum of Ethnography.

The fourth section, the *Bibliography*, utilizes the national and international findings published in academic writings on the subjects of history, ethnography, and cultural anthropology. The book, *Jewish Objects*, edited by Zsuzsa Szarvas, achieved its goal: it represents well that the Jewish culture can truly be captured and understood in its particularity. The remarkably open language and composition of the two studies included in the book leave room for the readers to develop their own interpretations and understandings. The editor emphasizes all through the book that the research is still a work in progress, while at the same time presenting the available items without omission. Finally, as to the appearance of the book, the high utilization of the book's pages must be mentioned, while full-page pictures provide a high level of aesthetic experience to the reader.

KLIMA, László: *Jürkák, tormák, merjék. Szemelvények a finnugor nyelvű népek történetének korai forrásaiból*. [Yurkas, Tormas and Meryas. Excerpts from the Early History of Finno-Ugric Peoples]. 2016, Budapest: MTA Humanities Research Center. 471. ISBN 978-963-4160-37-3

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László Klima is a domestically and internationally renowned and esteemed scholar of Finno-Ugric Studies, more specifically of the history of Finno-Ugric peoples. His work has always targeted the wider audience alongside the narrower professional readership. His book, published in 2016, is closely linked to the author's scientific work so far, a summary and consolidation of his well-known source compilation and explanatory works.

The editorial principles of the book are clear: it analyzes selected texts according to source groups, separating early Latin, Greek and Hebrew sources, descriptions of medieval European travelers and Muslim geographers and travelers, and Russian chronicles. The author has made the appropriate choice with this editing principle, because, on the one hand, as he demonstrates, the identification of certain individual peoples is often uncertain, and it is hard to even decide whether or not the given sources are talking about ethnic groups; on the other hand, the source groups are clustered by their peculiar characteristics, as they show the Finno-Ugric peoples from a particular perspective, through a specific geographic underpinning and political influence. Thanks to this choice of editorial principle, we can see the history of the same territory and the same peoples through different prisms, which show the connection system of the Finno-Ugric peoples and the realms that define their history in a unique, polyphonic way, thus contributing to a more accurate picture.

The author calls his work excerpts, and rightly so, because the collection of sources is far from complete, even with regard to travelers' literature. Nonetheless, his choices are comprehensible and justified. He strives for a great deal of completeness where he can (Muslim sources), and makes rational and discreet choices where it is needed (Russian chronicles, yearbooks).

The editorial principles are also clear in terms of time, defined by historical events: by the beginning of the 17th century, all the peoples studied have been reached by Russian colonization, the Siberians being the last. By then, the European Finno-Ugric peoples can be considered to already be known about, primarily thanks to Russian sources, but the exploration of Finno-Ugric peoples in Siberia had only just begun at that time, so the sources from the 17-18th century are just as arbitrary as the 16th-century literature was regarding the groups in Europe. Fortunately, as he points out in a footnote, he considers the release of these sources as his next goal.

The presentation of the individual sources is also based on a unified structure: after introducing the author of the source, he describes the historical source itself, writing about its Finno-Ugric aspects and texts, placing the source within a historical context, and, finally, quoting the text excerpts related to Finno-Ugric peoples.

The work of László Klima serves primarily educational purposes: it is a consistently assembled collection of sources, a manual also appropriate for use as a textbook because of the source-related analyses it provides. The notes also serve this unconcealed educational objective, as do the two excellent appendices included at the end of the work: an index of geographic names and a glossary of persons mentioned in the texts. There has never existed such a detailed source library regarding Finno-Ugric peoples, and what's more, many of the texts see their very first publication in this work.

However, individual chapters of the book can also be read as stand-alone case studies. A prominent example is the presentation of the legend of Saint Stephan of Perm, which provides extensive information about everything related to Saint Stephan of Perm, ranging from the legendarian's personality and literary style to the saint's life, the problem of the Old Permian script, the presentation of the legend, the saint's cult, his relics and artistic memories – the thorough presentation of the parts that can be interpreted as a resource about Finno-Ugric peoples is almost an addition.

