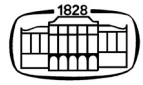
ACTA ETHNOGRAPHICA HUNGARICA

Volume 66 Number 1 2021 June

Financial support was provided by Eötvös Loránd Research Network, by the Academic Committee of the János Arany Memorial Year, government decree 1707/2017 (September 25), and by NRDI (National Research Development and Innovation Office) Fund, grant number K 120712.



AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ
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Periodical of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Cover photo: László Arany's manuscript of the fairy tale *The Beautiful Girl and the Devil*
(Library and Information Centre of the HAS Department of Manuscripts and
Rare Books Irod. 4-r. 409/II. 73v–74r.)

Cover design: DÉNES KASZTA

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AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

Interpretation, Influence, Reception: Historical Folklore Studies of 19th-Century Hungarian Folk Poetry

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The authors of the thematic block are all researchers of the Institute of Ethnology at the Research Centre for the Humanities. The institute is a Centre of Excellence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The institution's Folklore Department employs a total of 10 folklorists, who conduct both historical folklore research and contemporary research. They collect, systematize, and analyze the traditional genres and transitional forms of folklore, but they also record and analyze the folklore phenomena of the digital world and the Internet. The priority plan of the Department is to compile a new handbook of folkloristics, the *Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Folk Poetry*, which has been in the works for several years and is ready to be published as soon as possible. The endeavor's professional foundation lies in the fact that a significant part of the Hungarian scholars of textual folklore work here. One of their aims is to provide a modern, 21st-century interpretation of the basic concepts of folkloristics, such as folklore, folk poetry, tradition, oral tradition, orality, folklore collection, archives, authenticity, etc. Another aim is to produce encyclopedia articles summarizing the latest Hungarian and international research results on the most important issues in folklore, genres such as folk songs, fairy tales, legends, ballads, anecdotes, jokes, proverbs, riddles, etc., the most significant types, motifs, and performers, as well as the most prominent scholars in the field (cf. Szemerkényi 2013:9–36). Decades have passed since the publication of the handbooks summarizing Hungarian folkloristics; the five volumes of the *Encyclopaedia of Hungarian Ethnography* (Ortutay 1977-82) and the *Folk Poetry* (Vargyas 1988) volume in the *Hungarian Ethnography* series. Since then, new folklore phenomena and new research findings have emerged, new topics, methods, and approaches have gained ground, and the ideology of the era in which they were produced has left its mark on the interpretation and use of concepts in those previous summaries. These circumstances prompted the idea of writing a new handbook.

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In the thematic block of *Interpretation, Influence, Reception: Historical Folklore Studies of 19th-Century Hungarian Folk Poetry*, six studies provide an insight into the historical textual folklore research of the Folklore Department, a significant research direction for the folklorists of the research institute. In the last two decades, at the intersection of literary historiography with a sociohistorical orientation and historical folkloristics, research of 19th-century Hungarian textual folklore genres, especially the fairy tale, legend, and riddle, has intensified. This was actually quite expedient because a significant part of the corpus of Hungarian folklore had been collected in the 19th century, yet folklore research is significantly delayed in the processing, publishing, and interpretation of this corpus, especially in terms of prose narratives. By studying the editing principles and text formation practices of early folklore publications, the researchers focused primarily on the issues of authenticity, textualization, and copyright. An important question is whose storytelling and folklore knowledge is ultimately reflected in the folklore texts amassed from the 19th century, in non-verbatim transcripts, often only as synopses, and without the context of collection: the presumed informant, the collector, or the intellectual, scientific elite that determined and governed the work of collectors? Another important area of research in the Folklore Department is the analysis of the influence of 19th-century popular literature – such as chapbooks, almanacs, the illustrated press, and schoolbooks – on oral phenomena. They also study how folklore has been integrated into education over the past 150 years, how it is present in written and electronic media, how it relates to popular culture, how it appears in today's festival programs, how it is integrated into the protection of intangible cultural heritage, and from what and by what means its practitioners want to "save" folklore.

The following studies reveal how professional Hungarian folkloristics developed since the first calls for the collection of folklore and the emergence of interest in folklore at the beginning of the 19th century. One of the central issues in all these studies is the 19th-century interpretation of the concept of folk poetry and its changes. They ask questions like: who were the collectors of the era, what was their social background? Which genres attracted their attention, which ones did they consider worthy of recording? What expectations did they set for collecting folklore? How did the canon of collecting folklore develop? What text formation and publishing practices did the editors of the popular publications of the era follow? What principles did they formulate and adhere to? By the 1860s, folklore publications were already following well-defined principles in terms of publishing folklore texts, and *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* [Collection of Hungarian Folk Poetry] series, launched in 1872, provided the institutional framework for the implementation of all these principles. As Anna Szakál's study, *Collections of Hungarian Folk Literature from the 19th Century and Their Canonisation*, points out, the publishers and editors of 19th-century Hungarian folklore collections were fundamentally governed by an aesthetic ideal. They wanted to publish folklore texts that were refined and essentially characteristic of a phenomenon or a type of text, and this is what governed how they formed and stylized the collections. Nonetheless, there were differences in how each publication tried to accomplish this.

Four of the present studies – Judit Gulyás's *The Collaborative Folktale Project of a Family: The Synoptic Critical Edition of a 19th-Century Hungarian Folktale and Riddle Collection*, Mariann Domokos's *The Influence of the Grimm Tales on the Tale Textology of László Arany*, Katalin Vargha's *Riddles in the Manuscript and Print Version of a 19th-Century Collection*, and Ágnes Eitler's *The "Re-Tuning" of János Arany's Life and Work in the Popular Education of the 1950s* – are closely related to the Arany Family's folklore activities and their perception of folklore collection. The father, János Arany (1817–1882), was a poet of superior skill and

influence in 19th-century Hungarian literature whose extremely rich and diverse oeuvre is inevitable in Hungarian folklore research because he utilized and adapted many folklore sujets and motifs in his works, but his theoretical views on folk poetry also had a great impact on his contemporaries. His son, László Arany (1844—1898), was a poet, collector of folklore, translator, economics and politics writer, and lawyer. He edited the 1862 volume *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales], still one of the most significant and influential collections of Hungarian folktales. His contemporaries, and later ethnographers, too, responded to the volume with unanimous approval. They praised the work of the collector-editor László Arany for his authentic reproduction of the Hungarian folk narrative style, even though he, too, adapted the texts according to contemporary literary tastes.

In 2017, on the 200th anniversary of János Arany's birth, the Folklore Department organized a conference, the proceedings of which were published in a volume (Balogh 2018 ed. in chief), and a review of which is included in this issue (Török 2021). In addition to the anniversary, another reason for the event was the fact that the synoptic edition of the Arany Family's manuscript tale collection (Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018) was completed around the time of the conference. The aim of the pioneering endeavor was to publish the transcripts of the tales along with the emendations to the manuscript side by side with the text versions published in the book *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] edited by László Arany. This allows the reader to observe the process of textualization, that is, how a tale text was being shaped in the process of transcription or publication, and what changes the editor made to the manuscript texts. A critical edition of the Arany Family's collection of tales and riddles, in addition to making this valuable material accessible, can facilitate the (re)interpretation of 19th-century folklore collections and publications, as well as the concepts and procedures that produce them. It can encourage a rethinking of not only historical prose folklore but, more broadly, the textological practice of folklore text publications, and even the publishing principles of recent collections. The volume was edited by Judit Gulyás and Mariann Domokos. Their studies are also included in the thematic block and provide an idea of both the principles of publishing the volume and László Arany's text formation practices.

Katalin Vargha's study is organically related to this topic. It provides an overview of the 19th-century Hungarian history and interpretation of folk riddles based on the Arany Family's manuscript collection of tales and riddles, as well as the texts found in *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales]. The final essay related to the folklore activities of the Arany family is a study by Ágnes Eitler, who talks about the recasting, adaptation, and interpretation of the oeuvre of János Arany in Hungarian popular education of the 1950s from the period of communist dictatorship. The concluding study of the thematic block (*At the Eleventh Hour. The Principles of Folklore Collection in the Scholarly Oeuvre of Lajos Katona and in Hungarian Folklore Studies at the Turn of the 20th Century*) is authored by Ildikó Landgraf. Through the oeuvre of Lajos Katona, a prominent scholar of Hungarian folkloristics – which became an independent discipline at the end of the 19th century – she seeks to demonstrates the changes that took place at the turn of the 20th century in the principles of folklore collections and text publications.

A significant and not yet sufficiently explored part of Hungarian folklore are the texts of 19th-century folklore collections that are manuscript and found in early collections. Readers of the thematic block will gain insight into this exciting material, as well as into an important area of historical textual folklore research at the Institute of Ethnology of the Research Centre for the Humanities.

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Ildikó Landgraf is a senior research fellow and Head of the Folklore Department at the Institute of Ethnology, Research Centre for the Humanities. She graduated with degrees in History, Ethnography, and Finnish Language, acquiring her PhD in 1998. Her PhD dissertation discussed the heroes and hero types of the 19th century in Hungarian folklore, especially the oral and written traditions of the Habsburg dynasty and the historical legends of the 1848/49 War of Independence. She investigates narrative folklore genres, primarily historical legends and anecdotes in the context of the interaction between folklore and popular culture, and analyzes the role of popular prints (chapbooks, almanachs, illustrated press) in the transmission of folk narratives. She examines the history of Hungarian ethnography, primarily the oeuvre of significant folklorists, such as Lajos Katona, Béla Vikár, or Gyula Ortutay.

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 5–30
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00006

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Collections of Hungarian Folk Literature from the 19th Century and Their Canonisation

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Received: February 15, 2021 • Accepted: March 15, 2021
Published online: December 21, 2021

ABSTRACT

In the first half of the present article, I review collections of folk literature which include 19th-century folktales, placing a special emphasis on trying to establish the extent to which these texts and the associated collectors have been studied, explored, and published.[1] Next, I demonstrate which of the texts in question may be considered as part of the canon[2] of folk literature that emerged in the latter third of the 19th century, which works and authors defined the approaches that were considered relevant, and what the selection criteria for canonisation were. Alongside the interpretative canon, I shall also attempt to record the textual canon and its changes – to capture the act by which certain texts were clearly excluded from the canon while others were included by the individuals who wished to create or modify the canon. I would also like to show how the image of 19th-century collectors and collections created in the second half of the century became gradually transformed during the 20th century, and how these changes affected the place the collections in question occupy in folkloristics in general.

KEYWORDS

canonisation, Hungarian folktale, folklore collection, folklore collector

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[1] For earlier English-language summaries of the topic, see VOIGT 2010:1175–1187; ORTUTAY 1972:286–322.

[2] For more on the concepts used in connection with the canon, cf. SZAJBÉLY 2005:81–89. Mihály Szajbély uses these concepts to describe the emergence and operation of the literary canon. According to his interpretation, "the role of the open canon is to define the role of literature and to describe the attributes that works need to have to fulfil this function. It names the criteria a work must fulfil before it is considered literary and draws the boundary accordingly between the canonised and the extra-canonical. It shapes the corpus of the works that are within the sphere of the canonised – the *textual canon* – and pairs these with the set of expectations and approaches considered relevant to their interpretation – the interpretative canon" (SZAJBÉLY 2005).

UNKNOWN COLLECTORS, UNKNOWN COLLECTIONS?

I shall attempt a brief review of 19th-century collections of, or including, folktales[3] by seeking to answer the following questions: who was the person (directing the collecting work) under whose name the collection became known in the folkloristic community? What was their social status and occupation? Were they also actively involved in collecting or did they simply receive manuscript collections from someone else? Did they have a network of collectors, or were they surrounded in any other way by individuals who aided the collecting work in any way? What method did they use? Where and in what manner were they active and who did they collect from? Whose scholarly attention did the collector manage to attract (primarily in the past two decades) and from which viewpoint did they approach the material? Were the original manuscripts studied or did they remain dormant throughout the century without making an impact? Do we know where the manuscripts are to be found? Was there a new edition produced over the past hundred years, and if so, what was the nature of it?

Moving in a chronological order, the first collection that included folktales was one produced by István Szilcz, a landowner in Vasmegyer. The compilation, consisting of eight folktales and five legends, was created around 1789, probably with the purpose of entertaining, and remained unknown to folkloristics until 1917. This is when József Gulyás first wrote an account of it (GULYÁS 1917:19) and went on to publish the original manuscript collection in 1931 in Sárospatak. True to the practice of the times, he did not strive for a literal transcription. This 1931 volume was republished, verbatim and complete with annotations, in 2004 *Három vándorló Királyfirul való Historia. A sárospataki kéziratos mesegyűjtemény (1789)* [A History of Three Princes. The Manuscript Folktale Collection of Sárospatak (1789) by Katalin Benedek], but this edition does not offer a comparison with the original manuscripts – a decision hard to justify from a scholarly point of view. With regard to the life of István Szilcz himself or the circumstances of the emergence of the compilation or the original manuscript, we know close to nothing. The manuscript is still in Sárospatak.

Literary historian Zoltán Hermann wrote about the emergence of this collection. The notebook containing the stories had itself been in use before 1789, as well as during the subsequent decade and a half. The stories had been written down sequentially, whereas a rental contract entered in the booklet in 1842, after the tales and legends, indicates its changed function (HERMANN 2006:527). Although Zoltán Hermann's paper is not based on the texts themselves, it draws some important conclusions regarding the requirements that folkloristics have of authentic folktales. Among other things, he noted that the linguistic inconsistencies and the deteriorations of the text were seen as grave failings within the concept of folk literature used by romanticist scholarship with its focus on originality. Thus, not merely the text but the collector or the person recording it also came to be seen in a negative light for a long time (HERMANN 2006:520). Examining the collection in terms of the oral vs. written dimension, Zoltán Hermann argues that tales were a far less rigid generic category even back in the 19th century than was believed or expected of them. He also mentions the fact that István Szilcz, the compiler of the volume, probably had a theory of his own concerning the genre and collecting of tales, and just

[3]Since we only have a single 18th-century collection that includes tales, I consider this work (Szilcz's collection of tales) among the collections proposed for discussion.

because this did not coincide with the concept of the tale held by later canonisers, the texts lost none of their value, nor are they less deserving of research (HERMANN 2006:524–525).

For a long time, instead of Szilcz's collection, scholarship considered a book called *Mährchen der Magyaren* [Tales of the Hungarians] compiled by György Gaal/Georg von Gaal (Pozsony, 1783 – Vienna, 1855) as the first collection of Hungarian folktales. This latter contained the texts of 17 tales and was published in the German language in Vienna in 1822. Gaal's primary goal by collecting and publishing these texts was to raise the popularity of Hungarian folk literature abroad. He is sure to have worked with the help of collectors whom he instructed at least partially by mail, while in other cases he used soldiers to note down the texts.[4] The 1822 volume was also known to and popularised by the Brothers Grimm (cf. GRIMM 1822:432–433, 1850:XLVI, 1856:345–347, 392–393), but all they reveal about Gaal's method of collecting is that the stories had come from a Hungarian old man who spoke no other language than his mother tongue. The Preface to Gaal's volume also enables us to reconstruct the fact that he and his friends pursued their collecting efforts over ten years in order to create "a collection I had always longed to create . . . which is the totality of clear and simple stories" (GAAL 1822). The Hungarian texts of this collection were published in Pest between 1857 and 1860, edited by Gábor Kazinczy and Ferenc Toldy. Since that time there has been no further edition of Gaal's collections of stories. Viktória Havay embarked on a philological exploration of the tales (comparing the Hungarian and German texts). The Hungarian and German language manuscripts of the collection are in the Manuscript Collection of the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Another member of the group, which Vilmos Voigt called the *Vienna triad*,[5] was Count János Majláth/Johann Mailath (Pest, 1786 – Starnberg, 1855), writer and external member of the Bavarian Royal Academy, who published his collection, similarly to György Gaal, in German. It was first published in Brünn in 1825 (*Magyarische Sagen und Märchen*), then an extended edition was issued in Stuttgart and Tübingen in 1837 (*Magyarische Sagen, Märchen und Erzählungen*). He had probably noted down some of the stories himself from his informants and also asked others to write down the stories they heard. In one of the notes attached to his text, he talks about the genre of the tale, opportunities for collecting them, and the way in which the storyteller shapes the story (MAILATH 1837:I:251–252). This partly allows us to conclude that it was mostly "by the shepherds' fire during night-time work in the fields" that he himself had tried "to salvage from oblivion" the stories which, he claims, were found "most commonly among shepherds and soldiers", but he also talks about editorial principles. Accordingly, he had strung together several stories (collected from the same place) to constitute one, as other storytellers often do (and he considers himself one). The volume was published in Hungarian in 1864 (*Magyar regék, mondák és népmesék*) [Hungarian Sagas, Legends, and Folktales], translated by one of the most outstanding writers of the era, Ferenc Kazinczy.[6] Since then, only the 1837 book

[4]On Gaal's collection, cf. VOIGT 1987, 1989, 1997; ORTUTAY 1963a; NAGY 2000; DOMOKOS 2005; HAVAY 2011.

[5]Cf. VOIGT 1982:144, 1989:375–377. The reason Vilmos Voigt connects these authors is that all three were active in Vienna, in the service of Hungarian culture. The third member of the triad was Count Alajos Mednyánszki, who published his collection of legends in Pest in 1829 under the title *Erzählungen, Sagen und Legenden aus Ungarns Vorzeit*.

[6]Since Ferenc Kazinczy's translation was complete by 1825, some of the tales could be published in the journal *Muzárion* (cf. GULYÁS 2006). In view of the period, we must also definitely reckon with the canonisation of texts published in chapbook editions in the case not only of Mailáth but also, for instance, of Arnold Ipolyi.

has been re-published in a facsimile edition in Germany in 2013 (MAILATH 2013). The location of János Mailáth's manuscripts has not been identified.

The first collection of folk literature and prose published in Hungarian was edited by the excellent poet, critic, literary scholar, and theoretician of folklore János Erdélyi (Kiskapos, 1814 – Sárospatak, 1868), who played an important role in integrating folk literature as a legitimate subject of scholarly discourse. During his one-year tour of Europe, he visited Jacob Grimm in his home (ERDÉLYI 1985:306). His three-volume collection, published 1846–48 under the title *Népdalok és mondák* [Folk Songs and Legends], consisted of texts that were submitted in response to two calls for submissions, one published by the Tudós Társaság [Learned Society] in 1831 and the other by the Kisfaludy Society in 1844. There were altogether 176 collections submitted from all over the country (which meant 8–10 thousand folklore texts; cf. GULYÁS 2020:52). János Erdélyi himself collected little (KÜLLŐS 2014:601); his task was to coordinate[7] the network of collectors who had volunteered and organised themselves in the wake of the calls and publications, as well as to arrange the texts submitted and to edit them into volumes. *Népdalok és mondák* contained 33 texts, and if we compare the existing manuscript material with the published texts, we can easily ascertain that Erdélyi made the fewest possible alterations on the texts (cf. GULYÁS 2020). Another collection titled *Magyar népmesék* [Hungarian Folktales], consisting purely of tales, was published in 1855, also edited by János Erdélyi.

An essay written by István Ruman Csörsz offers a particularly important line of considerations that help us gain a nuanced understanding of the early collections. He approaches the texts submitted to Erdélyi from the angle of popular literature and thereby sheds an entirely new light on Erdélyi's activity in editing and forming the texts (CSÖRSZ 2014). In her 2005 paper, Monika Gönczy offers an excellent example of the widely different ideas that were prevalent at the time concerning the type of text and the manner of publication that can or cannot be considered.[8] Another study by Imola Küllős also proves that János Erdélyi's concept of folk literature was far broader than is generally believed of him or of the concept of folklore held by 19th-century collectors in general (KÜLLŐS 2014). Judit Gulyás explores János Erdélyi's relationship to folktales and points out, among other things, that Erdélyi used different strategies of text publication for poetry and prose texts (GULYÁS 2014). A great advantage of this vast corpus is that most of it (including relevant correspondence) can be found in public collections in Budapest. *Népdalok és mondák* has not been re-published despite its great popularity.

Known as an art historian, historian, and later bishop, Arnold Ipolyi (Stummer) (Ipolykeszi, 1823 – Nagyvárad, 1886) also made use of folk tradition, as well as a wide array of other sources, in creating his magnum opus, *Magyar Mythologia* [Hungarian Mythology] (1854) – an attempt to reconstruct the ancient religion of the Hungarians. While he himself also carried out a certain amount of collecting (DOMOKOS 2015:84), he essentially acted, similarly to János Erdélyi, as a coordinator at the hub of the collecting effort. His network of collectors included not only simple village people but practically all of his friends (a circle including a lawyer, a vicar, a novice priest, a schoolmaster, a doctor, and a literary historian) (cf. KÓSA 2001:61;

[7]It is important to note that in line with the common practice of the 19th (as well as the 20th) century, János Erdélyi enlisted students for his collecting efforts, among other collectors. In the preface to his 1855 volume, he mentions "the scholarly youth of Sárospatak" who assisted him in his endeavors (cf. ERDÉLYI 1855:[2]).

[8]GÖNCZY 2005. The example of József Kelecsényi, one of the many Transylvanian collectors, demonstrates that there were individuals who did not approve of János Erdélyi's treatment of the texts.

BENEDEK 2007:164–210; DOMOKOS 2015:83–86). Best known to us, thanks to research carried out by Mariann Domokos, is the tale collection of Benedek Csaplár (DOMOKOS 2015:137–160). A portion of Ipolyi's collection was published in 1914 by Lajos Kálmány (IPOLYI 1914), then, in 2006, Katalin Benedek arranged for print the textual corpus available in Budapest (IPOLYI 2006).

Gábor Kazinczy (Berettő, 1818 – Bánfalva, 1864), a well-known organiser of literary life as well as a politician, poet, and author, had three-fold ties to folktales. Firstly, he had translated tales in preparation for the publication of a series to be titled *Népek meséi [Tales of Folks],* which was to acquaint the Hungarian readership with the folklore of non-Hungarian peoples (DOMOKOS 2008:280). Secondly, he edited collections compiled by others[9] and, in the 1850s and 60s, even joined the ongoing efforts to collect folktales through his network of collectors. The exact composition of this network is not known to us – the only collector to have been commemorated in a brief study is József Beke, a teacher in a Protestant folk school in Velezd (cf. DOMOKOS 2015:179–191). After Gábor Kazinczy's death in 1864, the collection of Palóc tales from Borsod County[10] passed into the hands of the Kisfaludy Society, but they were never published. Kazinczy's manuscript collections can still be found in Budapest.

László Merényi (Pomáz, 1837 – Budapest, 1907), later an administrative official, had begun collecting folktales when he was a law student. The publication of his volume *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] (1861) was welcomed by the press and his contemporaries: it was lauded as a contribution to the emerging national literature and seen as a sequel to János Erdélyi's *Népdalok és mondák* (1846–1848) (DOMOKOS 2007:140–145). Merényi went on to publish two more collections, in two volumes each, titled *Sajóvölgyi eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales from the Sajó Valley] (1862) and *Dunamelléki eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales from the Danube Valley] (1863–1864). At the same time, he sought financial support for his collection tour of Transylvania from the Academy. This was the first paid (and therefore official) academic collecting tour in search of folktales, and, accordingly, it was viewed with great interest by both the press and the contemporary public. However, the collecting tour was not a success, and it also became a widely held conviction that Merényi's published tales had not been recorded in their authentic form. Collectors turned their backs on him and he became marginalised as a literary figure.[11] This set the tone for the way in which he was later viewed in folkloristics – before Mariann Domokos, not a single folklorist had considered his persona or his collections worth studying. The manuscripts for his collection are in an unknown location, his published collection was never re-published.

László Arany (Nagyszalonta, 1844 – Budapest, 1898), son of one of the most outstanding poets of the age, who later became secretary and then director of the Hungarian Land Credit Institute, published his work *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] in 1862, at the age of 18. A critical edition of this work was completed in 2018 by Mariann Domokos and Judit Gulyás (DOMOKOS – GULYÁS 2018). In this volume, the editors were able to analyse the way in which

[9]See some of the previously mentioned collections, *Gaal György magyar népmesegyűjteménye* [György Gaal's Collection of Hungarian Folktales] (1857–60), and *Magyar regék, mondák és népmesék. Gróf Majláth János után Kazinczy Ferencz* [Hungarian Sagas, Legends, and Folktales. By Ferencz Kazinczy, Based on Count János Majláth] (1864).

[10]The Palóc are an ethnic group living in the northern part of the Hungarian-speaking area and clearly distinguishable by their dialect and customs. In the 19th century, great interest was shown in discovering the ethnography of groups living on the peripheries (e.g., Palóc, Székely), believed to be more archaic.

[11]See DOMOKOS 2007 for changes in the appraisal of László Merényi as a collector of folktales.

Arany had shaped the texts in question, since they had access to the first record of the tales, complete with corrections, as well as the published volume. The texts published in *Eredeti népmesék* were noted down by Juliska Arany, László Arany, and their mother, probably from memory, thus they are probably closely associated with Nagyszalonta or Nagykőrös. László Arany later made some considerable changes to the tales.[12] The manuscripts can be currently found in Budapest. Mariann Domokos wrote about László Arany's concept of the tale (DOMOKOS 2010), while Judit Gulyás compared three variants of the same tale, each associated with this family (GULYÁS 2010b).

Transylvanian Unitarian vicar, later bishop, teacher, and writer János Kriza (Nagyajta, 1811 – Kolozsvár, 1875) published his first advertisement for volunteer collectors in 1842, but his collection of folktales and poetry entitled *Vadrózsák* [Wild Roses], representative of the folklore of the *Székely* (or *Sekler*) ethnic group, could not be published until 1863. Kriza himself probably did little collecting, instead he single-handedly coordinated his extensive network of collectors.[13] Most of these collectors were Unitarian priests and teachers, and as a result, *Vadrózsák* mostly comprises textual material collected in the Unitarian villages of the Székelyföld region. Although tales occupy a prime position within the collected material, the greater part of this corpus has remained unpublished to this day. *Vadrózsák* has become one of the most canonical collections of folk literature in the Hungarian language and has been re-published eight times. 2013 saw the publication of the portion of the collected material containing previously unpublished texts other than tales and legends (KRIZA 2013). The activity of the individual collectors has been explored in several papers (SZAKÁL 2017, 2018, 2019), and a source publication has examined this collecting effort in its social historical context (SZAKÁL 2020). The manuscripts are in public collections in Budapest and Cluj, but a portion of the corpus is still missing.

Later renowned as a critic, literary historian, and university professor, Pál Gyulai (Kolozsvár, 1826 – Budapest, 1909) was among the leading figures in creating the canon for what we understand to constitute Hungarian folk literature. He had probably started collecting independently as early as the 1840s, but his name is mainly associated with the collection of folk literature and folktales collected between 1858 and 1862 by him and his students while acting as a college teacher.[14] This collection was never published, and the manuscripts can be found in Budapest.

Sámuel Szabó (Székelyföldvár, 1829 – Kolozsvár, 1905) was also a lecturer at a Calvinist College in Transylvania; his collections did not appear until 2009 when they were published after being edited by Katalin Olosz (SZABÓ 2009). With the help of his student collectors from Marosvásárhely, Szabó had created a collection in the 1860s on par with Kriza's *Vadrózsák*. The texts were published in their manuscript student paper, issues of which can still to be found in a public collection in Marosvásárhely. Later, in Kolozsvár, Szabó organized his students there to collect folktales as an assignment in two academic years. These manuscripts are still in Kolozsvár.

A collector active in the second half of the 19th century was Gyula Pap (Felsőpálfalva, 1843 – Salgótarján, 1931), whose work *Palócz népköltemények* [Palóc Folk Literature] (1865) contains

[12]See the studies of Judit Gulyás and Mariann Domokos in this volume.

[13]For a published version of the correspondence and other documents related to the collectors' network, see SZAKÁL 2012.

[14]For identifying student collectors and exploring the role that Pál Gyulai played in the history of 19th-century folklore collecting, see DOMOKOS 2015:221–264, 376–382.

six fairy tale texts. The introduction to his volume reveals that he managed to get his collections published by recruiting subscribers, and that János Erdélyi had been instrumental in helping him accomplish this (PAP 1865:XXII). His collecting efforts focused on the Salgó area in Nógrád County, probably in the years directly preceding the publication. We know practically nothing about his collection, the location of the manuscripts is still unknown.

The line of 19th-century collections of folk literature and prose is concluded by the first three volumes of the series *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* [Collection of Hungarian Folk Literature, CHFL] edited by László Arany and Pál Gyulai and launched in 1872; by Lajos Kálmány's two-volume work (*Koszorúk az Alföld vad virágaiból* I–II., 1877–1878 [Wreaths from the Wild Flowers of the Great Plain]), and finally by the collections of folktales by Elek Benedek (*Székely tündérország* [The Fairy Land of the Seklers], 1885, *Székely mesemondó* [The Sekler Storyteller], 1888, *Magyar Mese- és Mondavilág I–V.* [The World of Hungarian Tales and Legends, Vols. I–V], 1894–96).[15] The first volume of *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* appeared under the title *Elegyes gyűjtések Magyarország és Erdély különböző részeiből* [Miscellaneous Collections from Various Parts of Hungary and Transylvania] (1872).[16] The second volume (*Csongrád megyei gyűjtés*, 1872 [Csongrád County Collection]) contained folk literature and prose collected by Károly Török,[17] while the third volume (*Székelyföldi gyűjtés*, 1882 [Székelyföld Collection, 1882]) contained texts collected by János Kriza, Balázs Orbán, Elek Benedek, and Jób Sebesi. These volumes indicate the onset of a new period, that of institutionalised folkloristics, therefore I merely enumerate the collections published after this point.

The years 1874–1876 saw a collecting campaign run by a nation-wide network of collectors associated in folkloristics with the name of Lajos Abafi. A thorough study of its history was published by Péter Pogány (POGÁNY 1954), in which the author reveals, among many other things, that the texts that had been submitted and the edited manuscript of the collection that was eventually submitted for publication can all be found in various archives in Budapest.

Another collecting effort in the 1870s was carried out by a Gyula Balás – of whom we know practically nothing beyond the fact that he submitted his collections to the Kisfaludy Society from Mezőkovácsháza and these were indeed published in a local edition (BALOGH 1988).

Palóc folktales were published by Gyula Istvánffy (Miskolc, 1863 – Miskolc, 1921), a schoolteacher in Lipótszentmiklós, and by Sándor Pintér (Etes, 1841 – Szécsény, 1915), a practicing solicitor in the town of Szécsény. The former collection was published in Lipótszentmiklós in 1890 (*Palócz mesék a fonóból)* [Palóc Tales from the Spinning Room], while Pintér published his work in Losonc in 1891 under the title *Népmesékről XIII eredeti palócz-mesével* [About Folktales, with XIII Original Palócz Tales]. Sándor Pintér's manuscripts were probably destroyed, while a re-print edition of his book of folk stories appeared in 1999 (PINTÉR 1999). An extended edition of Gyula Istvánffy's publication was completed by 1912 but was not published until 1963 under the professional oversight of Ferenc Bodgál.

[15]Elek Benedek's collection has been published in a great number of selected and re-printed editions, but there has been no critical edition, which may be related to the fact that the current location of his manuscripts of ethnographic relevance is unknown.

[16]For more on the history of this publication, see DOMOKOS 2015:265–343.

[17]For a good point of departure on Károly Török's manuscripts (the location of which is currently unknown), see DOMOKOS 2015:335–336.

Another schoolteacher, Rafael Dékány (Kecskemét, 1828 – Budapest, 1895) produced a collection of folktales from the Great Plain in the 1880s, manuscripts of which are available for research in a public collection in Budapest, but the stories have only appeared in the form of two publications for children to date.

A learned society in Marosvásárhely, called the Kemény Zsigmond Társaság [Zsigmond Kemény Society], organized competitions for the collection of folk literature in 1896–97 (OLOSZ 1972). Manuscripts submitted for the first round became lost, while the second round received four submissions: the collection by schoolteacher János Ősz (Királyfalva, 1863 – Marosvásárhely, 1941); a joint submission by schoolteacher János Kóbori (Szentlászló, 1862 – Marosvásárhely, 1933) from Marosvásárhely and vicar Ferenc Vajda (Farcád, 1865 – Székelyudvarhely 1938) from Székelyudvarhely; one by István Kolumbán (Olasztelek, 1874 – Budapest, 1963), a schoolteacher from Székelyudvarhely; and one submission from Sándor Borbély, head of the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Vác. János Ősz went on to self-publish his collection (BERDE 1937, 1938, 1941; FARAGÓ 1955). The other collections were published in excerpts only (ŐSZ 1941). István Kolumbán's folktale collections were published with a full scholarly apparatus by Katalin Olosz (OLOSZ 1972). Kolumbán's manuscripts are in Marosvásárhely. All the other folktale collections are presently at unidentified locations.

Lájos Kálmány (Szeged, 1852 – Szeged, 1919) was a pastor who served as vicar in numerous villages of the Great Plain and collected folklore texts during his stays. This resulted in a vast collection, which he began to publish in instalments in 1877, edited and financed by himself. He worked without fellow collectors and thus had the chance to notice if one of his informants showed a particular talent for storytelling. His legacy is currently located in Budapest, a part of it having been published in the 1950s, while the complete material was published in 2015 (KÁLMÁNY 2015).

A collector widely known to this day is Elek Benedek (Kisbacon, 1859 – Kisbacon, 1929), but we have very little closer information about his collection.[18] We do know that he used to re-tell the stories and that he defined himself as a "son of the people" so he felt quite natural in telling folk stories and writing ballads.[19] A vanishingly few of his collected texts actually survived; what we still have access to are his published books of folktales regularly re-published in children's editions. Despite the fact that, as we have seen, the corpus of folk literature and prose that includes 19th-century folktales is associated with a relatively small number of texts, collections, and collectors, folkloristics had shown little interest in studying them until quite recently. Interpretations or thorough philological analyses of these texts have not been done in the 20th century, there have been no studies to analyse, interpret, or explore them to any extent, and not many critical editions have been completed either. Since most of the basic research is missing and source exploration has only been completed in a handful of cases, we are talking about practically unknown texts, collectors, and text-shaping strategies when it comes to the 19th-century corpus of folktales (or to 19th-century folklore collection in general).

[18]For the best description of Elek Benedek, the storyteller and writer of stories (particularly in relation to analyses of his tales), see KOVÁCS 1974, 1977.

[19]Writing about Elek Benedek as an author and forger of ballads, Katalin Olosz also discusses Benedek's self-definition. Cf. OLOSZ 2011, primarily 111–112. On Elek Benedek as a writer of stories, see GULYÁS 2011:25–46.

CANON AND CANONISATION IN THE 19TH-CENTURY COLLECTIONS OF FOLKTALES

As the above review of 19th-century collections containing folktales has revealed, the sporadic folktale collections of the first half of the 19th century were gradually replaced from the 1840s[20] and 1850s onwards by textual publications following increasingly precisely defined principles.[21] By the beginning of the 1860s, collections emerged which permitted scholars to formulate and also to enforce fundamental principles for collecting and text publication. Then, the *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* [Collection of Hungarian Folklore], launched in 1972, represented the institutionalised framework for operating along these principles – and at the same time the beginning of folkloristics as a separate and vigorous discipline in its own right.

In the early 1860s, we can point out four pieces of scholarly writing that clearly outlined the elements and sphere of interpretation of the open canon of the 19th century. First in chronological order is János Arany's criticism of Merényi's *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] (1861), which was published in Szépirodalmi Figyelő in 1861. This was followed by Pál Gyulai's review in *Budapesti Szemle* in 1862, which described László Arany's *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] (1862), whilst also forming an opinion of all previous collections of folktales alongside Merényi's. In the third article (published in *Koszorú* in 1864), László Arany criticised László Merényi's third book, *Dunamelléki eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales from the Danube Valley] (1863–64). The last paper was László Arany's inauguration address (*Magyar népmeséinkről* [On Our Hungarian Folktales], 1867) in which he reviews the folktale collections that had been published to date.

In his writing on Merényi's book, János Arany first introduced two pairs of concepts into common parlance and scholarly discourse – he declared that there existed *good collectors* and *bad collectors,* as well as *excellent* storytellers and *clumsy* storytellers. "A good collector should be gifted, above all, with the abilities of a perfect storyteller. Moving around among the people, in their spinning houses or by the shepherds' fires, growing up among them, as it were, he should command not only their language, their turns of phrase, but their entire way of thinking, the characteristic knacks of their imagination, their mannerisms should all be engraved on his mind in indelible letters. He should be someone who, had he remained in that circle, might have gone on to figure as the most enchanting storyteller of the land. (. . .) He should have such a good command of their manner of recital and ornamentation that, given the bare bones of any story, he should be able to transform it as if he had taken it directly from the lips of one of the best storytellers. He should be able to recognise the slightest touch of anything that is foreign to this style which might mingle with the text due to the scribes and assistant collectors and be able to remove it without damage. (. . .) A good collector stops being clever the minute he starts writing down the text. (. . .) He does not keep reminding himself that he is a learned man and can on that pretext feel entitled to add or subtract; nor to explain at points where the people do not deem it necessary; to render probable something that is absurd, nor to cast a *literary* hue over it all as if he were writing some kind of an artistic short story. His job is to provide the truest possible representation of the text in terms of content and form alike, as if it were being

[20]For more on the literary publications of folktales outside the collections in the 1840s, see GULYÁS 2010a.

[21]This was clearly also related to the 1836 establishment and goals of the Kisfaludy Society.

performed orally by an excellent storyteller. *Excellent,* I say, for there are also *clumsy* storytellers whose unseemly tirades, absent-minded repetitions, littered with 'and then' and 'so he said' are really not fit for a printed collection. (. . .) In his *storytelling,* the collector can follow the freedom of the excellent storyteller, but not with *poetic freedom*" (ARANY, J. 1861:7, 21).

After all of the above, he classifies Merényi as one of the good collectors ("to tell a story, quite like that, according to the way in which the people think, just as a clever peasant storyteller would tell it – our collector is perfectly capable of all of this", cf. ARANY, J. 1861:21), and he clearly encouraged Merényi to continue with his efforts. While János Arany praises this collector, he also chides him and uses words in his criticism which were soon to become key words in condemning folktale collections and collectors, and even in excluding them from the canon. With regard to Merényi he notes, among other things, that he "sometimes over-colours things, includes lengthy descriptions, and even where he does preserve the original folk expression, he falsifies the manner of the narrative" (ARANY, J. 1861:21); (. . .) at other times he takes unfair advantage of his own talent and "being in possession of a great many folk proverbs, similes and parables, and finding himself discontented with the simple flow of the story, he volunteers additions on his own initiative which do not reflect the spirit of the people" (ARANY, J. 1861:22). Recurring phrases in János Arany's writings include *falsification, not in the spirit of the people, originality, authenticity*, and he also often speaks of what may be seen (in an unambiguously negative light) as *literary additions, forgeries, suspicious, non-folklore invention, arbitrary addition, verbose vanity, or the crooked use of the popular way of speaking* (ARANY, J. 1861:37, 38, 53, 54).

Writing in 1862, Pál Gyulai harangues László Arany's newly published volume *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales]. In the introductory and concluding parts of the paper, he complains about a lack of sufficient interest in folktales,[22] whilst also expressing his hope that soon they would be discovered by wider audiences, as well as by critics, and an ever-greater number of competent collectors would start collecting tales. He might feel this option more probable partly because he sees, and presents, the collection of folktales as a developmental process with the collections of György Gaal and János Majláth marking the beginnings, while the apex would be represented by László Arany's just published work and János Kriza's book under preparation at the time.

Gyulai's writing is the first review of the collections of tales published up to that date complete with critical remarks which clearly reveal which traits were sought or condemned in collections of folktales in the 19th century. He dedicates a separate passage to discussing Gaal's German and Hungarian tale collections, and remarks, with regard to the latter, that the texts "betray at every point that they were not drawn from a pure and rich source (. . .) – his presentation is languid, it lacks the Hungarian flavour, it is neither sufficiently naïve, nor sufficiently Hungarian" (GYULAI 1862:387). Majláth, Gyulai finds, "hunts and hoards all that is miraculous" (GYULAI 1862:387–388); János Erdélyi's storytelling style is an improvement, but "still not sufficiently simple, (. . .) it lacks the lightness with which the story glides along, the charm of unsought naiveté, the natural turns, and fleeting but nonetheless characteristic descriptions, a certain undisturbed unity of ambiance, the relaxed and spontaneous charm of the language, its caprice and pictorial power (GYULAI 1862:388). Merényi, while considered far more adept than Erdélyi, is blamed by Gyulai for his penchant to "over-colour" his text – but Gyulai still believes

[22] GYULAI 1862:386, 392. Arnold Ipolyi complains of similar problems, cf. IPOLYI 1858.

he would "turn out to be one of our most excellent collectors of folktales" (GYULAI 1862:388). He praises László Arany, stating that while his collection contains fewer texts, his narration and approach to the language are closest to the ideal formulated by János Arany.

The third piece of writing that contributed significantly to creating a canon in the collection of folktales was László Arany's 1864 criticism of Merényi's *Dunamelléki eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales from the Danube Valley] (1863–64). In it he reiterates his father's opinion and refers to the principles stated three years earlier (originally with the intention to help improve) to judge the new collection and its manner of presentation. In a tone far sterner than his father's, László Arany expresses his disappointment in the collector who, he claims, has made absolutely no use of the critical remarks offered. He declares that Merényi self-indulgently uses his own imagination "to create and conjure" (just like "the writer of some horror novel"), and that his tales are usually far removed from a "sound and healthy folktale" (ARANY, L. 1864:209). After repeatedly inventorying the flaws that János Arany had pointed out (the overuse of folkish phrases and turns of speech, inconsistencies, and the occasional highly literary formulation), he explains Merényi's doggedness by deeming that perhaps "this is how he finds [the stories] beautiful" (ARANY, L. 1864:210). This supposition is confirmed by the fact that Merényi's flaws seem to abound most at points where he had obviously invested most effort into embellishing his tales. The fact that Arany finds this different ideal of the folktale unacceptable is proven by the references he makes to two groups that contributed significantly to canon formation, both of which represent ideals different from Merényi's. One of these is the reference to the Brothers Grimm, who favoured simplicity in their collection. Summarily he declares, "I brought up all of this to convince Merényi, if that is at all possible, that this dreadful load of folkish ornamentation and decorative embellishment is far from beautiful, at least experts of the folktale literature do not find it so" (ARANY, L. 1864:210). The spirit of the entirety of the paper leaves no doubt that László Arany sees his own group, along with the Brothers Grimm, as *experts of the folktale literature*, creators of the Hungarian canon of the folktale.

In his inauguration speech at the Kisfaludy Society (*On Hungarian Folktales*), László Arany inventories (without value judgement or ranking order, simply marking the number of tales contained in each collection) the collections of folktales that had emerged to date. This inventory includes, beyond the titles listed by Gyulai, Gyula Pap's *Palócz népköltemények* [Palócz Folk Literature].[23]

Thus, over the first half of the 1860s, the four authors and their writings discussed so far laid the foundations for the paradigm within which contemporary and later collections of folktales (and folk literature in the broader sense) were to be interpreted. They envision collections of folktales in a hierarchic order, with the works of Gaal and Majláth at the bottom (the beginning), followed by Erdélyi, and later Merényi who goes within a few years from being seen as a promising collector to being a condemned collector. Gyula Pap is also placed on the periphery of the canon with his collection that László Arany first considered promising (ARANY, L. 1865:475) but made little mention of later. This canon only tangentially notes the folktale collections of Ipolyi (as a collateral textual corpus required for Magyar Mythologia), and completely omits István Szilcz, Gábor Kazinczy, or Sámuel Szabó, or other minor collectors belonging to the collecting network. One obvious reason for this is that these texts were still in manuscript form at the time, whereas the canon could only include published works. The great,

[23]Cf. ARANY, L. 1867:40–41; also, László Arany introduced Gyula Pap's book: ARANY, L. 1865.

classic collections were those by László Arany and János Kriza, but the true apex of this hierarchic construct came to be constituted by the volumes of the series *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* [Collection of Hungarian Folklore] launched in 1872. The Kisfaludy Society had commissioned Pál Gyulai to embark on this project as early as 1861, and he had chosen László Arany as his co-editor. This meant the emergence of an institutional and accountable forum for the practical implementation of the guiding principles for collecting and editing folk literature.

There was only one point in the 19th century when it seemed necessary to re-draw the boundaries of this canon. The years 1894–96 saw the publication of Elek Benedek's five-volume *Magyar Mese- és Mondavilág* [The World of Hungarian Tales and Legends]. The first critical reflection on the first volume came from László Arany in *Budapesti Szemle* in 1894.[24] This was followed by a strand of polemics[25] between Lajos Katona (Vác, 1862 – Budapest, 1910), the ethnographer who laid down the foundations of Hungarian comparative folkloristics, and Elek Benedek himself, based on an article published by the former in 1899. This dispute took place partly in *Ethnographia* and partly in Benedek's own journal, *Magyar Kritika*.

In the Preface to his book, Elek Benedek explains his strategy of text formation in a manner that is clear and accessible to any reader: he is mostly re-telling tales that had already been published, with the aim of making them "a common treasure before the great millennial celebrations" (Benedek, E. 1894:III). Such a notion of the collector's task puts an ever-increasing emphasis on the manner of storytelling (as the title page states: "told by Elek Benedek"[26]), and this is also reflected in the last sentences of the Preface: "By way of information I note that my book, as the attentive reader may well establish, is no simple collection of tales and legends picked up or quoted from any manner of place. I myself wrote each and every one of them, to the best of my abilities" (Benedek, E. 1894:IV). Perhaps anticipating later objections, Benedek also adds, "this re-writing, however, does not mean depriving the folktales of their authentic character" (Benedek, E. 1894:III), it simply means choosing a style which renders the texts equally enjoyable "to the people and the educated audience". As part of the contents list, Benedek also provides the source of each of his tales, so they can be easily identified and compared (Benedek, E. 1894:V–VII). It is in response to this gesture, deemed offensive vis-à-vis their declared principles, that László Arany offers a scathing critique of the first volume. He declares that, on final balance, Benedek's work "cannot be included among the source publications of Hungarian folklore" (Arany, L. 1894:477). After such an irremediable exclusion from the canon, he assigns Benedek's collection its place within the ranks of children's literature, claiming that "this enterprise will stand its ground as reading fit for the growing generation" (Arany, L. 1894:478).