Obviously, the textbook as a genre also required that in regard to the early history of Finno-Ugric peoples the author should address in detail the issues of prehistory, homeland, and ethnogenesis. This issue cannot be missing from a manual of Finno-Ugric Studies – especially from a work of a historical nature – because Finno-Ugric Studies is by definition an ethnogenesis-based discipline. This chapter of the treatise is a very valuable achievement in itself: a readable and thorough, articulate overview of the history of the subject. It is of special merit that authors who are unjustly seldom cited in works on the prehistory of Finno-Ugric peoples (e.g., Bernát Munkácsi) are duly emphasized, and, naturally, the latest research is also incorporated, including the author's own insights.

All along, the author's reasoning is precise and convincing, which is presented to the readers in a readable, occasionally explicitly personal literary style. He is extremely discerning philologically, paying attention to the possible uncertainties of interpretation, and like a good teacher, he does not decide issues but presents problems instead. This he accomplishes in a particularly impressive, captivating way.

In summary, László Klima's book can be read equally as a scientific monograph, a textbook, or a source library. It meets both professional and educational needs at the same time; besides being a collection of sources, it can also be considered a history book of Finno-Ugric peoples. Its publication can only be welcomed.

VON STOCKHAUSEN, Alban: *Imag(in)ing the Nagas. The Pictorial Ethnography of Hans-Eberhard Kauffmann and Christoph von Führer-Haimendorf*. 2014, Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Art Publishers. 452. ISBN 978-3-89790-412-5

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Given the allegedly “still-prevalent visual phobia in academic anthropology”, the aim of this imposing book is to suggest “a possible way to let the visual, the photograph, take as

much part in an academic historical or anthropological work as the written text” and to “let the photographs speak by providing them with context through the written ethnography of the time, through the life and working conditions of the anthropologists who took them, and through the historical traditions to which they belong” (11.) The undertaking is based on over 6000 photographs taken in the 1930-ies by two anthropologists of German-Austrian origin, Hans-Eberhard Kauffmann and Christoph von Führer-Haimendorf among the Naga, a world famous “Zomian” population on the hilly borderlands of India and Burma. The two protagonists have taken different paths. Though they knew each other from their university years, visited the Naga Hills at the same time (1936-37), what’s more worked for three weeks in the same village (Wakching) among the Konyak Naga and took even some shots of each other while doing fieldwork (!), whereas the more adventurous and elegant, easy-going Führer-Haimendorf has become an uncontested authority on South and Southeast Asian anthropology as a British citizen, Kauffmann’s activity and contribution were and are still largely ignored by the scientific community due to his hitherto unclear relationship to the ideologies of Nazi Germany.

Both of them brought back invaluable materials that are scattered all over Europe. Kauffmann’s ethnographic collections (512 objects) are housed in Zurich, Basel, Cologne and Paris, the ones of Führer-Haimendorf (800 pieces) in Vienna. Putting aside for the moment other collections of musical recordings (wax cylinders), physical anthropological measurements, plant specimens, written materials (diaries and notes) and the like, Führer-Haimendorf’s more than 3500 photographs are located at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, while Kauffmann’s around 2500 photographs were in greater part (re)discovered (!) by the author of the book at the University of Munich where Kauffmann had taught between 1958–1967. In the framework of several international museological projects and ethnographic exhibitions the two photographic collections have been digitalized by the author and the intensive study of this unique corpus delineated for him the contours of a “pictorial ethnography” “which may have also been at the back of the two anthropologist’s minds, even if they had not explicitly mentioned or published it in the literal sense of the word” (16.)