In support of his opinion, László Arany also compares Benedek with earlier collectors of folktales. It is revealed that in his opinion, Benedek's manner of presentation "is not as authentic and archaic, nor as rich as that of Kriza", "his colouring is less rich and varied than that used by László Merényi", and as regards the structure of his tales, he "can compete neither with János

[24] Arany, L. 1894:473–478. This review was published with the signature r.--, so it was not clear to contemporaries, who authored it. Elek Benedek clearly saw Pál Gyulai behind it, but in fact the paper had been authored by László Arany.

[25] For a detailed analysis of this polemic, see Gulyás 2011.

[26] This method was in fact applied by all collectors in the era, explicitly or implicitly, and shaped the stories to a varying extent. Allusion to it in the title, besides Elek Benedek's case, is made by Gyula Istvánffy. The full text on the title page of his 1890 collection reads, *Palócz mesék a fonóból*. Meséli: Istvánffy Gyula. [Palóc Tales from the Spinning Room. As told by: Gyula Istvánffy].

Erdélyi, nor the greater part of the folktales included in the latest collection of the Kisfaludy Society". At the same time, he admits that his style is closer to the folklore register than the volumes of the *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* [Collection of Hungarian Folklore], nor is it so "overly profuse" as Merényi's and is more readable to the general public than the tales of Kriza (ARANY, L. 1894:476). However, even if Benedek is able "to tell the tales with ease and fluidity," in vain is he "acquainted with the innumerable ins and outs and common tricks of the trade of storytelling" (ARANY, L. 1894:476), in László Arany's judgement, his presentation of the tales is at odds with the rules of literary structure.

Lajos Katona expressed his opinion regarding Elek Benedek's collection in 1899 in the context of criticising the selection criteria used in a French collection of tales (KATONA 1899a:63–65). From this paper we can reconstruct the appearance of a new bone of contention: Katona claims that we can distinguish *apocryphal* and *authentic* folktales, where the texts of Benedek's collection represent the former category, while authentic folktales would clearly be "László Arany's collection with all its flavours, and Kriza's died-in-the-wool Authentic Folktales" (KATONA 1899a:64), as well as the volumes of the CHF and the tales published in the journal *Magyar Nyelvőr*. In his somewhat heated reply (KATONA 1899b), Elek Benedek demands evidence to support the accusation of forgery and argues with Lajos Katona regarding the characteristic traits of the genuine folktale (BENEDEK, E. 1899a:174). Benedek also repeatedly emphasises that although his tale collections are the most popular among readers, and during his collecting tours he still keeps coming across people who re-tell him his own tales, people like Pál Gyulai or Lajos Katona fail to take notice of this and, aside from a single article that was published in *Budapesti Szemle*, "there has been no criticism of any significant stature" of his work (BENEDEK, E. 1898:295, 1899a:173). Lajos Katona gave a reply (KATONA 1899b) that was even more categorical than that of László Arany: "not even all of Mr. E. B.'s protest or indignant rejection will shake my opinion, for even if he claims a thousand times that we ought to have paid attention to *The World of Hungarian Tales and Legends* and studied it, we folklorists and ethnographers will never recognise it as of any use to *our purposes*" (KATONA 1899b:174). With this statement he draws a clear dividing line between "us" and "him", declaring that it is impossible for Benedek to enter the canon they had constructed. Katona justifies all of this by arguing that the principles of textual publication have changed since the first publications of János Kriza and László Arany and the first volumes of *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény,* and Elek Benedek "does not and will not understand what is meant by a *real* folktale or, rather, it is something else he considers to be it than the totality of the latest scholarly literature of the examination and comparison of tales" (KATONA 1899b:175). Going even further, Katona states that it is no longer possible in his time to publish a text as an authentic folktale if it has been re-worked, re-told, or stylised by the collector, no matter what an excellent storyteller he may be. In response to which Elek Benedek furiously rejects the idea that Lajos Katona "and his folklorist colleagues are the only ones to know what a real folktale is (. . .). Can a folktale be genuine if it has received a *literary form?* Of course it cannot! Stories published by the notary of the most godforsaken village – they are the real folktales; what I tell based on *my very own notes*, in my own storytelling voice, with the best of my talent for storytelling, is no longer a real folktale, it is not trustworthy enough for the world-famous folklorist" (BENEDEK, E. 1899b:244). With this, Benedek actually openly opposes the theoretical tenet at the very base of the canon whereby not everybody is equally well suited for the role of storyteller and tale collector. He questions the assumption whereby "the notary of a godforsaken village" (i.e., a

literate but not a literary person) will be less likely to shape the tales, and the texts he collects will be closer to those told by the people than Elek Benedek's tales.

In 1903, the pages of *Ethnographia* saw another debate concerning the originality and the mode of collecting and presentation of folktale texts. In his paper *Magyar népmese-typusok* [Types of Hungarian Folktales], Lajos Katona accused Sándor Pintér of plagiarism. He claimed that Pintér had borrowed one of his tales from János Erdélyi and re-wrote it to reflect a *palóc* dialect, because he had found some verbatim analogies between the texts of the two tales. And 'since the collector does not note this circumstance', reasoned Katona, 'his procedure may give rise to doubt concerning the *originality* of his other stories, or at least forewarn us to exercise the utmost caution in their regard" (KATONA 1903a:133). In his response, Sándor Pintér replied in a proud letter published in the following issue of *Ethnographia*. First, he declared as a fact that he had "neither read Erdélyi's tales, nor seen them in writing or in print, thus he cannot have re-written the previously mentioned tale '*in a more folkish style*'" (PINTÉR 1903:197). Next, he named the source of the tale in question, "a lame spinster of the name of 'Örzse', some 60–65 years of age and with a true gift for storytelling" (PINTÉR 1903:197), and went on to describe to Katona his method of tale collection.[27] In the second half of the letter, he points a whole line of impassioned questions at Katona, a philologist, asking him how he thinks about folktales, about the independent recurrence of folktale texts in different locations, and what he might have done in order to avoid the charge of plagiarism. "What is it I should have remarked? According to Lajos Katona, I should have stated that if there is a similar tale anywhere else in the world, this is not 'a re-telling of that tale in a more folkish style.' Dear Sir! Do you know where, how, in what way, and in which region János Erdélyi had come by the folktale titled 'The Widowed Man and the Orphan Girl'? Do you know me to have been familiar with the folktale published by Erdélyi? Do you also know for a fact that no other person could have known this tale other than the person who told it to Erdélyi? And then, highly honoured fellow member, what right have you to proclaim that all of the tales currently still in my desk drawer are already *dubious* with regard to their *originality*?" (PINTÉR 1903:199) Finally, he requests Lajos Katona to pay him the honour of a personal visit, to examine in his home the tales that he had noted down and the storytellers who will be invited and produced for the occasion" (PINTÉR 1903:199–200). In his reply published in the same issue of the journal (KATONA 1903b:200–203), Lajos Katona apparently accepts Sándor Pintér's answer and seemingly believes that the latter had not been familiar with Erdélyi's tales and thus could not have re-written them. At the same time, Katona revisits with such obstinate frequency the question of tales cropping up at some distance from each other in both time and space in such similar forms that in effect he manages to keep open the option that Pintér may in fact have made recourse to Erdélyi's collection of tales – which in this case would be equivalent to saying that his collection was entirely devoid of use for scholarship.

To sum up, we can confidently say that the canon of the late 19th century left intact the hierarchy that had emerged in the middle of the century and which accorded value to collections (such as the collections of János Erdélyi or László Arany, or the volumes of *Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény*) produced by individuals who were associated with the central institutions of the field (Kisfaludy Society, Tudós Társaság [Learned Society], editors of *Ethnographia*), with the

[27] He informed Katona that he still had several folktales hiding in his desk drawer which are also original, meaning that either he himself had written them down following the original storyteller verbatim, or had someone else write them down for him, except for a few rare cases when the storytellers themselves wrote the tales down.

only exception being János Kriza's *Vadrózsák*. This pattern was disrupted only by one firm manoeuvre (relegating Elek Benedek to the counter-canon) and one attempt (questioning the credibility of Sándor Pintér's collection of tales). Collections of *palóc* folktales are mentioned in passing, while Transylvanian collections, with the exception of Kriza's *Vadrózsák*, never appeared in print and therefore had no chance of becoming incorporated in the canon (KATONA 1894).

In the 20th century, folklorists devoted little attention to collections of folk literature, including folktales in their own right, since the main priority of folktale research at the time was to focus on recent collections and engage in the vast enterprise of catalogue-building.

In the earliest years of the century, it was Antal Horger who highlighted the text-building strategies of 19th-century collectors (among them canonised figures such as János Kriza or László Arany). He claims that the collectors created and re-wrote the tale texts in the name of a particular aesthetic ideal. The difference, he claims, was only in their mode. "While Merényi remained a greasy rustic, László Arany used a literary language, and Kriza wrote his own tales in an endearing Transylvanian dialect" (HORGER 1908:456). This statement, made in Volume X of the CHF, led to a lengthy debate between him and Gyula Sebestyén on the pages of *Ethnographia* (ERDÉLYI, L. 1913; HORGER 1908, 1912, 1913; SEBESTYÉN 1912, 1913a, 1913b). In his logically cogent reasoning, Horger is not seeking to condemn Kriza's manner of storytelling, he merely draws attention to the fact that in the 19th century, "in Kriza's time, it was not merely permitted but practically an expectation to 'smooth out' the folktales they had collected," since "scholars, as well as the wider audiences, were likewise only interested in *beautiful* Hungarian folktales" (HORGER 1913:54). Gyula Sebestyén's increasingly heated replies turned more and more personal. By 1913, he was declaring Antal Horger to be a "common collector" and a "bad ethnographer" (SEBESTYÉN 1913a:57) who is incapable of forming an opinion about Kriza. Since this debate was not followed by an act of re-examining the historical tale corpus or re-thinking the principles of textual construction, after Antal Horger had exposed the problem, Hungarian folkloristics needed to wait another century for the question to re-surface and research efforts to shift in the direction of examining the historical texts.

The effort of reviewing 19th-century folktale collections in the 20th century is largely associated with the name of Gyula Ortutay (Szabadka, 1910 – Budapest, 1978), a defining figure of the Budapest school of performer-centered narrative research.[28] He surveyed the main collections in four papers (ORTUTAY 1939, 1960, 1962, 1963), mostly with the purpose of self-legitimization – i.e., with the intention to demonstrate the kind of foundations upon which the volumes of the paradigm-shifting *Új Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* [New Collection of Hungarian Folklore, NCHF] were built, and the works that should be considered its predecessors. In his writings he establishes a hierarchic order amongst the 19th-century collectors he considers his forerunners, where the criterion, the "extent of re-writing," is drawn from an imagined notion of authenticity.

In his 1960 paper on György Gaal, he writes that the latter "had shaped the material of his storytellers with a firm hand (. . .), and Gaal cannot be excused even if we are fairly closely

[28]The *Budapest* or *performer-centered school* of folktale research believed that studying the personality of the individual storytellers and the communities surrounding them was an aspect of outstanding importance in the understanding of folktales. Its departure was marked by Gyula Ortutay's book *Fedics Mihály mesél* [Storytelling by Mihály Fedics] (1940), which was published as the opening volume of *Új Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény* [New Collection of Hungarian Folklore].

acquainted by now with the history of the re-writing of the Grimms' tales" (ORTUTAY 1960:27). Concerning János Majláth, he declares that his collection "is saturated, through and through, with the romantic attitude of its author, so unfortunate in his destiny, and in no way to be considered as an authentic product of the peasantry. His method – that of forgery and transformation – will, as we have seen, go on to haunt our collections for a long time to come, although in a declining manner" (ORTUTAY 1939:230). Judgement is passed along similar lines regarding János Erdélyi.

In 1960 he wrote, „even if the literary re-writing had done considerable damage to the usability of the text, nevertheless a great portion of his collection deserves the epithet 'blood from our blood'" (ORTUTAY 1960:27). As regards Merényi, he states that "János Arany had condemned sharply this method of over-decorating re-writing", and that Merényi's collection "is of no use to us today except as a database fit to prove the existence of certain textual types and structures" (ORTUTAY 1960:30). László Arany's collection *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales], he claims, is "far closer to the genuine voice of the folktale, even if it does inevitably resort to re-writing" (ORTUTAY 1960:30).

Ortutay also frequently expresses his opinion regarding the publication of the individual volumes. He believes that the collections of István Szilcz, György Gaal, and Arnold Ipolyi would be worthy of publication (ORTUTAY 1963b:91) and János Erdélyi's deserves re-publication (ORTUTAY 1962:533). He justifies this claim by stating that "various stages in the history of the Hungarian folktale could be carefully re-examined on the occasion of their publication" (ORTUTAY 1963b:91).

Perhaps the most serious difficulty in relation to these pronouncements is that Gyula Ortutay, although in possession of considerable experience as a tale collector (and partly founding his opinions on this), had probably never examined a single original manuscript thoroughly. This way he could only presume that György Gaal had changed the texts of his storytellers or that Majláth's method had been forgery, and that this tendency decreases with each new collection until we finally reach the stage when "the real voice of the folktale" comes to dominate (ORTUTAY 1960:30). The very word "forgery" probably sounds far too harsh and may ring familiar from János Arany's essay of 1861. As regards János Erdélyi, it is again not very clear what Ortutay meant when he claimed that the re-writing "had done considerable damage to the usability of the text." We may even question whether the extent of re-writing may be genuinely captured and measured through the tale collections of an entire century. I believe this is one of the things that could be explored on one specific corpus (besides many other dimensions) and if the question appears in some sense relevant, the texts/collectors could then be ranked accordingly. This, however, entails very special requirements as far as sources are concerned (most of all a rich range of philological variants: notes taken on location, clean draft, text prepared for publication, and published version should all be available simultaneously). Only after carrying out textological investigations based on these can we make any serious claims, for example, that the extent of transformation showed a declining tendency in our collections. Neither is it clear whether Gyula Ortutay's preferences regarding editions and re-editions were in any way connected with promoting scholarship, since these collections, in my judgement, can also be examined without publication/re-publication (perhaps with more difficulty), but by excluding certain texts/collectors *ab ovo* from scholarly investigation,[29] we deprive ourselves of the chance

[29]Cf. for example Ortutay's statement regarding László Merényi, "I would not consider republishing Merényi's rare volumes" (ORTUTAY 1963b:91).

to see the entire corpus in all of its historical dimensions. Based on all of the above, we may safely say that Gyula Ortutay had no intention of changing the structure of the previously emerged canon by his statements concerning the 19th-century tale corpus, and it was mostly in order to name his own forerunners that he included certain collectors in the canon.

Another important representative of the *Budapest school* was Ágnes Kovács, who published important essays concerning the collecting activity of Arnold Ipolyi and László Arany and had plans to produce critical editions of their collections (KOVÁCS 1982, 1989). She wrote repeatedly about János Kriza and his network of collectors in connection with the Kriza legacy which turned up in 1949 (KOVÁCS 1956, 1961a). She also authored the only paper of the period to be written clearly with the intent of re-canonisation – in *Ethnographia*, in 1961, she argued for Elek Benedek's rehabilitation (KOVÁCS 1961b). After having familiarised herself with the original manuscripts, she claimed that the manner of text formation used by other collectors in the late 19th and early 20th century (re-writing, transforming the text received from the original storyteller) does not differ significantly from that of Benedek's. Although in this paper Ágnes Kovács incorporates Elek Benedek in the canon, she does not question the legitimacy of the dichotomy of bad collector/good collector established in the late 19th century within the canon – in other words, she rehabilitates Benedek as a *good collector*. This gesture entered the history of the canonisation of these collections as a one-off case but did not create a precedent for scholarship to re-think the collections of others and thereby arrive at a position that all collectors may be deserving of research in order to contribute to an understanding of the period.

As we have seen, over the course of the 20th century the canon did become modified and more nuanced under the influence of the above-described publications, but it was not transformed significantly. On the peripheries we find János Majláth and László Merényi as collectors clearly deemed unworthy of research. More significance is accorded to the collections of István Szilcz, György Gaal, Arnold Ipolyi, and János Erdélyi. An even higher grade in this notional hierarchy is occupied by the volumes of the CHF, Elek Benedek, and Lajos Kálmány whom Ortutay considered a direct predecessor to performer-centered research, as well as the "classic collections" – László Arany's *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] and János Kriza's *Vadrózsák* [Wild Roses]. The apex of this construct is occupied once again by the present – i.e., the *Új Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény*. The only significant way in which the canon has become modified compared to the end of the 19th century is that Ágnes Kovács has incorporated Elek Benedek, as well as other fellow collectors in the cases of Arnold Ipolyi, László Arany, and János Kriza.

Besides those listed above, new members of the canon incorporated around this time were the publications containing the collections of folk literature submitted for the contest invited by the Zsigmond Kemény Society in 1897 and published in Transylvania by József Faragó and Katalin Olosz. Although these also became known in mainland Hungary, particularly *A kecskés ember* [The Man with the Goat] (1972)[30] – a collection of folktales which may be seen as a scholarly publication – they never became emphatic parts of the canon. This is also what happened to Gyula Istvánffy's collection published in 1963 by Ferenc Bodgál. Attempts to re-formulate the canon established in the 19th century, particularly at altering its canon of interpretation, did not commence until the 21st century. Forerunners to such research within folkloristics may be pinpointed in two writings by Péter Niedermüller (NIEDERMÜLLER 1987,

[30]With regard to the present volume, see KOVÁCS 1972.

1990) which, probably unwittingly, continued along Antal Horger's idea. Niedermüller argued that the 19th-century textual base is very much a construct – in his view, the scholarship of the 19th century considered texts as clearly something of value, and whatever was declared devoid of value according to an aesthetic criterion was either corrected as unpresentable in its existing form or left entirely out of consideration. What we find in the background of such collecting and publishing activity is a concept of pure folklore which existed in the minds of all collectors (and, we might add, corresponding concepts of collecting, of folk literature, of tales, of the collector, the data publisher, or of what may be considered a beautiful text, etc.), based on which they pursued their collecting and text publishing activity. It is this same latent paradigm (the construction of the rustic by the elite) that Róbert Milbacher wrote about in his book (MILBACHER 2000). He presents concrete case studies (based on the examination of literary texts) to demonstrate how folk culture splits into two strands in the process: texts which the elite culture finds presentable and usable, and those which are unacceptable for the elite and are thus condemned to being silenced, replaced, or deleted altogether. If we take this tendency of literary history (also in relation to the research efforts represented by Márton Szilágyi) as our point of departure, in Hungary, scholars like Judit Gulyás and Mariann Domokos mark the trend which is committed to a thorough philological examination of 19th-century folktale collections in order to gain a thorough understanding (after the exploration of the material) of what was in fact considered a folktale in the 19th century and what were the different concepts of the folktale existing in the minds of the collectors. Besides her programmatic paper (GULYÁS 2007), Judit Gulyás wrote several other articles on the appearance of the folktale in the Hungarian literature of the 19th century, and on the attempt made on behalf of the elite to integrate the genre of the fairy-tale with the literary canon. Mariann Domokos has been publishing continually since 2002 about 19th-century collectors, executing important source publication work. These two authors had jointly prepared the critical edition of László Arany's *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] (1862) (cf. DOMOKOS – GULYÁS 2018).

Anyone studying mid-19th century Hungarian folklore collections today must take into consideration the research carried out by István Csörsz Rumen and Imola Küllős (Cf. OHP 2000, 2006, 2013, 2015). At least as regards János Erdélyi, the authors demonstrated through specific collections that the activity of the collectors who lived at this time cannot be viewed separately from the tradition of popular literature but must be imagined as an organic part of it.

Katalin Olosz continued her investigations, launched in the 1960s, with renewed dynamism after the post-communist transition. These recent volumes of historical folkloristics have been of a pioneering value both in their approach and in their philological precision, their handling of the texts and in the exhaustive exploration of all possible sources and all routes to any of the collections (Cf. SZABÓ 2009; KRIZA 2013; KANYARÓ 2015; OLOSZ 2018).

Summarising the above, my goal in this paper has been to demonstrate that even though studies in textual folkloristics have become enlivened over the past few years, the great number of unexplored or only partially explored 19th-century collectors and collections leave us with plenty of further work to do. On the one hand, it is crucial to carry out certain important pieces of basic research, while it is also indispensable that we re-think certain pronouncements of 19th- and 20th-century folkloristics which are often summary generalisations unsupported by sources but which live on uncritically in the scholarly literature of the field.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this paper was supported by the MTA Premium Postdoctoral Research Program. The author is a member of the MTA–ELTE Lendület ("Momentum") Historical Folkloristics Research Group.

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 31–54
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00002

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

The Collaborative Folktale Project of a Family: The Synoptic Critical Edition of a 19th-Century Hungarian Folktale and Riddle Collection

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Received: January 19, 2021 • Accepted: February 1, 2021
Published online: September 20, 2021

ABSTRACT

In 1862, a volume of tales was published under the title *Eredeti népmesék* ('Original Folktales') by László Arany, the then 18-year-old son of János Arany, the national poet of the period. *Eredeti népmesék* has been classified by folkloristics as the first canonical folktale collection in Hungary. Besides scholarly recognition, it has also become one of the most popular folktale collections of the past one and a half century, as selected tales from this collection have been continuously republished in schoolbooks and anthologies and have become a regular element in children's literature. After the Second World War, in the basement of the main building of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest, a huge pile of manuscripts had been found in very poor condition, consisting of, among others, various 19th-century folklore collections. In the 1960s, it was discovered that a part of these manuscripts was identical to the texts published in *Eredeti népmesék*. The vast majority of the manuscript tales had been recorded by the family members of János Arany, namely, his young daughter (Julianna Arany) and his wife (Julianna Ercsey), in the period between 1850 and 1862, presumably for family use. A comparison of the manuscript texts with their published versions revealed that in the editing process, László Arany significantly reworked the texts of the manuscript tales, implementing significant stylistic modifications. This article reports on the research project underlying the synoptic critical edition of the manuscript and published tales of the Arany family (2018). In the first part, the author presents the manuscript and published tales and their place in the history of Hungarian folkloristics, followed by an introduction of the members of the Arany family with an emphasis on their sociocultural background, and concluding with a discussion of the roles they played in this collaborative folktale project as collectors, editors, copy editors, and theoreticians. The second part is a summary of the textological concept and techniques applied in the course of the development of the synoptic critical edition.

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KEYWORDS

folktale collection, Arany family, synoptic critical edition, textualization, textology

Eredeti népmesék [Original Folktales] (Arany L. 1862), edited by László Arany, was published in 1862, and is still one of the most significant and influential collections of Hungarian folktales. The volume garnered unanimous high praise from contemporaries and later folklorists alike, pointing out the tales' excellent style of narration, that is, the collector-editor's authentic rendition of the style of Hungarian folk narratives. These folktales also greatly influenced oral traditions because of elementary school textbooks, children's literature (Domokos 2018a, 2018b), and cheap, popular editions published in large quantities in the early 20th century. Familiarity with László Arany's folktales was prevalent in the repertoire of many (even illiterate) storytellers in the 20th century (Kovács 1969). Due to their widespread popularity, the folktales of László Arany played a similar role in Hungarian culture as the Grimms' tales played in German culture. Not only did they bring about the popularization of certain folktale sujets, their style of narration became the standard storytelling style, which over time became established in the general consciousness as the "genuine," "true" and "natural" narrative style of Hungarian storytelling.

It was not merely the quality and significant impact of the texts in the anthology that attracted general attention but also the collector himself. An 18-year-old law student, László Arany (1844–1898) was the son of János Arany (1817–1882), the greatest poet of the period. Although this anthology was his first publication at the age of 18, readers were already familiar with his name, as Sándor Petőfi, his father's best friend, wrote a poem in the summer of 1847 to the then three-year-old boy (*Arany Lacinak*), which has remained one of the best known Hungarian nursery rhymes to this day.

László Arany was listed on the cover of the folktale anthology as collector. Neither the names (or other details) of the storytellers nor the location where the tales had been collected were indicated in the book, and he remained quite reticent about this by and by. After the Second World War, a vast, disorganized manuscript material was discovered in the cellar of the dilapidated building of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on the Pest bank of the Danube, which contained, among other things, texts from 19th-century folklore collections. It was confirmed around the turn of the 1960s that some of these texts were identical or very similar to the texts published in *Eredeti népmesék*.

Comparing the handwriting of János Arany's family members revealed that the majority of the tale manuscripts that can be traced to *Eredeti népmesék* had been put to paper by László Arany's sister, Julianna Arany (1841–1865), and László Arany's mother, Julianna Ercsey (1818–1885), presumably in the 1850s. The discovery of the manuscript of *Eredeti népmesék* was a significant turning point in several respects. On the one hand, the Arany family's private documents had been destroyed when the villa of László Arany's widow in Buda was hit by a bomb in January 1945, so apart from correspondence saved by others, no other documents of theirs have survived. On the other hand, neither folklorists nor literary historians had been aware of the existence of the manuscripts of *Eredeti népmesék*. Thirdly, it became apparent from the manuscripts that László Arany's mother and sister both played a significant role in recording the folktales (Gulyás 2018a).

The manuscripts correspond to the vast majority of the texts published in 1862. At the same time, the handwritten material is not identical to the final, print-ready version of the manuscript of *Eredeti népmesék* (the whereabouts of which is still unknown), but it seems that László Arany used these manuscripts for editing his collection of tales. Besides the many autograph corrections, the manuscripts written in ink also contain corrections made by another set of hands.

In addition to the transcripts of the Arany family's handwritten texts, the recently published critical edition (Domokos – Gulyás 2018) also includes the versions edited by László Arany that were published in 1862 under the title *Eredeti népmesék*. The synoptic edition's arrangement of the manuscript and print versions in a mirror layout on a two-page spread serves the purpose of enabling the comparison of the folktale manuscripts with the print versions of the texts.

In recent decades, the issue of authenticity in regard to 19th-century folklore collections has come up more and more frequently. According to this, works of folklore published in the 19th century were products of unreflected and unseen construction, that is, the texts of folklore collections underwent significant transformation in the process of editing and publishing in accordance with ideological, moral, and aesthetic expectations. This point of view is undoubtedly true. Nonetheless, this criticism has been very rarely supported in Hungarian folkloristics by case studies and meticulous textual analyses based on the comparison of manuscripts and published texts (Gulyás 2010:225–246; 2014).

The critical edition of László Arany's anthology, *Eredeti népmesék,* makes such a comparison possible, since in this case we have at our disposal the autograph manuscripts of the recorders, the editors' corrections alongside the autograph corrections of the recorders, and finally the texts of the published anthology. The *joint publication* of these text versions allows the observation of the process of textualization, that is, how the tale text changed in the process of recording and publishing, and what changes the editor made to the manuscript texts when he made the tales intended for family use available to a national audience.

HISTORICAL RESEARCH OF FOLKTALES IN HUNGARIAN SCHOLARSHIP

After identifying the manuscripts of the collection of folktales published under the title *Eredeti népmesék*, Ágnes Kovács, a folklorist of the Ethnographic Research Group at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and editor-in-chief of the *Catalogue of Hungarian Folktales*, launched the exploration of the material and published two major studies on the subject (Kovács 1969, 1982); nonetheless, the texts of the folktales remained in manuscript format.

The question arises as to why these texts had not been published for decades, seeing that the corpus is so crucial to the Hungarian folktale tradition. There are several reasons for this. One of these is that since folk literature, and especially epic genres, played a prominent role in János Arany's oeuvre as a creative writer and essayist, and they also indirectly influenced *Eredeti népmesék*, a research project like this is best carried out if the researcher has extensive folkloristic as well as literary historical knowledge regarding János Arany and the period's literary, poetic, and intellectual historical trends and approaches to folk literature. Therefore, the creation of the synoptic edition had been dovetailing the yearslong research project on the critical edition of the works of János Arany of the Institute of Literary Studies at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

On the other hand, historical folktale research was, in general, of secondary importance in Hungarian folkloristics; in fact, only in the last 15 years did the programmatic research of early (i.e., 18th–19th century)[1] folktales begin. From the 1940s, and especially after the Second World War, the so-called *Budapest School* for the study of the role of personality in storytelling, established by Gyula Ortutay, focused primarily on the pragmatics and use of stories: it studied the process of oral transmission, the storyteller's personality, repertoire, performance style, and the sociocultural functions of storytelling (Dégh 1995). Between 1940 and 1995, numerous anthologies of folktales, featuring the repertoire of various local communities or individual storytellers and accompanied by scientific annotations, had been published, in keeping with the folktale interpretation trend that was almost monopolistic due to Ortutay's privileged position in scientific policy. *Folktales and Society* (Dégh 1969), a monograph by Linda Dégh, one of Ortutay's students, even impacted international folktale research. Of course, the fact that from the late 1960s contextualist studies and performance had attracted increased attention also played a role in this.

Although historical studies on the links between literature, folklore, and intermediary cheap print (chapbook, almanac) had been carried out in Hungary, the Budapest School itself was much more interested in contemporary cultural research. Presumably, this was also due to the fact that, according to this approach, the historical folktale material published or preserved in the archives in manuscript form did not provide a way to study the performance, context, and use of folktales. This approach was generally characteristic of international folkloristics, too: studying historical texts containing insufficient or no contextual-performative data seemed rather problematic and irrelevant (Apo 1995:14–155; Anttonen 2013; Gunnel et al. 2013).

The other key task of folktale research after 1945 was the creation of a catalog of tale types resulting from research that covered the entire Hungarian folktale repertoire. To date, ten volumes of the Hungarian folktale catalog – in line with the international tale type catalog – have been published, a significant undertaking even in international terms (Mnk 1982–2001; Uther 1997:217).

The reason, then, that studying the early Hungarian folktale corpus was of secondary importance in recent decades is that Hungarian folktale scholarship had been focusing on two very large projects during this period. Firstly, unlike in Western or Northern European countries, it aspired to document traditional storytelling practices that still existed after the Second World War in the Hungarian-speaking area (including Hungarian communities in Romania, Yugoslavia/Serbia, Czechoslovakia/Slovakia, USSR/Ukraine), in accordance with the salvage paradigm. Secondly, it focused on the typologization of the already recorded tales, that is, on creating the *Catalogue of Hungarian Folktales*.

Traditional community storytelling had mostly waned by the late 20th century, surviving in only a few peripheral communities (e.g., among the Roma living in smaller villages). Storytelling itself, of course, persists in all sectors of society, but tales – so prominent in the canon of classical folkloristic genres – are being supplanted by other narrative genres in oral tradition (personal experience narratives, urban legends, humorous or horroristic prose narratives, etc.). At the same

[1]To the best of our knowledge, the manuscript of the first Hungarian folktale collection can be dated to 1789, but it remained unknown until 1917. Prior to that, some Hungarian-language fairy tales (tales of magic) have been known sporadically from the late 18th century. Information about earlier, 16th–17th century Hungarian folktale tradition is minimal.

time, there is great interest and nostalgia for the folktale genre explored (and preferred) by folkloristics among middle-class and urban intellectuals, and the "re-learning" of vernacular storytelling is taking place within the framework of institutional, state-supported *folklorism*. Contemporary storytelling thus exists mostly as a stage performance or as a form of bibliotherapy.

Meanwhile, thousands of pages of Hungarian folktale manuscripts recorded in the 19th century languish in archives, practically locked away from the public. Curiously, not only the manuscript but also the published historical tale corpus is largely inaccessible, for until recently the most important 19th-century folktale collections usually had only one edition, the first one, of which only a few copies have survived even in larger public libraries. Change was obviously brought about by the possibilities of digitization on the one hand, the re-evaluation of editorial and philological work on the other, as well as an emergent need for the interpretation of these historical texts. The Arany family's collection of folktales is the first critical edition of Hungarian historical folktales.

THE FOLKTALE MANUSCRIPTS OF THE ARANY FAMILY

The Arany family's manuscripts of tales and riddles are located in the Department of Manuscripts at the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest, dispersed in four volumes among other collections.[2] The Arany manuscripts consist of a total of 123 sheets. Of these, riddles make up seven pages.

In 1862, the anthology titled *Eredeti népmesék* included 36 tales and 54 riddles. In the holdings of the Department of Manuscripts at the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a total of 33 tales (thirty complete and three bearing a title but unfinished), one short tale fragment without a title, as well as 78 riddle manuscripts can be linked to the Arany family. This corpus contains the manuscripts of 30 of the tales and all of the riddles published in *Eredeti népmesék*.

In the manuscript tale material of the Arany family, five tales had been recorded by János Arany's wife, Julianna Ercsey.[3] One of the tales was penned in the young adult handwriting of László Arany,[4] an earlier fragment of which can also be tied to Juliska Arany. 17 tales can be attributed entirely to Juliska Arany (Fig. 1).[5] Six tales and presumably an additional fragment

[2]Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (accepted abbreviation: MTA KIK Kt.). Irod. 4-r. 409/I., 409/II., 409/III., Ms. 10.020/VIII.

[3]*Ráadó és Anyicska/Ráadó and Anyicska* (ATU 313), *Az aranyhajú hercegkisasszony/The golden-haired princess* (ATU 403+404), *A veres tehén/The ginger cow* (ATU 511+361*), *Gagyi gazda/Master Gagyi* (ATU 560), *Dongó meg Mohácsi/ Dongó and Mohácsi* (ATU 1525E+1641+1654).

[4]*A szép lyány meg az ördög/The fair maiden and the devil* (ATU 407).

[5]*A vak király/The blind king* (ATU 550), *A boltos három lyánya/The shopkeeper's three daughters* (ATU 923), *A czigány fiú/The Gypsy boy* (ATU 1628*), *Az őzike/The fawn* (ATU 450), *A tündérkisasszony és a czigánylyány/The fairy maiden and the Gypsy girl* (ATU 408), *Az ördög-szerető /The devil lover* (ATU 407), *Jankó és a három elátkozott királykisasszony /Johnny and the three accursed princesses* (ATU 400+518), *Az ördög és a két lyány/The devil and the two girls* (ATU 480D*), *A nyelves királykisasszony/The cheeky princess* (ATU 853), *A farkas-tanya/The wolves' house* (ATU 210), *The pig bladder, the straw, and the ember* (ATU 295), *Wolfie* (ATU 20C+20A), *A kakaska és a jérczike/Little rooster and little hen* (ATU 2021), *A két koszorú /The two wreaths* (ATU 883B+510B), *A kóró és a kis madár/ The weed and the little bird* (ATU 2034A*), *A kis ködmön/The little furcoat* (ATU 1450+1384), *Bolond Jankó/Foolish Johnny* (ATU 1696+1691+1653).

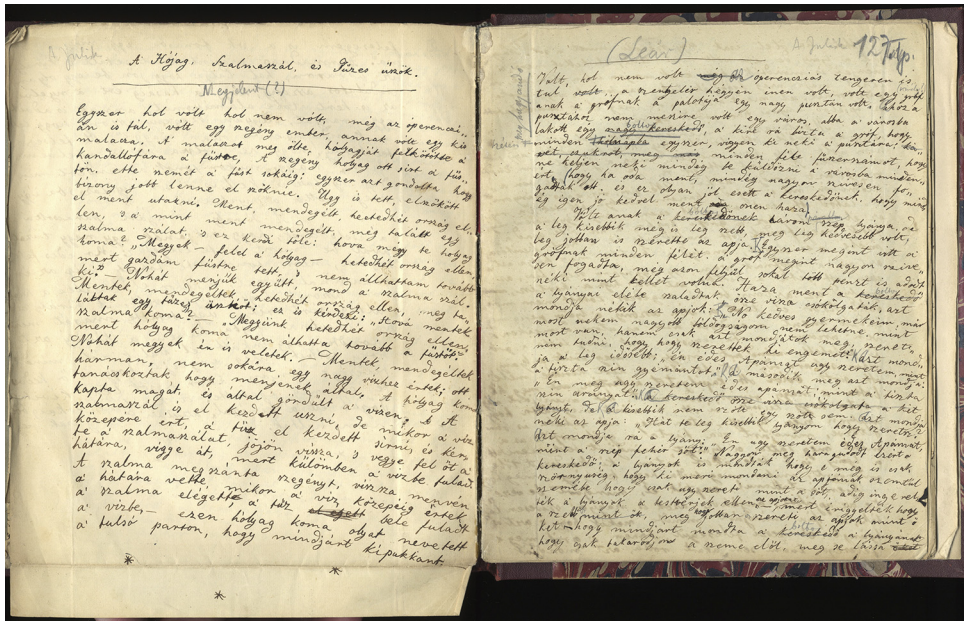

Fig. 1. Pages of the tales *A Hójag, Szalmaszál, és Tűzes űszök (The pig bladder, the straw, and the ember)* and *Lear* recorded by Juliska Arany (MTA KIK Kt.)

had been put to paper by an unidentified recorder.[6] It is possible that it was the young László Arany who recorded these tales, but this cannot be verified, because unlike in the case of his mother or sister, there are no other autograph manuscripts of László Arany from the 1850s allowing the handwriting to be definitely attributed to him.

In some of the tale manuscripts, the cooperation of several recorders can be detected.[7] In three of Julianna Ercsey's tales, another person (presumably Juliska Arany) added a few lines in the text of the tales, after which the mother continued writing the manuscript. Four other tales[8] were written jointly by Juliska Arany and the unknown recorder, taking turns paragraph by paragraph or page by page. Most of the riddles (with the exception of one text, which can be attributed to László Arany) were written down by Juliska Arany (Vargha 2018) (Fig. 2).

The vast majority of the Arany family's extant manuscripts of folktales and riddles can thus be attributed to Juliska Arany and the unknown recorder, and to a lesser extent to Julianna Ercsey. The manuscripts are not dated, but based on a distinctive change in the handwriting of

[6] *A kis malacz és a farkasok /The piglet and the wolves* (ATU 121), *Fehérlófia/Son of the White Horse* (ATU 301), *Babszem Jankó/Johnny Bean* (ATU 700+650A), *A macska és az egér/The mouse and the cat* (ATU 2034), *A kis gömböcz/The small haggis* (ATU 2028), *Iczinke-piczinke / Teeny tiny* (ATU 2016).

[7] *Ráadó and Anyicska, Dongó and Mohácsi, The golden-haired princess.*

[8] *Zsuzska és az ördög/Susie and the devil* (ATU 328), *A szomorú királykisasszony/The sad princess* (ATU 571), *Panczimanczi* (ATU 500+501), *Az özvegy ember és az özvegy asszony*/The widower and the widow (ATU 480).

Fig. 2. Riddles by Juliska Arany (MTA KIK Kt.)

the adolescent Juliska Arany, the transcript can be dated around the 1850s (especially between 1854 and 1856).

The manuscripts were written in pen by the recorders, and they themselves made corrections in the texts (spelling mistakes, corrections of words, less often deletion or insertion of sentences, etc.). It is evident that they made an effort to put flawless, complete texts on paper (i.e., not drafts or excerpts) that included the recorders' corrections. Scribbles and sketches in certain spots suggest that most of the manuscripts were not considered finalized, clean versions.

In addition to autograph corrections, a person other than the recorders also corrected the texts in pencil and/or pen. I call these texts *interim texts*: they reflect the transitional state between the first, autograph record and the published, finalized text. Ex post corrections occur at several levels: lines, underscores, circles, crosses, numbers, stars, paragraph markers, from single small strokes to multi-line text suggestions. In many cases, the person making the corrections ex post (presumably László Arany) also added titles to the tales (originally, the recorders usually indicated with a horizontal line on the first page of the manuscript that it needed a title) or changed the existing titles of the manuscript tales (the texts were published in 1862 in accordance with these changes). Most of the changes are stylistic in nature, but there are also changes at the plot level (motif, sujet).

THE PUBLISHED TEXTS: EREDETI NÉPMESÉK

The plain, 328-sheet book with no illustrations was published in the summer of 1862, with the designation "*Eredeti népmesék,* Collected by László Arany". The volume contained 31 tales with

titles, followed by 54 riddles with numbers, followed by five catch tales with numbers, as well as the solutions to the riddles. The 36 tales are distributed across genres as follows: sixteen tales of magic, eight formula tales, five animal tales, two novella tales, three jokes, and two non-typologized tale closing motifs as catch tales.

According to the notes in the manuscripts, László Arany kept track of the tale types that had been published already, and tried to publish tales that were considered a novelty. He sought to expand the known folktale corpus not only in terms of types but also in terms of genres: the publication of animal tales, catch tales, and formula tales told primarily to children was a novelty compared to the material of earlier Hungarian folktale collections.

László Arany's textualization method, revealed through the comparison of the manuscript and print folktale texts, basically consisted of the following processes: inserting, deleting, and substituting motifs and episodes, that is, modifying the sujet or plot as compared to the manuscript records. In the folktale called *Fehérlófia* (Son of the White Mare, ATU 301), for example, the battle between the hero and the third dragon, which in the manuscript version of the unknown recorder shows them transforming into glass and porcelain and rolling down the hill, is replaced with a more conventional battle: Fehérlófia slams the dragon into the ground neck deep and then cuts off his head. In the tale of the *Forgotten Bride* (ATU 313), he inserted the motif missing from his mother's manuscript version but present in his father's 1847 verse tale, according to which the face of the girl starts burning while she is on the run, signaling that her pursuer is nearing. In the margins of the manuscript of the same tale, he indicates with the word *ring* that the lovers' betrothal scene lacks the motif of the exchanging of rings, even though the ring plays an important role in the recognition scene later, in the closing of the tale, which is why in the published text he remedied this omission in the scene.

Nonetheless, most of the changes are not about plot but about punctuation and spelling, or stylistic in nature. László Arany's typical processes included the insertion of vernacular idioms and proverbial similes, the replacement of foreign, international loan words with Hungarian equivalents (e.g., *dínom-dánom* [razzle-dazzle] instead of *bál* [ball]), using more vernacular, rustic names for tools and animals (*lopótök* [bottle gourd] instead of *üveg lopó* [glass siphon], *komondor* instead of *agár* [hound]).

On the one hand, László Arany's text modifications make the realm of the tale more folkloristic (through idioms, proverbial similes, and vernacular phrases); on the other hand, some of his typical solutions include inserting the motif of divine providence, introducing common fairytale numbers (trinity), using dialogs between actors instead of the narrator's summary/description, and inserting a narrator's commentary explaining the actions of the characters. In general, the logic of the published texts is much more explicit and rational compared to the manuscripts: László Arany expounds the implied connections, explains them to the reader, uses forward and backward references, thus making the tales more coherent and transparent (Gulyás 2010:225–234).

One of the reasons for the oft-condemned editorial rewriting of folktales, a common practice in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Kovács 1961), may have been the attempt to compensate for the changes resulting from the shift in medium. When only the pure text of an oral performance is recorded in writing, the text loses a significant part of its effect, that which stems from the simultaneous presence of the storyteller and the audience, their shared knowledge, and the information and experiences carried by nonverbal communication. Therefore, in the medium of writing, such a text cannot function properly in terms of linear reading, that is, this

effect must be reintroduced by some means, as compensation for the lost performative aspects (Gulyás 2015:25).

THE ARANY FAMILY: TELLERS, RECORDERS, PUBLISHERS, AND THEORETICIANS OF FOLKTALES

The uniqueness of the tale corpus in question also stems from the fact that it is a family collection. Family members were involved in this collaborative folktale project in different ways. In the following, I present the four members of the Arany family, starting with their biography – with special regard to their socio-cultural position – and concluding with each family member's role in the folktale project.

JÁNOS ARANY (1817–1882)

The head of the family was born in the market town of Nagyszalonta (Salonta, Romania), in a Protestant family of theoretically noble privilege but practically poor peasant status. He began his literary career relatively late and with almost no publication history: he submitted his verse epics to literary competitions anonymously, which helped this rural civil servant become one of the top poets in the country by the age of 30, and remain one of the most important authors of the Hungarian literary canon. Arany represented the apex of a literary movement that considered the integration of folk literature indispensable to the birth of a national literature. He himself often used legends, tales, and ballads known from oral tradition as the basis of his works. His very first published poem in 1847 was a fairytale in verse, the first Hungarian written version of the tale type of the forgotten bride (*The Tale of Rose and Violet: A folktale*, ATU 313, AaTh 313C). Starting in 1851, he was first a grammar school teacher in Nagykőrös, a small town near the capital, then in 1860, having had moved to Pest, he became the director of the Kisfaludy Society, a literary society that also coordinated the collection of folklore, the editor of literary and art magazines, and from 1865 secretary general of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Having come from a family of poor peasants, János Arany's career reflects extraordinary social mobility; culturally speaking, he went from the world of oral tradition and cheap print to the pinnacle of elite literature and scholarship (Szilágyi 2017).

One of the fundamental questions about the creation of this manuscript collection of folktales may be the following: what was it that prompted a housewife in her thirties, Julianna Ercsey, the adolescent Juliska Arany, and the child László Arany, living in a small town in the 1850s, to record more than a hundred pages of folktales? It is conceivable that the recording and publishing of tales may have been influenced by János Arany's interest in folktales. In the mid-1850s, when a significant portion of the folktale manuscripts in question were being produced, János Arany, as a teacher in Nagykőrös, was planning to publish a grammar school textbook that would have introduced the different narrative genres, one chapter of which would have been about folktales. The textbook was completed, but alas, it was not published, its manuscript got lost, and only the introduction and table of contents survived. In this period, there were only a few dozen folktales published in Hungarian, and certain genres of tales have never seen print at all. Therefore, it is possible that Arany asked his family members to transcribe the tales they

knew in order to expand his compendium. There was precedence for such a practice in the family: in 1853, two short animal and formula tales (ATU 295, ATU 2034A*) were published in a children's textbook based on the narration of the then 12-year-old Juliska Arany (Gáspár – Kovácsi 1853:2–3, 25–27).

The folktale's debut in Hungarian elite culture and print media was rather late and laborious in comparison to other genres of folk literature (i.e., orally transmitted and endowed with aesthetic value), having played a secondary role both in folklore collections and the interpretive discourses on them. This situation was described by Pál Gyulai, a friend of the Arany family and a leading literary critic of the era, in his review of László Arany's folktale anthology: "Folktales are disdained among even the least educated" (Gyulai 1862:386). A change in the appreciation of folktales, considered a genre of domestic servants and children, took place at the turn of the 1860s: from then on, the publication of folktale anthologies increased, followed by an expansion of children's literature, which included folktales, from the mid-1880s onwards.

Thus, it is particularly noteworthy that in the middle of the 19th century, amid a general indifference or rejection of folktales, János Arany advocated the collection and publication of folktales in several of his writings between 1855 and 1861, providing analyses and guidelines. Arany expressly preferred the medium of oral tradition over literacy and written historical works, because it maintains knowledge relevant to the community within the framework of poetic construction. To Arany, the existence of *poetic composition* in fairy tales is what distinguished it from all other oral epic genres (Gulyás 2017).

In 1861, Arany published a Hungarian translation of an English review of John Francis Campbell's *Popular Tales of the West Highlands.*[9] With his commentary in the review, he intended to draw attention to the importance and ways of collecting Hungarian folktales by following the Scottish example (Gulyás 2016). It was also in 1861 that he published his essay-length critique of László Merényi's anthology of folktales, *Eredeti népmesék* [Original Folktales].[10] In it, he emphasizes the communal nature of oral culture, the immediacy between performer and audience, instantaneous feedback, shared knowledge, and "solidarity" (in contrast to written works). He provides a detailed summary of the criteria of a "capable tale collector," the most important of which, in his view, is that the tale collector should be an outstanding storyteller. This enables the collector to correct any problems with the text performed during collection, in writing.

That is, around 1860–1861 (i.e., the period immediately preceding the publication of *Eredeti népmesék*), János Arany had addressed the issue of collecting and publishing folktales on several occasions. Directly or indirectly, his approach to folktales has certainly left its mark on László Arany's concept of text. There are no textual corrections by János Arany in the extant tale manuscripts, but there must have been one (or more) version(s) that reflected later phases of the corpus, even though the whereabouts of these are unknown. In any case, in 1867, László Arany wrote that he considers what his father wrote in his critique of Merényi's folktales to be the guidelines for himself and all other folktale collectors (Arany L. 1867:225).

[9] Ajöm XI. 65–73. Source: *The Athenaeum* No. 1726. (London, Saturday, 24 November 1860), 701–702.

[10] Ajöm XI. 326–342. On the folktale collection of László Merényi, see Domokos 2015:192–220.

JULIANNA ERCSEY (1818–1885)

János Arany's wife, Julianna Ercsey, was also born into a Calvinist family in Nagyszalonta; her father was a lawyer, her paternal grandfather a Calvinist pastor. According to an earlier hypothesis, she was an illegitimate child from his father's relationship with his housekeeper, but there is no trace of this in the civil registers. This circumstance may be relevant because earlier scholarship attributed Juliska and László Arany's knowledge of folklore to the fact that their grandmother, Julianna Ercsey's mother, had been a maid, who, having been excluded from elite culture, must have been the source of folklore knowledge for her daughter and indirectly her grandchildren. We know little about Julianna Ercsey's education and schooling. In 1847, János Arany described his wife in a letter as follows: "my wife does not paint, play the piano, or change clothes ten times a day: but she reads Petőfi's poems, is a good mother, and a good Hungarian housewife."[11] All relevant sources consistently describe Julianna Ercsey as an excellent housewife who surrounded her husband with great care and devotion. As for her writing praxis, Julianna Ercsey carried on regular correspondence with her brothers and friends in Nagyszalonta and Nagykőrös for decades. Her extant written documents, in addition to the manuscripts of the tales, consist of about half a hundred letters.

JULISKA ARANY (1841–1865)

In his letters, János Arany described his daughter as a smart, imaginative child with poetic and artistic talents who was keen on reciting poems at the age of three or four.[12] In 1850, the textbook writer and schoolbook editor János Gáspár noted the excellent storytelling skills of nine-year-old Juliska (AJÖM XV. 313, 691), and in 1853, as mentioned above, he even published two of her short tales. In 1851 the family moved to Nagykőrös. The Arany children first visited the capital, Pest, in 1853. 12-year-old Juliska was especially impressed by the theater,[13] wanting to become an actress, and subsequently she and her friends performed in several amateur productions in Nagykőrös. According to her contemporaries, she was a lively, sensitive, smart, and conscientious girl with remarkably good performing skills. Meanwhile, János Arany (who in his teenage years also tried, unsuccessfully, to become an actor) watched his daughter's artistic talents and ambitions with concern mixed with pride, not fully supportive of them.[14] At the age of twenty, Juliska Arany had written to her girlfriend that even if she had other ambitions, her upbringing eventually made her realize that she would only find happiness in a quiet household and within family life.[15]

It is likely that if Juliska Arany had attended school, her formal education would have ended at the age of 12, around 1853–1854. Nevertheless, her letters indicate that her knowledge and cultural awareness was more substantial than those of small-town ladies. She studied both

[11]János Arany's letter to Sándor Petőfi, Nagyszalonta, 28 February 1847. AJÖM XV:60.

[12]János Arany's letter to István Szilágyi, Nagyszalonta, 1 August 1845. AJÖM XV:15.

[13]János Arany's letter to Mihály Tompa, Nagykőrös, 1 September 1853. AJÖM XVI:298.

[14]János Arany's letter to Mihály Tompa, Nagykőrös, 4 December 1853. AJÖM XVI:352–353.

[15]Juliska Arany's letter to Dánielné Lengyel, Pest, 8 November 1861. ROLLA 1944:49.

French and German privately, through her father she was acquainted with the figures of the contemporary literary and cultural scenes, and she was an avid reader of contemporary fiction. Starting in 1857, at the invitation of Antal Csengery and his wife,[16] she often stayed in the capital for months, where she regularly attended theater performances and concerts. The list of books owned by Juliska Arany numbers about eighty, consisting predominantly of literary works. She got engaged to Kálmán Széll, a Calvinist pastor from Nagyszalonta who had previously studied in Göttingen and Geneva, in the spring of 1863. On this occasion, the only photograph depicting all members of the Arany family together was taken (Fig. 3), and this is the only extant photograph of Juliska Arany. She died in 1865 at the age of 24. In addition to the manuscripts of tales and riddles, about forty of her letters survive.

Fig. 3. The Arany Family in 1863: Behind Juliska is her fiancé, and behind Jánosné Arany is her son, László Arany. (Petőfi Literary Museum, 2017.231.1.)

[16]Antal Csengery was a prominent and influential politician, essayist, and scholar of the era, and his wife, Róza König, was one of the first Hungarian translators of Andersen's tales in the early 1850s.

LÁSZLÓ ARANY (1844–1898)

After graduating from law school, László Arany's career followed three parallel paths: literature, science, and financial and legal administration. He worked as the legal director of one of the major Hungarian banks, traveling all over Western and Southern Europe. At a very young age (1867), he was elected to the most important scientific and literary societies, then to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1872), and finally to the National Assembly (1887). He wrote several articles on linguistics, political history, literary history, and literary criticism, and even drafted the Hungarian Copyright Act (Fig. 4). After the death of János Arany (1882), he mostly focused on overseeing his father's legacy, compiling and publishing his manuscripts.

László Arany was a highly educated and extremely talented poet and translator, but his disposition was always characterized by his eschewing of publicity. As the son of the national poet, he did not want to gain an undeserved reputation. He hid his literary aspirations even from his own family. He won prestigious contests with several of his narrative poems, but he always submitted these anonymously or with codenames, and even after the announcement of his winning, he did not reveal his identity for a long time. The ironic-disillusioned narrative poem *Délibábok hőse* (1872), reflecting a Byronic-Pushkinic influence, remains one of the prominent works of the Hungarian literary canon.

Fig. 4. László Arany in 1883 (MTA KIK Kt. Ms 10206/3.)

In contemporary Hungarian society, László Arany was a tremendously gifted man in all respects. Aside from his poetic talent, education, language skills, legal and financial knowledge, witty and mercilessly offish criticism, his contemporaries also recalled a tall, athletic man who represented the dispassionate reticence and sarcastic, dry temperament of an English gentleman. From a social point of view, therefore, he was destined for greatness, but his formally extremely successful career failed to fulfill his artistic and scientific potential. Despite his notable talent, László Arany gave up writing poetry and literature in the mid-1870s, scaled down his work as an essayist, and published his writings in the press largely anonymously, making it impossible to reconstruct his entire oeuvre. In his last years, he battled depression, which he could hardly conceal even through his self-discipline. Thus, the career choices and lifepaths of Juliska Arany and László Arany seemed to reflect the ambivalent attitudes (aspiration and wistfulness) underlying the changes in the social status of their father, János Arany, which can be discerned in Arany's work as a constant sense of alienation and displacement (Szilágyi 2017:15–30).

Eredeti népmesék was László Arany's first publication, and it was not accompanied by interpretive paratexts. Thus, his views on tales can only be partially reconstructed based on later sources (Gulyás 2018b). Most of these writings were published in the 1860s, encompassing various critiques of folklore collections and a comprehensive study of folktales. The image that emerges from these is as follows:

László Arany equates authentic storytelling with the *peasant* way of storytelling: the ideal storyteller is thus a capable peasant storyteller one listens to during communal spinning or corn-shucking sessions. (Soldiers, for example, were not capable storytellers, in Arany's opinion, because having left their villages and integrated into new communities in far-away countries, they used an artificial, affective style of storytelling.) Folktale collectors may, to some extent, amend the text of a tale performed orally during its transcription if they do not use solutions alien to the peasant storyteller. But by no means shall they have the "imagination" of a literary author, that is, they shall not invent the plot. Textualization, alien to folk orality and criticized by László Arany, include processes such as classicization, use of grandiloquent language and euphemisms, idealization, overelaboration, and exaggeration arising from unfamiliarity with the vernacular language.

For László Arany, the paragon of folktale style was represented by the tales of the Brothers Grimm, which he later unambiguously expressed in a letter, emphasizing that every writer's oeuvre should be held to its own standard: "When it comes to folktales, the tales of the Brothers Grimm to me are the pinnacle; but if I held Andersen to this standard, I would have to eschew him; even though he, too, has proven himself."[17] He also praised von Hahn's anthology of Greek and Albanian folktales, in relation to which he described the paragon of tale style as follows: "It includes everything necessary and nothing superfluous" (Y. I., 1864:210).

According to László Arany, the narrative style of the folktale presented to the public in print reflects the style of the collector, not of the storyteller. Thus, the collector-editor is not merely documenting the folklore text but also creating it to some extent. This is the approach that was then canonized in 1876, in the Hungarian copyright act, the text of which was drafted by László Arany. According to this, the copyright of folklore anthologies belongs to the editor, i.e., the

[17]László Arany's letter to Lajos Tolnai, Budapest, 4 April 1878. Arany L. 1960:490.

person who put the oral tradition considered public property in a written form and created its style (Domokos 2015:344–382).

László Arany's treatise on Hungarian folktales was published in 1867 (Arany L. 1867). This was the first meticulous and comprehensive analysis of Hungarian folktales since the publication of Imre Henszlmann's 1847 study *A népmese Magyarországon* [The Folktale in Hungary], focusing primarily on the issues of genre, theme, and narration.

In addition to his knowledge of all Hungarian folktales ever published (about 240), the 23-year-old author also demonstrated his impressive knowledge of foreign tales and folk literature. He relied primarily upon the work of the Brothers Grimm, as well as representatives of comparative folklore philology, such as Theodor Benfey, Félix Liebrecht, and Reinhold Koehler, and was a regular reader of *Orient und Occident*, a journal published quarterly in Göttingen and edited by Benfey. His comparative examples included Dutch and Norwegian songs, Swedish and Danish ballads, Italian and Spanish romances, Finnish and Vogul folk poetry, Sami, English, Malagasy, and Indian tales, the Serbian tales of Vuk Karadžić, and the Romanian tales of Arthur and Albert Schott. He was thoroughly familiar with the classic collections of European, Indian, and Arabic tales, as well as the works of Straparola, Basile, Perrault, and referenced parallels found in the *Arabian Nights,* the *Panchatantra*, and the *Mahabharata,* respectively. His list of similarities in terms of motif also included epics that were considered oral tradition (the Eddas, the epic poems of Homer and Ossian). He wrote general evaluative commentaries on the neighboring Germanic, Slavic, and Romanian tales, as well as Swedish, Danish, and English tales.

The backbone of his treatise is the distinction and categorization of tale genres. László Arany (following Henszlmann) distinguished three main genre categories: 1. symbolic tales (tales of magic), 2. didactic tales, 3. absurd or weird tales (jokes, children's tales, formula tales, tall tales). László Arany did not see folktales as a homogeneous genre. One of his objectives was to demonstrate the diversity of forms they take, even ones that collectors did not previously consider worth documenting (such as children's tales, animal tales, tall tales). One novel feature of his tale interpretation was his appreciation for not only the content or meaning of the tale but also its form. He considered the study of rhythmic prose tales to be important for the reconstruction/creation of a specific form of Hungarian poetry. He saw folktales in general, and more broadly speaking folk literature, as one of most important foundations for a national poetry.

Between 1872 and 1882, László Arany was the first editor of the representative series titled *Collection of Hungarian Folklore*, authoring its comparative-typological notes on folktales and legends (with an international perspective). This series established and canonized the standards of the scholarly publication of folklore for decades.

THE ROLE OF JULISKA ARANY, JULIANNA ERCSEY, AND LÁSZLÓ ARANY IN THE CREATION OF THE FOLKTALE COLLECTION

One of the main conceptual problems regarding the tale manuscripts stems from the interpretation of the roles of Julianna Ercsey and Juliska Arany. One plausible hypothesis is that the recorder and the storyteller are the same person, i.e., mother and daughter were documenting their own folktale lore, so the manuscript collection basically represents the folktale repertoire of

Juliska Arany and her mother. However, this opinion is subject to some reservations, as no direct evidence supports the identity of the recorders and the storytellers.

The tale manuscripts of the Arany family bear no name, signature, or any other sign that would indicate the identity of the storyteller or recorder. The identification of the manuscripts was based on the similarity/sameness of the titles and sujets of the folktales with the texts published in *Eredeti népmesék*, as well as the penmanship of the manuscripts. We are not aware of any statements by any of the three main figures (Julianna Ercsey, Juliska Arany, László Arany), private or public, regarding the mother's and/or sister's role in the storytelling or collecting. *Eredeti népmesék* has no paratext that would indicate the identity of the recorders/collectors of the texts or the storytellers. As mentioned before, the estate of the Arany family was destroyed in 1945, and among the surviving letters of Julianna Ercsey and Juliska Arany, there are none that discuss storytelling, tale collecting, or folktales in general. Neither are there any indications in László Arany's extant letters or published writings that his sister and mother had contributed to his collection of tales.

While the identity of the recorders can be established based on their handwriting, the identity of the storytellers is uncertain. The subjects either said nothing about it, or the documents in which they did refer to or discuss the collection of tales had been destroyed. Nonetheless, some of János Arany's private and László Arany's (very brief) public comments on how the tales had been recorded have survived. Besides the two of them, we are aware of only two other contemporaries who had some knowledge of Juliska Arany's role as a storyteller and/or collector of tales.

According to two of László Arany's comments, he himself recorded tales at the age of ten (around 1854), and collected them in Nagykőrös (Arany L. 1867:221).[18] János Arany, on the other hand, wrote in a letter to his poet friend Mihály Tompa in 1862 that the tales were collected by his son *and* daughter.[19] Pál Gyulai, who knew János Arany and his family well, wrote at the turn of the century (after all family members had died) that the tales had been recorded by Juliska and László Arany, and the final manuscript, compiled by László Arany, had been corrected by János Arany (Alöm IV:5–6). To date, the latter statement has not been confirmed by other data, but it is rather unlikely that János Arany, who considered the issue of collecting and publishing folktales an important task, would have been unaware that his son, living in the same household, was compiling a collection of folktales.

From this perspective, then, it is indeed a unique family collection of tales, where the creation of the corpus involved various family members in various ways and to various extents, but implying some kind of collaboration, as storytellers, tale recorders, editors, and proofreaders. If the two collectors, identified by their contemporaries as Juliska Arany and László Arany, recorded the tales they knew, and their mother also wrote down a few tales, the collecting did take place within the family household, and the corpus was in fact created by collecting and writing down the tales the family members knew.

Even if this were the case, it remains uncertain whether the recorder and the storyteller were the same person. It is also conceivable that family members dictated to each other. If one of them narrated a tale slowly and the other one recorded it, the correspondence between

[18]László Arany's letter to Mihály Tompa, Pest, 18 July 1862. Tompa 1964:378.

[19]János Arany's letter to Mihály Tompa, Pest, 20 June 1862. Ajöm XVIII:64.

storyteller and story would be the opposite of what the person recording it might suggest. It can be considered a unique collaboration where in the tale manuscript of Julianna Ercsey, the transcribing is taken over by the daughter (in the middle of a sentence), then continued and finished by the original recorder (the mother), and where a tale is transcribed by Juliska Arany and the unknown recorder taking turns. If, on the other hand, two individuals take turns transcribing the text of a folktale, it suggests that they are not documenting their own lore, but presumably recording in writing the storytelling and dictation of a third individual.

Similarly, we may want to entertain the hypothesis that someone from outside the family may have been telling the stories while the members of the Arany family wrote them down (it is also possible that the unknown recorder was someone from outside the family). However, there are no abbreviations in the manuscripts, elements that are common in transcriptions of tales by dictation. Similarly, there is no "source citation" (from whom, when, where the tales had been recorded).

We should also keep in mind that putting the oral performance of a prose text on paper in pen and ink is a rather complicated task, but it is an equally difficult task for storytellers to record their own repertoire of stories in writing, as they must tell the story (whether silently, to themselves, or out loud) at the same time as they put it on paper.

Should it be confirmed that Julianna Ercsey and her children were documenting their own repertoire of stories with these texts, it would make them the most well-known 19th-century Hungarian storytellers, as Hungarian collectors of tales usually did not even record the names of storytellers at the time, let alone other data about them, and we know of very few Hungarian female storytellers and even fewer female collectors of tales from the 19th century (Gulyás 2019).

Against this background, the question then arises: why did the members of the Arany family – father and son who valued folktales so highly – keep silent about Julianna Ercsey and Juliska Arany's knowledge of folktales and their role in the creation of the folktale collection? And why had these family members themselves never mentioned this in their private correspondence?

The silence that surrounded the mother and daughter's tales can be interpreted in several ways. Since most of the family-related documents were destroyed in 1945, it is conceivable that this silence did not extend to their private sphere. What is certain, however, is that neither László Arany nor János Arany alluded publicly to the fact that *Eredeti népmesék* had been created with the help of Julianna Ercsey and Juliska Arany, who, as recorders and/or storytellers, had in fact created an "original version" of the corpus that sits at the intersection of orality and manuscript literacy, without which the texts of *Eredeti népmesék* could not have been created.

The fact that Julianna Ercsey and Juliska Arany's knowledge of folktales remained obscure is all the more curious, as the recording of tales was by no means an obvious activity in this period among small-town women of a similar level of education. Different types of texts of popular literacy were present in the writing praxis of women with no formal education. In handwritten notebooks, they jotted down texts with magical-religious functions (e.g., apocryphal prayers), made notes with economic functions (household ledger, recipe), but also wrote letters with the purposes of maintaining family and social contacts, entered records in memory books, and (occasionally) composed texts expressing their individual identity (diary, memoir) (Keszeg 2008:116–140, 168–170). In any case, writing down folktale texts was not one of the typical writing praxes, so it would have deserved attention for that reason alone.

There may be several reasons for this contradiction, which, like so many of the explanations regarding this manuscript collection of tales, are mere assumptions.

On the one hand, as discussed above, in László Arany's view, the authorship of works of folklore belongs to the person that developed the style of the published tales. That is, folktales are public domain, but when they move from oral tradition to print literature, and thus to a wider public, the ultimate narrator is not the original storyteller but the editor who created the permanent, written form. The published tale becomes the quasi *property* of the editor on account of the *creative* work performed during the written narration of the tales.

On the other hand, it is possible that the issue itself is unhistorical, having lost sight of the contemporary context due to the unprecedented privileged position of the Arany family. After all, in 19th-century Hungarian folktale publications, the names of storytellers, or even tale collectors, were rarely indicated, volumes generally bearing only the editor's name, while the sources of the tales and the circumstances of storytelling and collecting were only mentioned occasionally and incidentally. In this respect, László Arany's *Eredeti népmesék* did not deviate from the general practice.

Thirdly, another reason for this silence may also have been the contemporary opinion that (middle-class) women going public with their work creates problems with regard to their femininity and role in society. In 1858, Pál Gyulai, a friend of the family, published an intensely debated piece on women writers, one of the basic tenets of which was that women's literary work is a fundamental fallacy (Gyulai 1908). Firstly, because women are inherently incapable of higher levels of abstraction and creation outside the performing arts, and secondly, because leaving the family circle and going public entails both objectification and exposure: the woman's effect and treatment becomes uncontrollable, receiving a kind of attention and gaze that can have certain devastating existential and moral consequences. They are allowed to write, of course, but publishing is dangerous. It is conceivable, therefore, that the female members of the Arany family, known for its reticence, did not wish to expose themselves to the public in this way.

THE TEXTOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES OF THE SYNOPTIC CRITICAL EDITION

Critical editions of folktales in general, and synoptic editions in particular, have no tradition in Hungarian folkloristics. Therefore, in the absence of precedent, the structure of the edition and all processes had to be developed based on the specific features of the corpus and the possibilities arising from them. In international scholarship, the work of Heinz Rölleke served as an inspiration, who published the Grimm collection's original manuscript texts and the authorized variants side-by-side on two-page spreads (Rölleke 1975; Rölleke – Marquardt 1986).[20]

The corpus consists of texts originating in oral, handwritten, and print literature, reflecting their intersections and interoperability. Due to the intermedial nature of the corpus, it was also necessary to deviate from the usual conventions of literary history and philology. Thus, the 1862

[20]For a comparison of László Arany's tales with the Grimms' tales, see Mariann Domokos' study in the current issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*.

print version did not become the main text, nor did the application of the principle of *ultima manus* seem expedient. There are several reasons for this. On the one hand, the manuscripts come from several (partly identifiable, partly unidentified) individuals. On the other hand, with due respect for the text finalized by László Arany, this version was not the only one considered worthy of publication. The authorized version has been available by means of the 1862 edition, but with the discovery of the manuscripts, it became possible to document the process by which the text developed, from oral to handwritten to print version. The shift in media brought the tales from a limited, familiar, small community audience to a national readership, allowing them to exert their impact in literature and oral tradition through macro- and micro-dissemination (Bottigheimer 2006). Variation is usually considered a fundamental mechanism of oral tradition, but variation is also a feature of manuscript literature, as only print literature is capable of producing physically completely identical texts (within a specific edition).

Therefore, instead of establishing and codifying a single main text, the synoptic edition of the folktale collection presents three text versions side by side: 1. the *primary text*, presumably coming from oral tradition, put on paper by the recorders; 2. the *intermediate text*, which bears the subsequent corrections of the recorders and another individual; 3. the *finalized text* published by László Arany.

The handwritten texts are on the left-hand (*verso*) side, and the corresponding texts, published in 1862 and edited by László Arany, on the right-hand (*recto*) side. In the primary text of the recorders, we marked the corrections by which the intermediate text was created by indexing: text elements that were later deleted, corrected, or rewritten were subscripted, while those that had been inserted, that is, to which they were corrected, were superscripted. To distinguish between autograph corrections and those that came from someone else, the indexed text elements that came from an individual other than the recorder were *italicized*. Changes to punctuation are not indexed, but punctuation marks that were corrected or marked for deletion are enclosed in angle brackets (< >) within the main text. If anything called for additional textual information beyond indexing, these are provided in a footnote at the bottom of the page (Fig. 5).

The transcripts of the manuscripts are faithful, the peculiarities and inconsistencies of orthography and punctuation not emended, as they may be relevant in terms of cultural history. At the same time, obvious slips of the pen, inkspots, i.e., non-restrictive elements are not indicated separately. Only one major editorial intervention was indicated: since in most cases the published tale text was much longer than the manuscript version, the texts on the left-hand side and on the right-hand side would have diverged so much after a few pages that it would have been impossible to compare the two versions, even though comparability was one of the main objectives of the publication. Therefore, we tried to make sure typographically (by inserting blank or indented paragraphs and pages) that each two-page spread bore the unit of manuscript and print tale text that corresponded contentwise.

The order of the tale texts follows the order of the 1862 edition, as the original order of the tale manuscripts could not be established. The riddles are an exception to this, as the manuscript version of these has not fallen apart, thus the original order of the texts could be reconstructed.

Each tale is accompanied by a comprehensive, detailed endnote. These indicate the location of the manuscript, identify the recorder along with a general description of the manuscript, and provide information on the publication of the text (the 1862 first edition and subsequent editions until 1949), the place of their contemporary critical and popular reception (e.g., book reviews, studies, schoolbooks, children's books), their genre classification, and type number. Moreover,

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[14.] A Fehér ló fia.[1]

[91r] Egyszer volt, hol nem volt, még az|óperencziás tengeren$_{en}$ is tul<,> volt<,>:[2] *Volt* egy fehér ló<,>.[3] $_{a}^{A}$z a' fehér ló egyszer meg fiadzott lett neki egy fia $_{gyermek}$ azt egész hét esztendeig szoptatta, akkor felküdte egy magas fára, hogy huzza le|annak a' hélyát<,>;[4] a' fiu fel mászott, de csak félig tudta le huzni<.>.[5] *a' fa hélyát*, $_{a}^{A}$kkor a' fehér ló megint szoptatta hét esztendeig, $_{akkor}$ megint felküdte egy magas cserfára, hogy huzza le|annak a' hélyát a' fiú lehuzta<,>.[6] $_{a}^{A}$kkor azt mondja a' fehér ló: „No fiam, már látom elég erös$_{s}$ vagy, hát csak menj el világra, én meg, meg döglök<.>," aval meg döglött a' fehér ló<,>.[7] $^{K}_{a}$ $^{A}_{a}$fi$_{a}$" el indult világra, a' mint ment, mendegélt, elö talált egy rengeteg erdőt, annak a' közepén talát egy embert ki a$_{z}$ $_{legnagyobb}$ élő fákat $_{a}^{ugy}$ $_{leg\ nagyobbakat}$ törderte, mint más a' szalma|szálat<,>.[8] $_{\pi}$ ~~^{A}zt mondja~~ *Köszön neki.* a' fehér ló fia: „Jó napot" *adjon Isten*. „Jo napot te kutya<,>![9] *Nem te vagy a fehér ló fia?* [...] $_{vagyok}$ halottam hirét *annak a fehér ló fiának* szeretnék vele meg birkó'ni." „Gyere no, – mondja a' fehér ló fia – én vagyok az.")[10] $_{m}^{M}$egbirkodzottak, de alig csavaritott $_{egyet}$ a fehérló fia a' fa tördelön, mindjárt fö$_{ö}^{ld}$hö$_{z}$ vágta. $_{a}$zt mondja a' fa tördelő: „Már látom erössebb vagy mint én, v$_{e}^{é}$gy$_{d}$ be szolgálatodba." A fehér lo fia befogadta, $_{a'}$ $_{mint}$ $_{már\ ekkor\ ketten\ voltak}$.[11] $_{d'}^{A}$ mint|mennek, mendegélnek, elő találnak egy kő morzsolót, a' ki a' követ ugy morsolta mint más a' tolyás hélyat<,>. $_{a}^{A}$zt mondja a' fehér lo fia: „Jó napot." „Jó napot te kutya, hallottam hirét annak|a' fehér ló fiának, szeretnék vele meg birkozni." Gyere no, – mondja a' fehér ló fia – én vagyok az." megbírköztak, de alig csavarított a' fehér lo fia tize$_{n}^{i}$ tizenketőt$_{t}$, mindjárt föthőz vágta<,>.[12]

1 A mese szövegét egyelőre azonosítatlan lejegyző írta le.
2 Tintával írt vessző tintával áthúzva, ceruzával kettőspontra javítva.
3 Tintával írt vessző ceruzával pontra javítva.
4 Tintával írt vessző ceruzával pontosvesszőre javítva.
5 Tintával írt és áthúzott pont, ceruzával pontra javítva.
6 Tintával írt vessző ceruzával pontra javítva.
7 Tintával írt vessző ceruzával pontra javítva.
8 Tintával írt vessző ceruzával pontra javítva.
9 Tintával írt vessző ceruzával félkiáltójelre javítva.
10 Ceruzával húzott függőleges vonal a két mondat között.
11 A tintával beszúrt mondat végén ceruzával írott pont.
12 Tintával írt vessző ceruzával pontra javítva.

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Fehérlófia.

[202.] Egyszer volt, hol nem volt, még az óperenciás tengeren is túl volt, volt a világon egy fehér ló. Ez a fehér ló egyszer megellett, lett neki egy fia, azt hét esztendeig szoptatta, akkor azt mondta neki:

– Látod fiam azt a nagy fát?

– Látom.

– Eredj fel annak a legtetejébe, húzd le a kérgét.

A fiu felmászott, megpróbálta, a mit a fehér ló mondott, de nem tudta megtenni. Akkor az anyja megint szoptatta hét esztendeig, megint felküldte egy még nagyobb fára, hogy húzza le a kérgét; a fiu le is húzta. Erre azt mondta neki a fehér ló:

– No fiam, már látom elég erős vagy, hát csak eredj el a világra, én meg megdöglöm.

Avval megdöglött. A fiu elindult világra, a mint ment-mendegélt, elő talált egy rengeteg [203.] erdőt, abba be is ment. Csak bódorgott, csak bódorgott, egyszer egy emberhez ért, ki a legerősebb fákat is úgy nyűtte, mint más ember a kendert.

– Jó napot adjon Isten! mondja Fehérlófia.

– Jó napot te kutya! hallottam hirét annak a Fehérlófiának, szeretnék vele megbirkózni.

– Gyere no, én vagyok!

Megbirköztak, de alig csavarított egyet Fehérlófia Fanyüvőn, mindjárt földhöz vágta.

– Már látom hogy erősebb vagy, mint én, – mondja Fanyüvő – hanem tegyük össze a kenyerünket, végy be szolgálatodba. Fehérlófia befogadta; már itt ketten voltak.

A mint mennek, mendegélnek, elő találnak egy embert, a ki a követ úgy morzsolta, mint más a kenyeret.

– Jó napot adjon Isten! mondja Fehérlófia.

– Jó napot te kutya! hallottam hirét annak a Fehérlófiának, szeretnék vele megbirkózni.

– Gyere no, én vagyok!

Megbirköztak, de alig csavarított Fehérlófia [204.] Kőmorzsolón hármat-négyet, mindjárt földhöz vágta.

Fig. 5. The manuscript and published version of the tale of *A Fehér ló fia / Fehérlófia* [Son of the White Mare] as represented in the critical edition

they briefly outline the international literature on the tale type (with special regard to the earliest known records and distribution of the type), and review the 19th-century Hungarian manuscript and print variants of the given tale type. At the end of the notes, there is a glossary of archaic or vernacular terms that occur in the tales. The notes are intended to position the tales of the Arany family within the network of Hungarian and European, oral and literary textual traditions. Due to the limited availability of sources and historical research to date, the brief notes on the riddles contain data of the manuscripts, first editions, and 19th-century Hungarian parallels.

The notes are followed by a table containing basic data about the Arany family's manuscript tales and László Arany's tales published in 1862 (title variations, location, recorder, genre, type number), a list of books of tales published until 2016 under the name of László Arany, photos of members of the Arany family and the manuscripts, and finally an index of names.

IN CONCLUSION

Eredeti népmesék is a work of significant editorial intervention yet aspiring to represent oral tradition (*Buchmärchen*), and its text formation processes and impact on Hungarian culture are

similar to those of the Grimms' tales. The "original manuscript" discovered after the Second World War created an opportunity to present the differences between manuscript and published texts, that is, the *process* of text formation, in a two-page spread format of a synoptic edition. By exploring the manuscripts of the folktale collection canonized as a national classic, and by identifying the recorders, the outlines of a family collaboration that allowed for different roles emerge from a period when transferring tale texts from oral tradition into manuscript and print literature was far from common.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The article was supported by the Academic Committee of the János Arany Memorial Year hosted by the Institute of Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 55–78
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00003

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

The Influence of the Grimm Tales on the Tale Textology of László Arany

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Received: January 15, 2021 • Accepted: February 16, 2021
Published online: September 20, 2021

ABSTRACT

László Arany's *Eredeti népmesék* (Authentic Folktales, 1862) is an iconic collection of folktales. The tales in this publication have been entrenched in the national identity as classic Hungarian folktales, and the narrative style of the tales has been established in the public consciousness as *the* narrative style of Hungarian folktales. The Arany family's collection of folktales ultimately had a similar function in Hungarian culture as the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* of the Brothers Grimm had in Germany, but while the text formation of the Grimm tales had been thoroughly explored by philology, the Arany tales had not been accompanied by folkloristic interpretations or in-depth philological analyses. To László Arany, the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm were the ideal, which he indicated in his many theoretical writings as well as his role as a collector and editor of tales. To form the individual texts found in *Eredeti népmesék,* László Arany used the tale manuscripts transcribed by his mother and sister in the 1850s, modifying them considerably, primarily by employing stylistic devices, many of which can also be observed in the work of the Grimms. This essay examines the extent to which László Arany's editorial and text formation practices were determined by the textological practice developed by the Brothers Grimm, and ultimately the extent to which the stylistic ideals of fairy tales developed by the Grimms contributed to the development of the written, literary version of Hungarian folktales.

KEYWORDS

historical folktale research, Grimm tales, 19th century Hungarian folktale collection, László Arany's folktales, folklore textology, *Buchmärchen*, poetics of fairy tales

Kinder- und Hausmärchen (hereinafter: *KHM*) of the Brothers Grimm was first published more than two hundred years ago (Grimm 1812/1815; Rölleke – Marquardt 1986),

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followed by sixteen subsequent editions with varying content during the lifetime of the brothers. Not only did their text formation practice led to the creation of a collection of texts with a huge impact on European culture, by creating a written form of folktales, they also created a new genre, the *Buchmärchen* (Bausinger 1979). The Brothers Grimm launched a new era in folktale research, as the stories they published defined for a long time what the European intelligentsia considered a folktale and the manner it should be presented (Nagy 2015:15). Exactly fifty years after the publication of the first volume of *KHM,* in 1862, the first work of János Arany's son, László Arany, then 18 years old, was published under the title *Eredeti népmesék* (Authentic Folktales) (Arany, L. 1862, critical edition: Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018).[1] According to our current knowledge, the folktales and riddles in this collection – unlike the Grimm collection – actually come from oral tradition, but the textualization of the tales bears many similarities to the Grimm collection. Like in the case of *KHM*, the transcription of the folklore corpus was a family enterprise, in which the young László Arany and his sister, Julianna Arany (1841–1865), as well as their mother, Jánosné Arany Julianna Ercsey (1818–1885) participated in the second half of the 1850s.[2] According to Ágnes Kovács, some of the tales represent the folktale repertoire passed down through the maternal side of the family (Kovács 1982:500–502). In a letter to Mihály Tompa, a family friend, written on the occasion of the publication of *Eredeti népmesék,* László Arany indicated that he had collected the tales in Nagykőrös.[3] As head of the family, János Arany was most likely aware of the folklore collection being compiled, and it was likely through his intercession that Gusztáv Heckenast published *Eredeti népmesék* in 1862 (Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018:83–84). The collection published under László Arany's name has become one of the most influential volumes of fairy tales in Hungarian culture. The tales published in this collection, which came from oral tradition but have undergone textual modifications in the editing process, have been canonized in the last nearly 160 years as classic Hungarian folktales, both in terms of their plot and their narrative style (Fig. 1).

This essay presents the text formation of László Arany's collection of tales in the context of the history of the development of the European folktale, and in relation to the collection of the Brothers Grimm. I hypothesize that *KHM* profoundly influenced László Arany's tales. To him, the Grimm tales represented the model to be emulated in terms of compiling the collection, editing the tales, and the textological practices implemented in their transmission. The confirmation and clarification of this hypothesis may be significant in Hungarian folkloristics because, from the second half of the 19th century, Hungarian folktales passed down in oral tradition have been greatly influenced by the tales published in *Eredeti népmesék* through schoolbooks and children's storybooks (Kovács 1969; Domokos 2018a, 2018b). The

[1]János Arany (1817–1882), the greatest figure in Hungarian literature and prime representative of literary folklorism, played a fundamental role in the formation of popular national culture in the 19th century. László Arany (1844–1898), poet, translator, essayist; in the middle of the century, he was also involved in collecting and publishing works of folklore.

[2]For more details, see Judit Gulyás' study in this issue.

[3]László Arany's letter to Mihály Tompa, Pest, 18 July 1862 (Tompa 1964:378). Nagykőrös (Pest county) is approx. 80 km from Budapest. This potential collection site is supported by the fact that at the time of the presumed creation of the manuscripts, it was the family's place of residence, as János Arany was a literature teacher at the Nagykőrös Reformed Grammar School from 1851 to 1860.

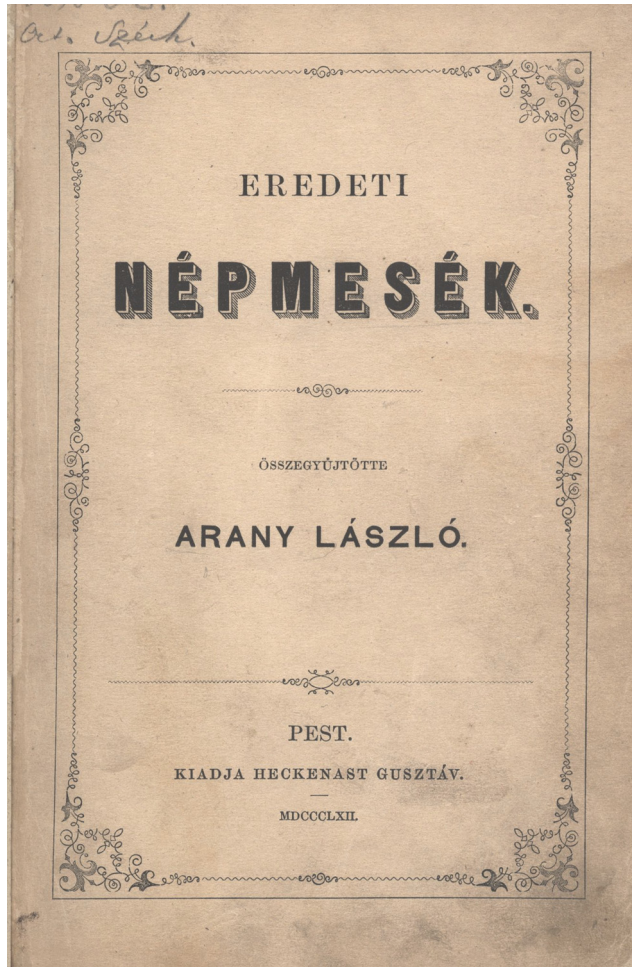

Fig. 1. László Arany: *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales] (1862), cover image

popularity of László Arany's collection of tales not only ensured the diffusion and variant formation of the plots of the published tales, but also largely defined the narrative style that became entrenched in the public consciousness as the standard narrative style of Hungarian folktales (Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018:10), the development of which, I hypothesize, was greatly influenced by the Grimm tales as well. In order to outline the Grimm effect, my essay first provides insight into the scientific and popular Hungarian reception of the Brothers Grimm and their tales, then presents László Arany's reflections on the Grimms' collection of tales, and finally compares László Arany's text formation practice with the editorial practices that Wilhelm Grimm implemented in *KHM*. My aim is to identify and elaborate the aspects that led László Arany to consider the Grimm tales as a model to emulate when editing and presenting his own collection of tales.

THE HUNGARIAN SCIENTIFIC RECEPTION OF THE WORK OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM

In the 19th century, the work of the Brothers Grimm inspired folklore collections in several European nations and *KHM* became a model for national folktale collections and publications. The history of Hungarian folkloristics is no exception, and the history of folktale research in particular has been inseparably intertwined with the name of the Brothers Grimm (Ortutay 1963). In the preface to the first Hungarian folk and fairy tale collection, *Mährchen der Magyaren*, published in Vienna in 1822 in German, reflecting on the difficulties of collecting folklore, the collector-editor Georg von Gaal alluded to the idealized informant of the Brothers Grimm when he wrote that he could never find a narrator as excellent as Frau Viehmann[4] had been to the Brothers Grimm (Gaal 1822:IV). Starting in the early 19th century, numerous folklore collectors (e.g., János Kriza, János Erdélyi, Arnold Ipolyi) have set themselves the goal of exploring folklore and presenting it as a national heritage, an aspiration that suggests an underlying influence of the Grimm concept (cf. Jacob Grimm: *Circular wegen Aufsammlung* der *Volkspoesie* 1815, facsimile edition: Grimm, J. 1968). The Hungarian scientific reception of the Brothers Grimm gained real momentum in the 1830s with the publication of *Deutsche Mythologie* (*Teutonic Mythology*) (Grimm, J. 1835). In 1837, Lőrinc Tóth determined that the manifestations of folklore should be considered a viable resource in the advancement of Hungarian-language literary folklorism, and he directed the Hungarian public's attention to the importance of poetic narratives inspired by folk beliefs, citing the Grimms as a benchmark (Tóth 1837:725). In an article published in 1840 under the title *Népmondák* (Folk Legends), Ferenc Pulszky described folk belief, folk customs, and folk poetry as vestiges of a pre-Christian religion. He saw folk traditions as historical records indicating the religion of ancient times and considered the Grimm model an example to be followed in collecting and adapting these traditions (Pulszky 1840:164). Arnold Ipolyi adopted the same view, and his work was also greatly influenced by Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie* and his concept of Märchen. In the second half of the 1840s, Ipolyi, a young priest at the time, established an extensive network of collectors with the help of his fellow priests, and they collected folklore data from various parts of Hungary with the goal of reconstructing the ancient Hungarian religion.[5] Besides prose narrative genres, folk beliefs, folk customs, and folk games did not escape his notice either, all of which he incorporated into his work called *Magyar mythologia* (Hungarian Mythology) (Ipolyi 1854).[6] Ipolyi was also a prolific critic in the early days of folktale research, contributing to the popularization of the folktale research of the Brothers Grimm in Hungary

[4]Dorothea Viehmann (1755–1815), who lived in a village called Niederzwehrn near Kassel, was the only storyteller the Brothers Grimm identifed by name in their published collection. She became an iconic figure, her portrait adorning the cover of the *KHM* volumes from the second edition onward. Thanks to the myth formation not independent of the Grimms, Frau Viehmann became a symbol of German (Hessian) and folk (peasant) storytelling, even though the woman herself – who had French ancestry on her paternal side – was not of the farming peasant class, given that her family were innkeepers and her husband a tailor. For more information on Dorothea Viehmann, see: Lauer 1998 and Erhardt 2012.

[5]A nearly thousand-page-long manuscript folklore collection from all over Hungary, particularly representative of the northern Palóc of the Csallóköz region and the vicinity of Szeged, was exceptional at the time (Ipolyi 2006).

[6]In his book, Ipolyi interprets fairy tales and legends as fragments of old, lost myths, the scientific relevance of which was introduced by the Grimms (Ipolyi 1854:VII).

(Ipolyi 1855, 1858). In 1847, the literary criticism weekly *Magyar Szépirodalmi Szemle* (Hungarian Literary Review) published a writing on the German translation of Giambattista Basile's *Pentamerone,* a collection of fairy tales from Naples. The unknown reviewer provided excerpts from Jacob Grimm's introduction to the translation, referring to Jacob as "the foremost authority on medieval fairy tales and belief legends" (NN 1847:47–48). Imre Henszlmann, the author of the first Hungarian study on folktale theory, routinely and methodically alluded to the tales of *KHM* when talking about Hungarian folktales, calling the Brothers Grimm themselves "the main heroes of fairy tales" (Henszlmann 1847:81). Jacob Grimm's Hungarian contemporaries welcomed his work in historical linguistics above all, in recognition of which he was elected an external, corresponding member of the Department of Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1858 (Fekete 1975:347). The linguist Szende Riedl was a great admirer and follower of Jacob Grimm, who, following the example of *Deutsche Grammatik* (Grimm, J. 1822), published a German-language monograph on Hungarian grammar called *Magyarische Grammatik* (Riedl 1858). From 1865, János Arany held the position of secretary (subsequently called secretary general) of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which was the third most important position within the academy. In this capacity, he performed important scientific management tasks for nearly a decade and a half. Among other things, he was responsible for organizing commemorative events for deceased members of the academy. Jacob Grimm died in Berlin on September 20, 1863. In November 1872, János Arany reminded the Department of Linguistics that they had failed to give a eulogy for the deceased member (Arany, J. 1964:468. Ultimately it was Szende Riedl who stepped up to the task: Riedl 1873). This, however, was not the only indication that János Arany held the work of the Brothers Grimm in high esteem. In his review of John Francis Campbell's collection of Scottish folktales called *Popular Tales of the West Highlands,* based on William Stigant's English-language review of the same, Arany set forth that he considered the preservation of folk traditions a matter of urgency, and in this context he highlighted the merits of the Grimms as follows: "Popular fairy tales and bedtime stories were slow to attract attention; it is the Brothers Grimm in particular that deserve credit for having acknowledged their significance and for elevating their study to a science."[7]

THE POPULAR RECEPTION OF THE WORK OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM IN HUNGARY

The above general overview makes it clear that the rise of European fairy tale research and the introduction of fairy tales as a subject of scientific study were clearly associated in contemporary Hungarian reception with the Brothers Grimm. At the same time, the general public had access to more and more translations/adaptations of Grimm fairy tales in Hungarian, published in various collections, standalone Grimm translations, textbooks, and chapbooks. Certain fairy tales, often not even associated with the Grimms, became important elements of Hungarian culture. The Hungarian literary reception of the brothers' tales began in the 1820s. In a German-language fairy tale adaptation compiled from several folktales and intended to be representative of Hungarian prose narratives (*Die Brüder,* Mailáth 1825:157–177), János Mailáth added one

[7]Arany, J. 1968b:66. For more details on the English and Hungarian review, see Gulyás 2016.

of the most well-known Grimm fairy tales, *Snow White,* as a distinct subplot, calling it *Die Geschichte vom Schneemädchen* and presenting the entire tale enclosed in quotation marks. Mailáth's tale was not a literal translation; he adapted the Grimm tale into a literary tale inspired by Hungarian folktales, somewhat simplifying and shortening the original plot. Thus, the Hungarian reception of the brothers' tales began in the first third of the 19th century with an adaptation compiled from various folktales (Domokos 2019a). The first well-known Hungarian translator of Grimm tales was Ignác Karády (? –1858), a practicing educator and pedagogue, who in the 1840s published a book called *Regék* (Tales), containing fairy tale adaptations based on German collections but no indication of sources. In addition to the tales of Ludwig Bechstein and Musäus, Karády also included several translations of Grimm tales based on one of the complete editions. According to the preface, the editor's objective was to provide a book for children and adolescents that was entertaining and edifying at the same time (Karády 1847:III–IV). The first collection of fairy tales in Hungarian under the Grimm name was published by István Nagy in two volumes in 1860 and 1861, called *Gyermek s házi regék* (Children's and Household Tales) (Grimm 1861).[8] Nagy's publication included translations of fifty fairy tales, which he based on one of the so-called "small editions" of the Brothers Grimm, published ten times between 1825 and 1858 (Domokos 2020a). Nagy's translation was not so much the beginning, rather the culmination of a decades-long intermediary process, as numerous translations of Grimm tales had been published before, both dispersed and arranged into books, typically without any indication of the authors and often not even the translators.[9] Thanks to the many German and Hungarian publications of Grimm tales in circulation, by the middle of the 19th century, the Grimm tales were no longer limited to literary and scientific circles. Fun fact regarding the reception of the Brothers Grimm in Hungary: they were so popular in the 1850s that the general public was interested in any and all information about them personally. *Vasárnapi Ujság* (Sunday Post) was the best-known illustrated non-fiction periodical in Hungary in the second half of the 19th century, published weekly from 1854 to 1921. On January 16, 1859, this paper with a wide reach published a short story about Jacob Grimm having recently been visited by a little girl in his apartment in Berlin. According to the anecdote, the apropos of this visit was the fairy tale about the clever tailor (*Vom klugen Schneiderlein*, KHM 114). In the closing of the tale, the following sentence appears after the marriage scene of the tailor and the princess: "Whoever doubts this, shall pay me a thaler" (Grimm 1980 II:149). According to the report of the incident, the eight-year-old girl did not believe the story, so she heeded the call in the closing of the tale and went to tell the brothers, "(. . .) I do not believe this story because a tailor could never marry a princess. I can't pay you a thaler all at once, but for now, here's a penny; I will pay the rest in installments" (NN 1859:35).[10]

[8]The most prominent international annotation of Grimm tales lists only eight Hungarian Grimm translators, identifying by name only three from the 19th century, the first of whom is István Nagy (Bolte – Polívka 1930 IV:479).