The book consists of eight chapters: the first offers a short history of photography in anthropology and explains how and why photographs can be a valuable source for anthropology. In the second, the author outlines the reasons for his main focus on Kauffmann’s pictures and sets out the methodological framework of his study. Chapter three offers a very thorough and truly spectacular history of the visual representation of the Naga ending with a remarkable timeline summarizing almost 200 years of scientific research and visual information coupled with Naga history. The fourth and fifth chapters focus respectively on the two protagonists, on their lives and careers just as on their literary and photographic oeuvres; the sixth touches upon the historical context in which the two German anthropologists were implicated: Second World War and Nazi ideology and on how all this affected their activity.

With chapter seven we arrive to the core of the volume: a Naga “pictorial ethnography” through Kauffmann’s unpublished and partially unlegended photographs that are contextualized by the author through Kauffmann’s published and unpublished writings coupled with visual and textual materials from Führer-Haimendorf and others. „One idea behind this section of the book is to create as closely as possible an ethnography through images that Kauffman never got round to publishing – an experimental setup in the visual

anthropology of the Nagas of Northeast India” (235.). This chapter making up half of the book alone is structured thematically into eight parts covering different facets of Naga life: general vision of “Hinterindien”; villages, houses, architecture; social structure and political system; status as a core concept of Naga society; agriculture, hunting and trade; oral tradition and religion; arts and crafts and body decoration; impact of colonial rule. In what way the resulting Naga ethnography is new to Naga specialists only they could tell, but for a specialist of Southeast Asian Highland peoples it is an excellent summary offering a wealth of comparative material accentuated by the extraordinary visual power of the images.

For the present reviewer perhaps the most interesting parts of the book are the ones that shed light not only on *imaging* but also on *imagining* the Nagas. As the author himself underlines it several times, even the term “Naga” and the notion of “Naganess” is a European construction in itself. One has also to bear in mind “how large the impact of a visual representation of a culture is on the concept an observer has about the depicted culture in general” (13.). The breathtaking story of the well known cover photo of Fűrér-Haimendorf’s *The Naked Nagas*, unraveled by the author is a perfect illustration to it. The Konyak girl Henlong, “The Belle of Wakching”, is pictured on it with her hands behind her head, pushing out her bare breasts “in a pose reminiscent of poses known from Josephine Baker and other popular dancers of the 1930s.” (161.). A sensational series of pictures in the Kauffmann archive discovered by the author reveal that this picture was, in fact, set up by Fűrér-Haimendorf himself! Kauffmann photographed the scene from a few meters away and his shots, taken within the lapse of a few minutes show how Henlong, under the instructions of Fűrér-Haimendorf, uncovers gradually herself and takes up the posture. This strongly eroticizing and eroticizing picture of Henlong is then nothing else but an expression and a response to the phantasies of the anthropologist and of the European public. Does anyone need a better proof for the (de)construction of the ‘noble savage’?

In sum, this book is a most original, groundbreaking contribution, a must for at least three different publics: for sociocultural anthropologists of South and Southeast Asia; for all those interested in photography and visual anthropology; for museologists involved in redocumenting old archival material. They all can find what to digest in it.

MICHAUD, Jean – BARKATAKI RUSCHEWEYH, Meenaxi – SWAIN, Margaret Byrne: *Historical Dictionary of the Peoples of the Southeast Asian Massif*. Second Edition, 2016. Rowman & Littlefield: Lanham – Boulder – New York – London. ISBN 10: 1442272783 ISBN 13: 9781442272781

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It is impossible to start the review of this second, expanded edition of Michaud’s *Historical Dictionary*, published originally in 2006, without referring to James Scott’s epoch-making book “The Art of Not Being Governed” (2009) that has changed our

fragmented, parochial view of the hill peoples of a huge geographic area, bringing to the fore their socio-cultural and historic unity. The dramatic but most welcome expansion in size and geographical coverage of this edition is a logical outcome, as Michaud hints at it in the Introduction, of Scott's generalizing look and the scholarly discourse that followed: parts of the Southeast Asian Massif (Northeast India east of the Brahmaputra, the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, upland Peninsular Malaysia, the mountains of Taiwan, and the southern and southwestern highlands of China) that were *not* covered in the first edition are treated here in detail, for the first time in such a dictionary of peoples and cultures. A great result in itself.