[9]For details, see: Domokos 2019b. For a standalone source edition of Hungarian Grimm translations in 19th-century chapbooks, see Domokos 2020b.

[10]This sweet anecdote is an internationally acknowledged element of the history of the Grimm cult; other versions also include the date of the visit: 4 July 1858 (Bolte – Polívka 1930:456). The story was also mentioned in one of Wilhelm Grimm's letters to his girlfriend, dated 2 March 1859 in Berlin. The story appeared in a little-known issue of the *Kölnische Zeitung*, which may have served as a source for the *Vasárnapi Ujság* (Reifferscheid hrsg. 1878:189–190, 253).

LÁSZLÓ ARANY'S REFLECTIONS ON THE FAIRY TALE COLLECTION OF THE BROTHERS GRIMM

László Arany provided many indications of his thorough knowledge of the fairy tale literature of his time. In his fairy tale-related writings, he not only cited materials from Hungarian folklore collections, but also regularly alluded to foreign fairy tale collections and the theoretical considerations based on them.[11] László Arany made use of, among others, Arthur and Albert Schott's Romanian tales collected in Hungary (1845), Josef Haltrich's collection of Saxon folktales from Transylvania (1856), Friedrich Müller's collection of Transylvanian legends (1857), Johann Georg von Hahn's collection of Greek and Albanian folktales (1864), and Joseph Wenzig's collection of Czech and Slovak tales (1866). In his writings on folkloristics, he relied heavily on German collections and literature, citing the work of Ludwig Bechstein, Felix Liebrecht, publisher of the tales of Giambattista Basile in German Theodor Benfey, as well as Reinhold Köhler, but above all, most frequently and most consistently, the Brothers Grimm. László Arany, like his predecessors – and his father, no less – expressly linked the starting point of the scientific study of fairy tales with the Brothers Grimm (Arany, L. 1867:47), and in a letter written in 1878, he also stated that when it comes to folktales, the Grimm tales represent the ideal (László Arany's letter to Lajos Tolnai, Budapest, 4 April 1878, Arany, L. 1960:490). In the spring of 1867, László Arany gave an inaugural lecture on Hungarian folktales at the Kisfaludy Society, a literary society. The text of his lecture was also published in *Budapesti Szemle* (Budapest Review), wherein László Arany undertook the review and systematization by genre of all Hungarian folktales published to date (Arany, L. 1867). Although he focused on Hungarian folktales, in presenting parallels in tale type and motif, László Arany also took into consideration the foreign variants he was aware of. In his comparative study, his main reference was the seventh and latest major edition of the Grimms' collection of fairy tales, which has since become the standard (1857). In all Hungarian fairy tales he reviewed, Arany sought to establish and document the corresponding Grimm type parallels (he made no such gestures for the other foreign collections he referenced), thanks to which this specific essay of his contains more than thirty references to *KHM*. In most cases, Arany referenced specific Grimm tales, but he also often referred to the reference data in the Grimm annotations (Grimm 1856).[12] László Arany made use of the rich material of the Grimm fairy tale collection not only in his above-mentioned essay, but also as the editor of an anthology of Hungarian folk literature. The most significant series of anthologies of Hungarian folk literature of the 19th century was the *Magyar népköltési gyűjtemény* (Collection of Hungarian Folk Poetry), launched in 1872 by the Kisfaludy Society following extensive preliminary work. Pál Gyulai was invited to edit the poetry material of the volume featuring a mixture of genres, while László Arany was asked to edit the prose material.[13] László Arany

[11]For the most recent survey of László Arany's interpretation of fairy tales, see Gulyás 2018.

[12]In his study of fairy tales, László Arany referenced directly the following Grimm tales (the tales are listed based on their standardized serial numbers): KHM 1, 4, 7, 10, 11, 20, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 36, 39, 41, 45, 50, 53, 72, 110.

[13]In the notes to the 1872 volume, László Arany referenced other tales from the Grimm collection in addition to those mentioned above: KHM 17, 21, 35, 44, 62, 73, 74, 75, 81, 94, 97, 112, 136, 148, 183, 189. For the history of the volume, see Domokos 2015:265–343.

made comparative notes on the collection's tales and legends. This practice, adopted from the Grimms, later became a consistent practice in Hungarian folkloristics, a core methodological principle in the transmission of tales. With regard to a humorous tale from Torockó, László Arany included an excerpt from the Grimm tale of the same type in German (*Der gescheite Hans,* KHM 32) to demonstrate that the Hungarian version is not a translation of the Grimm tale (Arany, L. 1872:599–600).

In summary, to László Arany, *KHM* was not just a European folktale collection; he was well acquainted with it and regularly referenced it in his theoretical works, and it was ultimately the main reference point for collecting, publishing, and studying fairy tales.

CHILDREN'S TALES: GENRE INNOVATION IN EREDETI NÉPMESÉK

In the following, I argue that in compiling and editing *Eredeti népmesék,* the collection of fairy tales published in 1862, László Arany considered the collection of the Brothers Grimm a benchmark not only in terms of collecting the documents of the oral narrative tradition but also in *selecting* and *transmitting* the tales, thus becoming a model in terms of both genre and style. László Arany consciously strived for the folklore collections that he edited from his own (Arany, L. 1862) and from others' collections (Arany – Gyulai eds. 1872) to provide a diverse picture of Hungarian folktales in terms of genre and language (Arany, L. 1872:595–596). *Eredeti népmesék* contained 36 tales and 54 riddles, as well as solutions to the riddles. The genre distribution of the tales is as follows: 16 fairy tales (tales of magic), 8 formula tales, 5 animal tales, 2 novella tales, 3 humorous tales, and two other non-typologized closing formulas. If we look at the genre distribution of other Hungarian fairy tale collections published in this period, we find that the genre diversity of László Arany's folktales was truly novel compared to the publishing practice of the period, as fairy tales were clearly over-represented in previous collections.[14] Arany's quest to present the diversity of folktale genres has also caught the attention of his contemporaries. As Pál Gyulai emphasized in his review of the volume, Arany's collection was novel in its presentation of formula and animal tales, a genre of children's tales generally overlooked by previous collectors but prioritized by the Brothers Grimm (Gyulai 1862:389).

In László Arany's collection of tales, less than half of the folktales (about 44%) represent the previously almost exclusive genre of fairy tales (Sárkány 1971:162), while texts that were typically meant for children – that is, short, rhythmic prose formula and animal tales featuring animals and simpler ordinary objects – were represented in a higher proportion than in any previous collection. In László Arany's fairy tale classification system, these simple, short tales meant for children occupy a special place, which he himself called *children's tales.* László Arany defined this group of fairy tales as naive and animated, simple narratives without mythological and didactic content, suitable for grabbing children's attention: "The German collection of the Grimms is particularly rich in such playful naivete. Our Hungarian collectors seem to have paid little attention to these (. . .)" (Arany, L.

[14]Nearly 90% of Georg von Gaal's three-volume collection of tales (Gaal 1857–1860) and nearly 82% of János Erdélyi's collections (Erdélyi 1846–1848, 1855) are tales of magic (Sárkány 1971:162).

1867:219). László Arany stated that ten of the folktales in his own collection belong to this category.[15] To illustrate this, in his essay he briefly recounted two of the children's tales of *Eredeti népmesék*, both of which he considered noteworthy in terms of their form and rhythm as well (Arany, L. 1867:219–222; Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018:430–433, 464–467). With regard to the rhythm of these tales, Arany specifically pointed out that national poetry could very well find its source material in folk prose, yet these tales were typically utilized not as a resource for fiction but as school and children's reading material. Interesting data concerning the use of László Arany's shorter animal tales can be found in the correspondence of János Kriza, a Unitarian priest who also collected folk poetry. As Kriza related it, his six-year-old daughter, Lenka (1856–1890), learned to read with the help of the tales in this volume.[16] László Arany's shorter tales for children were not only suitable for pedagogical use in terms of genre but, in the words of Pál Gyulai, as "the best narrated Hungarian folktales" (Arany, L. 1901a:5), they also represented an excellent linguistic sample of national literature for textbook writers; consequently, many of László Arany's folktales became a permanent part of the reading material of Hungarian school books from the middle of the 19th century to the present day.[17] In his essay, László Arany highlighted several Grimm tales in order to illustrate possible type parallels found in his own tales. *A farkas-tanya/The Wolves' House* is about wandering animals fleeing their homes and finding a house where they come into conflict with wolves. There are three Grimm tales related to this story: KHM 10, *Das Lumpengesindel*, KHM 27, *Die Bremer Stadtmusikanten,* and KHM 41, *Herr Korbes* (Arany, L. 1867:220). With regard to the story of *A kóró és a kis madár/The Weed and the Little Bird*, Arany noted the Grimm tale known as KHM 30 (*Läuschen und Flöhchen*) as a narrative related to his tale in terms of structure and mood. One novelty of László Arany's collection was the diversity of genres, which, as we have seen, was realized mainly by including simpler fairy tale genres (formula and animal tales) meant for children. The earlier Hungarian-language folktale collections could not serve as precedent for Arany in this respect, but the Grimm collection offered many examples of such fairy tales. Ultimately, the *KHM* material had certainly guided László Arany in the development of the genre structure of *Eredeti népmesék*. It is not known whether such influence can be assumed for specific types of tales as well, but in any case, it should be noted that nearly two-thirds (20 tales) of the Arany tales published in 1862 represent a type that can also be found in the collection of the Brothers Grimm (see Appendix for summary table).

[15]Based on this definition, László Arany may have considered the following tales published in *Eredeti népmesék* to be children's tales: *The Piglet and the Wolves* (ATU 121), *The Cat and the Mouse* (ATU 2034), *The Wolves' House* (ATU 210), *The Pig Bladder, the Straw, and the Ember* (ATU 295), *The Little Haggis* (ATU 2028), *Farkas-barkas* (ATU 20C + 20A), *The Little Rooster and the Little Hen* (ATU 2021), *The Weed and the Little Bird* (ATU 2034A*), *Iczinke-piczinke* (ATU 2016), *Why is the Pig Angry at the Dog, the Dog at the Cat, the Cat at the Mouse?* (ATU 200) (Arany, L. 1867:219).

[16]See two letters of János Kriza to Pál Gyulai: Cluj-Napoca, 29 October 1862, and Cluj-Napoca, 19 November 1862 (Szakál 2012:131, 122).

[17]For details, see: Domokos 2018b:647. The Grimm tales have similarly been incorporated into the repertoire of German-language textbooks, cf. Tomkowiak 1993.

GRASS AND GEMSTONE: THE NARRATIVE STYLE OF LÁSZLÓ ARANY'S FAIRY TALES (SIMPLE, VERNACULAR, PICTORIAL)

László Arany's *Eredeti népmesék* has been given a special place in Hungarian folkloristics practically since its publication, due to not only its genre diversity but also the performance and linguistic style of the individual tales. According to his contemporaries, László Arany got the folk storytelling voice just right (Gyulai 1862; Katona 1894). Arany's tales started getting re-issued as early as the second half of the 19th century, almost immediately after their first publication, in various types of print products. The tales continued getting re-issued in the 20th century at an even higher rate, in compilations and adaptations geared toward children, which contributed to the canonization of the narrative tone of László Arany's fairy tales as *the* narrative style of Hungarian folktales.[18] Below, I would like to identify some of the elements of this narrative style, especially ones whose precedence or parallels can also be discovered in the Grimm tales. The tales presented in *KHM* exist in numerous manuscript and published versions (Rölleke ed. 1975). There is only one authorized version of László Arany's tales, the volume published in 1862, and the collection of the family's manuscript tales which provided the basis for these tales are kept in the Department of Manuscripts of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Budapest). The manuscript tales of the Arany family were discovered in the cellar of the Academy's main building in Pest after the Second World War, and only in the first half of the 1960s has it been confirmed that they were genetically related to the texts of *Eredeti népmesék*. However, none of the extant manuscripts are completely identical to the published tales. The manuscript texts have been transcribed by several different individuals, most of them written down between 1850 and 1862 by Jánosné Arany Julianna Ercsey, Julianna Arany, and László Arany.[19] The manuscripts represent an earlier textual state compared to the published texts, but the manuscripts themselves embody the different phases of story formation, as most texts bear traces of subsequent corrections by a hand other than the transcriber's, in addition to the autograph corrections added at the time of recording. A philological comparison of the manuscripts and the published texts reveal that László Arany used his mother's and sister's and his own earlier (childhood) tale transcriptions in preparing the volume's tales, but modified them significantly, practically rewriting them stylistically line by line, episode by episode. In the synoptic (genetic) critical edition of the published text versions and the manuscripts they are based on, the different text versions are displayed side by side (Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018). The parallel reading of these texts enables us to observe the way in which László Arany, relying on the manuscripts, formed the texts of his tales in a distinct fairy tale style. By comparing the manuscript and the published texts, I aim to determine the text formation practices that László Arany as collector-author-editor applied to the manuscript folktales that were originally derived from oral tradition and which ultimately resulted in the classic collection of fairy tales associated with his name. In his study on the classification of Hungarian tales, László Arany quoted Wilhelm Grimm's famous gemstone analogy. In Wilhelm's concept, fairy tales have a kind of

[18]Between 1901 and 2016, nearly seventy different volumes of fairy tales had been published under the name of László Arany, not counting reissued and untitled tales. For a detailed bibliography of these, see: Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018:691–694.

[19]For more details on the manuscripts' origins and their transcribers, see Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018:27–31, 41–46.

ancient, cult content core, which he likened to gems scattered among the grass and flowers, and which he believes must be discovered if fairy tales are to be suitable for transmitting knowledge about the past. Although László Arany did not dispute the validity of this view, he considered folktales valuable not only in terms of their substance, or from the historical perspective as remnants of a hypothetical ancient cult, but also from a formal, aesthetic perspective, considering the "unassuming grass" as a folktale character a noteworthy phenomenon as well (ARANY, L. 1867:51). I find László Arany's grass analogy to be particularly significant because it draws attention to the form of folktales, and to the narrative style that is the main characteristic of the folktales published by László Arany. In his notes to the folktales and legends published in 1872 in *Elegyes gyűjtések* (Miscellaneous Collections), László Arany also states that the value of folktales is derived either from their hypothetical mythological content or from the aesthetic value of the language of fairy tales, the latter being the main aspect of his selection (ARANY, L. 1872:595). Thus, to Arany, the "unassuming grass" hiding the "gems," i.e., the language of folktales, clearly represented a value. Curiously, László Arany's thoughts on the formation of fairy tales also found their way into his legal writings. As a trained lawyer (he studied law at the University of Budapest in the 1860s), László Arany contributed to the development of the first Hungarian Copyright Act (Act XVI of 1884). He drafted the text of the act and the accompanying commentary in 1876 at the request of the Academy (ARANY, L. 1901b). This draft illustrates the legal awareness of the folklore collector, for in it he argues that the editorial practices involved in publishing a collection of folklore texts represent a kind of creative work that legitimately raises the issue of copyright. Based on Arany's legal argument, collectors of folktales can claim a kind of special property right to the style of the texts of fairy tales they publish.[20] In this light, it is understandable why László Arany took such a special care to develop the narrative style of the tales he published. The poetics of the Grimm tales indisputably influenced the formation of this fairy tale style, but no matter how prominent a role the Grimms' collection of tales played in László Arany's conception and philology of folktales, his concepts are not exactly the same as those of the Brothers Grimm. László Arany's interest in fairy tales was much more aesthetic than historical in nature. The collection of tales compiled by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm sought to present German, folk, and oral texts; in fact, they wrote and edited their tome using various written sources of older eras and oral narratives representing different textual traditions.[21] The brothers did not differentiate substantially between their written and oral sources, but as far as we know, Arany did not use written sources in drafting his folktales (with the exception of the tale manuscripts recorded by his family), and we also understand that, unlike the Brothers Grimm, he did not approach the tale plot as a creator. It was Wilhelm Grimm that played a major role in shaping the style of the Grimm tales. As a result of decades of editorial work, he honed the texts in *KHM* from edition to edition, until finally developing the animated, coherent, and dramatic narratives that resonated with the literary public and could also be used for pedagogical purposes. The publication history of the Grimm tales shows that throughout the decades-long editing process, the texts became longer and more elaborate, the

[20] ARANY, L. 1901b:139. For more details on László Arany's concept of copyright, see DOMOKOS 2015:362–369.

[21] Among the narratives transcribed from orality, texts that came from literate, young, middle-class informants are dominant; it was primarily the narrative traditions of relocated, wealthy, French Huguenot families that had been recorded.

motivations of the characters becoming more and more pronounced, while the structure and wording remained simple and clear (Blamires 2003). Along these principles, and with the help of various linguistic interpolations, such as adding versified rhymes, closing formulas, typical vernacular expressions, proverbs, sayings, and other phrasemes, they created a distinct Grimmean fairy tale language that served as a model for László Arany. The main aspect for László Arany in the course of the collection and reproduction of tales was the creation of authentic folktale texts formulated along aesthetic criteria. However, according to the conception of the era, credibility lied not in his fidelity to an individual folktale performance, but rather in the representation of an imagined, ideal oral performance.[22] Prior to the advent of the technical conditions for sound recording, in transcribing folktales from an oral to a written medium, collectors inevitably reconstructed the tale type and style of each text. This reconstruction can be achieved with the help of linguistic and stylistic means, solely through the creation of literary texts. At the same time, László Arany's fairy tale textology was stricter than the practice enforced by the Grimms, at least as far as the plots and motifs of oral folktales were concerned. To the extent it can be determined based on the extant manuscripts, László Arany, unlike Wilhelm Grimm, did not drastically intervene in the plot of the tale, but at the same time he used similar stylistic tools as the Brothers Grimm in reconstructing the narrative of the folktale. Ultimately, by compiling his collection of folktales, László Arany sought to present folktales that represented orality, and to identify and highlight certain characteristic features of the folk storytelling style, which helped him develop his own style of fairy tale narration. János Arany is credited with one of the most important and most cited writings on the 19th-century theory of Hungarian folktale collection, which he wrote in reaction to László Merényi's fairy tale collection (Merényi 1861). In his critique of Merényi's book, János Arany defined the criteria of a good collector, whom he ultimately compared to a good storyteller (Arany, J. 1968a:329). In his critique, János Arany gave a clear mandate to the competent tale collector to formally (re)create the text of the folktale. In addition to reconstructing its content, the duty of a good collector is to create the text of an authentic folktale, for the sake of which he must correct individual mistakes and reformat the orally performed folktale's text in the style of more accomplished storytellers. The eminent folktale scholar Ágnes Kovács believed that László Arany was an extraordinarily gifted storyteller with significant storytelling experience (Kovács 1982:506). In her view, the integrity of the structure, the internal articulation, the proportion of dialogue and narrative parts, and the internal rhythm of the language in László Arany's tales are the main features that elevate his tales (along with Elek Benedek's tales) above other 19th-century collections of tales (Kovács 1961:437). Keeping in mind the principle formulated by his father, László Arany approached the linguistic formulation of his fairy tales as a creator, while in terms of tale plot, his practices were closer to the documentary efforts of tale collectors as we understand them today. In talking about János Arany's poem *Rózsa and Ibolya*, Judit Gulyás compared László Arany's folktale of the same tale type published in 1862, *Ráadó and Anyicska,* with its manuscript version written by Jánosné Arany Julianna Ercsey in the 1850s. Her main findings about the differences between the text versions also apply to László Arany's fairy tale formation in general, according to which the logic of the narrative in his tales is more refined and rational, using forward and backward

[22]In the overview of the history of textual folklore paradigms, Lauri Honko refers to this period as the *pre-textual* phase (Honko 2000:6–15).

references, striving to elaborate implied connections, thereby making the tale's plot more coherent and transparent (GULYÁS 2010:234). Based on a review of the manuscript and published texts of the entire corpus, it seems that a thoughtful tale composition and a clear structure are characteristic not only of the published texts but also of most of the manuscript transcripts of the tales. It is important to emphasize that, although the manuscripts represent an earlier textual phase compared to the published tales, they are by no means the same as the orally performed folktales. The manuscript transcripts of the tales are themselves well-edited, written oral texts, indicating that the transcribers deliberately sought to create literary texts meant for reading. This is also indicated, for example, by the practice of titling the manuscripts, as the transcribers systematically sought to ensure that all fairy tale texts had titles, although this gesture is foreign to orality when it comes to fairy tales (DOMOKOS – GULYÁS eds. 2018:34–35). Although in the course of his adaptation of the manuscript tales László Arany did not consider the internal structure of the transcribed tales to be completely untouchable, only a negligible part of his modifications affected the plot, for example when he deleted or repositioned an episode or motif that he deemed atypical or unnecessary, or added a detail relevant to the plot (KOVÁCS 1982:507; GULYÁS 2010:229). In editing his tome, László Arany's most common and most consistently implemented text formation practice was clearly stylistic in nature, aiming to develop a distinct style of fairy tale narration while keeping to the authentic and ideal tone of folktales. The wording of the published fairy tales is often simpler, clearer, more rational, and more precise than the manuscript versions they are based on, and in terms of their style, the published tales have also become much more polished artistically. László Arany omitted superfluous repetitions and irrelevant descriptions, but at the same time the texts of most published tales became longer than in the manuscript. He often added interpretative descriptions and explanations, regularly employed stylistic devices like hyperbole, exaggeration, and repetition, and systematically employed vernacular idioms that he considered typical. In their theoretical writings, János Arany and László Arany most often mobilized the semantic domain of *simplicity* to characterize the folk performance style they considered authentic.[23] László Arany considered the Grimms' collection of tales to be an exemplary implementation of the narrative style of fairy tales in this respect, too (Y. I. [ARANY, L.] 1864:210). In János Arany's view, the faithful, written version of a folktale employs linguistic elements capable of evoking the oral performance of the tale (ARANY, J. 1968a:329–330). To László Arany, the best way to produce a written narrative that is suitable for evoking the oral performance of a folktale was primarily through the imitation of spoken language and the use of vernacular. He believed that employing dialogue instead of indirect speech and using vernacular idioms and phrases were among the characteristic features of simple folk performance that were easiest to grasp linguistically. Through his diverse practices, he was able to create a kind of archaic and seemingly vernacular atmosphere in his tales yet avoiding the stylistic flaws of monotony or overt vernacularization, which both he and his father disapproved of (ARANY, J. 1968a:330; Y. I. [ARANY, L.] 1864:210).

For the most part, as compared to the original wording in the manuscript, László Arany replaced words and expressions in *Eredeti népmesék* he deemed foreign with ones that sounded more Hungarian, and expressions he found too colloquial were often replaced by more

[23]See in particular the Arany critiques of the two László Merényi volumes of tales: ARANY, J. 1968a and Y. I. [ARANY, L.] 1864.

vernacular ones, sometimes deliberately modifying the underlying text so that by evoking the more typical material and customary elements of folk culture, the fairy tale would become better suited for depicting the particular emotional and mental state of the folk (*Volksgeist/folk spirit*). The same practice can be observed in the editing process of the Grimm tales, too, wherein the fairy tales represent the typical toolkit of folk culture or the more typical elements of German folklore.[24] László Arany often used vernacular names for the characters in his tales, a practice that was intended to evoke the idealized peasant environment. Giving more vernacular names to fairy tale characters was also a common practice in the collection of the Brothers Grimm. It is common knowledge about the tale of the frog king (*Der Froschkönig oder der eiserne Heinrich,* KHM 1) that the name of the royal servant was borrowed from Hartmann von Aue's 13th-century poem (*Der Arme Heinrich*), precisely because it sounded vernacular (Rölleke ed. 1985:866). In László Arany's tale *Dongó and Mohácsi,* the servant girl who was unnamed in the manuscript version was called *Marcsa* (the vernacular form of Mary) in the published version; likewise, in the tale *The Fawn,* Arany chose to give the coachman a nickname when he named the protagonist of the tale *Pista* (a more direct and familiar form of Stephen). In *Jankó and the Three Accursed Princesses,* the protagonist's name in the manuscript was originally János (John), which Arany changed to the more vernacular-sounding *Jankó* (Johnny) in the published text (Domokos – Gulyás eds. 2018:402–423, 260–269, 318–331).

THE VOCABULARY AND PHRASEOLOGY OF LÁSZLÓ ARANY'S FAIRY TALES (OPENING AND CLOSING FORMULAS, IDIOMS AND PROVERBS)

To László Arany, the rhythm (Kovács 1974:126–135) and visual expression of the language of fairy tales were of paramount importance, which he effectively ensured through a broad variety and creative implementation of idioms and idiomatic phrasemes that often rhymed. Following the Grimm model, László Arany created his unique language of fairy tales through a rich set of phrasemes, the mobilization and consistent implementation of which made his fairy tale portrayals more elaborate and poetic than the ones in the manuscripts, and his depiction of emotions much more nuanced and expressive. László Arany often enhanced his tales with opening and closing formulas, proverbs, proverbial comparisons, and other idioms taken from phrasemes at various stages of entrenchment. This practice can be detected in almost every paragraph of all of his tales; these interpolated idiomatic expressions have no influence on the plot, yet they significantly modify the tales' style, making them more vernacular and graphic, animated, and easy-to-read. I believe that in addition to the clear, simple, and logical structure, it is through the insertion of these expressions that László Arany's tales became the standard for typical Hungarian folktale narration. László Arany systematically enriched his tales with these phraseme interpolations in the same way Wilhelm Grimm did with the texts in *KHM*.[25] One of the special features of the Grimms' tale editing practice was the addition of popular sayings and proverbs, which Wilhelm committed to in the sixth edition of *Kinder und- Hausmärchen* (1850)

[24]See, for example, KHM 59 (*Der Frieder und das Catherlieschen*) or KHM 61 (*Das Bürle*): Grimm 1980 1:304–311, 335–340.

[25]For the text formation practices of the Brothers Grimm, see, e.g., Lüthi 1968:49; Neumann 1993; Blamires 2003.

(GRIMM 1980:27). Proverbs systematically interpolated into Grimm tales have been noted by scholarship more than a hundred years ago as a peculiar feature of narrative style (TONNELAT 1912:150–152), and Lothar Bluhm and Heinz Rölleke have devoted an entire volume to presenting and documenting this practice of Wilhelm's (BLUHM – RÖLLEKE 1997). Sayings and proverbs, in contrast to other forms of linguistic manifestation, are quite formulaic, and due to their relatively fixed structure, they can be remembered easily and thus recalled easily. By comparing the various editions of *KHM* and distinguishing the original passages from the amendments and modifications, the Grimm-philology revealed the way in which the brothers incorporated into their tales typical vernacular expressions taken from orality and various literary sources. Nearly 600 such subsequently interpolated idiomatic linguistic data were registered in *KHM* (BLUHM – RÖLLEKE 1997:34). Wolfgang Mieder is of the opinion that Wilhelm Grimm considered proverbs to be a typical stylistic hallmark of folktales, so this programmatic editorial practice of his was intended to imitate the language of the common folk in order to evoke the peasant, rural world, the supposed setting of their tales (MIEDER 1991:116). The textual world of László Arany's fairy tales was formed very similarly to the style of the Grimm tales, his idioms and proverbial expressions being one of the most striking features of his fairy tale poetics. In order to identify the typical set of words and phrases in the language of László Arany's fairy tales, I compared the Arany family's manuscripts with the versions of fairy tales published in *Eredeti népmesék.* I was interested in the linguistic features that characterize the style of László Arany's fairy tales, which is why I compared the extant manuscripts line by line with the published versions formed/rewritten by László Arany. Based on the texts published in *Eredeti népmesék*, I created a glossary of nearly 450 terms, encompassing the typical phrasemes, proverbs, and idioms that represent linguistic features that are different from the manuscript texts and can be specifically attributed to Arany's editorial practice. I believe that these interpolations, suitable for evoking the living, spoken language, are a fundamental hallmark of the distinct language of László Arany's fairy tales. Due to space limitations, the complete list cannot be reproduced here; the selected examples are intended to illustrate a few of the characteristic practices of Arany's fairy tale textology.[26] All of the tales of *Eredeti népmesék* abound in idiomatic phrases that were added later and are not found in the manuscript texts. In his published tales, instead of dying, for example, he would use more euphemistic syntagmas, like *he is bargaining with otherworldly beings* and *one foot in the grave;* a protagonist is not simply beautiful, but *so beautiful that you'd have to look far and wide to find his/her match.* The stepdaughter is not just ugly, but *uglier than going backwards*. To describe happiness and elation, he uses the expression *he was in such a good mood that you could make him catch a bird.* Some of the idiomatic phrases are typically related to fairy tale genres, including primarily the opening and closing formulas, as well as the transitional formulas linking the different episodes, all of which received particular attention in László Arany's theoretical writings, too (YI [Arany, L.] 1864:210; ARANY, L. 1867:227). On the one hand, these opening and closing formulas allow the audience to enter and exit the world of the fairy tale; secondly, they determine the stylistic framework of the folktale; and thirdly, they define the relationship between the narrator and the narrated text, which is a kind of authorization gesture confirming the narrator's/storyteller's own authorship. László Arany often customized the opening and closing formulas while

[26]I detail László Arany's text formation practice and his proverb interpolations in particular in a separate essay.

composing his tales. By varying the formulas and the order in which they appeared in the volume, he apparently consciously sought to avoid making his fairy tales monotonous. When it comes to the opening formulas of the published Arany tales, László Arany changed three quarters of the original formulaic tale openings found in the manuscripts, thus ensuring that his tales would start in a variety of ways (with fifteen different opening formulas). It seems that in the case of fairy tale closings, Arany was less concerned with diversity, and therefore customized text formation is less characteristic here: in the case of more than half of the tales, he retained the original closing formulas found in the manuscripts, and most of the tales conclude with variations of the formula *and they lived happily ever after/they still live if they hadn't died,* or *if . . . had been . . ., my tale would have lasted longer, too.* Arany often coined new words in his tales by doubling or repeating words, for example, to emphasize the emotional state of the tale's characters or to illustrate the passage of time (e.g., *sírt-rítt/she wailed and wailed, addig-addig/as long as*, *vártak-vártak/they waited and waited*). László Arany's method involved unifying these forms of expression, and their consistent, repeated use was meant to reinforce and establish their fairy tale character. The stylistic tool of constructing words that create rhythm yet also help convey meaning was obviously not invented by László Arany; nonetheless, it is significant in terms of the poetics of tales that Arany consciously employed these in the composition of his tales in *Eredeti népmesék.* Special mention should be made of László Arany's set of proverbial expressions, as he apparently ascribed a prominent stylistic value to these linguistic elements. This is indicated by the fact that *Eredeti népmesék* abound in the use of proverbs even in places where the manuscripts do not. In the entire published text corpus, there are more than half a hundred sayings that were added subsequently, almost as many proverbial comparisons, and dozens of proper proverbs, all of which had to have been included in the published fairy tale texts as a result of Arany's text formation. Some of these are common proverbs (e.g., *nothing ventured nothing gained*; *one good turn deserves another*), others are less common (e.g., *if you swing an ax at something, you'd better keep moving it; he laid low like a fly after St. Michael's Day*). The number of examples for illustrating the assortment of words and phrases found in László Arany's fairy tales could be expanded endlessly, but perhaps this will suffice to demonstrate how the consistent inclusion of formulas, idioms, and proverbs made László Arany's fairy tales more poetic while remaining within the realm of simplicity and folkishness.

CONCLUSION

László Arany ascribed exceptional importance to the work of the Brothers Grimm in the field of collecting and publishing fairy tales, which he put forward in many of his theoretical writings, both as collector and editor. To him, *KHM* was not just one of the fairy tale collections in a series of similar 19th-century European publications but served as a reference point for tale collection and tale research, as well as a base model for fairy tale editing and publication. This essay demonstrates how the genre and stylistic standards of folktales developed by the Brothers Grimm influenced the editorial and text formation practices implemented in the collection called *Eredeti népmesék*, published in 1862 under the authorship of László Arany. Given that the narrative style of László Arany's folktales has become the definitive narrative voice of Hungarian folktales in the last century and a half, the narrative text formation practices of the Brothers Grimm also played a role, albeit indirectly, in the development of the written, literary form of Hungarian folktales.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This paper was supported by NKFIH in the framework of grants PD 124746, FK 132220 and the Academic Committee of the János Arany Memorial Year hosted by the Institute of Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. I would like to thank Katalin Vargha and Ildikó Landgraf for their helpful comments and suggestions.

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APPENDIX

Partial or complete type parallels of the Arany and Grimm tales.

Title of László Arany's tale	Page numbers of the published tale	Type number	Serial number and title of Grimm tale
A vak király [The blind king]	Arany L. 1862:1–29.	ATU 550	KHM 57 *Der goldene Vogel*
A boltos három lyánya [The shopkeeper's three daughters]	1862:30–36.	ATU 923	KHM 179 *Die Gänsehirtin am Brunnen*
Ráadó és Anyicska [Ráadó and Anyicska]	1862:41–82.	ATU 313	KHM 193 *Der Trommler*
Az aranyhajú herczegkisasszony [The golden haired princess]	1862:83–99.	AaTh 403A; ATU 403+404	KHM 135 *Die weiße und die schwarze Braut*
Az őzike [The fawn]	1862:100–110.	ATU 450	KHM 11 *Brüderchen und Schwesterchen,* KHM 141 *Das Lämmchen und Fischchen.*
A veres tehén [The ginger cow]	1862:111–127.	ATU 511+ATU 361*	KHM 130 *Einäuglein, Zweiäuglein und Dreiäuglein*

(continued)

Continued

Title of László Arany's tale	Page numbers of the published tale	Type number	Serial number and title of Grimm tale
Az ördög-szerető [The devil lover]	1862:153–162.	ATU 407	KHM 160 *Rätselmärchen*
Jankó és a három elátkozott királykisasszony [Johnny and the three accursed princesses]	1862:163–175.	ATU 400+ATU 518	KHM 193 *Der Trommler*
Az ördög és a két lyány [The devil and the two girls]	1862:176–186.	ATU 480D*	KHM 24 *Frau Holle*
Fehérlófia [Son of the white mare]	1862:202–215.	ATU 301	KHM 91 *Dat Erdmänneken*
Gagyi gazda [Master Gagyi]	1862:220–231.	ATU 560	KHM 104a *Die treuen Tiere*
Babszem Jankó [Johnny Bean]	1862:232–245.	ATU 700+ATU 650A	KHM 37 *Daumesdick*
Dongó meg Mohácsi [Dongó and Mohácsi]	1862:246–265.	ATU 1525E+ATU 1641+ ATU 1654	KHM 98 *Doktor Allwissend*
A szomoru királykisasszony [The sad princess]	1862:266–269.	ATU 571	KHM 64 *Die goldene Gans*
A farkas-tanya [The wolves' house]	1862:273–276.	ATU 210	KHM 41 *Herr Korbes*
Panczimanczi [Panczimanczi]	1862:277–284.	ATU 500+ATU 501	KHM 14 *Die drei Spinnerinnen* KHM 55 *Rumpelstilzchen*
A hólyag, szalmaszál és a tüzes üszök [The pig bladder, the straw, and the ember]	1862:285–286.	ATU 295	KHM 18 *Strohhalm, Kohle und Bohne*
A kakaska és a jérczike [Little rooster and little hen]	1862:295–298.	ATU 2021	KHM 80 *Von dem Tode des Hühnchens*
A két koszorú [The two wreaths]	1862:299–304.	ATU 883B+ATU 510B	KHM 65 *Allerleirauh*

(continued)

Continued

Title of László Arany's tale	Page numbers of the published tale	Type number	Serial number and title of Grimm tale
A kis ködmön [The little furcoat]	1862:308–313.	ATU 1450+ATU 1384 (ATU 1229*+ATU 1245+ATU 1284*)	KHM 34 *Die kluge Else*
Az özvegy ember és az özvegy asszony [The widower and the widow]	manuscript tale, Domokos – Gulyás 2018:482–490.	ATU 480	KHM 24 *Frau Holle*
Bolond Jankó [Foolish Johnny]	manuscript tale, Domokos – Gulyás 2018:492–498.	ATU 1696+ATU 1691+ATU 1653	KHM 59 Der Frieder und das Katherlieschen

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 79–95
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00017

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

Riddles in the Manuscript and Print Version of a 19th-Century Collection

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Received: October 5, 2021 • Accepted: November 2, 2021
Published online: February 3, 2022

ABSTRACT

Scholarly publication of folk riddles in Hungary started in the mid-19th century. Among the early sources was the first classic collection of Hungarian folktales, *Eredeti népmesék* [Authentic Folktales], compiled by László Arany, which includes a separate chapter comprising 54 *riddle tales.* Manuscripts related to this publication were found in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences among other collections from the 19th century and identified in the 1960s as having been recorded by members of the Arany family. The manuscripts contain all the riddles published by László Arany, along with 25 riddle texts that remained unpublished. Comparison of the two sources reveals the editing process: the selection and arrangement of the material, along with the text modifications applied by László Arany. The first part of this article consists of a few terminological notes on tales and riddle tales in 19th-century Hungary, followed by the description of the riddle material in the manuscripts associated with the Arany family. In the second part the author presents in more detail the editing process which shows a far higher degree of conscious editorial attention than other publications of folk riddles in the period.

KEYWORDS

riddle, riddle tale, Arany family, textology, text editing

László Arany (1844–1898) was only 18 when the anthology *Eredeti népmesék [Authentic Folktales]* (Arany L. 1862) was published under his name – a collection which contemporaries saw as "the best told Hungarian folktales" (Gyulai 1900:6) and which in Hungarian folkloristics is considered the first classic collection of folktales (Voigt 1998:237; Kósa 2001:65; Domokos – Gulyás 2018:10). 'László Arany's collection of folktales,' however, was not only László Arany's work and not only a collection of folktales, as *The Folktale Collection of the Arany Family,* the

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synoptic critical edition published in 2018 (Domokos – Gulyás 2018)[1] demonstrates. The manuscripts that had served as the basis of the critical edition may be traced back to at least three individuals, but there is also a fourth handwriting we need to reckon with whose source has remained unidentified to this day, but is other than Juliska Arany, Julianna Ercsey, or László Arany who have been identified as having noted down the tales.[2]

The volume is also more than a collection of just tales, since directly before the catch tales concluding the volume, it also includes a separate chapter comprising 54 *riddle tales* (Arany L. 1862:318–325, 328; Domokos – Gulyás 2018:503–537). These texts are not tales, but examples of another folklore genre which we refer to in today's terminology as folk riddles.

Thus, *Eredeti népmesék* is not only an important source for folktale research but also one of the early examples of folk riddle publications in Hungarian folkloristics. Scholarly publications in this field began in Hungary in 1856 on the pages of a linguistic journal, *Magyar Nyelvészet* (1856–1861), while there was only one anthology of folk literature before László Arany's volume in which riddles were published as part of a larger collection (see Merényi 1861/I:204–224). One respect in which Arany's collection is unique among the early sources is that the manuscripts on which the book was based have been preserved and are available for research.

In this article the author aims at revealing the editing process of the riddle chapter, which shows a far higher degree of conscious editorial attention than other publications of folk riddles in the period. First, the riddle material in the manuscripts associated with the Arany family is described. In the second part the editing process is presented in more detail, with regard to the selection and arrangement of the riddles as well as the text modifications applied by László Arany.

'MESE' [TALE] AND 'TALÁLÓS MESE' [RIDDLE TALE] IN THE 19TH CENTURY. A FEW NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS

Before going any further, it is necessary to consider, at least tangentially, what the term *találós mese* [riddle tale] meant in Hungary in the mid-19th century and how the genre it denoted was connected to tales. Research on the meaning of the Hungarian term *mese* [tale] has most recently been reviewed by Judit Gulyás (2008). Sources agree that one of the first meanings of the word must have been *riddle* or *enigma*, with data corroborating this claim from the 16th century onwards (Voigt 1980). It was used in this sense in Hungarian literacy up to as late as the 19th century (see Gulyás 2008:171–175, 198–202; Vargha 2011:97–98), but the extent of such usage decreased continually, and there are numerous data indicating that there was a need to make a distinction between the various meanings of the word *mese*. I will mention but two examples of this. An article published in the entertaining-didactical periodical *Hasznos*

[1]For more on the critical edition, see Judit Gulyás's paper in the present issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*.

[2]László Arany (1844–1898), lawyer, poet, literary translator, folktale scholar. His father, János Arany (1817–1882), is one of Hungary's greatest poets of the 19th century. His mother, Julianna Ercsey (1818–1885), and elder sister, Juliska Arany (1841–1865), played a significant part in recording the tale and riddle texts that served as a basis of *Eredeti népmesék*. On the members of the Arany family and their role in the emergence of the manuscript tale and riddle collection, see Judit Gulyás's paper in the present issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* (Gulyás 2021).

Mulatságok (1817–1840) in 1822 bears the title *Enigma, vagy is mese* [Enigma, in other words, tale] and lists altogether eight meanings of the term to clarify that the author is using it in this particular instance with the eighth meaning – enigma (Anon. 1822:145–147; for an analysis, see Gulyás 2008:172–176).

"But here we are not using the term Mese in any of the senses described so far, but mean by it what our forebears had meant under the term Enigma – a saying, pronouncement, or question with a hidden meaning whose sense, definition, or solution needs to be prized out or guessed; and in order to render such a solution all the more difficult, the matter is laid before us through its causes, traits, and conclusions, or is being likened to other, similar things in order to trick the mind, and the contradiction among these things is being placed in the foreground to allow the guesser finally to come upon the true likeness between them. To this end, words of a common meaning are mixed with words of a foreign meaning and the entire Tale is comprised into verses of some kind." (Anon. 1822:145–147).

As far as relevant lexicons and encyclopaedias are concerned, enigma or riddle also appears as one of but not the primary meaning of the word *mese*, and occasional reference is made to folk literature. Thus, Gergely Czuczor and János Fogarasi's thesaurus lists six meanings of the word *mese*, where the fifth reads as follows, "5) catchy or tricky questions concealed in mysterious images which the common people usually start with the phrase, *Mese mese, mi az?* [Riddle, riddle, what is it?] (. . .) They are also known as *találós mese* [riddle tale]; and a more recent term, *rejtély* [mystery]" (Czuczor – Fogarasi 1867:508–509).

During the 19th century, the term *találós mese* became increasingly widespread in referring to riddles, while the other meanings of *mese* (tale, and more specifically folktale) became consolidated. However, this term itself contains several shades of meaning and is also shifting in time. Its first documented occurrence is found in the periodical *Mindenes Gyűjtemény* (1789–1792) (*Mindenes Gyűjtemény,* I, 1789:31), where it was introduced as the Hungarian equivalent of the word *enigma* and was used to refer to riddles in verse or other literary form. Usage of the word in reference to texts of folk literature was first documented in 1847, in a report on a session of the literary association Kisfaludy Society, where János Erdélyi (1814–1868) had proposed that "not only legends should be collected but also riddles (riddle tales), proverbs, and similes that live on the lips of the people" (Anon. 1847:95). Over the 1850s, the expressions *néptalány* [folk riddle] and *találós mese* [riddle tale] both appear in reference to folk riddles, but from 1862 all the way until the 1920s, *találós mese* [riddle tale] is clearly the accepted term for naming the genre.[3]

RIDDLES IN THE MANUSCRIPTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ARANY FAMILY

A hard-cover volume of colligated manuscripts located in the Department of Manuscripts at the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest contain a total of 123 sheets of manuscript associated with the Arany family.[4] These are bound in the same volumes with other 19th century manuscripts of collections of folk literature connected with

[3]On terminological issues in the 19th century related to the genre of riddles in Hungary, see Vargha 2011:96–106.

[4]On the process of finding and identifying this manuscript corpus, see Domokos – Gulyás 2018:11–26; for exact data of the manuscripts, see ibid. pp. 26–27.

János Kriza (1811–1875) and the Kisfaludy Society.[5] The majority of the Arany material consists of tales recorded by several members of the Arany family, and only seven pages contain *riddle tales*. 75 of the 79 riddle tales are found continuously on six sheets, separately from the tale texts (MTA KIK Kt. Irod. 4-r. 409/I. 3r–8r). The title *Találós mesék* [Riddle tales] appears five times in the total body of manuscript pages, which partly indicates that the recorded texts were clearly classified as belonging to the same genre, and partly that the riddles were presumably noted down over a number of subsequent occasions. The sheets which were folded in half and used for recording them were later arranged into a 'booklet' (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:31–32), at least as indicated by page 1, which merely contains the title *Találós mesék*, underlined, with the back of the page left blank. The original order of the sheets has presumably differed from the present state.[6] This, however, is of little significance, as neither the present, nor the probably original sequence is identical to the order in which the texts were arranged for publication.

Three complete texts and one fragment were noted under the title *Találós mese* on a sheet located in a different part of the manuscript (MTA KIK Kt. Irod. 4-r. 409/II. 18v), in the second volume, on the back of the second page of a tale which came to be published in *Eredeti népmesék* under the title *A kis malacz és a farkasok* [*The piglet and the wolves* (ATU 121)] (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:342–345). This is also the only sheet in the manuscript that includes recordings of both genres, although nothing indicates that the tales and the riddles were recorded in one session. We also lack exact data evidencing the time or place of the texts' recording. Editors of the critical edition have ascertained that the records were probably made sometime between 1850 and 1861/1862 (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:41); as far as geographic location, the collection probably consisted of tales and riddles "learned in Nagyszalonta and Nagykőrös (or even Pest)" (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:45). Contrary to the folktales, all of the riddles included in *Eredeti népmesék* can be found in the manuscript records of the Arany family, which also includes 25 texts which do not appear in László Arany's collection.[7] When the manuscript was found, Györgyi Sáfrán was the first to identify – on the basis of the handwriting of the members of the Arany family – who had made the individual records. Her conclusions were ascertained by the editors of the critical edition, even though they were unable to involve professional graphologists in the editorial process, and so there remain a few textual records where the identity of the recorder is not entirely certain (see Domokos – Gulyás 2018:27–31).[8]

The currently held view is that the majority of the riddles (76 of the 79 texts) were noted down by János Arany's elder sister, Juliska Arany. None of the riddles seem to have been written

[5] *Kriza János gyűjteménye, Mesék, találós mesék, versek és népdalok, 19. század második fele* [János Kriza's Collection. Tales, Riddle Tales, Poems and Folk Songs, Second Half of the 19th Century] (MTA KIK Kt. Irod. 4-r. 409/I–VI.); *A Kisfaludy Társaság népmesegyűjteménye, 1840–1860-as évek* [The Folktale Collection of the Kisfaludy Society, 1840–1860s] (MTA KIK Kt. Ms 10.020/I–VIII.) (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:16).

[6] Based on the handwriting of the individual pages and the titles and drawings accompanying the riddle texts, I assume that the original arrangement of the four sheets folded in half was probably the following: the outside cover was probably the pair of pages later numbered 1 and 8. This in turn contained three further sheets folded in half, possibly already in the process of arrangement for publication, which were, according to the current page numbering, pairs 4–5; 3–6 and 2–7.

[7] The majority of the omitted texts have already been published in 1982 by Ágnes Kovács (1982:529–530); the entirety of the published and unpublished texts of the manuscript were first published by Katalin Vargha, in her own reading (Vargha 2012:259–279).

[8] In establishing the identity of the various persons who recorded the texts, I rely on the conclusions of the editors of the critical edition, which, naturally, also summarise prior scholarly findings on the subject.

down by their mother, Julianna Ercsey, unlike in the case of the folktales, and only two riddles may be considered as recorded by László Arany, neither of which have been published by him in print. The first scholar to engage with this manuscript material, Ágnes Kovács attributed the recording of one single riddle to László Arany (Kovács 1982:530) – the only one to be written in pencil, which reads as follows, „Szegény paraszt ember útón-utfélen elhajagálja a nagy urak m[eg?] zsebbe teszik. takony [?]" [Poor peasants scatter it freely along the road, while the grand lords keep it in their pocket (snot) [?]] (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:532 [75]).[9]

Another text shows similarities with László Arany's handwriting in young adulthood, which goes, "Míg él mindég áll, holta után szaladgál (ördög szek[. . .])" [While it's alive, it stands still, after it's dead, it runs around (tumbleweed] (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:530 [71/69B]). There is a third text that was also left in manuscript, but the identity of the author cannot be clearly determined based on the handwriting (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:520 [48]).

Another four riddles contain sections of text and longer corrections that were inserted later and show similarities with László Arany's handwriting (as a young adult), which is indicated in the following citation by underlining. In one case this concerns the text of the riddle, 'Piros mint a rózsa, kerek mint az alma, rétes réteges *de nem béles mint a rétes*, etem belőle de nem édes. (veres hagyma)' [Red like a rose, round like an apple, flaky layered *but not filled like a strudel*, when I eat it, it is not sweet (red onion)] (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:524 [55/47B]). In the case of the other three riddles, it is the solution that contains short texts that were probably inserted or added as corrections later (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:504 [5], 512 [23], 520 [49]).

There may well be several other corrections and additions that came from László Arany, but these are too short for us to ascertain their authorship based on the handwriting. In terms of content, however, the changes are of such a nature as to indicate that they are probably related to preparing the texts for publication. One example is the riddle „*Egy Két* garas *iczár* ára, még sem fér *a' egy* házba. (Gyertya ez is.)" [Only costs one two grosch kreuzer, still doesn't fit in the a house. (Also a candle.)] (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:518 [41]), where the modifications come from someone other than the original recorder, but the identity of this person cannot be ascertained based on the handwriting. At the same time, the text was published in *Eredeti népmesék* in the corrected version, which may suggest that the corrections came from the editor of the volume.[10]

FROM MANUSCRIPT TO COLLECTION – LÁSZLÓ ARANY'S ROLE IN PREPARING THE RIDDLE TALES FOR PUBLICATION

The editors of the synoptic critical edition emphasise that the different textual variants[11] made accessible in their edition "allow us to observe how the text of the tales is transformed in the

[9]Riddle texts are quoted in this paper in the form identical with that of the critical edition and source references also point to the page number in the critical edition. I include in brackets the numeral that refers to the position of the particular texts in the manuscript. On the textological principles informing the organisation of the critical edition, see Judit Gulyás's paper in the present issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*.

[10]„Két garajczár ára,/Még se fér egy házba." [Only costs two kreuzer, still doesn't fit in a house.] (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:519 [VIII]).

[11]In other words, "besides the autograph (tale) manuscripts of those recording the texts and the corrections made by these persons, the corrections of the editor who arranged them for publication, and, finally, the texts of the published collection" (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:11).

course of noting down and publication, what types of changes the editors perform in manuscript texts when they are transferred from use within the family to the wider readership" (Domokos – Gulyás 2018:11).[12]

Phases of text formation may be observed in the case of the riddles, and these are also well documented in the critical edition. As a part of preparing them for print, it was probably László Arany who selected the pieces deemed worth of publication and determined their sequence (see Vargha 2012:379–385). But what might have been the principles that László Arany followed when preparing the riddles for publication? We have no direct data to help us answer that question, as *Eredeti népmesék* contains no accompanying text, preface, or notes whatsoever. In contrast to folktales, László Arany makes no mention of the genre of riddle tales even in his later works.[13]

His inauguration address at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, titled *Magyar népmeséinkről* [On Our Hungarian Folktales], also clearly reveals that he did not consider riddle tales as a subgenre of tales. On this occasion Arany focused more on categorizing and characterizing Hungarian folktales (Arany L. 1867:200–228; for an analysis, see Gulyás 2018:420–440), defining three basic categories: symbolic tales, fables, and comic tales. Riddle tales, however, do not fit into any of these categories. Therefore we have only indirect sources to rely on. It is mostly based on some of the theoretical writings of the father, János Arany, that we can outline how his son may have seen the genre of the riddle tale and what kind of principles he may have followed in preparing *Eredeti népmesék* for publication. He may also have been influenced by text publications of the period, particularly László Merényi's collection of tales published a year earlier, which also contained a selection of riddles.[14]

The most important influence on László Arany's editorial concept, as regards riddles, is likely to have been his father's widely known review of László Merényi's collection of tales, in which Arany also addressed the *folk riddles* published by Merényi.[15] In this piece of criticism, which was later to become programmatic for Hungarian folkloristics, Arany expressed his views – argued meticulously and supported with numerous examples – on the best way to collect (and publish) folklore texts, including riddles, and what to focus on in the process. He placed the main emphasis on rhythm and retaining their rhythmical arrangement.

"On the lips of the people themselves, riddles rarely appear in a purely prose form. Occasionally they rhyme, but most often it is not so much the rhyme but *the rhythmical arrangement of words and sentences, their onomatopoeia, alliteration,* and other poetic devices that primitive

[12]On the way in which László Arany shaped the texts, and the process of textualization in the case of these tales, see Gulyás 2010:225–234, 2018:411; Domokos 2021.

[13]There is but one reference in the notes László Arany attached to the introduction to his father's manuscript legacy in the context of one of the wordplays János Arany was so fond of, in which László Arany mentions that in his youth his father had been fond of "playing around with jokes of this kind," and that in Nagykőrös, "in his early years as a schoolteacher, he and Ferencz Mentovich made a veritable contest of fabricating such rebuses," but records of these texts did not survive (Arany L. 1889, IX). For more on János Arany's rebuses and linguistic playfulness, see Voigt 2013:68–69; Szilágyi 2019:275–285.

[14]On the folktale collection of László Merényi (1837–1907), see Domokos 2015:192–220.

[15]Arany J. 1861; AJÖM XI. 326–342, 765–768. For the volume described, see Merényi 1861. For a comparison of László Arany's and László Merényi's publications of riddles, see Vargha 2012. The section in János Arany's criticism relating to riddles was included, near verbatim, in the call in which the Kisfaludy Society invited people to engage in collecting folk literature (see Greguss 1863), thus it was able to directly influence the emerging expectations and principles of Hungarian folkloristics regarding riddles.

folk poetry uses that distinguish them from our everyday language. With regard to these riddles, the excellence of the collector lies in his ability to find and keep these rhythmical arrangements in their purest form, and not in the collector himself lending a verse form to the folk riddle." (ARANY J. 1861:339–340, emphasis by K.V.)

In his criticism, János Arany quotes one particular text from those published by Merényi as a positive example of communicating the "authentic folk verse," while he quotes others as "signs of self-seeking verbosity," and elsewhere he complains that the example quoted does not "breathe the fresh flavour of folklore." In the case of another riddle tale, alongside Merényi's variant, with which he is not satisfied, he publishes the variant he considers correct, which is a better reflection of the rhythms of folk poetry and which he accompanies with a full poetic analysis (ARANY J. 1861:339–341).

Even before this occasion, János Arany had written about the significance of rhythm (as well as accent and alliteration) in Hungarian (folk) poetry. His first paper on the subject was published in the 1856 annals of the grammar school of Nagykőrös in a paper called *A magyar nemzeti vers-idomról* [On Hungarian National Poetry] (AJÖM X:218–258, 602–607). Here he already emphasised the importance of rhythm, as opposed to rhyme and metrics, in the various genres of folk poetry, "accordingly, the essence of bound speech being not rhyme or metrics, but rhythm, this last is coaeval with poetry itself, which originally only appeared in this form, and only later assumed the sonorous attributes of rhyme or meter" (AJÖM X:221).

The examples he quotes include some riddles, alongside proverbs, folk songs, and play songs. "Each metric unit is heightened by one accented syllable, which here stresses the beginning of the unit. We find the same in the following folk riddle (pertaining to a calabash): *Míg* él | *min*dig fut: | *hol*ta után | *min*dig lop." [While it's alive, it always runs; after it's dead, it always steals.] (AJÖM X:226. For a practically identical variant, see DOMOKOS – GULYÁS 2018:522 [53], 523 (XVIII)). The emphasis may be rendered even more striking by alliteration, of which János Arany admitted that it is not as significant in Hungary as it is in Northern, Old Scandinavian poetry. Nevertheless, he quoted examples of it from Hungarian folk poetry – besides some proverbs, folk songs, one play song, and one nursery rhyme, this line included a riddle, **„Rí ruca | rí, rí.** *(Talány a hegedűre.)*" [Cry, duck, cry, cry (Riddle for the fiddle)] (AJÖM X:227; cf. DOMOKOS – GULYÁS 2018:516 [37], 517 (V)).

László Arany must have been influenced by his father's studies in poetics, since he himself also wrote an essay titled *Hangsúly és ritmus* [Accentand Rhythm] (with the subtitle *Függelékül Arany Jánosnak A magyar nemzeti versidomról szóló tanulmányához* [An Appendix to János Arany's Essay on the Hungarian National Poetic Formula]), which he left unfinished (ALÖM II:319–356). At the same time, contrary to his father, he mostly quotes literary texts as examples, while from folk poetry he merely cites ballads, folk songs, and a few proverbs, but not a single riddle. It is highly likely that it was a matter of conscious choice in his editorial process of *Eredeti népmesék* to arrange the riddles selected for publication in such a way as to place highly rhythmical, occasionally alliterative, 'lyrical' texts at the beginning. He even emphasized their poetic character by publishing texts No. I – XVII broken into lines, contrary to the rest of the riddles in the volume. This appears to be a conscious choice because there is no such format in the manuscript records. The selection of texts in the process of preparing the material for publication also contributed to publishing the riddles most in line with János Arany's ideal. Of the 79 texts found in manuscript form, László Arany published 54. The texts that were omitted, and the possible reasons for this omission, have already been described in earlier publications in

detail (VARGHA 2012:248–252, 2018:383–385), therefore only the possible reasons will be reiterated here, along with a few examples.[16] Nine riddles were already struck (partially or entirely) from the manuscript, a few of them were blotted out by pencil, so without the digital copies these would be practically indecipherable. We cannot be sure that these deletions were performed by László Arany, or that they happened during the process of preparing for print. They include one fragmented text and three that are repeated within the manuscript.

Three riddles that were crossed out are based on wordplay. This textual type was almost entirely omitted from László Arany's volume, but the same applies to the manuscript. Within that, one text is seemingly in a foreign language, but in fact it is a Hungarian text which is to be understood verbatim.[17] Another text is tricky, and the question covertly contains the answer. („Senki és Semmi hárman laktak egy halylékba, senki el ment tüzért semmi pedig vizért ki maradt othon? (és)" [48]) [Nobody and Nothing, the three of them lived in one shelter. Nobody went to get fire, nothing went to get water, who stayed home? (and)]. The third is a charade somewhat closer to the tradition of popular poetry („Nem fér a' pajtába, nem fér a' pinczébe, de könyen bele fér egy hajszál végébe. (a V betű.)" [57]) [„It won't fit in a barn and it won't fit in a cellar, but it will easily fit into the very end of a hair. (the letter V)].

This way, the above three texts are questionable in terms of genre. This is even more true of the last two deleted texts. One of them („Ött betűből állok, pipára, és tanácsra illek. (kupak) – I consist of five letters and fit a pipe or a meeting. (lid)" [8]) is a riddle in formal terms, but is invariant, i.e., we know of no similar variants either in contemporary or in later folklore collections. The other text („Regel méreg, délbe étek, este orvoság. (fekete retek.)" [72]) [Poison in the morning, food at midday, medicine in the evening. (black radish.)] appears as a riddle only exceptionally, but is widespread as a proverb, János Erdélyi's is one of several 19th-century collections in which it appears.[18]

Three further texts are questionable in terms of genre, though they are not crossed out in the manuscript. Two of them are riddles as regards form, but we know of no variants for them in Hungarian folklore; one is a wordplay. Another text ('poor peasants scatter it freely along the road, while the lords keep it in their pocket' – snot [?]) László Arany probably left unpublished due to its impropriety.

Ten more texts must have been omitted due to László Merényi having had priorly published their variant. Seven of them bear a direct mark (a letter 'M' in red pencil) to indicate that László Arany left them out of *Eredeti népmesék* with a view to prior publication. This, however, cannot be considered a consistent principle, as there are five riddles published by Merényi whose close variant was in fact published by László Arany.

Altogether, then, there are two reasons why a certain portion of riddles recorded in the manuscript were left unpublished. Partly it was texts that were generically dubious, not

[16]For the sake of easier reading, I have refrained from converting to lower index the sections that were struck from the original, instead I include texts in the first version in which they were recorded. Textual variants that document the process of text formation are available in the critical edition. I refer to texts by the numerals used in the critical edition.

[17]A similar linguistic joke, also known as dog Latin, serves as the basis of the tale by the title *A czigány fiú* [The Gypsy Boy (ATU 1628*)] in László Arany's volume (DOMOKOS – GULYÁS 2018:200–203, 559–560).

[18]„A retekről azt tartják régi tapasztalás szerint: reggel méreg, délben étek, este orvosság" ['Radishes are believed by ancient rural wisdom to be poison if taken in the morning, nourishment if consumed at midday, and medicine if ingested in the evening] (ERDÉLYI 1851:338; cf. SZEMERKÉNYI 2009:1185).

belonging to the category of *true riddles* (Taylor 1951:1–5), or not deemed sufficiently folk(ish) or attractive, resulting in a far more coherent, more consciously selected range of riddles than other collections published at that time. On the other hand, he probably bore in mind a central expectation of scholarship in his time, according to which a collection of folk literature is expected to publish "original" or "authentic" texts that no one else had published before (Gulyás 2018:409–415).

Shaping the riddle texts in the process of preparing for publication

Judit Gulyás has pointed out that in the process of preparing *Eredeti népmesék* for publication, in the case of the tale texts, "the majority of changes (. . .) did not affect the plotline but amounted merely to minor corrections in punctuation and spelling or were of a stylistic nature" (Gulyás 2018:411). With regard to the riddles, we also find that László Arany shaped the text not in its essential traits but in some formal respects, and within that, mostly in terms of spelling or punctuation.

Stylistic changes included the line breaks mentioned earlier, which affected altogether 17 texts. Besides that, we might also include modifications which, again, did not affect the content of the riddle, but did affect its phrasing and thereby its style and ambiance.

This could mean altering a single word or two (e.g., 'ahol' [where] → 'amott' [yonder], 'pecsenye' [roast] → 'hús' [meat], 'rág' [chews] → 'eszik' [eats]), or re-phrasing several words or a structure in a clause (e.g., *egy lepedővel sem lehet le teríteni* [you can't lay a bedsheet over it] → *egy ponyvával se' tudnád betakarni* – [you couldn't cover it with a tarp]).

While the above concern the whole text of a riddle, certain changes appear only in the solutions, others only in the riddle questions. As regards the solutions, the most common procedure for shaping the texts is abbreviation or simplification, which we can observe in the case of several texts. However, in most cases this has meant a change of one or two words, usually the omission of an adjective in front of the corresponding noun.[19]

vörös hagyma [red onion] [14.]	Hagyma [onion] (XLIV.)
zöld káposzta [green cabbage] [20.]	Káposzta [cabbage] (XXXI.)
fekete retek [black radish] [22.]	Retek [radish] (XXXII.)
görög dinye és a magva [Greek melon and its seeds] [23.]	Dinnye és a magva [melon and its seeds] (XXXIII.)
kenyér tésztát mikor dagasztják [bread dough when they knead it] [25.]	Dagasztáskor a tészta [dough upon kneading] (XII.)
Ló hátas ember [man on horseback] [38.]	Lovas [a rider] (VII.)

[19]I quote all texts in this section in accordance with the critical edition, placing the manuscript version on the left and the variant published in *Eredeti népmesék* on the right. By way of identification, I include no page numbers, only the serial number of the text in the critical edition, using square brackets for the manuscripts and round brackets for texts that were published.

A more interesting case is when longer, explanatory answers are omitted and replaced by an answer of just a few words. This may be observed in the following examples.

Ludnak a' tolla ir. az ember a' kezével tolja odébb, és gondolatját teszí a' papírosra. [A goose feather writes. You push it about with your hand and put your thoughts on paper.] [1/1A.]	Írás [Writing]. (X.)
elől megy a' fényeske; az a tű, utána a fehérke; az a czérna, fmeIg van a farka vége kötve; az a csomó a' czérnán [a bright little thing marches on ahead, that's the needle, followed by a white little thing, that's the thread, the end of its tail is tied up, that's the knot on the thread] [5.]	tű és cérna [needle and thread] (XV.)
anyai emlő, *a' testvérek által adják egymásnak, mikor szopnak.* [the mother's breast, the siblings pass it on to each other as they suckle] [28.]	Anyai emlő. [Mother's breast] (I.)
Kukoricza cső zöld korában) a tövén, minden szemen van egy szál sejme, vagy másképp haja. [Corn cob when it's green) it has a piece of silk or hair on every grain] [68.]	Kukoricza [Corn.] (XLI.)
az a' kis fa, a' ki a' tüdős hurkába van szurva, hogy ki ne jöjön belöle a tőtelék. [that little stick that's stuck in the lung sausage so the stuffing doesn't come out] [70.]	A hurka végébe szúrt kis fa. [The little stick in the end of a sausage] (XXIII.)

A dialogic structure is among the prime characteristics of the riddle genre with the corresponding practice of question and answer. During the collection of riddles, the dialogue was usually merely imitated, with the same informant reciting both the question and the answer. Consequently, according to the testimony of the accurate, verbatim records of 20th-century collections, the solution was usually pronounced (and recorded) accompanied by some kind of explanation which would not be uttered in a spontaneous riddling situation. One example from László Mándoki's collection in Moldova is as follows:

„Nagy ángyimnak nagy inge,/még egy őtés sincs benne./Találja ki ezt is, micsoda? A kemence, *amibe a kenyeret süssük. Annak nagy inge van, ha bemeszeljük, mert fehér.*" [My great aunt has a great shirt/and not a single stitch in it,/can you guess what it is? The oven *in which we bake the bread. It has a great big shirt when we whitewash it, because it is white.*] (Mándoki 1971:209, emphasis by K.V.). We may clearly observe that the explanation is not actually a part of the text of the riddle – it is merely addressed to the collector, who would not otherwise understand it.

In other instances, the explanation was incorporated into the text when it was transferred from orality to literacy, when the collector/publisher supplemented the solution with an interpretative remark during recording or publication in order to make sure that readers understand. E.g.,

„Mig fiatal, lábon áll,/Ha megvénül szaladgál. Bondor, ördögszekér. *Igy nevezi a nép. Láthatni őszszel, sokat a szántóföldeken, a mint űzi a szél.*" [While it is young it stands still/when it is old, it runs around. Tumbleweed, *that's what the folk call it. You can see lots of it in the fields, as the wind drives them along.*] (PAMLÉNYI 1879:521, emphasis by K.V.)

In the majority of cases, however, the published riddles end with a simple answer, no more than a few words, that are typical in spontaneous oral occurrences.[20] Although the texts that László Arany arranged for publication had not come from oral collection in the classic sense of the phrase but had been written down by his sister, the shaping of the answers probably served to reconstruct the characteristics of the spontaneous popular manner of riddling. A similar strategy may be observed in the case of the three narrative riddles found in the volume, where a long, narrative answer was cut considerably shorter by László Arany when preparing the text for publication.

Magyarázat. a' három láb' a' csizmadia szék, a' két láb a csizmadia, (előtte) az egy láb<;> a' sonka, (oda ment) a négy láb; a' kutya. (el vite az egy lábat; a' sonkát, a' két láb; a csizmadia, fel kapta a' három lábat; a csizmadia széket, ugy meg űtötte vele a' négy lábat; a kutyát, hogy míndjárt el ejtette az egy lábat; a'sonkát.) [9.] [Explanation. The three legs is the cobbler's stool; the two legs is the cobbler, (in front of him) the one leg is the ham, the four legs (went there) is the dog (carried off the one leg; the ham, so the two-leg, the cobbler, picked up the three legs, the stool, and struck the four-leg with it so hard that it dropped the one leg straight away.)]	A háromláb csizmadiaszék, a kétláb csizmadia, az egyláb sonka, a négyláb kutya. (XXV.) [Three legs is the cobbler's stool; the two legs is the cobbler, the one leg is the ham, and the four legs is the dog.]
Magyarázat. Még a tőlgy fa élt; (túdnilik mig ki nem vágták,) makokat termett, élőket tartott, mert disznók híztak vele. Mikor ki vágták hajót csináltak belőle, élő emberek jártak rajta<,> vizen, halak, 's más vizi álatok fellett. [76.] [Explanation. While the oak tree was still alive (that is, until they cut it down), it grew acorns and nourished living things, because it was fed to pigs. After it was felled, they built a boat out of it, and living people traveled in it, on the water, over the top of fish and other water creatures.]	Egy tölgyfa, melyet csolnaknak csináltak. (Mig élt, disznókat tartott makkjával; mint csolnak embereket hord, s halak felett jár.) (LIII.) [An oak tree made into a row boat. (While it was alive, it fed pigs with its acorn; as a boat, it carries people and travels over the top of fish.)]

(continued)

[20]See the anthology of Hungarian folk riddles published in print in the 19th century, based on linguistic or folkloristic collection (VARGHA 2010).

Continued

Magyarázat. Egy vadász lőtt egy nyulat, olyan nagy fi[?] volt bene hogy egy pár nap mulva meg elett volna, a' vadász kapta magát, felét meg sűtötte, felét meg főzte, a' kis piczi nyulnak. azután fel vitetett egy nagy fa tetejére egy teknő földet, le tétette a galy közé, maga fel mászot a fára, alá ült a' teknőnek, ott ete meg a nyulat. [77.] [Explanation A hunter had shot a rabbit, it had such a large kit in it that it would have given birth within a few days, so the hunter roasted half and boiled the other half of the little rabbit. Then he had a large tub of soil carried up to the top of a tree, had it put down among the branches, climbed on top of the tree, sat under the tub, and that's where he ate the rabbit.]	Egy vadász mondta ezt, ki egy hasas nyulat lőtt; a fiát kivette belőle, felét megsütötte, felét megfőzte, levitte a pinczébe, ráállott egy szál deszkára, úgy ette meg. (XIV.) [This was said by a hunter who had shot a pregnant rabbit, had taken the little rabbit out, roasted half, boiled the other half, took it down to the cellar, stood on a plank and ate it that way.]

In the case of the first part of the riddles or riddle questions, we see changes of a different nature, but these, too, have been made presumably with the intention of restoring the 'original' folk text. This may have taken the form of abbreviation, omitting the details that seemed unnecessary.

Nekem olyan kis hordóm volt, hogy ha le esett a padlásról, nem vólt olyan bodnár a' vílágon a' kí meg tudta vólna csinálni, ugy szélyel tört. (tojás.) [35.] [I had such a tiny barrel that if it fell off the attic, no cooper in the whole word could mend it, it was so badly smashed. (egg)]	Nekem olyan kis hordóm volt, hogy ha leesett a padlásról, nem volt az a pintér, a ki meg tudta volna csinálni. Tojás. [XLVIII.] [I had such a tiny barrel that if it fell off the attic, no barrel maker could mend it. Egg.]

In one text, a change of word order could have served attaining/restoring the correct rhythm and rhyme between 'fényes' [shiny] and 'édes' [sweet]:

Kívűl fényes, belől szőrös, a' közepe igen édes. (gesztenye.) [27.] [The outside's shiny, the inside's hairy, the middle is truly sweet (chestnut).]	Belől szőrös kivül fényes, A közepe igen édes. Gesztenye. (XIII.) [The inside's hairy, the outside's shiny, the middle is truly sweet. (chestnut)]

To the same end, László Arany replaced a somewhat awkward text with a slightly more remote variant:

‘Se kint, se bent, még is a’ házban van. (ablak fa.) [66.] [It’s neither outside, nor inside, and still it’s in the house (the window frame)]	Kint is van. Bent is van, Mégis a házba’ van. Ajtófélfa. [It is outside, it is inside, and still it is in the house. The door post.] (XVI.)

Elsewhere, an adjustment of but a few words served to approximate two texts of a similar theme and rhythm to each other:

Erdőn vágják, meg faragják. lábat tesznek alá, lelket tesznek belé. (bőlcső.) [2.] [They cut it in the forest, carve it, add legs to it, and put a soul inside. (cradle)]	Erdőn vágják, megfaragják, haza hozzák, lelket tesznek bele. Bölcső. (XX.) [They cut it in the forest, carve it, take it home, and put a soul inside. Cradle]
Erdőn vágják, meg faragják, testet tesznek belé. (koporsó.) [3.] [They cut it in the forest, carve it, and put a body inside. (coffin)]	Erdőn vágják, megfaragják, haza hozzák, testet tesznek bele. Koporsó. (XIX.) [They cut it in the forest, carve it, take it home, and put a body inside. Coffin]

Finally, in one place László Arany replaced the word ‘főld’ [soil] with the word ‘zőld’ [green] to make sure the words of the riddle were alliterative. This way, however, instead of restoring the original, he produced a variant which is logically flawed and is different from the known parallels.[21]

főld a lába, zöld nadrága, furkó a feje. (zőld káposzta.) [20.] [earthen legs, green pants, club head (green cabbage)]	Zöld a lába, zöld nadrága, fúrkó a feje. Káposzta. (XXXI.) [Green legs, green pants, club head. Cabbage]

[21]Currently known variants contain terms identical in content to ‘föld’ [Earth or soil], e.g., „Sár a’ lába, zöld a’ nadrágja, furkó a’ feje, fa a’ ködmenje? Káposzta.” [Its legs are mud, the trousers green, the head’s a club, its coat is wood. Cabbage.] (Philofennus [Fábián István] 1857:393); „Sáros a lába,/Zöld a dolmánya,/Fa a tarisznyája,/Kő a sapkája? Káposzta.” [Its feet are muddy/its mantel is green,/its knapsack is made of wood,/its cap is made of stone? Cabbage.] (Kálmány kb. 1875–1919:1).

SUMMARY

After selecting and arranging from the Arany family's manuscript collection of tales and riddles, where riddles had mostly been recorded by Juliska Arany, and after making certain modifications to the texts, László Arany eventually managed to assemble a chapter in *Eredeti népmesék* which is unified in style and which, in comparison to later collections, represents folklore riddles accurately.

The volume was presented in *Budapesti Szemle* by Pál Gyulai, whose favourable review confirmed that László Arany had met the standards set out by János Arany in his critique of Merényi with regard to riddles as well as folktales. Gyulai primarily commends László Arany for retaining the original form of the riddles, sometimes repeating verbatim the principles that János Arany had set out.

„The collection ends with a few riddle tales and catch tales. (. . .) The riddle tales of the collection are also excellent. The collector has faithfully kept their original form, *the rhythmical arrangement of the words and sentences, their onomatopoeia and alliteration*, which are so typical of both our riddle tales and our proverbs. Indeed, far too little attention has been paid to these to date. Even among [János] Erdélyi's proverbs we find some that have been divested of their original form, while [László] Merényi stretches out riddle tales, patching them and adding to them as he goes.

Reading through the entire collection has been a favourable experience, and we only regret that there are not at least two volumes of it." (Gyulai 1862:391–392. Emphasis by K.V. Cf. Domokos – Gulyás 2018:339–340.)

The modifications made by László Arany in the process of preparing the texts for publication served to highlight and, if necessary, restore the 'original' form of folk riddles. Although he did not engage with theoretical questions of this particular genre, the chapter containing riddles in *Eredeti népmesék* shows a far higher degree of conscious editorial attention than any other publication of folk riddles in the period. This is reflected by the arrangement of the texts, the minor adjustments made to form or content, as well as the composition of the texts published.

Joking questions based on wordplay amount to at least one third of riddle texts published in the 19th century. They can be found not only in collections of folklore in this period but also in manuscript collections, chapbooks, periodicals, readers, and minor entertaining publications. László Arany, however, included only one such text in his collection. He also refrained, in most cases, from publishing dubious, obscene, or even improper texts, which also constitute a considerable stratum within the total body of Hungarian riddles.[22] He also omitted pieces belonging to popular poetry, which are to be found in great numbers not only in chapbooks and entertaining periodicals or in László Merényi's much criticised volume but also in one of the most important collections of folk poetry in the period, *Vadrózsák* [*Wild Roses*] by János Kriza (Kriza 1863).

The majority of texts published by László Arany fall in the category of 'true riddles' (cf. Taylor 1951:1–5), which describe a subject from the rural lifestyle in a way which intentionally misleads the reader. Thus, this volume is a far more homogeneous material of riddles than other publications of riddles from the same period.

[22]Lajos Katona puts particular emphasis on this in his encyclopaedia entry, which briefly summarises Hungarian folk poetry and its genres. 'IX. Riddle tales or folk riddles, within which a considerable group includes those referring to obscenities, a category quite numerous among our people, too' (Katona 1896:60).

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 97–117
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00001

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

The "Re-Tuning" of János Arany's Life and Work in the Popular Education of the 1950s

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Received: December 20, 2020 • Accepted: January 10, 2021
Published online: November 12, 2021

ABSTRACT

In 1948, in the year it came to power, the Hungarian Communist Party began building its legitimacy, using the occasion of the centenary, by appropriating the legacy of the Revolution of 1848. The need for a revolutionary transformation of culture heralded the advent of the scientific materialist worldview. The popular education system, created as a channel of the cultural revolution, conveyed the findings of the various branches of science and arts, combined with the rhetoric of political propaganda, to the "working people." Revolutionism, which the Marxist view of history elevated to prominence, soon gained ground in the interpretation of Hungarian literary history via the compilation of "progressive literary traditions." Public educators' literary presentations in villages and cities, as well as articles and cheap publications produced in large quantities all served to promote this central principle.

The author examines the representation and interpretation of János Arany's life and work in various textual and visual popular education products. Certain junctures and directions in Arany's life, used as guidelines of the presentations, were highlighted in the image of Arany mediated by filmstrips and newspaper articles to make him one of the "poets of freedom." Publications intended for the cultural and political education of "working people" set out the way in which to relate to the poet and the framework for interpreting his writings. Through the Arany poems that popular educators employed in scientific education, the author points out the way in which textual and visual representations became carriers of added content in a given context and a possible means of the "rural class struggle."

KEYWORDS

János Arany, socialism, popular education, cultural revolution, political propaganda

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1948 marks a turning point in the history of Eastern European states that entered the Soviet sphere after World War II: the era of short-lived democratic experiment(s) that started in 1945 came to an end with the local communist parties coming to power (Kenez 2006:160–183). In Hungary, the Hungarian Working Peoples' Party – formed by merging the Hungarian Communist Party with the Social Democratic Party – became the sole holder of power in June of the year that lives on in history as "pivotal." However, in addition to gaining control, the one-party government established under the leadership of Mátyás Rákosi[1] also needed to establish the legitimacy of the regime. The centenary of the 1848–49 Hungarian Revolution and anti-Habsburg War of Independence provided a good opportunity for this, as the appropriation of the anniversary ensured an opportunity for the political representation of the new regime and its representatives (Gerő 1998:17).[2] The party sought to shape the "scenario" of the centenary according to its own objectives: in addition to celebrations across the country, regular radio broadcasts, press articles, and commemorations, it also conveyed a strong message to the public about reinforcing the foundations of a nascent socialism.[3]

For 1848–49 to serve as a reference for the communist regime, the framework for the interpretation of the Revolution and War of Independence needed to be defined and made exclusive. The guidelines for celebrating the centenary and approaching the historical event were developed by the Communist Party's dominant figure and ideologue József Révai,[4] the editor-in-chief of the party's daily newspaper, *Szabad Nép* [Free People] (Gyarmati 1998:100–102). The appropriation of the interpretation and memory of the historical event served primarily the purpose of setting a precedent for the communist regime and showing its continuity. The regime was defined as the implementer of the aspirations of the Revolution and War of Independence, making its legitimacy indubitable. The anniversary thus became a means of reinterpreting the past while laying the foundations for the axiom of genetic coherence between 1848 and 49 and the communist takeover.

"By celebrating the centenary of the 1848 Revolution and War of Independence, we aim to achieve a dual goal. In the consciousness of the Hungarian people reborn in democracy, we recall the events that took place 100 years ago, highlighting the unadulterated essence and true image thereof. At the same time, we also want to point out that today's Hungarian democracy is,

[1]Mátyás Rákosi (1892–1971): General Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party (1945–48), General Secretary of the Hungarian Working People's Party (1948–1953), First Secretary of the same party (1953–1956) (Várdy 1997d; Markó 2004, V:599–604). The era of the Stalinist exercise of power associated with his name entered Hungarian historiography as the Rákosi regime or Rákosi dictatorship (Várdy 1997e; Romsics 1999:265–300; Gyarmati 2005:570–587).

[2]As Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' idea, the key concept of linking communist takeover and (violent) revolution was formulated in the concluding paragraph of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) as the only possible means. "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win" (Marx – Engels 2002:258).

[3]On the significance of the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence in Hungarian history, see Gergely 1999:169–173.

[4]József Révai (1898–1959): politician, in Soviet emigration between the two world wars, member of a small circle of politicians in a leadership position in the Hungarian Communist Party (called the Hungarian Working People's Party in 1948–1956) after the Second World War. Between 1945 and 1950, editor-in-chief of the party's central organ, *Szabad Nép* [Free People]. As Minister of Popular Culture, he directed cultural life between 1949 and 1953 (Várdy 1997f; Markó 2004, V:714–716).

in fact, but the culmination and fulfillment of the ideas raised in 1848 that were never accomplished perfectly and definitively" (A centenárium 1948:8).

The ideology built around the centenary extended the circle of the successors of the Revolution and War of Independence to the "working people" and their leaders, while it excluded political and public actors and social groups considered enemies (cf. Gyarmati 1998:99–100). Of the historical figures, the ideology raised Lajos Kossuth,[5] Sándor Petőfi,[6] and Mihály Táncsics[7] as role models. Their portraits became indispensable accessories of the mass events of the centenary ceremonies, thereby visually becoming the "faces" of 1848–49. Lajos Kossuth became a symbol of the defense of national independence, while Petőfi became a symbol of the battle against tyranny, and Táncsics took his place in the triumvirate as an advocate of the peasantry. The leading politicians of the Communist Party conceived of themselves and wanted to be seen in relation to these prominent historical figures—as the custodians of the "legacy of Kossuth, Petőfi, and Táncsics" (cf. Révai 1948).[8]

To make the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence a point of reference, it was necessary not only to reinterpret the given historical events but also to reassess the past one hundred years. Politicians, poets, writers, and scholars of the 1848 to 1948 period were weighed according to how they assisted or hindered the implementation of the revolutionary ideas initiated in 1848 and, according to ideology, fulfilled by 1948. The rewriting of the past as compared to 1848 meant that fundamentally new canons had to be written. The collection of "progressive traditions" resulted in anthologies and collections of essays that were timed to be published, with great press coverage, during the centenary.[9]

[5]Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894): statesman, one of the leading figures of the Hungarian Reform Era and the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence. From March 1848, member of the first responsible government of Hungary (as Minister of Finance), later, from its resignation (October 1848) until the defeat of the War of Independence (August 1849), holder of executive power as chairman of the National Defense Council (Várdy 1997a; Markó 2002, III:1107–1108).

[6]Sándor Petőfi (1823–1849): poet, defining figure of literary romanticism and folklorism. Despite his untimely death, he is one of the most influential poets in the history of Hungarian literature. For more on his life, see Várdy 1997c; Markó 2004, V:305–311; on Sándor Petőfi's place in the history of Hungarian literature, see Czigány 1984:179–197; Margócsy 1999. On the origin of literary folklorism, see T. Erdélyi 1999.

[7]Mihály Táncsics (1799–1884): politician, writer, publicist, prominent figure in the political and public life of the Reform Era (Markó 2007, VI:606–608). Communist rhetoric was especially fond of him because, being a descendant of serf peasants, he could be represented as an advocate of the "oppressed classes."

[8]It should be noted, however, that the first "historical pantheon" of the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence emerged concurrently with the historical events. The mythological topoi, centered mainly around the figure of Lajos Kossuth, have been mediated and popularized since 1848 by contemporary literary works and fine art representations (Szilágyi 2007:128–129). The Kossuth Song, which the press dubbed in 1848 as Kossuth's recruitment song, gained nationwide popularity and became an expression of resistance to the Habsburg Empire (Landgraf 2014:35).

[9]e.g., Szendrő 1948; Lukácsi – Patai – Szabó 1948. In the discipline of ethnography, a national collection of "the folk traditions of 1848" commenced on the occasion of the centenary (Dégh 1952; Tompos 2018). Collectors paid special attention to the memory of the emblematic players of the Revolution and War of Independence, which resulted in the collection of a significant amount of folk art material centered around the figure of Lajos Kossuth, for example. See Landgraf 2014 for more information.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND POPULAR EDUCATION

In addition to control over the political and economic system, by declaring a cultural revolution, the authorities expressed their interest in disseminating a materialist ideology and developing a socialist culture that would become dominant. The cultural revolution, which sought to replace the old "bourgeois" culture with the new socialist culture, followed the Soviet pattern, in Hungary as well as in the other socialist states (Kim 1961:738).[10] Mátyás Rákosi, General Secretary of the Communist Party, defined the significance of the cultural revolution by declaring that there was much greater "underdevelopment" in the field of culture than in the economic and political functioning of the system. His declaration was included in all subsequent propaganda texts with almost no changes, becoming the indisputable source of interference by political authorities. However, this deficit was not simply lagging behind: in their reasoning, cultural underdevelopment was proffered as the legacy of capitalism (Köszöntjük 1949). As Minister of Popular Culture, József Révai defined the transformation of culture as a necessity and following the Soviet model as self-evident: "the great economic and political achievements of our people's democracy, our working class coming to power, the consolidation of the leading role of our Party are all taking place in our country by following the example of the socialist culture of the Soviet Union. (. . .) In building our socialist culture, just as in building our socialist economy and our state, our model is the great Soviet Union" (Révai 1950a:2).

The institutional system of popular education was built on the ideological foundation of the cultural revolution.[11] Popular education, which laid claims to extracurricular education and culture, got its start in socialist Hungary through Act XV/1949, which established the Ministry of Popular Culture. In the 1950s, the institutional system of popular education included a network of libraries and cultural centers, managed extensive outreach activities, played a significant role in book publishing, and published specialized periodicals.[12] The new, socialist culture saw itself as originating from the people, built on the principle of 'by the people and for the people.' As József Révai said: "Socialist culture is popular culture, in literature, fine arts, and music alike. Socialist culture is oriented towards the people, creating for the people, and in its content and form, it is based on the tastes, language, everyday life, and great historical aspirations of the people" (Révai 1950a:1; cf. Kim 1961:739). Urban and rural popular education endeavors were given a public forum in the specialized periodicals of the Ministry of Popular Culture – *Népművelési Híradó* [Popular Education News] (1949–1953), *Művelt Nép* [Literate People] (1950–1956), and *Népművelés* [Popular Education] (1954–1956) – providing guidelines for popular education professionals. *Népművelési Híradó* [Popular Education News] was launched in November 1949 with the following introduction: "No area of culture must be neutral, including literature and art. It must be militant, partisan, it must support the fight of our people, it must teach our people devotion, work, fight, new patriotism" (Köszöntjük 1949).

[10]On the role of the cultural Rrevolution in the history of the Soviet Union, see Fitzpatrick 1974; King 2014.

[11]The antecedents of the institutional system of popular education in Hungary date back to the turn of the 20th century. See Az Urania 2018.

[12]The institutional system of popular education provided an umbrella for a network of cultural centers, cinemas, and libraries at the national level. Versatile activities were grouped around the above-mentioned sites, e.g., cultural centers provided space for educational presentations and specialty clubs, but they also served as venues for celebrations and cultural competitions (Halász 2013:16, 29–30).

POPULARIZING PROGRESSIVE LITERARY TRADITIONS: LITERARY EDUCATION

The main organizing principle of the literary canon, compiled in the Marxist-Leninist spirit, was to show the continuity of revolutionary traditions in our literary history. József Révai, as Minister of Popular Culture, and Márton Horváth,[13] responsible for the party's agitation and propaganda activities, had a decisive influence on the selection process. Their collection of literary studies was published just in time for the 1950 Book Days, accompanied by wide press coverage (Révai 1950b; Horváth 1950a).[14] The mainstream of the legacy acceptable by socialism included authors seen as expressing the "needs for the creation of a new society" and whose writings provided a "sharp and consistent critique of counter-revolutionary oppression" (Horváth 1950a:7). According to the official guideline, Sándor Petőfi, Endre Ady, and Attila József – representatives of revolutionary traditions – became the mainstream poets of the new literary canon, followed by Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, Mihály Vörösmarty, and János Arany (Czigány 1990:52–54). Petőfi, most unquestionably linked with the revolutionary spirit, became a true icon, or as Márton Horváth put it, a "standard".[15] These standard literary works were published in an anthology under the title *Hét évszázad magyar versei* [Hungarian Poems of Seven Centuries] (Klaniczay et al. 1951), and in 1952, a monograph with an accompanying collection of texts was also published, both of which sought to reveal the "anti-clerical traditions of Hungarian literature" in Hungarian literary history (Pándi 1952a, 1952b).

Other means of disseminating partisan interpretations of literature were literary presentations held in various cities and villages. Dissemination activities started up immediately after the Second World War, but with the expansion of communist influence, this type of dissemination began to serve explicitly political purposes. From 1946, the primary instrument of rural popular education was a series of presentations called Free Land Winter Evenings (Szabad Föld Téli Esték, hereinafter: SzFTE). Within the framework of the SzFTE movement, educational presentations on current political issues and topics from various disciplines and branches of art were held in villages on Saturdays in winter. These educational presentations were sometimes enhanced with brief performances: short drama scenes, poetry recitals, song and dance productions. Rural popular education was particularly pronounced in the party's cultural propaganda, which presumed a fundamental ideological "backwardness" about rural society as opposed to the urban population. The fact that,

[13]Márton Horváth (1906–1987): politician and journalist, member of the Hungarian Communist Party, later of the Hungarian Working People's Party; 1945–1950 and 1954–1956, editor-in-chief of *Szabad Nép* [Free People], the central organ of the Communist Party; 1950–1954, head of the agitation and propaganda department of the party's Central Command; along with József Révai, one of the influencers of the cultural policy of the Rákosi dictatorship (Markó 2002, III:380).

[14]The so-called book days and book weeks played a significant role in the promotion and distribution of publications produced in the spirit of the new literary, scientific, and educational canons. On the occasion of the event, the products of individual publishers and bookstores showed up in several rural cities, and even in some villages and factories. Similar events have been held in Hungary regularly since the late 1920s, so this method of book distribution itself is not a development of the socialist period (Halász 2013:141–162).