The new scope is naturally far beyond the reach of one single author – a fact that explains the invitation of two co-authors, Meenaxi Barkataki Rouscheweyh and Margaret Byrne Swain, an Indian and a Chinese specialist, respectively, so that the two newly included highland regions would be covered as fully as possible. Nearly 300 ethnic groups totaling around 100 million persons living as “persistently ignored minorities” in 10 different countries (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, China, Taiwan and Malaysia) are thus covered with their linguistic, demographic, socio-cultural, economic and religious peculiarities in more than 700 cross-referenced entries. Practically most of the entries are new: if not brand new, updated and in many cases expanded.

Similarly to the first edition, the Dictionary consists of four parts. The first contains a new Preface, more Maps, and an expanded general Chronology concentrating mainly on 19-20th century events. Then comes a completely re-written, tightly reasoned Introduction providing a general ethnographic and historic background to the entries, with special reference to historical sources, customary socio-political structure and highland/lowland relationships, concluding in a succinct sketch of the present and future of the minorities of the Southeast Asian Massif and their chances of survival.

The following 400 pages make up the body of the Dictionary. Every dictionary, just as anthologies, entails difficult decisions of “leaving out” and/or “bringing in.” Here, inevitably, personal preferences and competences decide what will and will not be included. Instead of dwelling on why this or that was left out or brought in, or why in a shorter or longer form than one would have expected, let us point out some of the choices of the authors. One of the most painful decisions must have been the exclusion of highland societies smaller than 5,000 individuals from the list of separate entries and from the demographic tables. Historical or anthropological importance is not necessarily related to demographic count. The example of the hunting-gathering Mlabri known commonly as the “Spirits of the Yellow Leaves” numbering only 282 individuals shows, however, that fortunately the authors do not stick unabashed to this principle (even if the Chút [Rùch, Arem, Sách] of Vietnam, a similar hunting-gathering group is excluded).

Another recurring issue with dictionaries is what the authors call “encyclopedization” – something similar to pruning. The reader, just as the representative of a Northeast Indian minority group mentioned in the Preface, feels, not infrequently, that the information is shorter than what he/she would have liked to read: “Is that it?” In many cases, necessary generalization makes it almost impossible to say anything definite on a given topic; one would need a whole book in order to present the details of a “burial” or of the “ancestor worship” of only one given ethnic group.

And yet, there is an incredible wealth of information in these entries. It is enough to read the ones on “Affirmative action”, “Hmong”, “Institute of Anthropology of Vietnam”, “Khun Sa”, “Laos, Highland minorities in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic”, “Strategic hamlets in Vietnam”, “Territoires militaires” or “Yunnan”, to name but a few, in order to grasp the importance of this *Historical Dictionary*. Obviously, the focus is more on history than on ethnography, which is but natural for a “Historical Dictionary”. But given the fact that most of the entries deal with “anthropological” subject matters like identity, religion, lineage society, social structure or livelihood practices, sociocultural anthropologists will surely be amongst those who benefit the most from this major work.

The fourth part of the Dictionary is a more than 100-page-long Bibliography. This rich and up-to-date bibliography is a most useful, unique tool even to specialists of the region, not to mention undergraduate and graduate students and interested laymen. The only reproach a specialist of former French Indochina could/would make is the visibly decreasing number of non-English bibliographical entries – a very unfortunate sign of Anglo-Saxon publishing politics and linguistic imperialism that afflicts even a French Canadian author.

Nonetheless, this “first dictionary entirely devoted to Southeast Asian upland ethnic minorities with a transborder frame of reference”, together with its rich illustrations, figures, statistics and tables, as well as its comprehensive bibliography, is a most useful reference book, a must for anybody interested in the vast “Zomian” region.