[15]With the help of József Révai, Márton Horváth built the cultural policy primarily around Petőfi's legacy. Horváth's speech on the centenary of Petőfi's death bore the title *Our Standard: Petőfi* (Horváth 1950b:185–208). József Révai on Petőfi: Révai 1950c, 1950d, 1950e. On the socialist transformation of the Petőfi cult in the early 1950s, see Margócsy 2008:77–178. https://secureservercdn.net/160.153.138.177/oky.839.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/banner-1.jpg.

according to the party line, the influence of the Church was much more prevalent in village communities played a significant role in this (Halász 2013:27). From 1947, SzFTE Books and Booklets, published weekly as part of the Free Land series, contained program materials and a short synopsis of political, scientific, historical, literary, or agricultural topics (Ispán 2017:330). The guides accompanying each topic were intended specifically for SzFTE speakers and included the information that needed to be conveyed about the specific topic, additional recommended literature for the speakers to consult, and instructions on the purposes and accentuations of the presentation. From 1953, the Society for the Dissemination of Social and Natural Science (Társadalmi és Természettudományos Ismeretterjesztő Társulat, hereinafter TTIT), also established on the Soviet model, was responsible for ensuring the professionalism of the dissemination (Halász 2013:35; cf. Straub F. 1953; Balázs – Vincze 1956). Filmstrip (diafilm) was a frequently used visual aid in rural outreach. In the 1950s, *Beszélő képek* [Talking Images], produced by the Ministry of Religion and Public Education and later the Ministry of Popular Education, was a typical filmstrip series, first with a stand-alone script, and from 1953 onward with the visuals and script merged (Halász 2013:36–38).

Inclusion in political events and festivities confirmed the place of authors and their writings in the newly created canon of socialist literature. Various institutions and societies (e.g., the National Council of Trade Unions, the Ministry of Popular Culture, the Hungarian–Soviet Society, the Union of Hungarian Youth) produced program booklets for these occasions. The programs of the festivities regularly included the performance of Soviet and Hungarian authors' poems which the program producers thought would reinforce the message that was to be conveyed to the public. There was an increased interest in the work of prominent writers and poets on the occasion of the anniversary of their birth or death.

THE OEUVRE OF JÁNOS ARANY AS A PROGRESSIVE LITERARY TRADITION[16]

Popular education texts were modeled on a centrally defined ideal for the purposes of demonstrating the official guidelines—they cannot be assessed as individual professional accomplishments. I consider the texts I use to examine the mechanism of "re-tuning" as sets that, using the concept of Genette, exist as hypertexts of each other, that is, they were created from an earlier text or from each other as a result of an operation (Genette 1997:5–10). This principle of interpretation helps me focus solely on the process of the textual function of political propaganda, keeping me from the slippery slope of the issue of authorial stance.

As far as János Arany is concerned, the publications in service of the education and political instruction of the "working people" also designated the ways of engagement with the poet, the framework of the interpretation of his writings.[17] For the 1950 Book Day, an anthology of the

[16]János Arany (1817–1882) Hungarian poet, translator and editor, emblematic figure of literary folklorism. His rich oeuvre covering a relatively long period is composed of narrative poems, lyrical pieces, and ballads. Arany had a fundamental effect on the literary life of his age as well as on Hungarian national culture and institutional education to the present. For a short summary of János Arany's oeuvre in English, see Czigány 1984:199–207.

[17]It is not the intention of this study to analyze the proclamations of literary historians and politicians that set the tone for official literary interpretation but fall outside the field of popular education, nor to make a coherent comparison with the texts used in popular education, as these are addressed in detail by István Margócsy's work (Margócsy 2007:153–154).

poet's poems was published specifically for promotional purposes (Arany 1950).[18] The *Preface*, which lists no author, outlined the key elements of a new approach to Arany. Additional sources used in my research were the articles related to the poet in the press products of popular education, such as *Népművelési Híradó* [Popular Education News], *Művelt Nép* [Literate People], and *Népművelés* [Popular Education]. The texts of the 1952 volume are especially of interest to us, since János Arany's oeuvre received increased attention on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of his death. The guidelines of literary educational presentations that had a direct impact on the target audience of popular education required the interpretation of the authors' biography and writings. Two guidelines were created for the presentation on the career of János Arany, both authored by Károly Horváth: one intended for SzFTE speakers and the other for TTIT speakers (1951, 1954).[19] For my analysis, I also used the script of the relevant parts of the *Beszélő képek* [Talking Images] series of filmstrips used as visual aids in the educational presentations (Vihar 1951).

The preface to *Arany János válogatott költeményei* [The Selected Poems of János Arany], published for the 1950 Book Days, announced the need for a new Arany image, citing the incorrect interpretation of the interwar period, which "(...) wanted the truly progressive, somewhat revolutionary parts of János Arany's ouevre to fade into oblivion" ([Somlyó] 1950:1). From the Marxist-Leninist point of view, the assessment of the poet's career must be based on Arany's relationship to the Revolution and War of Independence: this became the main organizing principle of his biography. His involvement in 1848–49 was elevated to a singular experience that defined his entire oeuvre—only in relation to this have all preceding and subsequent phases of his career become important or negligible, perhaps even to be glossed over. It seems that Arany's inclusion in the canon was for the most part about the evidence of his revolutionism: "Arany's involvement in the War of Independence and his critique of feudal capitalist Hungarian society has merited that his work, which is so full of splendor and artistic value, should be known, critiqued, and loved by the workers appropriating (!) the classical literary traditions" (Horlai 1950:19). Not only is the start of the poet's trajectory interpreted as a historical precursor to the revolution, the entirety of the three decades of Arany's post-war life and career is represented by the sources as a direct consequence of the fall of the War of Independence. The preface to the collection of poems published for the 1950 Book Days adds the following comment to Arany's post-war poetry: "The fall of the glorious War of Independence provides an explanation, a reason, a truly deep content for his entire later poetry, his somber seclusion (!), his turn to the grandeur of the Hungarian past, his pessimism" ([Somlyó] 1950:2).

Arany's friendship with Sándor Petőfi was interpreted as conclusive evidence of his revolutionism. Because of the strong connection of his oeuvre to the events of 1948–49 and his untimely death linked to one of the battles of the War of Independence, Petőfi was already seen by his contemporaries as the poet of the Revolution and War of Independence. Trying to condense Arany's person and work into one sentence, the first thought of an article published in 1952 in *Művelt Nép* [Literate People] on the 70th anniversary of Arany's death was the following: "János

[18]Other Arany editions from the early 1950s: Arany 1952, 1953a, 1953b, 1953c, 1955a, 1955b, 1955c. The critical edition of Arany's writings began in 1951 under the direction of Géza Voinovich (Bisztray 1959:37–42). Volumes published in the 1950s: AJÖM 1951a, I; 1951b, II; 1952a, III; 1952b, VI; 1953a, IV; 1953b, V.

[19]Károly Horváth (1909–1995): literary historian, with a primary research interest in the comparative study of 19th-century literary history and European romantic literature (Markó 2002, III:378).

Arany, a great peer and friend of Petőfi, died seventy years ago" (Kelemen 1952). This definition defines the poet entirely by reference to someone else – Petőfi – and not on the basis of his own merits. It allowed for Arany's entire career to be rewritten from a point of view in which almost every stage of his life and creative work had been shaped by Petőfi's influence or Petőfi's memory. The article in *Művelt Nép* [Literate People] quoted above presents the period between 1846 and 1848–49 as follows: "Petőfi's example as a poet and his boldness also released his own forces. And they released them in two directions: political and poetic. (. . .) His career as a poet was most prolific during his friendship with Petőfi" (Kelemen 1952). The fall of the Revolution and War of Independence and Petőfi's death divides Arany's life into two periods: "Arany was following in Petőfi's footsteps when, through his actions and poetry, he stood by the cause of the rise of the people and the liberation of the nation, and he was faithfully preserving Petőfi's legacy when, after 1849, he sang of the moral righteousness of the oppressed and the coming victory of the people" (Horváth 1954:38). The premise of the Petőfi-effect has been present in literary history since the late 19th century; the socialist expectation prevalent in popular education texts, however, not only compares Arany to Petőfi to the extent of a few "features," it portrays him completely as a product of his influence: Arany's greatest virtues, which make him worthy of inclusion in the lineup of "progressive literary traditions," are in fact all Petőfi's merits.[20]

For authors to be included in the socialist literary canon, it was a fundamental requirement that the trend of socialist realism be evident in their work. Socialist realism, the framework of which was developed by Soviet cultural politician Zhdanov,[21] became the dominant method of literary criticism in Hungary in the 1950s (King 2014:546–549). In comparison to the 19th-century literary and artistic style called realism, which focused on realistic and characteristic features, a socialist realist author attained the reflection of reality through social criticism and a commitment to the socialist social order (Czigány 1990:54–55).[22] The theory that would canonize Arany's oeuvre – according to which his writings realistically mirror peasant life and his poetry reflects the aspirations of the peasantry – also turns up in popular education texts.[23] Inasmuch as, according to the official ideology, the

[20]The double canonization and interdependent representation of the figures of Arany and Petőfi are the result of literary cult-making, the genesis of which can be traced back to the eulogies that were created upon Arany's death in 1882 (Margócsy 2007:139–141). At the same time, in the assessment of their friendship, opinions on the primacy of Petőfi versus Arany varied based on one's ideology and literary criticism approach. The socialist literary canon tried to magnify and make exclusive the position declaring Petőfi's primacy. The shift in emphasis was quite extreme according to the interpretation in force in the 1950s (Margócsy 2007:153–154). The rules of socialist "roles" were also adopted in the popular education texts.

[21]Andrei Aleksandrovich Zhdanov (1896–1948): communist cultural politician and member of the most influential political group organized around Stalin. After World War II, as a member of Politburo (The Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party), he played a leading role in defining and putting into practice Soviet cultural policies. The latter was served by the endeavors of the international organization Cominform (Communist Information Bureau), established in 1947 under his supervision (Roberts 2001).

[22]On the interpretive traditions of the concept of realism and the emergence of the trend in the history of European and Hungarian literature, see Szegedy-Maszák 1999.

[23]The texts used in popular education emphasized the poet's peasant origins, while the gentry origins of the Arany family were mostly glossed over. In the 1951 script of the *Beszélő képek* [Talking Images] filmstrip series, for example, while discussing Arany's biography, the poet's father is portrayed as a "peasant buckling under the burden of serfdom," with not a mention of the noble past of the family (Vihar 1951:1).

implementer of socialist realism in poetry was Sándor Petőfi, the emphasis on Arany's realism ultimately further reinforced his association with Petőfi. Károly Horváth's 1954 guideline states: "Arany is a realist poet who created types into which he condensed fundamental contemporary social trends (. . .)" (Horváth 1954:38). The class-warrior interpretation of the narrative poem *Toldi*[24] is well known in literary history (Szilágyi 2017:75). The interpretation was based on a theorem developed by György Lukács,[25] a Marxist philosopher, on the centenary of the birth of the work, according to which *Toldi* is in fact the story of the rise of the peasantry (Lukács 1947:492). In the texts used in popular and political education, the hero is that of Lukács's interpretation, who becomes important not for his individual accomplishments but as a type. "This is how Miklós Toldi becomes a folk epic hero, as György Lukács has shown. His destiny epitomizes the destiny of an entire class, the upward mobility of the peasantry, his individual goals and life inextricably linked with the goals, aspirations, and life of the community" (Horváth 1954:43).

THE POEMS OF JÁNOS ARANY IN SERVICE OF SCIENTIFIC MATERIALIST IDEOLOGY

Making the new socialist culture exclusive also entailed the abolition of the culture of the pre-socialist period (Kim 1961:739). In addition to improving the literacy of the general population, popular science education established in socialist countries on the Soviet model was also responsible for disseminating the ideology of scientific materialism (cf. Halász 2013:23–26; Ispán 2017:328, 339). The need for ideological education was based on the premise that the capitalist ruling classes deliberately kept the subjugated classes in ignorance in order to preserve their power. The masses were mainly kept from acquiring scientific knowledge: "(. . .) the general Hungarian population was blocked by the former ruling class from the opportunity to learn about natural sciences. They kept the Hungarian working people in intellectual darkness with the help of old-fashioned fairy tales and false doctrines. These conditions hinder our further development" (Tanner 1949). According to this argument, the acquisition of scientific knowledge ushers in the disintegration of the so-called religious-idealist worldview, for scientific evidence substantiates the system of scientific materialism (cf. Keresztes 1952:6). The efforts to spread the ideology of scientific materialism were explicitly anti-religious and anti-clerical in nature, for the clerical reaction was, in the eyes of the authorities, the main ideological supporter of the prevailing exploiters and the greatest

[24]Arany's narrative poem written in 1846, which brought him his first critical acclaim as well as a burgeoning friendship with Sándor Petőfi. The figure of the protagonist, Miklós Toldi, was preserved in a 16th-century ballad (composed by Péter Ilosvai Selymes), the inspiration for Arany's work. The theme of the narrative poem is the journey of Miklós Toldi – a man of noble origins but reduced to the background and kept as a peasant by his own brother – to the royal court and a life of gallantry he yearned for, while overcoming external circumstances and his own human frailty (AJÖM 1951b, II:97–153). For more on this, see Czigány 1984:199–201. English translation Loew 1914.

[25]György Lukács (1885–1971): philosopher, aesthetician. Between the two world wars, he lived in Moscow and Berlin, returning to Hungary in 1945. Between 1945 and 1949, he taught at the University of Budapest (aesthetics, cultural philosophy). In 1949, the official party line classified his views as right-wing deviation and urged him to practice self-criticism (Várdy 1997b; Markó 2002, IV:333–334).

enemy of development.[26] According to the paradigm of rural class struggle, the clerical reaction in the countryside formed a strong alliance with the *kulaks*,[27] considered to be the rural exploiters (Huhák 2013:78). In the regime's propaganda, the village priest–kulak duo was representative of a past that was to be abolished, an obstacle to progress.[28] It is no coincidence then that anti-religionism and anti-clericalism have received particular emphasis in popular education.[29]

In the Soviet Union, the employment of literature in a variety of ways was built into state popular education. It was expected of speakers to use literary examples, anecdotes, and quotes to substantiate and illustrate their claims. The methodology to be followed was summarized by F. Matroszov in a brochure, which was published in Hungarian in 1950 by Szikra Publishing House under the title *How to Employ Literature in Popular Education* (Matroszov 1950).[30] In Hungary, the journal of popular education, *Művelt Nép* [Literate People], introduced its readers to Matroszov's guidelines in its August 1950 issue. The Hungarian summary highlights the use of literature as a weapon in the work of the Soviet author: "The use of literary examples, anecdotes (!), quotes, and the powerful weapon of literary satire has contributed greatly to eliminating the remnants of capitalist ideology, exposing bureaucrats, corrupt elements, the wastrels of social property; it makes workers aware of the tremendous accomplishments of socialist development, boosts production, reveals the prospects of a bright future" (Lukács 1950). In the spring of 1956, an article in the journal *Népművelés* [Popular Education] titled *A szépirodalom és a materialista nevelés* [Literature and Materialist Education] summarized and evaluated the achievements of socialist popular education and projected its future tasks. Summarizing the experiences of the last eight years, the text considered the use of literature a useful technique in the toolbox of rural popular education.

"Given the inadequate knowledge base of peasant workers, raising ideological issues among the peasantry rarely yields results in a more abstract form. That is why the most important task is to get our peasantry into the habit of reading high-quality books in plain language, to fashion them into readers. The knowledge thus gained would serve as a good foundation for raising ideological issues, especially since discussing these with a peasant audience is possible primarily in relation to specific literary works" (Bárd 1956:12).

The *Népművelési Híradó* [Popular Education News] regularly published supplemental materials and curricula for the use of popular educators in their various educational endeavors. The poems, short plays, and musical pieces accompanying the educational presentations were intended to arouse the interest of the villagers in these events and to substantiate and reinforce

[26]"The Church and her priests work primarily to obscure reality, to keep the oppressed in the bondage of the exploiters, and to stop the wheels of history" (Bárd 1956:11).

[27]The term *kulak* is a concept of the communist regime's propaganda. In the following, I will use the term in my study without italics for ease of reading.

[28]cf. Reinhart Koselleck's concept of the historical-political semantics of asymmetric counter-concepts (Koselleck 1985:159–197).

[29]Anti-clerical propaganda highlighted the poem *János pap országa* [The Land of John the Priest] (1848, Ajöm 1951a, I:38–42) from János Arany's oeuvre and declared it the poet's "grand anti-clerical satire" (Pándi 1952a:117–120; Bárd 1956:11).

[30]Matroszov points out that the practice of incorporating literary texts originated with Lenin and Stalin, who followed his example (Matroszov 1950:23).

the presentation's content. In December 1950, the SzFTE series *Babonákról és csodákról* [On Superstitions and Miracles], compiled specifically as an educational presentation for a rural audience, included János Arany's narrative poem *A bajusz* [The Mustache].

The text of the guideline for the *Superstitions and Miracles* presentation – having been published specifically to govern rural popular education – is the primary source of how the regime, seeking to disseminate the scientific materialist ideology, viewed the medium for which the presentation was intended: the rural lifeworlds. With an educational intent, the guideline pillories the superstitions that popular education sought to eradicate from the ideology of rural society by means of disseminating scientific knowledge. In the text, the description of each example is followed by the scientific explanation of said phenomenon and the scientific resolution or mitigation of the problem or hazard. In addition to superstitious beliefs, religiosity also gained emphasis in the depiction of the ideology to be supplanted. In this context, popular education could be seen as a battle against the influence of "imperialist mercenary priests" and kulaks, for "(. . .) traditionalism and superstition are allied with the old noble world and imperialism, serving their interests" (Babonákról 1951:6). The tone of the text and the style of the illustrations are often sarcastic, trying to make fun of the enemies of the regime whom it portrays as representatives of unenlightened views (Fig. 1).

Why and how did Arany's poem become an instrument of the "anti-superstition" campaign of popular scientific education, a recommended unit of the presentation on *Superstitions and Miracles*? For context, we shall return to the text of the educational presentations on the life and poetry of János Arany. The guideline attempts to demonstrate through some of his narrative poems on rural subjects – A Jóka ördöge [The devil of Jóka] (1851, AJÖM 1952a, III:199–214), Az első lopás [The first theft] (1853, AJÖM 1952a, III:267–279), a Fülemile [The nightingale] (1854, AJÖM 1951a, I:219–223), A bajusz [The mustache] (1854, AJÖM 1951a, I:224–230) – that through these poems, by portraying a life situation considered typical, the poet intended to educate rural

Fig. 1. "There are still people today who think that cabbage should be sown when the moon is full, because then the heads will be as fat as the moon" (Babonákról 1951:13, National Széchényi Library, General Collection, 210.676)

populations, thus actually suggesting that Arany's writings were precursors of socialist popular education.

"In his longer epic poems, in which he seeks to heal the errors occurring among the people, he wants to address the people under a tyranny. (. . .) In 'The Mustache' (. . .), the bare-faced Uncle (!) György Szűcs trusts the Gypsies' superstition, and gets utterly fooled: György Szűcs is put in a large tub amid assurances that the 'incantation' will make his mustache grow, and while he is crouching on the bottom of the tub, the Gypsies rob his house" (Horvát 1951:25; cf. Horváth 1954:24–25).

The Mustache (1854)[31] is a parody of a gullible man who puts superstition above reason, making its performance suitable as the first item on the program recommended for the educational presentation on *Superstitions and Miracles*, intended to promote the materialist ideology. In terms of context, it is worth considering the contemporary acts included in this program's lineup. As a second item, the *Népművelési Híradó* [Popular Education News] recommended Klára Fehér's *Jámbor Jeremiás* [Jeremiah the Pious]. Through a dialog between a peasant farmer woman, a kulak woman, a disguised monk on a bicycle (Jeremiah the Pious), and a female physician, the short, one-scene play demonstrates that clerics and kulaks want to keep the peasantry in the dark about advances in medicine (albeit this time unsuccessfully) (Fehér 1950). The third item, Ernő Urbán's *Esőcsinálók* [Rainmakers], deals with a similar subject matter as the previous example: the clergy strives to keep the rural population ignorant (Urbán 1950).

However, there is another factor that provides a backdrop to the anti-superstition career of *The Mustache*. János Barta's 1953 monograph summarizing the life and oeuvre of János Arany claims that "The mustache represents the haughty, idle type of farmer" (Barta 1953:104). Arany himself describes the protagonist of the narrative poem as follows: "Ami pedig Szűcs György gazdát / Máskülönben illeti: / Nem bolond ember volt ám ő: / Ládájába' pénz, egy bögre, / Azonkívül juha, ökre / És – szamara volt neki" ["As far as Master György Szűcs / is otherwise concerned: / he was no foolish man: / money in his vault, by the mugful / He's got sheep, oxen / and even a donkey"] (Arany 2003:296). The above passage lets us surmise that the affluence of the protagonist was one of the reasons the socialist interpretation considered his character the rural enemy of the regime, a kulak. The description of the protagonist's physical features further supports the socialist interpretation: „Sőt az is szent, hogy már régen / Ott ülne a bírószéken, / Hasa, hája, kéknadrága. . . / Minden kész e méltóságra: / De mit ér, ha nincs bajusz!" ["And it is dead certain that / he'd have already been in the council seat, / His paunch, his corpulence, his blue pants. . . / Everything readied him for this rank: / But what of it all without a mustache!"] (Arany 2003:296). In the anti-kulak propaganda of the 1950s, the verbal catalog that described the appearance and distinctive features of the kulaks was largely based on the portrayal of obesity. The synonyms used for kulak, such as *zsírosparaszt* [greasy peasant], *hájas gazda* [fat farmer], or simply *zsírosék* [Fats], served to make the enemy's body seem repulsive. Discussing

[31]The protagonist of the narrative poem *The Mustache* is György Szűcs, an affluent farmer who is unable to enjoy his life despite being wealthy because he is unable to grow a mustache or a beard. Because of his bare face – and therefore lack of an adequately somber, masculine look – the people of the village do not elect him as a village magistrate. The poem is actually a story of the protagonist's embarrassment in a humorous, ironic tone. Because all he wants is to grow a mustache, György Szűcs trusts the traveling Vlach Gypsies stopping by his village that they can help him with their spell, but while their king distracts the host with his "cure," the Gypsies steal all his valuables from the house. German translation Lüdeke – Gragger 1926:135–143.

the symbolism of obesity, Claude Fischler found that negative value judgments related to obesity are not aesthetic but rather moral judgments. A person who fails to comply with the system of sharing goods and consumes more than others is seen by the community as a norm violator, because their behavior violates the rules of social coexistence (Fischler 1987:264–269). The socialist state sought to establish an image of itself as the creator of a society based on equality, where there are no extreme wealth differences. The kulak – who, as an exploiter, is working against achieving equality, and accumulating at the expense of others – brings about extreme inequality in terms of distribution of wealth. In Hungary, the agricultural policy of the early 1950s resulted in a food supply crisis, and the authorities tried to deflect the tensions created by the situation towards large farmers (Tóth 2016:650). Through these depictions of the kulak physique, the propaganda sought to amplify the characteristics assigned to the enemy, thereby substantiating the legitimacy of the actions against them. This is well illustrated by the 1953 filmstrip made for the SzFTE presentation series *Ádáz ellenségünk a kulák* [Our Fierce Enemy, the Kulak], which, citing Lenin, declares a causal relationship between the character and physical appearance of the kulak. According to the script of the filmstrip, the kulaks "have grown fat on the blood of peasants and starving workers" (Ádáz 1953:9) (Fig. 2).

In the 1930s, shortly after the anti-kulak propaganda began in the Soviet Union, the Soviet concept of kulak emerged in Hungary as well, primarily in the writings of the so-called folk writers and sociographers. Early on, the idea of the kulak had been "invested" with the personality traits and distinctive physical features that would become its hallmark. Later, the anti-kulak politics of the Rákosi dictatorship labeled kulaks as exploiters and employers (as opposed to workers), and using the existing forms of representation, the political propaganda developed a kulak character typical of the pictorial representations of the 1950s (Bolgár 2008:52–67). In the imagery of political caricatures published between 1949 and 1956, a static character named Kulák, Greasy Farmer, or Fat Farmer is usually a stocky, overweight fellow with a handlebar mustache, smoking a tobacco pipe, wearing black boots and a black hat, his eyes mean and malicious (Takács 2003:53–55; cf. Huhák 2013:83; Tóth 2016:649–650). This kind of representation also became dominant in the imagery of the 1954 film adaptation of Arany's poem *A*

Fig. 2. "Ádáz ellenségünk a kulák!" (Ádáz 1953:3)

Fig. 3. Bajusz [Mustache] 1954. Filmstrip based on János Arany's poem

bajusz [The Mustache] (Bajusz 1954).[32] The script of the filmstrip is simply the Arany poem, each scene a separate slide, the propagandistic content emerging in the visuals through the representation of György Szűcs's character, physique, and every detail of his clothing matching the imagery of anti-kulak caricatures (Fig. 3).

What benefit could the propaganda speaking through popular education have hoped to gain by making Arany's protagonist a kulak? The answer lies in the fact that kulaks were represented in propaganda as committed to traditionalism and superstitions, the enemies of socialist development. The story of György Szűcs, a man who gave credence to the "Gypsies' superstition" and was punished for it, was ultimately intended to ridicule the kulak, and confirmed the notion that the kulak is an impediment to the dissemination of the scientific materialist ideology and the antithesis of scientific popular education. The imagery became a medium for added content in the given context, thus making János Arany's poem a tool of the rural class struggle.

CONCLUSION

The junctions in János Arany's biography and oeuvre that allowed him to be included in the socialist literary canon were, of course, not made up by socialism. In many cases, the features of the Arany image presented to the "working people" by different types of popular education followed traditions of interpretation that already existed. The canonization of Arany was done by emphasizing his revolutionism and folklorism while attributing a decisive and instrumental role to Sándor Petőfi in the evolution of the poet's life and the genesis of his writings. Marxist-Leninist literary criticism greatly exaggerated the emphases in its evaluation of the poet's oeuvre

[32]Like the texts of popular education, I do not consider the work of the cartoonist, Pál Korcsmáros, to be an individual accomplishment that can be evaluated in isolation.

and made it the exclusive interpretation. It sought to show in some of Arany's texts the foreshadowing of socialist popular education itself, further reinforcing the idea of a genetic interconnectedness between the Revolution and War of Independence of 1848–49 and the aspirations of socialism, an idea born in the year of the centenary by appropriating the memory and interpretation of the historical events. In their effort to disseminate the materialist ideology, the Soviet style popular education sought to utilize literary texts added to the canon, including Arany's poems, not only in literary education but also in the ideological battle. The poem "The Mustache" was accordingly reinterpreted in the context of the rural class struggle and portrayed through popular education endeavors.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The article was supported by the Academic Committee of the János Arany Memorial Year hosted by the Institute of Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 119–134
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00023

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

At the Eleventh Hour. The Principles of Folklore Collection in the Scholarly Oeuvre of Lajos Katona and in Hungarian Folklore Studies at the Turn of the 20th Century

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Received: October 20, 2021 • Accepted: November 30, 2021

ABSTRACT

In Hungary, the academic study of folklore started at the turn of the 20th century. In the period between 1889 and 1920, institutions for the study of folklore and ethnography were established. The author points out that ethnographic collections in this era were motivated by concern about the loss of folk culture phenomena owing to changes brought by modernisation. Major arguments for the establishment of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society as well as the Museum of Ethnography referred to the need to salvage endangered items of folk culture from vanishing. Folklore collections were interpreted as rescue missions aiming to save material in the penultimate moment. The author of this paper investigates the way in which an outstanding folklorist of the period, Lajos Katona (1862–1910), professor of comparative literary studies, defined the essence, purpose, and method of ethnographic/folklore collections. Katona urged on several occasions that collectors of folklore be equipped with professional guidebooks and other auxiliary materials. He played a role in the popularisation of the activities of the Folklore Fellows, furthering the establishment of a network of voluntary collectors. Empirical data collection in the field is a central notion of folklore studies, one of the most important methodological and epistemological categories of the discipline, which functions as a distinctive feature differentiating it from other fields of study. Therefore, it is of central importance to shed light upon how and why the principles of the collection and recording of folklore phenomena in oral culture have changed.

KEYWORDS

folklore collection, 'salvaging at the last moment,' Lajos Katona, voluntary collectors, folklore fellows

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Obsolescence, collection, preservation, rescue – all these terms have served as leitmotifs of ethnographic and folklore research. They crop up again and again as key points of reference and motivating forces and remain present in the history of our discipline. Concern over the disappearance of the phenomena of folk culture and the collection fever triggered by the excitement of the eleventh hour have gained impetus in Hungary in the 20th century, at a time when the traditional peasant lifestyle was gradually disappearing. Such justification for collecting is, in fact, coeval with the discovery of folk poetry in the 19th century, when its research began, and it has accompanied the history of folklore studies as a discipline. It is still present in our very day.[1] It was exactly with reference to the 'eleventh hour' that ballads were salvaged from obsolescence since the 1860s, just as we today salvage remembrance materials of WWII or the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

European modernisation, the industrial revolution, and rapid urbanisation have created the possibility of exploring folk culture and the desire and capacity to preserve it and transmit it as a thing of great value. At the same time, this has triggered a process which led to the complete transformation or disintegration of local 'folk' or 'traditional' cultures over the 19th and 20th centuries and the eventual disappearance of European peasant culture.

What people in the multiethnic kingdom of Hungary noticed during the 19th century, was that the more spectacular phenomena of folk culture and the representative objects of folk art flourished as an effect of the economic changes. It was from the era of Romanticism in Europe including Hungary, when they became interested in folklore, vernacular architecture and home-industry and began to exhibit and collect highly ornate objects or ensembles of objects, increasingly colorful peasant costumes, the rites of folk customs, and folk music (Hofer 1975a:402–405, 1975b). It was also in the wake of this process that people began to treat peasant culture, folk poetry, folk music, and the folk arts in general as valuable. Folk poetry came to be seen as a source of inspiration for high literature, or, in a broader sense, of all branches of art and related scholarship. This is when folk culture started being seen as an autochthonic system. The oral folk tradition was seen as uniquely original, developing organically and independently of external influences – a manifestation of the "national spirit or the national character," and thus a depository of national traditions. Thus, the oral traditions, objects, and customs of folk culture are valuable, their disappearance is a loss, and therefore we must salvage them "at the last minute, in the eleventh hour."

Before the early modern period, the transience of things was self-evident to man who lived in unison with the natural cycle and thus held a cyclic world view. Changes seemed insignificant when the eternity of the divine presence was what really mattered. The spirit of the community survived the destruction of the particular and the concrete. By contrast, modern man has woken up to the fact that life is eternal change and that things can vanish irrevocably and irretrievably. They felt threatened by the global changes brought by technical innovation and tried with all their might to collect all the vanishing objects, phenomena, and memories, to take stock of them, describe them, and systematise them scientifically – and thus salvage them from being forgotten forever. However, ethnographic collections fuelled by the frenzy of the eleventh hour carry the danger that collection and text recording leave no space for interpretation, as that would divert time and energy away from collecting. This way, objects and phenomena come to be stored in

[1] A historical review of folklore collection and research inspired by the principle of 'salvaging at the last moment' in German scholarship is offered by Schöck 1970:85–104.

collections, databases, and museums deprived of their context, and it is left for posterity to process them and examine them. Rudolf Schenda (1970:124–154) believed that the danger of ethnographic collection focusing on salvaging material, as opposed to a problem-focused approach to collecting, lay in the fact that collectors would show little interest in facts and their interconnections and concentrate merely on the phenomena they strive to rescue. Thus, they would notice only features that meet their prior expectations and confirm their existing assumptions and attitudes. The interviewer and the interviewee would focus not as much on the existing realities as on the ideals they are both trying to meet. A further possible pitfall of collecting efforts inspired by this kind of mentality is that the interviewer may look on the informant and data provider as a true representative of an entire community. Their utterances and acumen may be considered as generally valid for a smaller or even larger group (family, village, or even region or ethnic group), which may lead to false conclusions.

In Hungary, the second half of the 19th century brought about the beginning of the scholarly study of folklore – ethnography no longer had to struggle[2] to secure itself a place among other scholarly disciplines. The cause of collecting, publishing, and studying folk poetry became separate from other great national movements, from the search for national traditions and a close co-existence with national literature. In the history of Hungarian folklore studies as a distinct branch of scholarship, the period between 1889 and 1920 was the beginning of folklore collection with a professional approach, when the relevant scholarly methodology was developed, institutions established, and learned journals launched.[3] The very first initiatives of collecting and publishing folk poetry were already fueled by the fear of the eleventh hour (cf. Gulyás 2015:15–16), but the subsequent period in the history of the discipline, the age of institutionalisation, is also accompanied by reference to the eleventh hour as the principal force that motivated folklore collection. All of this is also present in the context of the establishment of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society (Magyar Néprajzi Társaság, founded in 1889) and later the Museum of Ethnography (Néprajzi Múzeum). An address about the need to set up a Museum of Ethnography was delivered at the very first assembly of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society in 1889. As Antal Herrmann, secretary of the society said: "In order to secure the future existence of our nation, it is our duty to promote the spread of civilisation even to the detriment of primitive culture, but it is also our duty to *rescue* for scholarship the features and documents of the original nature of our peoples which real life has eliminated from itself. We have tarried far too long, perhaps until *the eleventh hour*, in complying with this duty. *We have filled* monumental museums with the flora, fauna, and geology of the great wide world, as well as with the cultural relics of the past people of Pannonia and the current people of overseas parts; thanks to the eager activity of an enthusiastic professional, we even boast an anthropological museum; laudable efforts have been dedicated to salvaging our intellectual and spiritual legacy; but the

[2]The promotion of folklore studies as a discipline in its own right was presented as a 'struggle for life,' for instance, in Lajos Katona's programmatic writing in which he argued for the recognition of folklore studies as a separate branch of scholarship (Katona 1890a, cf. Gulyás 2015:19).

[3]cf. Voigt et al. 1998:47–49 (A népköltészet tudományos vizsgálatának kezdete [The Beginnings of the Scholarly Examination of Folklore]); Kósa 2001:101–113 (Az alapvető néprajzi intézmények kialakulása [The Emergence of the Fundamental Institutions of Ethnography]); Sozan 1979:132–224 (The Golden Age of Hungarian Ethnography 1889–1919); Landgraf 2011:158–174 (A folklorisztika önálló tudományszakká válása – 1890–1920 [The Transformation of Folklore Studies into an Independent Discipline]).

objects of the peoples of our land, at least as far as their ethnographic aspect is concerned, have been sorely disregarded" (Herrmann 1890:21, emphasis by I.L.).

The proposal made by the Museum Committee of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society reads, "We must lay a great emphasis on collecting, particularly since *the material which is of ethnographic importance is vanishing at an alarming rate in the wake of the spread of modern transport and the resulting commerce;* and this is particularly true of regions inhabited by pure Hungarian populations where the cottage crafts have already disappeared completely and all occupations are being thoroughly transformed, particularly with regard to the tools used" (N. N. 1890:97, emphasis by I.L.). A similar line of argument was used by Ottó Herman[4] when he spoke in Parliament in favour of establishing a Museum of Ethnography: "The development of modern culture and transport is swallowing up and wiping away genuine folklore, the *ethnos* and things of ethnographic relevance, and so we are talking about salvaging things that still exist in, so to speak, the last hour" (Herman 1891:25, emphasis by I.L.).[5]

Learned members and highly honoured officials of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society voiced their concern that the institutions of ethnography and the collecting campaigns may have been launched too late. This idea was also adopted by amateur collectors who supported the activity of the scholarly society when reasoning about their collecting work.[6] A penchant to turn toward the past and to study and collect that which affords a conveniently distant perspective in time seems to be a profound characteristic of ethnography and the academic study of folklore. Over the past two centuries, the study of folk poetry has focused on genres and folklore phenomena which were beginning to lose their practical value, significance, popularity, function, potential performers or practitioners due to certain changes in culture. This may be equally true of songs of Midsummer's Night or the use of memorial books (Keszeg 2000:20–21). Such an attitude of scrutinising the past may often permeate not only the ethnographer or collector but even the informants themselves. Indeed, it is a well-known situation in the life of any collector that the person invited to recollect declares that in his or her community traditions have been long dead. The present is perceived as inferior to an earlier past state often seen as a standard of comparison – a trait that can be partially explained by the mechanisms of social psychology. Collectors have encountered this attitude not only in the 20th or 21st centuries – the case was no different in the era of the earliest collecting efforts. For example, János S. Kováts had joined the

[4]Herman, Ottó (1835–1914), zoologist, archaeologist, ethnographer of international stature, politician. From 1875, member of the Hungarian National Museum. At the National Expo of 1885, he presented his own collection on fishing, which later became the foundation of the Hungarian ethnographic collection of the Museum of Ethnography. He was also a founding member of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society.

[5]15 years later, arguing for the need to organise museums and collections of ethnography, Zsigmond Bátky, later director of the Department of Ethnography of the Hungarian National Museum, wrote, "consider *the loss* that our national culture has suffered because our forefathers did not *think to collect all of this* a hundred or even more years ago. What treasures have sunk into eternal oblivion, and we watch with an aching heart how we are treading among *ruins* in the field of the ethnography of this country, even if these ruins are fairly abundant compared to those of other nations" (Bátky 1906:7, emphasis by I.L.).

[6]See, for instance, Kováts S. 1892:74: "Just consider how many characteristic customs have been wiped from the face of the Earth by the rapidly spreading new currents of culture and education! They have left barely any trace! And the depressing political and economic conditions of our present time (. . .) *have utterly crushed the fashion for folk customs.* (. . .) The former merry spirits of the people are gone, their place has been taken by dreary greed. I am not sure whether *the establishment of the Ethnographic Society has not come too late*" (emphasis by I.L.).

Hungarian Ethnographic Society as a novice schoolteacher upon its foundation in 1889, and a few years later the journal *Ethnographia* published his article on the collecting of folk customs. In the Introduction he writes, "When I was a child, *the world was quite different here*. Neighbours, relatives, and in-laws would come together in each other's homes on snowy winter days and *chat merrily* by the good old tiled stove with a glass of wine and a pipe to smoke. Young lads and maidens used to gather in the spinning house; with the spindles whirring, you heard the sound of storytelling, song after song; lots of laughter, chatter, and jokes – some harsher, others tamer. Today these places are empty. (. . .) Today! Today everyone stays home with their own family. (. . .) One wonders whether the spread of education is not as detrimental as it is blissful, in some ways?" (Kovács S. 1892:74).

The above diagnostic of vanishing customs and a world that has already changed was written in 1892(!).

The intention to rescue vanishing phenomena nearing oblivion due to changes brought on by advances in civilisation and plans to register them and systematise them are also observable in the oeuvre of Lajos Katona (1862–1910). However, his investigations were inspired by a problem-centred scholarly approach based on comparative philology. He was interested in interpreting phenomena rather than amassing material or salvaging things.

Lajos Katona played a key role in the intellectual history of the turn of the 20th century not only by Hungarian but also by European standards. He was born and raised in a Catholic artisan family in the city of Vác.[7] At the Faculty of Arts of Budapest University, he embarked on a course of studies in Greek, Arabic, Turkish, and Creole languages. His lecturers included philologists Gusztáv Heinrich, Aurél Mayr, Emil Ponori Thewrewk. His linguistic competencies, profound knowledge of classic philology, sensitive approach to problems, wide-ranging research interests, and instinctive feel for philology predestined him to becoming the figure who was to lay several cornerstones for Hungarian folklore philology. The most powerful influences on his scholarly approach came from the scholarly methodology used by positivist German philology and cultural history. The most powerful impact on the development of his theoretical thought came from Romanist Hugo Schuchardt[8] and Gustav Meyer, who specialised in Balkanology and Indo-German studies. His approach to culture and folklore reflected Theodor Benfey's monogenesis theory on the universality of folk tales and Wilhelm Wundt's school of folk psychology in equal measure.

[7]Vác is a city and seat of a bishopric on the bank of the Danube, a township that has been inhabited since the Hungarian Conquest. It is 40 km from the capital city. Hungary's first railway, which opened in 1846, ran between Vác and Pest. In the second half of the 19th century the city underwent considerable industrialisation, which strengthened the middle classes. It came to be characterised by sports clubs, educational circles, and a flourishing local press. At this time, it had approximately 16 thousand inhabitants.

[8]Hugo Schuchardt (1842–1927), an excellent linguist, was professor of Romance philology at Graz University from 1876. He was in active correspondence with his former student, Lajos Katona. Schuchardt's legacy is currently being processed and published online at Graz University under the direction of Professor Bernhard Hurch. The project is accessible at: http://schuchardt.uni-graz.at/ (accessed November 27, 2021). Schuchardt's total correspondence amounts to some 12 thousand letters, 300 of which were to or from Katona. Within the broader project, their correspondence is being processed by Frank-Rutger Hausmann, professor emeritus of Freiburg University. I owe him many thanks for the information he provided regarding the correspondence.

Katona was one of the founders of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society, a member of its select committee for a number of years, its notary and then secretary, until finally, in 1906, he became its deputy president – a post which he held until his death in 1910.[9] He played a fundamental role in ethnography and folklore studies becoming an independent discipline in Hungary.

It was shortly after the establishment of the Society, at one of its first reading nights in 1890 that he delivered his ambitious address titled *Ethnographia. Ethnologia. Folklore* [Ethnography, Ethnology, Folklore]. The significance of the author and his work is indicated by the fact that this address was published as the opening article in the first learned journal of Hungarian ethnography, *Ethnographia*, launched in 1890. The author supported his argument for seeing ethnography as a discipline in its own right with a rich international array of references and placed the issue in a historical context. He claimed that the following conditions needed to be met for this field of study to become an independent discipline: "does it have its *own object* of study which is fully or (. . .) at least partially separate from that of other disciplines? Does it have its own *methodology* corresponding to that object? Furthermore, does it comprise a *system* of knowledge which is closely coherent and which was obtained through this method and which fits organically into the universe of all other disciplines as a higher whole?" (Katona 1890a:71).

Since the answer to these questions is affirmative in the case of ethnography, it has a place within academic scholarship and may be considered a discipline in its own right, argued Katona. His suggestions about the possible objects of ethnological, ethnographic, and folklore studies, along with his terminological suggestions, have only partly become incorporated in 20th-century Hungarian folklore studies. At the same time, his perspective on his subject matter and his exacting standards of quality, along with his striving to integrate Hungarian research in their international context, were exemplary both for those helping the emergence of the new discipline and for posterity. The respect he enjoyed among his contemporaries is expressed by the following words of laudation spoken by Gyula Sebestyén:[10] "we have to acknowledge that in the fields of comparative literary history and folklore, all of us here were students of Lajos Katona" (Sebestyén 1910:453).

It was with a sharp-eyed sagacity that he drew attention to certain questions and problems that had regularly recurred in the history of ethnographic and folklore research. Thus, for example, he emphasised that the study of folk poetry was of an interdisciplinary nature, since the collected material itself, i.e., the object of study brought it closer to literary history, but the subject, the performer of the texts, placed it in connection with ethnography and ethnology. The method of investigation, Lajos Katona believed, cannot be anything other than philology. He admonished his colleagues to apply the strictest consistency in handling, tracing, and comparing their data. Collectors and analysts of folklore data could forestall distrust from other branches of scholarship – and in his age this mostly meant philology, primarily classic philology – by applying the strictest discipline in their methodology, as Katona convincingly

[9]On his role in the foundation of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society, the posts he held, and his relationship to Antal Herrmann, see Hála 2014:281–288.

[10]Sebestyén Gyula (1864–1946), folklorist, literary historian, Chief Custodian of the library of the Hungarian National Museum, corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and member of the Board of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society in various functions, co-editor of *Ethnographia* jointly with Bernát Munkácsi between 1898 and sole editor between 1911 and 1917.

claimed (1900a:165–166, re-published 1912/II:13–14). In an era of scholarship where questions of origin and the search for genetic connections represented one of the central issues of folklore research in Hungary, just as elsewhere, it was particularly significant that he deployed all his knowledge and professional prestige to try to curb the search for genetic connections and parallels which are remote in time and space and cannot be philologically validated.[11]

In light of Lajos Katona's essays and reviews, a clear distinction between pseudo-scholarship – meaning naïve dilettante scholarly pursuits, mostly motivated by the noblest intentions – and genuine professional scholarship emerges. He believed that collectors and amateur researchers with an interest in folk traditions "were only unscientific in their methodology, but their strong faith in tradition can no more be condemned than the noble respect and enthusiastic zeal with which they apply themselves to their uncritical efforts. It is quite natural that, learning from their examples, we will not emulate their naïve mistakes, but we will no more imitate those who, falling into the opposite extreme, deny tradition any of its credit and validating potential. They are even willing to twist the facts about by force rather than accept something from tradition" (Katona 1897:59, re-published 1912/II:207). Thus speaking, he captured the desirable ethos of the ethnographer and folklore researcher in a manner which is valid to this day.

In the following paragraphs I shall outline the way in which Lajos Katona, this scholar of exceptional talent and authority, and in a broader sense the folklorists of the period, interpreted the essence, purpose, and methodology of ethnographic/folklore collection. Katona summarised the 'most imminent tasks' of Hungarian folk story scholarship in four points:

1. explore the historical folk tale corpus
2. collect from the lips of the people
3. process and systematise the material collected
4. comparative examination,

which he saw as the part of research that is "the most difficult and requires the greatest apparatus" (Katona 1891:227, re-published 1912/I:214). It is widely known in the discipline that Lajos Katona practiced three of these four activities intensely and at a high professional standard. Scholarship has paid less attention to how he thought about folklore collection and what kind of role he played in formulating the principles of collection in the period. His biographers and critics lauding his work often emphasise that he himself did not engage in intense collecting work.[12] He was mostly fascinated by comparative philological analysis and the systematisation and cataloguing of the various types of tales. Instead, he encouraged his students to collect. He considered field research to be a difficult occupation, since, as he writes, "capturing, recording, and publishing traditions" all require different qualities, and it is rare for a collector to be in

[11]One example is that of Gyula Istvánffy (1863–1921, teacher, ethnographer, collector of folk tales), who explained the similarity between the *sujet* of a Hungarian Paloc tale and a Turkish tale by attributing it to transmission during the 150 years of Ottoman Occupation in Hungary. Katona refuted this suggestion by offering a detailed review of the widespread European prevalence and parallels of the *sujet* and the various motifs of the tale (Katona 1890b:227–231, 364–371).

[12]"Of all of the workers of Hungarian folklore, perhaps Lajos Katona was the only one who had precious little direct contact with the people and who did not engage in collecting products of folk literature, either (. . .) He always encouraged his students to study the people and their life directly, and to do what they can to salvage abandoned products of folk literature," wrote Sebestyén (Sebestyén 1910:453). Katona himself wrote in a letter, "I am too much of a bookworm for collecting, sadly, or for entering in direct contact with the people" (Császár 1912:61; Reisinger 2000:23).

possession of all of these disparate traits. The collector must be familiar not only with the dialect of the people he observes but also with their manner of thinking, living, their customs, habits, and tastes (Katona 1891:220, re-published 1912/I:210).

In the following section I wish to prove that although Lajos Katona did not carry out intense fieldwork himself, he did fight with great dedication to make folklore collection reach a level that would make its results useable for academic study. He claimed that comparative work was not going to be philologically sound unless the recording of the text can be considered authentic (cf. Katona 1896a:251–252, 1891:220, re-published 1912/I:208–211). Empirical data collection in the field is a central concept and basic principle of ethnography and folklore studies, one of the most important methodological and epistemological issues in the discipline, the foundation stone of its identity, and, at the same time, the distinctive trait which sets it apart from related disciplines. Around the end of the 19th century, in the period when folklore studies developed into an independent discipline, the guidelines for collecting and recording folklore phenomena living in the oral tradition underwent a change. Lajos Katona's achievement in scholarship contributed to the criteria of the authenticity of folklore texts becoming transformed in Hungarian research.

Ever since he had taken an active part in the public affairs of his discipline, Lajos Katona had been in favour of supporting folklore collecting efforts through professional information and guidelines. As secretary of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society, in his report of 1896 he urged that the long-promised questionnaires for collectors be finally produced so they could guide and assist them in systematic collection work.[13] After all, the majority of the Society's membership consisted not of academics but of lay individuals interested in ethnography.[14] Several of them felt an affinity for collecting. The Hungarian Ethnographic Society has always had a supportive and helpful attitude towards collecting. In 1900, they decided to increase the number of pages in their journal, *Ethnographia*, in order to publish more of the collected material. But not simply material collected by scholars – they called on volunteer collectors in their advertisement, *Let us collect folk poetry,* as follows: "with regard to this joyful news, we wish to call on all friends of Hungarian folklore (...) to participate in these collecting efforts" (Munkácsi – Sebestyén 1900:31).

Lajos Katona was among the first Hungarian scholars to recognise that in no other discipline did the participation of dilettantes so jeopardised the professionalism and prestige of the discipline as it did in ethnography. Even back then, collectors very easily turned into self-appointed 'researchers.' This led to a tremendous number of shortcomings in textual publications and gave rise to flawed conclusions and explanations (Munkácsi 1900:39).

This kind of danger haunts folklore studies to this day. In the preface to his collection of folk stories, János Berze Nagy,[15] a student of Lajos Katona, writes about the dangers that may arise from the attitude of a contrary, all-too-clever amateur collector. "Anyone who has been fortunate enough to listen to the words of a dyed-in-the-wool rural story-teller will know what a

[13]"It would be desirable is our Society finally fulfilled its oft-renewed promise to its collectors and publish the questionnaires that offer instructions for a methodical procedure" (Katona 1896b:430).

[14]cf. Rendes tagok. A Magyarországi Néprajzi Társaság szervezete [Regular Members. The Organisation of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society] (*Ethnographia* I. 1890:60–68).

[15]János Berze Nagy (1879–1946), folklorist, tale researcher.

bloom of innocence may be struck from the face of tradition by the layman who knows nothing but pretends to know everything. Our folk poetry collectors fall into the gravest transgressions when they presume to tell the people what the latter actually want" (Berze Nagy 1907:XII).

Unprofessional folklore collection was not the only point where Lajos Katona identified the dangers of dilettantism – the search for the archaic religion and mythology of the Magyars could also easily depart from the facts in its comparative speculations (Katona 1897:56, re-published 1912/II:202). He was concerned that phenomena, objects, and motifs of folk culture may be diverted and transformed into cheap sensationalist exhibition pieces in bad taste, often driven by profit (Katona 1912a:260).

As early as 1896, he urged the publication of a collector's guide. In the decades following the birth of the discipline, various forms of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society called for more than the auxiliary materials and questionnaires for collectors. They also declared that it is desirable for a Hungarian collectors' manual to be produced as soon as possible. A compendium like that could review the subjects, goals, and findings of ethnographic research. They tried to bridge this deficiency by translating certain sections of handbooks written in foreign languages. Thus, for instance, Bernát Munkácsi offered a long review of Friedrich S. Krauss' *Allgemeine Methodik der Volkskunde* (1899) on the pages of *Ethnographia* with the purpose of temporarily bridging over the absence of a local manual on 'folklore studies.' In his review, Munkácsi described the most important pieces of advice the author gives on 'collecting material.' For collecting folk poetry, he particularly recommends the use of the phonograph. He draws attention to the dangers inherent in questionnaires – asking too many questions may hijack the collector's work, since the respondent may go out of their way to meet some genuine or imagined expectations. Instead of collecting answers to a questionnaire, the collector should "build on the most authentic and most direct confessions," according to the suggestions of the ethnographic manual (Munkácsi 1900:40). Incidentally, the use of questionnaires was merely a plan at this time in Hungarian research.

Lajos Katona himself was planning to write a Hungarian manual on folklore studies; indeed, he compiled two book plans, one in late 1889, the other in the mid-1890s. In these he outlined the projected structure of this summary, which, sadly, never came to be written. The outlines, however, clearly reflect Lajos Katona's perspective on the various fields of folklore research and the system of folklore genres (Katona 1912b:378–381).

In 1900, when the Hungarian Ethnographic Society published its advertisement on the pages of *Ethnographia* for collectors, titled *Let's collect folk poetry!*, there was still no Hungarian folklore manual or other collectors' guide available that they could have recommended to collectors. In view of this lack, Katona translated, and published in the same volume of the journal, a page-long paragraph that starts with *Wie soll man Volksmärchen aufzeichnen?* [How should folktales be recorded?], from Robert Petsch's[16] newly published writing reviewing the latest publications and research on German tales and legends. In it, the German folklorist summarised the most important rules of tale notation of the era.[17] Lajos Katona did not write

[16]Robert Petsch (1875–1945), German expert on Germanic Studies, ethnographer, folklorist. His works most frequently quoted by Hungarian scholarship include *Formelhafte Schlüsse im Volksmärchen* (1900) and *Neue Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Volkrätsels* (1899). Both were reviewed by Katona in *Ethnographia*, as well as two of his subsequently published works, *Das deutsche Volksrätsel* (1917) and *Gehalt und Form* (1925).

[17]Petsch 1900:381–390. See page 387 for the translated detail. https://archive.org/details/archivfrdasstu104brauuoft/page/386/mode/2up?view=theater (accessed November 27, 2021).

about the rest of the work,[18] and the emphases in the translation are his own, marking the points he wished most to commend to the attention of Hungarian scholarship. Writing at the end of the 19th century, Petsch postulated criteria for contemporary German scholarship that were different from those that the Brothers Grimm had followed:

- The collector should not be guided by his own aesthetic and ethical concept. "Today, the collector must entirely put aside his own self, his own notions of what is beautiful and what is moral; and *record with slavish precision all that he hears and in the way in which he hears it;*"
- a fragment heard should not be supplemented based on previously known more complete versions. If the storyteller mingles his story with individual, personal elements, those must be retained, because they also benefit scholarship, but these must not be over-emphasised;
- *unadulterated dialect* must be observed, preserving the speaker's pronunciation and manner of presentation;
- the same story needs to be heard from as many storytellers as possible. "*It is also desirable that the collector should get the same piece told by as many individuals as possible,* but not with the purpose of selecting, as did the Grimms, the presentation which seems 'the finest' of them or to supplement one with the help of the others (...) – what scholarship requires is not this kind of 'edited' material but the entire body of material" (Katona 1900b:424);
- even in the most perfect written record a great deal is lost, such as emphasis and tone of voice – this is where the phonograph is of great help, "used widely today in the course of collecting linguistic folk traditions for the purposes of ethnography and linguistics."

This is how Petsch concludes the line of criteria to be followed, and Lajos Katona adds, in brackets, to the German translation, "As is widely known, our fellow member, Béla Vikár, who up until now has noted down folk tales of Somogy County in writing and with stenography, has for the last year been using a phonograph, thanks to the noble generosity of our Minister of Religion and Public Education, to record with great success and laudable results the poetic relics living on the lips of the people" (Katona 1900b:424).[19]

Around the turn of the 20th century, it was far from obvious that the use of stenography or the phonograph should be accepted and supported. The requirement to capture texts without change and transformation had been clear even in the very first advertisements for collecting folk literature. But fidelity in recording had mostly meant not verbatim adherence to the text but faithfulness to the spirit of the people manifesting in folk literature in these early collections. Up until the second half of the 19th century, right up to the turn of the century and sometimes even beyond, the essence of collecting folk literature had not been to record a story with as much accuracy as possible but to record and publish the most complete variant possible, based on the variants that are structurally complete and aesthetically pleasing. The goal was not to document truthfully the unique, concrete phenomenon, the single speech event,

[18]He translated the part starting with *Wie soll man Volksmärchen aufzeichnen,* and in publishing omitted only one sentence, in which the author mentions a German example, and the concluding sentence and its extensions.

[19]Béla Vikár (1859–1945), linguist, translator, folklore researcher, corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. As an official, and later leader, of the Parliament Stenography Bureau, he was a professional practitioner and acknowledged international expert of stenography. He was able to note down text at the speed of natural live speech with total accuracy. The first time he used a phonograph for collecting in Hungary was in 1896 – a pioneering act in this regard even on a European scale.

but to capture the essence, the ideal typical traits of folk culture, and to reflect what was seen as folk performance. During the editorial process it was possible to make aesthetic and ideological corrections to adjust the texts to the assumed expectations of the recipients (cf. Gulyás 2011:129–130; Domokos 2015:30–42).

Lajos Katona believed that sharp vision and sharp hearing were indispensable prerequisites for the satisfactory recording of folk tales, "where the highest possible proficiency in stenography (. . .) is one of the chief assets" (Katona 1891:225). Nevertheless, even in some of his writings we find places where he seems to be speaking with a degree of caution and reservation about recording with stenography or the phonograph. János Berze Nagy's collection was published as Volume IX of the *Collection of Hungarian Folklore* [Magyar Népköltési Gyűjtemény], with Katona's laudatory words in the Preface: "the collector publishing these texts follows a fortunate golden mean between the faithful recording of stenography or even the phonograph and a free, stylised manner" (Katona 1907:VIII–IX).

What the above-quoted passage reflects is that the change in the criteria for folklore collection was not a single event but rather a gradual change within the history of the discipline and also in the personal oeuvre of one researcher. After all, these suggestions appeared several years after the previously cited string of advice regarding the annotation of folk tales. Katona, too, speaks of the contingent elements of phonograph recordings, similarly to folk song collector Zoltán Kodály, who made a great number of phonograph recordings and wrote in 1937 that "The phonogram gives you a snapshot, a momentary image. And this is not always the best image, it is often distorted. The true and full image of a melody cannot finally take shape for the collector until he has had several phonograph recordings and several instances of live observation. Only then will he know what is permanent and characteristic in the melody and what is changing or contingent" (Kodály 2007 [1937]:293).

Accepting, supporting, and encouraging collection using stenography or the phonograph, as well as striving for truly verbatim notation whereby all that is spoken by the informant must be recorded in the most accurate manner possible, even if the presentation is of uncertain origin or fragmented or aesthetically inferior – all of this was probably closely related to the powerful influence of the historical-geographic method.

European folklore research at the turn of the 20th century was fundamentally determined by the historical comparative method of the Finish historical-geographic school that emerged largely based on the textual philological investigation of Kaarle Krohn. Throughout Europe, the historical-geographic method played a key role in folklore studies growing into an independent discipline. The object of this new branch of scholarship, folklore, was seen as consisting of folklore texts that could be collected in different variants, and its method was seen as historical and comparative. Such a text-centred approach not only encouraged philological research but also opened the way to studying folklore as a social phenomenon. Based on textual variants, it became possible to study local and regional idiosyncrasies or to analyse questions of individual performance style and collective expectations. The method also influenced the criteria of what was considered an authentically recorded folklore text. Social and cultural context became important from the point of view of comparison, including who had performed the given variant, where, when, what their level of education was, and from whom they had learned it.[20]

[20]On the re-appraisal of the impact of the historical-geographic method and school, see: Frog 2013:18–34.

The process whereby this method became integrated into the Hungarian study of folk literature has not been adequately explored, even though the investigations of European textual folklore into questions of genre, its textual corpuses, catalogues of types and motifs, its principles of systematisation, or its conceptual terminology have strong ties to the basic principles of the historical-geographic method. The comparative method had an invigorating effect on folklore collecting, striving to base analyses on the largest possible number of variants. Lajos Katona's investigations, particularly his folk tale research and his attempts at cataloguing, were fundamentally affected by the historical-geographic school.

With the objective of exploring and salvaging the relics of folk poetry, folk music, folk belief and customs, and of processing and publishing the collected material, an international folklore association was founded in Finland in 1907 under the name Folklore Fellows by Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, German, and Danish scholars. The draft Deed of Foundation and the invitation document were signed by Kaarle Krohn, Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, and Axel Olrik. The society was commended to the attention of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society by Lajos Katona in 1908. At the meeting of the board of directors he described the goals of the international association. The Deed of Foundation was presented in *Ethnographia* (Katona 1908:374–375). He encouraged his colleagues to have the Hungarian Ethnographic Society join the initiative. However, the *Hungarian Branch of Folklore Fellows* was not formed until 1911, after Katona's death. By organising the Hungarian collectors' network, their goal was to salvage phenomena that were rapidly disappearing under the influence of ongoing changes. By involving and training the broadest possible range of collectors from the community, they were planning to collect the *folk traditions* of the Hungarians and ethnic minorities living in the country (Sebestyén 1912:193–199). It was under the auspices of this organisation that they first began to print collectors' guidelines, proposed topics for collection and questionnaires. In a publication called *Tájékoztató* [Prospectus] (Sebestyén – Bán 1912), collectors could read about the most important criteria for collecting, suggested subject areas, and the questionnaire itself. They emphasised the importance of noting down texts verbatim and the necessity to interview several informants. They also admonished collectors to record the exact personal data of both the collector and the informant. This was a new consideration, since the Society's guidelines for collectors issued in 1900 had not required that the data of the informant be recorded. In order to support this grand-scale research effort financially and morally, they managed to secure the assistance of the Hungarian National Museum, the Kisfaludy Society, and the Hungarian Ethnographic Society, as well as private individuals and various institutions. The National Széchényi Library was going to house the vast number of manuscripts that would result from such an international venture – indeed, the institution planned to organise a separate folklore department. However, the national archive that was envisaged did not come to exist until quarter of a century later, in 1939, as the Ethnological Repository of the Museum of Ethnography. Within a few years after its establishment, Gyula Sebestyén, in an address assessing the achievements of the Hungarian Branch of FF, once again spoke of the organisation of the Hungarian collecting network as a rescue operation.[21]

[21] "In the framework of an international alliance of scholars, a series of experimentation overarching several generations of our national literature and preparatory efforts of varying intensity, we have successfully found the method for the systematic exploration of Hungarian folk tradition, for *salvaging it at the last moment* and for valorising it in the national consciousness and international scholarship" (Sebestyén 1914:135, emphasis by I.L.).

In his obituary on Lajos Katona, Sándor Solymossy[22] spoke of the activity of the 'master' as one that brough about a change in the history of Hungarian folklore studies. In his work, the romanticist, aestheticizing view of folk poetry is replaced by comparative research exploring genetic connections, which sees an imperfect fragment as vital as a perfect piece of mature text.

"His activity marks a new turn in Hungarian literary scholarship. In place of the romantic vision and aesthetic appraisal of folklore, he accorded general validity to the genetic theory based on the psychology of the people, which holds that a shapeless fragment living in the memory of the people is just as valuable as the complete whole which happened to survive intact – indeed, the former may be even older due to its archaic character, which preserves age-old tradition" (Solymossy 1910:259).

He was among the first to point out the significance of Lajos Katona's theoretical approach and investigations for the history of the discipline. Concluding his laudation, Solymossy recalls one of his last conversations with Katona. Talking of social theory, Katona reflected on the antagonism that was emerging between the rapidly changing modern metropolis losing its local colour to international influences and the "the conservative villages changing at the slow pace of forced transformation" – a type of internal war within our societies. We must endure this degree of destruction and loss in exchange for mutual understanding and rapprochement, says Solymossy, quoting Katona's words, "Let us strive to know and understand the people in their true essence. Let us study regularly all with which they surround themselves – let us collect and study their intellectual treasures" (Solymossy 1910:261).

Conflict of interest: The author is an editorial board member and has not been part of the study review process.

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[22]Sándor Solymossy (1864–1945), ethnographer, expert on textual folklore, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He was a member of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society in various functions, acting as Vice President between 1918 and 1935.

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Parallel and Incompatible Ruralities. Rural Realities in Four Transylvanian (Romania) Microregions

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 135–152
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00029

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

Characteristics of the Transylvanian Countryside after Romania's European Integration

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Received: November 9, 2021 • Accepted: December 15, 2021

ABSTRACT

The village today is only partially what we used to know of in the past, our previous image rooted in a sinking world, nothing but memories. In the 21st century, even in rural communities, the daily routine, practices and strategies of economic life are determined by the processes of modernization and globalization, in conjunction with information and communication technologies along with the wide-ranging proliferation of digital devices. It can be said that life in the 21st century village also shows a simultaneous constraint of modernization (the constraint of evolution and change) and the presence of masses incapable of changing (even if their number is continuously decreasing). The coexistence and confrontation of these opposing forces and ideologies characterizes the Hungarian/Transylvanian rural space in Romania during the 21st century. All these have led to the degradation of previous community patterns, resulting in the faltering position of tradition as well as a major change in the role it plays in the life of said communities.

KEYWORDS

globalization, locality, modernization, non-synchronism, land use, EU accession

This paper presents the theoretical foundations of our recently completed research, titled *Párhuzamos ruralitások. A vidékiség mai (lét)formái négy erdélyi kisrégióban* [Parallel and incompatible ruralities. Rural realities in four Transylvanian (Romania) microregions], funded by the

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National Research, Development and Innovation Office (Hungary),[1] while outlining some of the research results. It also presents a thematic block covering rurality in this issue, the articles of which provide a selection of the project results.

The basic objective of the research was to explore the present and the recent past of Transylvanian rural society (which is preserved by the memory of the individuals, along with data that can be reconstructed on the basis of archival documents), analyzing the coexistence, interlocking and conflicts of the archaic (but nevertheless continually changing) and formerly inextant, newly manifesting (e.g., online) cultural behaviors over the past fifteen years. While conducting the research, we counted/examined the forms of rurality specific to the 21st century, attempting to offer a new, comprehensive frame of interpretation for the ethnographic approach to rurality and to the understanding of recently emerging rural attitudes.

1. Hermann Bausinger argues that the "shifting of the horizon" has the consequence that tradition, hitherto seen as organizing the world, loses its universal validity (cf. Bausinger 1995:81–83). The disruption/disappearance of the traditional peasant environment, the transformation of the economic structure, and the dissolution of traditions and their normative force have resulted in the disappearance of the village as a social organization with an autonomous identity. A similar conclusion was reached by Alexander V. Chayanov, who in his book *The Theory of Peasant Economy* saw the disappearance of the village primarily as a result of modernization. In his approach, the backwardness of the Third World is not explained by the slowness of modernization, but by the dependency relations created in the process of modernization (Chayanov 1986). Regarding the aforementioned processes of transformation in rural settlements, Terry Marsden writes that the self-sufficient village has transitioned into a rural area centered on consumption (Marsden 1999). At the same time, it is also worth mentioning Imre Kovách's work summarizing the process of transformation in rural society in the 20th century, in which the author writes that what we call rural areas are those where there are no peasants, only a memory of the peasantry in various forms and institutions (Kovách 2012).

In order to describe the space bounded by the horizons mentioned by Hermann Bausinger, Arjun Appadurai uses the concept of *locality*. "I view locality as primarily relational and contextual rather than as scalar or spatial. I see it as complex phenomenological quality, constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of contexts" (Appadurai 1996:178). Globalization, with its economic, cultural, social and information processes that transcend nations and continents and operate all over the world, thus changes practices and meaning-making that are bound to place and time. It does not, however, abolish local tradition, but only offers it a new horizon of meaning. Globalism is not the opposite of localism, but the framework in which localism is created (as a technique and identity-forming mechanism for resolving the alienation generated by globalization).

[1]The institutions involved include: the Research Centre for Humanities of the Institute of Ethnography of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Kriza János Ethnographic Society and the Department of Applied Social Sciences of the Marosvásárhely Faculty of the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania. Participants in this research were: Balázs Balogh, Sándor Borbély, Ágnes Fülemile, József Gagyi, Albert Zsolt Jakab, Barna Kovács, Levente Szilágyi, Gyöngyvér Erika Tőkés and András Vajda.

In another essay, Hermann Bausinger uses the concept of *parallel non-synchronism* introduced by Ernest Bloch to describe "the simultaneous existence of heterogeneous parts", a situation where "the obsolete bursts forward" and the present "reaches back to earlier desires and conditions" (Bausinger 1989:24–25). According to Bloch's definition, parallel non-synchronism actually means simultaneity i.e. "the simultaneity of different elements determined by different historical forces." Expressed even more concretely, "it is a question of the simultaneity of concepts and ways of life, of ideas and ideologies existing simultaneously in the present" (Bausinger 1989:25).

Our first basic assumption is that the individual regions do not have the same approach and attitude due to phase shifts in development and differences in historical development, i.e. regions with different developmental trajectories and value systems, practices, technologies and products left over from different periods live side by side at the same time within a region/settlement. This mosaicism characterizes Transylvanian rurality and rural ways of life today.

In addition, we consider it important to mention the social processes of both detraditionalization and heritagization, which are simultaneous, but working in opposite directions, as one of the most tangible ambivalences of contemporary rural communities. The first term refers to a kind of questioning of community authority and tradition, while the second refers to the opposite: to the reinterpretation, consolidation and survival of tradition in the community (cf. Morris 1996; Heelas et al. eds. 1996).

In the above sense, rurality is understood here as a construct of specific cultural characteristics and historically developed cultural features, not primarily economic or social, but cultural.

Simultaneously, while the dichotomy of reality into urban and rural deeply entrenched in the social sciences is unavoidable (Kovách 2007), the emplacement of rurality within current, more complex and global forms of society leads us beyond this duality since rurality proves to be a far more convoluted issue. Therefore, our second basic premise is that without an exploration of the present and the tangible recent past of rural society and its effects and memories still present, and without a description of the coexistence, intertwining and conflicts of archaic/traditional – but constantly changing – and previously non-existent, new (e.g. online) cultural behaviors that have emerged over the last ten years, it is neither possible to understand the global and local co-movements and their combined effects, nor to address and understand the resulting social problems in depth. Seen from this perspective, the two central concepts of the research are therefore *modernization* and its communicative universe, *social communication* in the broad sense (cf. Gagyi 2009a).

2. In the period following the changes of 1989, the evolution of rural life in Transylvania and its relationship to land ownership was based on the triple structure of land distributors, local entrepreneurs (i.e., the prospering) and subsistence farmers (see Gagyi 2007). However, looking back almost 30 years later, the fundamental question is whether Romania's accession to the EU can be considered as an epochal boundary, which, precisely because of normative rules, strategies and practices that transcended nations/countries, brought about such significant changes in the life of the Romanian and, more narrowly, Transylvanian countryside that it is perceived/interpreted as a new era, not only in political discourse but also in local society and in socio-scientific thinking. In other words, does the post-2007 EU accession era have actors and key players similar to those mentioned above, and if so, from which social strata?

The broader context of the study is therefore the processes that emerged after 1989, but which are still at work today. After de-collectivization, the countryside was characterized by an

increase in mobility (working abroad) and the resulting *consumer* lifestyle (characterized by a transformation of the material environment, new service institutions and new consumer identities) as well as by new media disseminating these patterns and the continuous mediatization of the contextualization and meaning of these patterns. "This too – writes József Gagyi – is an adaptation of local society to the great transformative processes of society, this time global, a process based on technical and social change in a new context. What is really exciting about this is the overlapping of processes that further west are successive in time and impact further west."[2] (Gagyi 2009a:30.)

Continuing József Gagyi's line of thought in agreement with the previous quote, this is why "it is very important and fruitful to take a social science approach that seeks to develop relevant knowledge about this society, concerning its adaptation to change, by studying the culturally coordinated and hidden resistance behind/underneath the surface social gestures, or the parallel non-synchronous actions" (Gagyi 2009a:30–31).

This is also necessary because, although Transylvanian ethnographic research has indicated and recorded the transformation of traditional peasant society and the farming village, it has still failed to answer the question of what the new rural society born in the wake of modernization following accession to the European Union has become. To what extent have differences in traditional peasant culture resulting from the landscape fragmentation been maintained? Or is the historical embeddedness of the mentality in each region so strong that it is able to resist the uniformizing effects of global processes geared to consumption?

3. If we look at the history of rural transformation in Europe, we might get the impression that the processes we in Eastern European countries have experienced in the last 30 years are the same as those experienced by the West about 100 years earlier. Apart from the "phase shift" which is historically and traditionally the case in East-West relations, this can be traced back to two basic reasons: during the post-World War II period, in the midst of and as a result of the struggle to establish and consolidate the power structure in Eastern European countries, the village was characterized by both (1) the slow nature of development and (2) lacking the organic integration of external influences.[3]

Nevertheless, in Eastern European countries during the 20th century –- including Romania – "the move away from the 'primary work,' i.e., agriculture, continued" (Füzi 2009:19),[4] with the result that the economic and cultural distance/difference between village and city gradually began to decrease.

First, the socialist transformation of the country's economy and social structure had a powerful transformative effect on Romanian village life. Then, over the last 30 years, other forms of economic and cultural change, such as the market economy, globalization and the emergence of the information society, have been the forces with a transformative impact on the village

[2]In his cited study, József Gagyi points out that modernised access roads, the accelerating spread of motorisation and the spread of computers and internet use occurred during the same years (see Gagyi 2009a:31).

[3]At the end of the 19th century, the modernisation of the predominantly rural and agrarian Romanian society was described by Titu Maiorescu, who developed Mihai Eminescu's theory as the adaptation of *forms without content* (*forme fără fond*) (see Maiorescu 1978:153).

[4]Emphasis in the original; according to the author, "this continuing and accelerating process of disintegration in agriculture links the twentieth century to the centuries before it" (Füzi 2009:19).

world, and as a result the differences/distances between village and town have shrunk even further.

Examining the transformation of peasant society in the 20th century and the results of ethnographic research on the subject, we can see that socialist modernization, the development of industry, the construction of road networks and the institutionalization of transport (railway network, regular bus services) in the mid-20th century had a great impact on the mobility of the rural population, often leading to the development of "amphibious" ways of life (cf. Gagyi 2009b). However, small-scale farming as a form of production typical of the peasantry and the associated "work ethic, farming and farm organization traditions and community norms inherited from the past" were not eliminated, which resulted in a specific mixture of "peasant and non-peasant elements" (Kőrösi 2006:144). Based on István Márkus' research in Nagykőrös during the 1970s, this is what ethnographic-sociological literature calls post-peasantizetion (Márkus 1979). Miklós Szilágyi calls the cultural system that was developed during the period of socialism and accepted by the whole of rural society a post-peasant tradition, which comprised a mixture of elements of the old and the new world. It was a way of life offered to all members of the community, and it also meant "a determined conformity to the dominant elements of the fragmenting peasant tradition beneath the surface of worker and employee life" (see Kőrösi 2006:144). Examining the question of post-peasantizetion, on the other hand, Balázs Balogh points out that in the phenomena, structures and economic behavior that can be understood more narrowly as "economic", underlying intentions are revealed, such as the possibilities and strategies of expressing value orientation, social rank and prestige (Balogh 2002).

By contrast, the great socio-economic transformation of the late 20th and early 21st centuries was characterized by both a rapid succession of waves that caused change in a variety of directions: on the one hand, decollectivization, repeasantization and demodernization led to regressive processes, while on the other, globalization, digitalization and the industrialization of agriculture[5] were the effects that led to the adoption of different life strategies, everyday practices and scenarios, not only from one region to another but also from one family to another.

In addition, media researchers point out that the spread of computers, smartphones and the internet in rural areas has not only created new varieties of virtuality, new communication environments, but also glocalities,[6] specific local varieties of globalization. This means that "although we continue to live in certain physical places, we are now increasingly sharing information with and about people who live in places other than our own. More often, we come

[5]By this we mean the shift to large-scale agriculture, where the entire work process is done by machines, during which people were replaced by machines, the place of the family as a productive unit was taken over by agricultural companies, and the practice of farming based on tradition and experience, which was geared to self-sufficiency, was replaced by large-scale management based on engineering. This change has affected not only the structure of the landscape – small-plot farming has been replaced by large-plot farming – but also the way of living within the landscape. The countryside became detached from the body of the village. This can be seen most clearly in the oft-repeated observation of people living in the village that one hardly ever sees people working in the countryside anymore, only machines.

[6]More specifically: glocalities. Joshua Meyrowitz states that not only are we all living in "glocalities" today, but "each glocality is unique in its own way". What they have in common is that "they are all influenced by global trends and global consciousness" (Meyrowitz 2005:30). Arguing in favour of glocalities, he adds that "no matter how sophisticated our technologies, no matter how hard we try to multitask, we cannot be in two places at the same time. The fixedness of experience is a constant, and the importance of place persists even in the face of massive social and technological change." (Meyrowitz 2005:29).

into contact with experiences and messages that were originally intended for people in other places" (Meyrowitz 2005:31). So, in glocality, the global and the local coexist (Meyrowitz 2005:32). Even so, what this means in terms of culture, economic structure, individual and community identity and the organization of everyday life is a different question and could well be the subject of further research. The dissemination of the internet, the computer and the smartphone in rural areas constitutes "tools that change value horizons, support adaptation to changes in the world, or generate cultural changes and cultural coexistences (synchronisms)"[7] (Gagyi 2013:58).

4. Based on our research experience, we argue that Romania's accession to the EU in 2007 is not only the boundary of a new epoch in terms of political history, but one that has affected almost all aspects of rural society, from the destination choices of migrant workers (migration) to the farming (e.g., land use) and lifestyle habits of those who stayed. Even new forms of traditional culture use (heritage creation, heritage use) are evolving under the influence/pressure of EU regulations and patterns (cf. Jakab – Vajda 2018). As József Gagyi aptly put it, the widening of elbow room and the availability of more funds through the EU grant system have started/accelerated the transformation of the infrastructural environment. New management and life management strategies have been established and perpetuated, new material worlds have been built, new relationships have been established, new desires and new interpretations have been born (cf. Gagyi 2009a).

The key question in relation to this new situation is what impact the rapid infrastructural transformation of rural settlements, changes in farming and income structure and social stratification, the changed mechanical environment (farming machinery, personal motor vehicles, or the computer and the mobile phone within the intimate, family environment), along with the use and function of these tools, have on rural lifestyles, economic practices and strategies as well as their impact on landscape use, the communicative and cultural memory of communities, biographical narratives, narrative behavior, and traditions in the broad sense. These questions have only been examined sporadically in ethnographic studies of Transylvania (cf. Ilyés – Jakab eds. 2013; Jakab – Vajda eds. 2018; Jakab – Vajda 2019, 2020).

The changes that have taken place in Romania in the nearly one and a half decades since its accession to the European Union have not only meant a blurring of cultural differences between village-urban areas and areas with different landscape-historical-cultural roots, a unification of economic practices and daily life, but also the increasing frequency and extent to which the population living in rural areas organize and live their lives in the nearby urban centre. The village has ceased to function as a living space (see Egyed 1981:250), and rural life can no longer be imagined without urban services. Despite the fact that the strong opening of rural habitat towards the city was already a feature of Romanian society in the second half of the 20th century, defined by forced industrialization and urbanization, the changes of the last decade and a half have brought about the complex dependence of the village on the city because the recent changes in village-town relations have been much more intense and drastic.[8] Today, it is not

[7]The parallel to the concept used by Hermann Bausinger (see above).

[8]It should be noted here that during the communist era, the village-town relationship was a much more organic intertwining. A large part of the urban population had rural roots and many links to the village in terms of daily food supplies. So, there was not only an opening of, and shift from, the village towards the town, but vice versa: an opening from the town towards the village.

only the workplace that links rural areas to the city, but also institutions and services that provide health services, education, culture, recreation and entertainment, and even shops for clothing and daily food. The last decade and a half have therefore seen the virtual disappearance of *self-sufficiency*.

At the same time, in the wake of the move away from the traditional peasant way of life, rural communities have, in the words of Jacques Barzun, who characterizes the last decades of the 19th century, "replaced tradition by comfort" (cited in Füzi 2009:22).[9] In the years following the reprivatization of the land, manual cultivation, typical of the pre-collectivization period, was definitively abandoned, replaced by the use of various herbicides and machinery (see Vajda 2019:40). While in the last decade of the 20th century all the stages of haymaking – from mowing to drying, collecting and transporting – were done manually in most farming families, in the last decade the whole process is mostly done by machine. In other words, the industrialization of agriculture, and the emergence and spread of machinery on small rural farms has made much of the agricultural work redundant, just as domestic machinery has done with much of the domestic work. This transformation, with the widespread use of machinery, has freed up a significant manpower, but the full picture is that it has only made life partially easier, and often created new burdens (see Füzi 2009:22), since these machines need constant repair and care (cf. Gagyi 2020).

At the same time, the rise of convenience over tradition has also led to the emergence of new consumer behaviors and the intensification of the *desire to consume* (see Füzi 2009:29). In rural life, too, homemade and handmade (i.e. not manufactured) tools and buildings produced from natural materials have been relegated to the background, replaced by mass-produced goods.

The emergence and widespread use of machinery has had an impact not only on labor requirements and the quality of work, but also on the amount of time spent with it. The mechanization of agriculture (and to some extent livestock farming) has speeded up certain processes and in many ways shortened the time needed to work the land. In the case of the rural population, the time thus freed up was appropriated mainly by three areas: television, the pub, and local festivals. It is also characteristic that the period of strong motorization in agriculture, and of rural activities in general, saw an increase in village festivities and commemorations.[10] In addition to village fairs and feast day celebrations at local churches, there is a proliferation of commemorative events, generational meetings, special days and Sundays for the elderly, choir meetings, and traditional festivals.[11]

[9]Jacques Barzun's *Hajnaltól alkonyig. A nyugati kultúra 500 éve* [From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life] (2006) takes account of what are considered 20th century phenomena at the level of everyday life, but which were in fact already complete in the last third of the 19th century. Referring to this period, he says that "these are the decades when tradition was replaced by comfort" (quoted in Füzi 2009:22). In the countryside, the introduction of electricity, alongside motorisation, can be seen as one of the first steps in the development of a comfortable environment (see Gagyi 2009b, 2019).

[10]In a different context, but for the 20th century, Albert Zsolt Jakab has made an inventory of the occasions, places and specialists of commemoration (see Jakab 2018). For rural commemorations, see also Pozsony 2006:262–280, 2015:235–264.

[11]See Albert Zsolt Jakab's lecture *Emlékállítás és (meg)emlékezési gyakorlatok vidéken a posztszocialista időszakban* [Memory Construction and Memorial Practice in a Rural Context in the Post-Socialist Period] (*Párhuzamos ruralitások. A vidékiség formái Erdélyben – a KJNT vándorkonferenciája* [Parallel Ruralities. Rural Realities in Transylvania]. Gernyeszeg/Gornești, 21 September 2018).

The decline of the farming lifestyle and the shrinking size of backyard farms, and in the case of most families their complete disappearance, is the most accurate measure of the gradual and accelerating decline of agrarian character in rural settlements. It is the surest sign of the socio-cultural transformation/disappearance of the peasantry, and with it the traditional village. Even now in transition, and although in many respects no longer peasant or rural in the classic sense of the word, this world is not becoming urban. The question is, then, what is it that most distinguishes this rural environment from the urban? If not agricultural work and backyard farming, then what is the characteristic feature of the 21st century village/rural area? In our interpretation, this distinction can best be captured by the concepts of *scarcity* (see Gagyi 2005:87) and *constraint* (see Peti – Szabó 2006:7).

It was not only traditional farming that disappeared by the end of the 20th century (Füzi 2009:21). As a result of economic changes, the family also ceased to function as a productive unit, giving way to the virtual family (see Boreczky 2004). The extended family – which included grandparents, siblings and distant relatives – gets together around the holidays instead of/alongside work. The frequency of meetings has decreased, but the time spent is quality time.

"Natural"[12] or unprocessed foods are also losing ground in rural life. The differences in dietary habits between town and village will be smoothed out, with both being dominated by (often semi-prepared) food from markets and supermarkets. However, the process of levelling out the differences is much more complex. During the communist period, and even in the early 1990s, urban populations with rural roots regularly "visited home" to buy a significant proportion of their basic foodstuffs (e.g., vegetables, pork). At the same time, after the introduction of rationing, the rural population was excluded from buying some foodstuffs (bread) and had limited access to others (butcher's meat, butter, etc.) due to the social institution of queuing and the operation of clientele systems.

Farming increasingly takes place in the background of social life (Füzi 2009:19). This is true not only of the rural environment, but also of society as a whole. For this reason, although a significant part of the rural population is still (also) engaged in farming and animal husbandry, the image of the village and also the daily life of individual families does not show the typical features of the agrarian way of life.

This change in the rural environment is influenced by simultaneously opposing forces: on one hand, the rural population is trying to break away from its agrarian past at an accelerating pace, to organize its daily life away from the built environment and the economic and cultural routines typical of peasant life (see Vajda 2019), while on the other hand, routines and mentalities that can be traced back to this way of life, and which are wished forgotten and transcended, are constantly surfacing and being activated. These belief-based explanations of the world derived from the past and popular culture, and the resulting breakdowns and pauses, "as bumps or stops in the way of overly rapid pattern-following," are what Hermann Bausinger calls regressions (see Bausinger 1995:44; cf. Gagyi 2020). At the same time, as a kind of *compensatory exercise* (Marquard 2001), forgotten traditions are sought out and revived (Vajda 2016, Keszeg 2018a:33–38). Another characteristic feature of the countryside today is therefore *attachment to antecedents* (see Füzi 2009:19).

The peasant continent (Gagyi ed. 1999:29), with the village as its site, has finally sunk, and what remains is a multiplicity and diversity of islands and reefs, a structure in which change has

[12]E.g., traditional vegetables and cereals are being replaced by genetically modified varieties developed in laboratories.

radically transformed certain levels/areas while leaving others untouched. In other words, the transformation has produced a "multiplicity of variations", and "these transitional forms are proving to be very resilient" (Gagyi 2009c:145). Nevertheless, certain attitudes in the rural environment – strongly linked to the traditional village and to the peasantry – are not only preserved, but also reproduced.

Today's village is only partly nourished by memories of that once existing, but now sunken, world. In the 21st century, the processes of globalization and modernization as well as the widespread diffusion of information and communication technology and smart devices are shaping the daily routines, practices and strategies for organizing (economic) life in rural communities. It could be said that a kind of modernization imperative is present, in which the need for progress and transformation alongside masses who are unable to transform (even if the latter are dwindling in number) are simultaneously present in 21st century rural life and that 21st century Romanian/Transylvanian/Hungarian rural areas are characterized by the combined presence of these conflicting and opposing forces and ideologies.

All of this has eroded the previously existing models of community organization, undermined the position of tradition and led to a major change in its role in the life of communities.

Whereas in traditional village society the individual's life was lived in the eyes of the community, with the approval of the community, the power of tradition to organize life and to produce life paths has now been eroded. In the traditional village, there are some (mostly ritual) occasions when the village confronts its own morals and takes responsibility for its actions. Tradition as a normative framework has created/maintained many contexts in which norm-breaking and moral lapses could be excommunicated. These rituals, as a valve for local society, were intended to eliminate internal tensions and restore order to society.[13] In the case of the 21st century village, however, these rituals, this kind of discussion of norm violations in the community, is no longer possible. This is mainly because, on the one hand, traditional communities have disappeared, and on the other hand, the community norms and the kind of public opinion that used to operate the rituals are no longer in place.[14] To put it a little more bluntly, it could be said that the normative role of public opinion has been definitively taken over by official regulation.

However, in terms of the transformation in rural areas during the 21st century, a process opposite to the one outlined above has also been taking place. The emergence of modern rural life has not only been determined by external forces that have been intensifying over the last quarter of a century. The roots of this transformation can be traced back to traditional rural society itself. In other words, the patterns of behavior we see in the rural areas today do not all come from outside the town/village. It could be argued that the village as we know it today has been shaped from the very beginning of the 20th century, but mostly in its last third. At least it

[13]E.g., the year-end rite of the "hill-calling" (*hegybekiáltás*) in the Transylvanian Mezőség region, during which "the young people of the village divided into two groups and went to the hill on either side of the village, from where they shouted out to each other the deviant events of the past year in an improvised ritual dialogue (…). The unwritten rule of this custom was that no one was to be offended or angry. The young people represented public opinion" (Keszeg 2018b:91).

[14]Of course, we must mention that the unity, the community and the compulsory nature of peasant morality and the public opinion which supervised it had already been broken. As early as the 1950s, young people who went to urban schools and lived in urban environments "spoke of their mothers' customs with contempt" (Nagy 1989:283).

was during this period that the traditional worldview disintegrated, when life models and behaviors as well as the technical/machine environment (such as the tractor and the car, to mention only the most important elements in terms of lifestyle change) that widely spread in rural communities over the last 20 years first made their appearance. Thus, László Füzi's statement about the 20th century, according to which "this century has not been able to «spread» its technological world in the wider world to the expected level (…), but has created new exclusions" (Füzi 2009:30) is even more emphatically true and for an even longer period of time (until the late 2000s) in the case of the rural areas.[15] This explains why the Romanian (Transylvanian/Hungarian) rural population adapting to the challenges of the changed economic, cultural and technical environment and abandoning the traditional way of life in the first half of the 2000s had already entered the path toward joining the European Union back in the 20th century, but with the advent of free movement and employment opportunities throughout the territory of the European Union and the entry into force of EU standards and legislation on agriculture and livestock farming, they suddenly found themselves in the 21st century.

THE RESEARCH AND ITS RESULTS

Consequently, in the light of the above, three types of rurality seem to have emerged in Transylvania: (1) liminal rurality, for the interpretation of which the key concepts are "identity," "boundary," and "transport"; (2) rurality as determined by the vicinity of the metropolitan area, for which one should concentrate upon its function as a suburb, along with developments aided by large investment projects and the radical transformation of consumer behavior; and (3) the so-called "deep rural" area, the characteristics of which are the negative change of population number, the rising number of Gypsies, and the general ageing of the population (e.g. typically in the valley of the Nyárád/Niraj river), along with the continuity of peasant farming and landscape usage (e.g. Székelyföld/Szeklerland). In the latter case, "heritage", viz. "heritage use" seem to be the central concepts which can explain the characteristic phenomena for this type of rurality (see Gagyi 2004).

The just-concluding NRDIO-study examined and tried to capture the responses to the changes that have taken place over the last almost 15 years by case studies. In other words, we were exploring different versions of the disappearance and survival of the peasantry, parallel ruralities constructed by cultural patterns of disappearance and survival, and elite-led resurrection. It is therefore justified, even inescapable, to use the basic categories of global/local and, in this context, glocality as a specific 21st century way of being, alongside the categories of multiple modernization, detraditionalization and heritagization, digitalization and mediatization (see above).

In the course of our research, the following research topics/areas were touched upon, through which slower or faster-paced structural changes and acculturation processes can be apprehended, exemplified, and interpreted:

1. The transformation of the concept of modernization which explains changes – from the conception "Stalinist modernization" through to pseudomodernization (Roth 2002) to the

[15]Emphasis in the original.

reflexive modernization of Ulrich Beck and the several existent theories of modernization (Beck 2008:146–159; Beck et al. 1994). "Modernization – writes József Gagyi – is still a political slogan, a political priority. The question is at what pace this has happened, and what regional and local differences lie behind the general use of the term" (Gagyi 2009a:32). Our research suggests that, in the areas we study, a kind of two-faced (or Janus-faced) modernization was most prevalent not only in the period following the collectivization of land ownership but also after Romania's accession to the EU. This not only means that while the modernization of the rural areas was/is indispensable and the inhabitants of these areas themselves, looking back from the present, interpret this process as a success, for the individuals who directly suffered the events, it has also meant terrible burdens, great annoyance, major disappointments and insecurity, as well as a strong cultural shock; hence, from the point of view of the traditional values and the world view of rural society, modernization seems to be as much a means of tyranny and destruction as a vital and constructive force for prosperity and comfort.

And what is at least as important as the above issues: nowadays, developers are active even in these formerly remote places (micro-regions and larger areas), and the future of these regions has become the subject of development plans. How do locals react to these facts? They view the advocates and administrators of various development plans and the proponents of different concepts of territorial autonomy with "suspicion, even as they gain political and personal economic advantages from this situation. They are trying to understand 'what these (Hungarians or Romanians) want (with us), and what does the EU want?'" (Gagyi 2009a:31).

2. An analysis of the capacity for adaptation in local society, which is increasingly defined by communication based on (progressively more widespread) tools of information technology, along with the number and quality of relationships (primarily outside the community, aimed at knowledge gain and use, based on mobility and mediatized), including the spread of new media, its use and the local adaptations of global processes, new roles, attitudes, routines and beliefs formed during the process of using new instruments and techniques (see Gagyi 2009a:31). According to József Gagyi: "Today, even »closed« and »exotic« communities are connected with the larger world by roads, several means of transportation, children and grandchildren visiting from remote places or creating their living environments in the respective locality and investing in it, their representation on the World Wide Web, and the curious gaze of the tourists" (Gagyi 2009a:31). Alongside the spread and use of new media, the proliferation of migrant work abroad and trips to other countries are creating local adaptations of global processes, new roles, habits, routines, beliefs and worldviews associated with new situations and the use of new tools and techniques.
3. Heritage and patrimonialization as the "creation" of traditional cultural elements used in a novel context and with new meanings. Local and regional identities are being formed and transformed within projects aimed at the creation of heritage. The last few years have also seen a proliferation of cultural heritage projects in Transylvania, the issue of heritage has been frequently addressed in the media, in political discourse, and even by economists and rural development planners who are developing economic/rural development strategies, as a cornerstone of local development (see Vajda 2016; Jakab – Vajda 2018:7). The reason for the proliferation of heritage approaches is twofold: (1) the changes that occurred with the fall of the dictatorial regime at the level of society (re)actualized the past and the socio-cultural

practices of the period before the dictatorship, while the accelerating historical changes of the first half of the 2000s have made it necessary to reassess this revived past, to confront the past and the heritage passed down from the past (Gagyi 2004:53); (2) tourism has resumed, which has led to the appreciation of the role of heritage in the identity strategies of local communities, as "the local community must articulate, reveal, visualize and narrate (not least sell) its past, its heritage, itself. (…) If the community has not had its own past before, now it must have one, its own heritage" (Gagyi 2004:50).

4. Research on minorities and ethnicities within a new context, due to the increasing number of challenges. Since the regime change, an aggregation of processes and a system of activities which both challenges and confirms ethnic and national identities can be witnessed, along with a political and social need for their understanding. From this perspective, one has to take into account the danger of the aggressive dynamics of these processes, which can become associated with economic instability – and even with moral crises –, thus threatening the abolishment of the legitimacy of systems administrated by the state (Gagyi 2009a:31–32).
5. Practices and formations of memory: the biographical, communicative, and cultural memory of both the determining historical events of the 20th century and everyday routines, the spaces, occasions, and contexts of memory and commemoration, their related narrative basis and narrative strategies. The latter two are justified because (a) communication is the medium in which the conflict between changes and traditional forms gain specific meaning and can be interpreted, and (b) since the research primarily relies on one of the preferred methods of ethnography and anthropology, i.e. the interview, and as such, the analysis of the narrative behavior and the communicative, viz. cultural memory of the researched community of speakers as a practice formed within everyday life and interview situations is indispensable.

In the light of the processes and situations outlined above, on 11–12 October 2019 we organized a scientific conference in Nagykároly/Carei entitled *Ruralitás és gazdasági stratégiák a 21. században – a KJNT vándorkonferenciája* [Rurality and economic strategies in the 21st century – travelling conference of the Kriza János Ethnographic Society]. Our professional forum continued and complemented the current and highly topical issue of the rural environment and its transformation (Jakab – Vajda eds. 2019).

The 2019 conference can thus be regarded as the direct continuation of the 2018 conference *Párhuzamos ruralitások. A vidékiség formái Erdélyben – a KJNT vándorkonferenciája* [Parallel Ruralities. Rural Realities in Transylvania] (Gernyeszeg/Gorneşti, 21 September 2018).[16] The presentations at the conference then sought to focus on three dimensions of changing ruralities: (1) the cultural dimension: identity, the upholding of traditions, detraditionalization, patrimonialization, and globalization; (2) the social dimension: changed relationship systems, population movements, new strategies for searching contacts, and new (occasionally virtual) forms of community; (3) the economic dimension: the transformation of rural farming, project-based developments, modernization, economic migration, and other individual and community strategies.

[16]The conferences were also organised in the framework of NKFIH research organized by the three partner institutions mentioned before; the conference organising committee consisted of Albert Zsolt Jakab, president of the János Kriza Ethnographic Society, Levente Szilágyi, research fellow of the Institute of Ethnography of the Research Centre for Humanities of the Institute of Ethnography of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and András Vajda, lecturer at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania.

The 2019 conference covered the following topics: (1) the relationship between the transformed economic structure and tradition; (2) the issue of environmentally conscious management and sustainable economic strategies; (3) the examination of transformed individual attitudes and life management strategies (e.g. mate choosing practices, migration); (4) an examination of the transformation in the technical environment of local lifeworlds and its impact on everyday life; (5) an exploration of the impact of new/changing media environments on everyday life; (6) an examination of identity discourses and strategies in the context of interpreting the past and the use of space; (7) an examination of the role of religion in social change.

Our 2018 and 2019 conference proceedings also presented the results of the ongoing research funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office, including both theoretical papers and case studies (Jakab – Vajda eds. 2019, 2020).

In 2020, we also edited a thematic issue of the journal *Korunk*, focusing on current social, economic and mental changes affecting rural societies, using our research findings (Jakab – Peti eds. 2020). Our authors have been asked to work on one of the following topics: (1) changes in local and external attitudes towards rurality (e.g. the valorization of cultural heritage); (2) changes in consumer attitudes towards the rural environment (tourism, moving to the village, using the village as a leisure space); (3) changes in the conditions and motivations for food production (leisure farming, the valorization of home-grown produce, the emergence of the idea of "quasi-organic" produce); (4) changes in the forms of cooperation.

The individual volumes are summaries of the specific area of research work. Gagyi József's volume analyzes the life story of Domokos Sztrátya, who was born in 1931 in the village of Jobbágyfalva/Valea in the community of Csíkfalva/Vărgata (Maros County, Romania). Peasant and intellectual at the same time, producing and arranging documents, Gagyi documents his own activity so that one can reveal the everyday life and the turning points of individual and community life. He possesses the intellectual abilities to do so as well as the writing technique (calculation, statistics) that he had learnt during military service. Walking through the villages, he was collecting the money for electricity, but he was also a curious observer of people, villages and the era itself. The book is about getting to know this man, sustaining the relation with him, accessing his knowledge and about the common and continuous articulation of this knowledge through "long conversations" (Marc Bloch) (Gagyi 2019).

Vajda András's volume analyzes the long process of transformation in the society and economic structures of Sáromberke/Dumbrăvioara. In many aspects, the village is developing dynamically and transforming rapidly, but otherwise holding on to its traditions, to the economic and cultural practices which are characteristic of rural societies. The book aims to identify, document and interpret the changes that have occurred within the economic and cultural structure of the communities, having the impact of turning points in their life (Vajda 2019).

Balázs Balogh and Ágnes Fülemile have largely explored aspects of the historical processes of regional group formation in the society of Kalotaszeg, similarly to their 2004 volume (Balogh – Fülemile 2004). They have examined theoretical issues and specific experiences of their decades-long multi-local fieldwork in Kalotaszeg (Balogh – Fülemile 2019). They have also analyzed the ways and changes in local society, peasant society and tradition preservation (heritagization) in relation to the research (Balogh – Fülemile 2020).

In his latest book, József Gagyi summarizes his research on the rural environment conducted over the decades, presenting the socio-cultural phenomena that characterized the coexistence of machines and people in his era. Technological and social progress in rural areas is inextricably

intertwined with the impact of millennia-old magical-religious beliefs and their impact on the technical environment, the phenomenon of regression. Tractor drivers were the "heroes" of the first part of the era; their attitude to machinery is described in detail. At the same time, the rural world is also being fundamentally transformed by motorization. There is a transformation of (1) the social and individual relationship to space-time, and with it (2) its narrative framing/cultural insertion, and (3) its general evidence in relation to local and micro-processes (Gagyi 2021). In addition to the above, the research participants have published a number of studies not mentioned here, and which we cannot cover at this time.

A thematical block of this issue presents articles, including some examples from the results of the above project. András Vajda proposes an analysis of changes that have shaped parallel realities and temporalities of ways of life and mentalities in diversified ruralities over the past quarter century. József Gagyi describes the changing relationship to the land after the political transition in Romania in 1989. Levente Szilágyi uses the example of two Swabian settlements (Mezőfény and Mezőpetri) to illustrate that although they were already considered to be particularly wealthy settlements after the regime change in 1989, they decided – contrary to general practice – to opt for the cooperative form of farming. This was done in a way that consistently excluded external elements, be it foreign labor or even EU funds. Sándor Borbély's paper summarizes the first partial results of an economic anthropological research study in a Swabian settlement (Mezőfény) in Sathmar about the livelihood and income-earning strategies of the agricultural production groups in local society and to interpret the different forms of economic adaptation. The author interprets the emptying out of the symbolic role of land and its desacralization as a turning point, as a result of which the majority of the rural population had left behind the symbolic relationship with land for good, or even denied it. Gyöngyvér Erika Tőkés examines the topic of digital inequalities among different social groups and the characteristics of the third-level digital divide among elderly Hungarians in Romania.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was prepared under project K 120712, *Párhuzamos ruralitások. A vidékiség mai (lét) formái négy erdélyi kisrégióban* [Parallel and incompatible ruralities. Rural realities in four Transylvanian (Romania) microregions], funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office (Hungary).

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 153–172
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00022

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

Rural Communities, Changing Habitats, Transforming Localities

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Received: July 26, 2021 • Accepted: October 10, 2021
Published online: March 7, 2022

ABSTRACT

The present study proposes an analysis of the conceptual apparatus that may facilitate the description and interpretation of the changes that have taken place in Transylvanian villages and ruralities over the past quarter century. The central question is: what is left of the village after these changes? Respectively, was this change superficial or has it affected the deeper strata as well? I argue that we are talking about a structure in which some strata have been radically transformed while others have remained unaffected. This led to the production of numerous ways of life that proved to be resilient. In the changing and diversified space of ruralities, there are several mentalities and tendencies that are parallel and simultaneously different temporalities that either complement or eliminate each other. Sometimes they coexist peacefully, other times they are in constant conflict with each other.

KEYWORDS

adaptation, acculturation, decollectivization, farming strategies, tradition, modernization, peasant embourgeoisement, depeasantization, rurality, post-peasantization, re-peasantization

ETHNOGRAPHIC AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH(ES) TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE VILLAGE

The issue of the transforming village can be approached by examining the relationship between the village and the peasantry, which in turn implies the question whether the disappearance of

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the peasantry also entails the disappearance of the village. But it can also be approached by examining the conceptual apparatus through which the transformation can be grasped and interpreted. In my presentation, I focus primarily on the second approach.

Starting points: the "sunken peasant continent"

Writing about the Transylvanian village as a "framework of life," Ákos Egyed makes the following observation: "before the First World War, the village was a *community of work, settlement, culture, and administration* of its inhabitants, in contrast with today's village, which is most often just a residential community" (emphasis in original – V. A.) (Egyed 1981:250). József Gagyi describes 20th-century peasant society via the metaphor of the "sunken peasant continent." It is a world that extends through time and space, and which "still endures, even though not in the same natural and social environment nor with the same people as centuries earlier, and even though it carries the imprint of the 'waves of modernization' – that setting: the village" (Gagyi ed. 1999:29). The village as context and habitat has outlived even 20th-century attempts of its destruction. However, there was a price to pay: "the village underwent a developmental and civilizing process (. . .) and has irreversibly changed" (Gagyi 2007:5). The only question is: what is left of the village after the transformation? What social structures, ways of life, and "new microcultural conditions" (cf. Gagyi 2009a:145) were produced? Sticking with the metaphor of the "sunken continent," one can say that there are smaller and larger islands (enclaves),[1] a structure in which some levels/territories were transformed while others remained unaffected. That is to say, "a multitude of variants are produced" in the course of the transformation, and "these transitional forms prove to be very persistent" (Gagyi 2009a:145).

Disintegrating horizons

The shift/disintegration of the horizon has had the consequence that tradition – hitherto seen as the organizing principle of the world – is losing its general validity (Bausinger 1995:81–83). The transformation of the traditional peasant environment and the dissolution of tradition resulted in the disappearance of the village as a social organization with an independent identity.

Herman Bausinger describes the transformation of the peasant environment as a natural habitat in terms of the conquest of space, time, and society (Bausinger 1995). The conquest of space resulted in the disintegration of the narrow horizon and has brought with it a transformation in the accessibility of goods (Bausinger 1995:61–72) and human relationships. In his opinion, "in today's society, hierarchical, patriarchal relations have become detached from cooperative ones everywhere." Vertical relationships and processes are being replaced by horizontal and individual (i.e., autonomous) ones (Bausinger 1995:89). In contrast, the conquest of time can be described by the concept of *acceleration*, which means that the accumulation of the goods of folk culture is no longer "characterized by long-term tradition, but by exchange and takeover across a wide range of areas" (Bausinger 1995:89). The conquest of society is linked to

[1]Some of these islands are quite real: the remains of small family farms, the farming village, and peasant society can still be seen within the body of the modernized/urbanized village. Others can only be identified through more careful examination. The latter category includes "microcultural determinations" (Gagyi 2009a:141) and habits left over from previous eras, such as community "bans" on the sale of land, termed by József Gagyi as the "land-bound mentality" (Gagyi 2007:6).

"the unlimited supply of tendencies pointing towards a unified culture, knowledge, and literacy, covering all groups of the population equally" (Bausinger 1995:126).

The ethnographic examination of the disintegration processes affecting the framework of traditional values and norms, economic strategies, and social structures in Transylvania/Szeklerland has been carried out by Ferenc Pozsony. In his studies, he mainly analyzed the long processes of the transformation of traditional society in the Orbaiszék/Scaunul Orbai region. According to Pozsony, the transformation of peasant society in the Hungarian-speaking area, including Szeklerland, was caused by the social processes that accompanied the liberation of serfs in 1848, which also led to significant demographic growth. This "soon became associated with the promising prospects of railway construction and industrialization that unfolded at the end of the 19th century. At the same time, from the beginning of the 20th century, the individualism, family models, and life patterns associated with the process of embourgeoisement have significantly rearranged the structure of Hungarian families living here. Then, the post-World War II communist regime and the globalization that unfolded after 1989 have led to more radical changes in the region's internal and external relations, as well as in its demographic structures and behaviors" (Pozsony 2010:535).

My research around Târgu Mureș also shows that it was the socialist transformation that first brought the outside world permanently close to the village. Basic health and cultural institutions and services became available in the rural settlements as well, all consumer goods became available in village shops, and even paid jobs appeared. The 21st century, however, brought the world so close that it has practically led to the complete disintegration of village society. Today, the village is not primarily a village community but a collection of residential houses, small glocal islands. The possibilities offered by technology not only allow individuals living in rural areas to be reached by news from distant lands at the same time as the event taking place but also to order/procure and consume the products of these distant lands without having to leave the comfort of their home. While in the past the drivers of change came from the local economic and intellectual elite, in the age of socialism they came from the nearest city – but still within the world enclosed by the horizons. In the 21st century, due to developments in information and communication technology, these patterns come from worlds that are spatially distant from the village. All this flows into the local and family space through a window (information corridors) opened by IT tools. Individual tastes and desires have transformed the world of the village. Nonetheless, while these desires have been inspired by Western patterns, they have been adapted to local frameworks and conditions. That is, they embody the collective ideas of local society.

Peasant embourgeoisement

According to László Kósa's definition, "peasant embourgeoisement is a social and cultural process through which the peasantry is freed from its feudal legal and lifestyle constraints and characteristics, becoming an autonomous, enterprising, and entrepreneurial-minded member of capitalist society, owning its own labor force and means of production. The emphasis is on the temporally and spatially widely extended *process*, consisting of complex historical formations. Peasant embourgeoisement as a process excludes permanence and presupposes uninterrupted movement and change" (Kósa 1990:57–58, 2003). In Kósa's opinion, this process of embourgeoisement takes place simultaneously on several levels, including the political, legal, economic, and cultural (civilizational) level (Kósa 1994:226). In this theoretical framework, the "bourgeois"

element refers to the transformation of economic processes and the orientation towards the market, while the "peasant" element indicates that the lifestyle and value changes have been/are delayed compared to the economic changes. Tamás Hofer has termed this way of thinking of the peasant society, unable to move forward, as the "bankruptcy of the peasant lifestyle" (Molnár 2005:194–195).

Imre Kovách only considers those individuals to be involved in the process of embourgeoisement whose small-scale agricultural production has been transformed into an enterprise. According to him, the process of embourgeoisement did not fully take place within Hungarian society – and will not fully take place in the future either – the consequence of which is that the *bourgeois peasant* condition is stabilized.

The reason for this is the fact that "the norms of strong community control prevail over individualization, while the groups involved in the process of forming the middle class become more rigid. The function of the household and the family is regenerated, all of which make it difficult for a small-scale peasant farm to transform into a business" (Molnár 2005:198).

Tradition and modernization

The process(es) of the transformation of the rural space and peasant society can be most generally described and grasped by the concept of modernization (Csepeli 2007; Fejős 1998; Hofer 2009; Hoppál 2007; Lajos 2013; Niedermüller et al. eds. 2008; Ratkó 1998; Szijártó 2007).

Veronika Lajos points out that the interpretation of the concept of modernization unfolds in the context of modernization processes in the 1940s and 1950s. Anthropological research has focused on modernization as a process and intellectual problem at that time, seen primarily as a change that destroyed or shattered traditions (Lajos 2013:44).[2]

According to Lajos, modernization appears very differently from the perspective which describes "peasant society involved in the modernization process" as an "adaptive peasant society." In her words, "this does not dispute the classical peasantry's ability to modernize and flexibly respond to macrolevel change, but rather, on the contrary, discusses the types of cultural adaptation. When examining how adaptation takes place, it becomes apparent that, at first, members of the classical peasant society generally do not want to but are indeed able to adapt to the paradigmatic challenges of modernity. Additionally, they also possess a socio-cultural toolkit with which they can alleviate and resolve the conflicts of radical cultural diversity and modernization" (Lajos 2013:45). Modernization therefore means not only the transformation of infrastructure and new instruments but also the emergence of new habits of use and production.

Modernization is then, most generally, a form of social change. In this process, the various agricultural societies were transformed into industrial and, in the late 20th century, post-industrial societies (Fejős 1998:9). Citing Wilbert E. Moore, Zoltán Fejős holds that the changes brought about by modernization can best be identified in rationalization (Fejős 1998:9). This is also György Csepeli's opinion, according to whom "modernization is the process by which 'Gemeinschaft' structures are displaced by 'Gesellschaft' structures. It is the process that liberates and transforms us. In Max Weber's words, this was a process of *disenchantment*, which has three

[2]She cites Mihály Hoppál to illustrate this point: "The problem with modernization as a social process is not that it wants to create something, but that most of the time it wants to help create the new by demolishing the old. The starting point of modernism and reform is, in many cases, the destruction of something" (Hoppál 2007:4).

components: *rationalization*, *secularization*, and *individualization*. All three break down some idea previously thought of as fixed and definitive, submitting them to analytical criticism with all its pros and cons" (emphasis in original – V. A.) (Csepeli 2007:60).

According to Anthony Giddens, modernization can be understood if we associate it with the industrialized world. According to him, the striking difference compared to the premodern world lies in the accumulation of goods, automation, the production of goods, the commodification of labor, and the strengthening of institutional power and control. All this is followed by changes in social relations and forms of social organization. The author identifies the dynamism of modern society in three elements: the separation of space and time (during which social relations are organized independently of local constraints), the discarding of constraints/embeddedness, and institutional reflexivity (which signifies the regulated and controlled use of the knowledge surrounding the situations in social life) (Fejős 1998:10).

A specific Eastern European (Transylvanian) version of modernization is *socialist modernization*, which can best be called pseudo-modernization in the sense that the quantitative results of industrialization and urbanization are overshadowed by the destructive activity that accompanies the attainment of these results (Róth 2002:7). Another feature of socialist modernization is that it was not initiated by society. "The basis of the planned economy was rationalized, predictable, standardized work, price–payment, production–consumption, training–life path" (Gagyi 2006). In fact, the everyday processes of social life were also planned and organized by the authorities.[3] This modernization has been characterized by "backwardness" and "delay" in rural areas, "the ongoing validity of a practice and a principle that may be put very briefly in this way: for most of society, the land was and remained the most important property," even if people did not possess, only cultivated the land, like the former serfs (Gagyi 2005a:80).[4]

Depeasantization and post-peasantization

In contrast, some Hungarian authors – influenced by Anglo-Saxon scientific literature (Vaddiraju 2013:9–12) – interpret the process of Hungarian peasant society's disappearance/transformation through the concept of depeasantization. This does not refer to the waning of peasant characteristics but to the disappearance of the peasantry as a social category, caused by superior and external forces (Molnár 2005:192).[5] According to Imre Kovách, who introduced this concept in Hungarian literature, the depeasantization process took place in the socialist era, involved three levels – social, structural, cultural – and resulted in the disappearance of the historical framework of the peasant way of life. This was a change that resulted in the rural population no longer producing for the development of the peasant farm but for consumption. Peasants started to modernize their houses and accumulate consumer goods, which also led to the disappearance of the peasant value system and traditions. The author argues that, as a

[3]On socialist modernization in Romania (Transylvania), see also: Gagyi 2004, 2005b, 2006, 2009a. On the relationship between state and society, see Oláh 2008.

[4]For the analysis of the collectivization process, farming cooperatives, the (re)allocation of resources, and the struggle for survival, see Oláh 2001; Bodó 2004.

[5]On the birth and interpretation of the concept, see Harcsa 2003; Kovách 2003a, 2003b.

complication of these processes, despite the disappearance of the historical peasantry, the significance of rural society remained (Kovách 2003).

In his work that summarizes the most important process of the transformation of rural society in the 20th century, Kovách states that what we now call a "rural area" is a region where there are no peasants, only the memory of the peasantry surviving in various forms and institutions (Kovách 2012).

However, the socialist transformation of the village has yet another interpretation, according to which peasant society, affected by the abolition of land ownership (collectivization) and industrialization, remained in place (as commuter workers) and sought to develop a particular way of life, as well as a particular form of land use, in which the oscillation between agricultural and industrial work became permanent. This tendency could best be termed as *post-peasantization* (Márkus 1996:117–118).[6] Talking about post-peasantization, Balázs Balogh emphasizes that the phenomena, structures, and behaviors considered economic in nature reveal underlying intentions related to the possibilities and strategies of expressing value orientations, social rank, and prestige (Balogh 2002; see also Schwarcz ed. 2014).

Decollectivization and re-peasantization

The process of decollectivization in Romania was studied by American anthropologist Katherine Verdery. In her analysis, she pointed out that, as a result of the restitution law, it is as if the land has come to life: its area has grown and shrunk, moved around, and the memory of different institutions and groups entered into a competition for its possession. The author calls this phenomenon the "flexibility of the land," or "blurred property" (Verdery 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999). Romanian sociologist Maria Fulea points out that the abolition of communal farming, the land law, and the liberalization of the economy have led to a change in the occupational structure of the rural population. The main result of this change is that the peasants involved in farming cooperatives have become private farmers (Kiss 2004:110).

The processes of decollectivization in Szeklerland were studied by József Gagyi (2007). Gagyi points out that, following decollectivization, "hunger for land" became a ubiquitous phenomenon among the peasantry, as a result of which "their relationship to the landscape and spatiality has also changed, since, following the division of the emotionally neutral land of the collective economy, they regained ownership of a series of plots" (Gagyi 2007:5). All this was accompanied by the re-stratification of rural society and the revival of the "land-bound mentality" (Gagyi 2007:6). At the same time, it also led to the development of a mass peasant society in Romania. This is why decollectivization is called *re-peasantization* in the scientific literature.[7] All this partially stopped and partially delayed the process of depeasantization (Gagyi 2007:16–19), while also starting demodernization processes in many respects. According to Vintilă Mihăilescu, the reason for this is that, instead of a *law aimed at agrarian reform*, only a *land law* was adopted, which did not provide a management model, shifting responsibility and initiative from institutions to individuals. It caused the fragmentation of the means of production and of the land but did not help in reorganizing them (Kiss 2004:102).

[6]As for the defense strategy employed solely to avoid unemployment after the regime change, the author defines it as a "secondary post-peasant way of life," or as a return to the quasi-peasant way of life (Lovas 2006:11).

[7]Following Enikő Veres, Dénes Kiss calls this *new peasantization* (Kiss 2004:112).

In this situation, the fundamental question is whether an efficient production, economic and social structure based on private property can be built. The author's answer is that a very thin layer of those who actually benefit from it has developed on top of the society orienting itself towards self-sufficiency (Gagyi 2007:14). However, the land use of the transition period can best be grasped by the notions of "crisis symptom" and "coercion" (Peti – Szabó 2006:7). This is also emphasized by József Kotics, who points out that since the 1990s, the society of rural settlements has changed dramatically, and one of the most striking features of this transformation was "the emergence of new forms of mass rural poverty." According to Kotics, most of the family farms that appeared after the regime change are *enterprises of necessity* (Kotics 2011:169).

Acculturation and/or adaptation

The transformation of the structure of the rural space, economy, and society, and the subsequent change of lifestyle and exchange of cultural patterns have been identified in the ethnographic literature primarily as an *acculturation* process. According to Vilmos Voigt's definition, it is "a cultural change that comes from outside and means an exchange of the *entire* traditional culture" (Voigt 1978:604). Acculturation therefore suggests an unbalanced cultural contact/encounter in which the asymmetric contact often results in cultural assimilation. At the same time, techniques of exclusion and segregation begin to work against individuals/groups trapped outside the assimilation process. Acculturation, therefore, means, in many cases, a cultural adoption saturated with extreme emotions, as a result of which the break with tradition is accompanied by extreme and vehement passions.

According to the general opinion – nourished by journalistic topoi – and views based on superficial observations, acculturation must be interpreted primarily as a result/complication of socialist modernization, during which not only the occupational structure of the village but also its cultural life was transformed. It was then that the socialist state propaganda and culture began to be established in rural areas and its institutional system (houses of culture) began to be built (Gagyi 2009a:111). Through these, the political power organized and regulated the cultural change (Gagyi 2009a:115). Gagyi identified the following dimensions of the cultural transformation of Romanian rural areas in the period after the Second World War: (1) the eradication of illiteracy; (2) the building of a system of socialist public cultural festivals; (3) the construction of the media as an information tool and power structure; (4) the emergence of folk scripturality and folklorism (Gagyi 2009a:106–115).

Gagyi also calls attention to the fact that, "in village societies, in rural areas, the orientation towards that which is new, the adaptation to innovation by adopting the 'beautiful' and the 'modern,' have already existed within a relationship to the city, to that which is outside of the peasant world" (Gagyi 2010:129). This "orientation towards innovation" can indeed best be interpreted as *adaptation*, i.e., as "a cultural process in which a community adopts the foreign cultural goods which it gets to know by sorting and filtering. In contrast with the previously prevailing, mechanistic perception based on *transfer and acceptance*, the application of the concept of cultural adaptation expresses the view that the reception of cultural goods is a complex phenomenon; the occurrence of acceptance is not only determined by whether or not a given cultural treasure is valuable in itself, or whether or not it is found in the culture of the community, but also by the attitude of the community towards the new phenomenon" (Sárkány 1980:347). During adaptation, despite a change in the lifestyle and life management strategies of

the recipient, this is not an invasive intervention but rather a productive modification. The new element is built in such a way that it adapts/nestles against the cultural patterns that characterize the community. That is, they come into use according to the rules imposed by the habits and routines operating in the community.

Synchronicity and nonsynchronism

Hermann Bausinger introduced the concept of the synchronicity of elements defined by different historical force factors through the term *parallel nonsynchronism*, which in fact refers to synchronicity (Bausinger 1989). This not only means that lifestyle strategies and worldviews imposing different morals and value systems that are sometimes traditional (i.e., inherited from the past) and sometimes non-traditional (i.e., nourished by the present) are simultaneously present in modern rural society. The synchronicity and nonsynchronism of microcultural patterns and attitudes nourished by the economic and social heritage of different eras can both be observed. Moreover, individual farms and social groups are in various phases of modernization and socio-economic change even within the microworld of a specific settlement. Due to these phase shifts, culture as a whole has a mosaic-like character. Some groups are characterized by rapid transformation while others by immobility. The latter tolerate, acknowledge, but exclude from their daily lives the various regime changes, major ideological, economic, and social transformations, the achievements of motorization and modernization. They do not incorporate these into their worldview, do not use them in formulating their economic strategies, and do not live according to them.

However, all of this has a generational reading as well. As Árpád Töhötöm Szabó puts it, "older people experience the fast changes that take place around them very differently. Since they are in no way able to catch up with the rapidly technicizing world, and are also being excluded from rural, traditional workspaces and places of representation due to changes in family structure, forms of ownership, and work culture, they counterbalance their frustrations by building the past in memory. (. . .) To them, the old world exists as the only livable pattern" (Szabó 2009:50).

ECONOMIC STRATEGIES

Ethnographic descriptions of rural/peasant farming have already been provided by many authors.[8] One consistent observation is that "the nature of the peasant economy and household is closely linked to the pursuit of self-sufficiency" (Paládi-Kovács 2001:202), with economic behavior not affected by the market (Lovas Kiss 2006:69). This form of behavior was noticeable in the rural environment until the late 20th century, which can be explained mainly by the economy being insufficiently equipped, as well as by the rigid adherence to traditional mentalities. These patterns of farming and knowledge related to production and instrumentation technologies are surveyed in the literature under the concept of *agricultural heritage* (Peti – Szabó 2006:8).

[8]A non-exhaustive list: Paládi-Kovács 1982, 2009; Fél – Hofer 1997; Balogh 2002; Kovács 2010; Viga 2013; for Transylvania: Biró et al. 1994; Bodó – Oláh eds. 1997; Peti – Szabó eds. 2006; Szabó 2009, 2013.

At the same time, it is not only social relations but also work that is characterized by reciprocity and the use of various *forms of cooperation*. That is why we can call rural society a *cooperative society* (Szabó 2009).

Hungarian ethnographic research distinguishes five types of traditional peasant farms: (1) privately owned agricultural holdings that regularly employ foreign labor – about 6% of farms; (2) privately owned farms that often use foreign, external labor; (3) farms based on family labor – about 20% of farms; (4) farms based on privately owned micro-holdings, where one or more family member(s) have been compelled to engage in occasional outside work and gainful employment; (5) farms owned by people who regularly seek outside work (Paládi-Kovács 2001:204).

Vintilă Mihăilescu classified the farming strategies of Romania after the 1990s into two dominant types: *diffuse/mixed* and *individual* farms. The former is reproductive, the latter productive. The former involves the extended family and relatives who have moved to the city in the production process, while the latter relies on the strength of the nuclear family (Kiss 2004:106–107).

József Gagyi describes the development of Transylvanian rural habitats based on the triple structure of actors who subvert/transform the economic structure, i.e., the *land distributors*, the local entrepreneurs (*gainers*), and the *self-sufficient* (Gagyi 2007). In his study of the rural elite, Sebastian Lăzăroiu talks about four types of entrepreneurs: the *old-new entrepreneurs* (those who were entrepreneurs even before 1989), the *network entrepreneurs* (those who have held a leadership position before 1989 and started a business based on this past), the *traders* (small-scale enterprises dealing with the purchase of goods and their local sale), and the *agricultural entrepreneurs* (Kiss 2004:113).

Árpád Töhötöm Szabó separates three levels of the cultural patterns that are characteristic of the post-socialist farming strategies of the Târnava Mică/Kis-Küküllő Valley: *self-sufficiency* (family integration), *partial market integration*, and *dominant market integration* (Szabó 2013). Antal Lovas Kiss uses a similar typology when talking about non-market-affected, market-affected, and market-oriented or market-organized economic behaviors (Lovas Kiss 2006).

Based on the analysis of the cultural patterns of Italian rural life involved in the process of urbanization, Zsuzsánna Paál classified the farming strategies of families into five groups: (1) accumulation, (2) survival, (3) subsistence, (4) the preservation of the house as residence, and (5) income generation (Paál 2003).

József Kotics argues that "the structure of Hungarian society and economy has far more long-term, continuous elements than analysts have assumed for decades. (. . .) The diversity of resources used, the often very mixed product structure of family farms, and the pluriactive income generation of rural households suggest the revival and continuity of the traditional rural activity structure" (Kotics 2011:170).

Kotics describes the current situation along the following key features: "(1) The economic function of the villages has weakened. (2) Rural society is much more dependent on public resources than urban society. (3) Instead of peasant embourgeoisement, the wage laborer mentality is spreading. (4) The old mentality of actively developing the village has disappeared. (5) The non-peasant mentality has intensified. (6) The attractiveness of belonging to a rural community has diminished. (7) The traditional village community has disintegrated. (8) The old peasant way of life, the community-organizing power of family work, and the traditional authorities have disappeared. (9) The transformation has abolished old relations but did not create

an accepted new form of life and community. No new system of prestige has been established" (Kotics 2011:170).

Even this brief overview clearly illustrates that, after joining the post-socialist and later European Union structures, the processes that took place in rural areas have resulted in extremely mixed/uncertain structures, and this uncertainty has also affected the findings of the studies and their interpretations within the social sciences. Although there is a consensus that today's processes can best be described as *transient*, the reason for this is sometimes seen in the rigid attachment to old structures, and sometimes in the uncontrolled (and therefore less than successful) adoption of foreign patterns.

Perhaps it is most expedient to evaluate changing ruralities as a combined and simultaneous outcome of these two processes.

In the settlement along the Mureş that I studied, as in the agglomeration zone of major cities or in most villages along major routes, a specific situation developed by the early 21st century. The number of people working in the agricultural sector permanently or seasonally, in full-time or part-time jobs, has fallen dramatically. Most people leased their land to a local agribusiness contractor, which resulted in the formation of large, contiguous plots. With this, the mosaic-like cultural landscape of strips of plots typical of the decades following decollectivization disappeared.

There have also been significant changes in the buildings and layouts of the farms. A significant part of the farm buildings fell out of use and underwent a change of function. The population – mainly younger families and those with above-average incomes – first abandoned raising livestock (cattle, horses), as a result of which some of the barns and granaries were demolished, while others were transformed into pigsties, summer kitchens, garages, boiler rooms, etc. In the next step, raising pigs for sale declined, followed by pig breeding for own consumption, and in the last step, farming was completely abandoned.

However, for a small part of the population, agriculture and animal husbandry remain the only source of income and livelihood. As these families do not live on farms on the outskirts of settlements but rather wedged between other plots, the odors and villagescape associated with agricultural and livestock farming settlements have to some extent (but certainly more than the proportion of those working in the agricultural sector would suggest) remained dominant.

Due to land prices, and because family plot allowance was barely 2.5 ares during the communist era, the machinery of the families making a living from agriculture is practically parked in front of the house, often stretching wider than the length of their property, and this sight certainly greatly contributes to the fact that these settlements do not resemble western suburbs or residential zones with gardens. Moreover, the by-products of farming are particularly visible in the backyard and immediate surroundings of these agricultural families: animal feces, dunghills, slurry, waste formed during the transport of fodder, hay and straw flakes, grain silos, hives, etc. The characteristic noises of agriculture are also constantly "polluting" the tranquility of the settlements. In summer, when the cows are brought in from pasture, the streets where the animals pass are regularly filled with cow dung. The coexistence of the two mentalities is therefore not conflict-free, but they do exist side-by-side. This is what makes the general picture so colorful.

Following nationalization in 1945, local public institutions and economic entities have for a long time used and continue to use the infrastructure built by the Teleki family, or the Reformed Church, or with public funds by various cooperative associations, although in the last decade

these all underwent major renovations and restructuring. Nevertheless, a specific ambivalent situation persists even at the level of public institutions. The settlements have communal and public cultural venues and infrastructure, yet hardly any functioning institutions. In terms of institutional provisions, the settlement is characterized by a duality: in the case of buildings, we can expect a continuously improving trend, which in turn is accompanied by the decline of the institutions occupying the buildings. The same can be said about the infrastructural provisions of the settlement: while the issue of gas and electricity, telephone, satellite or cable TV and internet, as well as waste collection, can be considered resolved, the drinking water and sewerage network and wastewater treatment are still in need of significant improvements.

The socio-residential attributes are largely determined by the population living here and their characteristic habits. In the case of an aging or low-mobility population, the building stock is also typically aging and declining. There are financial reasons for the buildings of the 1950s not yet having been demolished or significantly renovated in large numbers. However, the presence of a population with a higher status and more significant economic power is favorable for the development of the settlement.

In the early 20th century, a shared set of values and generally accepted moral rules still persisted in the local community, and there was a limited number of collectively accepted career models. Not only did each family live under very similar financial and housing conditions, they also had roughly the same economic and cultural aspirations. Until the middle of the 20th century, the village remained a self-sufficient agricultural settlement, where, with the exception of intellectuals and one or two civil servants, the inhabitants' primary source of income came from agriculture and animal husbandry. But even the pastor, teacher, or clerk with a fixed monthly allowance ended up farming: they raised animals and cultivated their own land. Those working in the industry or the service sector also owned land and raised animals. At the same time, this unity also gained expression in the villagescape.[9]

Today's villagescape, on the other hand, is rather mosaic: the traditional peasant farmstead (reminiscent of the '40s), the communist cube house, building types reminiscent of villas typical of the Mediterranean or alpine regions, spatial structures typical of suburbs and farming villages existing side by side and intertwined. A Transylvanian village in the 21st-century metropolitan area is therefore characterized primarily by diversity, a mixing of values and lifestyles.

Besides residential building façades and plot layouts, public buildings, infrastructure, and industrial facilities also influence the villagescape. Public buildings and their surroundings gradually deteriorated by the late 1980s. Over the past five years, however, these buildings have been progressively renovated, modernized, and expanded. Industrial and agro-industrial facilities have also declined over the last quarter of a century, some of them have been completely demolished, others have undergone a change in function: they have been transformed and "recycled." Some of the commercial units (tavern, general store) – which opened in the early 1990s – have deteriorated in the meantime, their infrastructure became outdated, the façade time-worn, while the newly established ones seek to bring the level of urban commercial units in

[9]Of course, this does not mean that local society was not fragmented internally and that this internal hierarchy was not considered in the local community. The system of Church seating based on the social hierarchy, for example, lasted until the late 1950s. I just want to point out that during this period, the expression of this internal fragmentation, with the exception of property size, was more symbolic. There were no truly significant differences in terms of living conditions, housing, or items used.

terms of image and infrastructure. The buildings of (public) health units (dental practice, pharmacy, doctor's office) have also been modernized in the last decade.

All in all, the settlement still reflects its former agrarian character in terms of morphology and structure, the erstwhile habitat of a population dependent on agricultural production, but it is gradually beginning to take on an urban appearance, and the majority of the population inhabiting these spaces already follows an urban lifestyle. Looking at today's spatial structure, an imprint of a slow transition becomes evident in which the peculiarities of the changes of the last century can be well traced.

Four major periods of these changes can be distinguished: the post-World War II transition period, the age of socialist transformation, decollectivization, and the era of transformations in the early 21st century that began with EU accession. In the mid-1940s, there was a slight decline because of World War II, mainly due to seizures by the Russian army passing through the settlement and the collateral losses suffered by the fleeing population. By the end of the decade, however, livestock had increased again. Another decline was brought on by the industrialization of the regional center, Târgu Mureş. At that time, several families abandoned animal husbandry, or at least reduced the number of their cattle and took up industrial work.

However, this decline was also short-lived, as the livestock of the settlement increased again after collectivization. By the end of the period, there were about 10,000 cattle in the settlement, of which approximately 200 were on individual farms.

In the 1990s, an increased unemployment rate due to the closure of factories caused a flight to agriculture as an alternative livelihood model. Many formerly working families started to raise animals (dairy cows and bull calves, as well as store cattle), and to cover household expenses from the sale of milk and young animals.

Another shift took place around the end of the first decade of the 21st century. At that time, not only did the cattle population decline, but there were also changes in the building stock, with roughly 25% of the former farm buildings disappearing and non-agricultural farms coming to dominate the villagescape.

The factors that triggered, accelerated, slowed down, and overturned the changes were at once external and internal impacts on the settlement. The development of pasture use and land ownership/land use was mainly influenced by Central Eastern European processes (serf liberation – collectivization – decollectivization). The quota system introduced in the mid-20th century, the liberalization of the market after 1989,[10] and the establishment of a system of land-based and other agricultural subsidies,[11] shaped, accelerated, or slowed down the transformation. At the same time, it was also affected by internal factors, the privatization of pastures, the emergence of the agricultural entrepreneur, and a generational change.[12]

[10]Fluctuations in the market price of animals have always had an impact on the growth/decline of livestock and the application of economic strategies.

[11]Subsidies also affected the choice of means of production and product types. In the first half of the 20th century, sugar beet production became dominant due to its high price, which was replaced by tobacco growing in the early 1990s. The increase and decrease and/or tightening of conditions for milk and livestock subsidies have also affected milk production and animal husbandry.

[12]Meanwhile, a new generation no longer socialized with farmwork in mind has grown up.

The development of transportation and transport infrastructure has also had an impact on the speed of change and the factors that trigger it. The evolution of transport has brought the world closer to the village.

All of this has also had an impact on the development of consumer behavior. Until the end of the 20th century, the local society of Sáromberk was characterized by a mentality defined by self-sufficiency. Even those whose financial situation would have allowed them to live off the market. By the beginning of the 21st century, however, more and more families have given up farming, abandoned raising even pigs and poultry after cows, and many have stopped cultivating their backyard gardens and producing vegetables for their own use. These households will buy pigs for fattening to cover their annual meat consumption from others in the village or from shopping centers. Food expenditures have come to account for an increasing proportion of family expenses after the regime change.

LONG AND SHORT PROCESSES

To understand the *transient* nature of today's processes, it seems most expedient to keep in mind Braudel's division of duration (Braudel 1972) in our analysis. Braudel created the concept of *courte durée* (short duration) as the opposite of *longue durée* (long duration), which he considers more important for historiography. In his interpretation, the long duration is not a measure of the length of the period but of the pace of development, and it is characterized by a certain calmness. It reveals the relationship between the landscape/natural environment and man, which has changed very slowly over the centuries. In contrast, the short duration is the "swirling surface," the time of the events characterized by speed, variability, and pulsation. The short duration deals with individuals and their experiences. It not only represents a short (time) scale but also a fragmentation of time (history/tradition), where decisions made in the heat of the moment and chance play a significant role. In our interpretation, this means that we perceive contemporary/synchronous processes as transient and contingent. At the same time, since all this takes place in a layer close to the surface, in most cases it hides from our eyes everything that is inherited in an undetected and unchanged way from the past, which is most characteristic of culture, and takes place in the deeper layer (structure).

The 21st-century Transylvanian village is characterized at once by permanence, the long-term survival of conditions typical of agricultural societies, and rapid change, with the addition that the changes take place mostly in the outside world, from where they seep into the village. There are more and more highways with ever more cars, more wires (electricity, telephone, TV, and internet) and content they transmit, more internet-based digital devices (internet of things) that open countless windows to the outside world, connecting the villagers to the people of the Internet more and more.

Fernand Braudel argues that structure changes so slowly that we perceive it as permanence, therefore the change takes place mostly at the level of economic activity (Braudel 1972). The duality of the rapid and radical changes on the surface (at the level of consumption, individual economic strategies, and lifestyle) and the permanence of the structures can also be observed in the settlement and area I studied.

In the mid-20th century, the collective farm took over the place and function of the manor in the organization of economic life. The vacuum created by its abolishment was then filled by the

agro-industrial company that settled in the area and leased thousands of hectares of arable land. The disappearance of the large estate was followed by the disappearance of the former elite, the landowner of noble origins, and the emergence of a new elite – embodied by the party secretary, the collective president, and the foreman – and after the 1989 regime change, the role was assumed by the agricultural entrepreneur.

If we look at the arc of transformation in the last more than a century from the point of view of family structure and family functions, the process that seems to emerge is that of going from a family living together and farming together, i.e., in different forms of cooperation, to a symbolic family (see Boreczki 2004).

CHANGING RURALITIES. CONCLUSION

Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007 also started new processes in the transformation of the village, from the choice of destination countries for migrant workers (migration) to the farming (e.g., land use) and lifestyle habits of those who stayed home. Even new forms of use of traditional cultural elements (cf. heritage creation and use) have evolved under the influence/pressure of EU regulations and patterns.[13] With increased room for maneuvering and greater access to resources (e.g., EU projects), a new world of objects has been built, novel relationships have been established, and fresh interpretations have been born. Not only Transylvania but also the Transylvanian village has come to be characterized by "diversity and variety," as well as by a "mosaic-like" character (Gagyi 2009b:33).

The question arises how the rapid infrastructural transformation of localities, the changes in farming and income structure and social stratification, the changed mechanical environment (farming machines, the personal motor vehicle, or, within the intimate family environment, the computer and the mobile phone), as well as the use and functions of the machines affect rural lifestyles, economic strategies, and land use, the communicative and cultural memory of the communities, biographical narratives, narrative behavior – in short, traditions in a broad sense. What does all this mean in terms of economic structure, identity, and the organization of everyday life?

According to Imre Kovách, Hungarian – and, more generally, Central and Eastern European – rural areas and societies have suffered fundamental and comprehensive changes around the turn of the millennium and in the subsequent years, which led to a complete reorganization of the rural regions and launched entirely new processes. As a result, a "new rural area" was born, where this "newness," according to Kovách, "is not a normative concept (. . .), but merely indicates that the changes are significant in all relevant dimensions of rural structures. The diversity of reproductive, economic, and power systems, actors, their interests and networks, and the various orientations of their values and actions have created a fragmented social structure, by which I mean the juxtaposition of phenomena that are not necessarily connected" (Kovách 2012:203). According to Kovách, one of the main features of this new rural area is "the hybrid nature of society and economy," where "hybridity is a structural state and not a synonym for transition"

[13] *Detraditionalization* and *heritagization* are some of the most tangible ambivalences of contemporary rural communities. (The first term refers to a kind of questioning of community authority and tradition, while the second refers to its opposite, the reinterpretation, consolidation, and survival of tradition within the community – cf. Morris 1996; Heelas et al. eds. 1996.)

(KOVÁCH 2012:203). Based on the findings of Imre Kovách's research, József Gagyi interprets this new rural area as "a construct of specific, primarily not economic or social but cultural realities and historically developed cultural characteristics."[14]

In the space/framework of these changing and diversified ruralities, several different and, if you will, parallel mentalities and tendencies prevail simultaneously, sometimes complementing, other times eliminating each other, some of them coexisting peacefully, others remaining in constant conflict with each other.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is part of the research project *Parallel Ruralities. (Existential) Forms of Rurality in Four Small Regions of Transylvania* (K 120712) supported by the National Research Development and Innovation Office (Hungary). An earlier draft was presented at the conference *12th Barn Talks in Vărgata/Csíkfalva: Parallel Ruralities – The Changing Reality of the Village*.

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[14]József Gagyi has called my attention repeatedly to this key problem of my research during our discussions over the last three years, for which I would like to thank him here.

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 173–180
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00021

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

Desacralisation. A New Turn in the Changed Relationship with Land in Rural Areas

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Received: April 27, 2021 • Accepted: November 3, 2021
Published online: March 7, 2022

ABSTRACT

This paper is based on the assumption that there was a well-articulated idea behind the rapidly spreading phenomenon of theft after the formation of collective farms in Transylvania during socialism: people thought that what they were doing was not wrong because the real culprit was the socialist state that deprived them of their control over their lands. Had that not happened, they would still be their own masters, existentially complete, and should the supremacy of this state cease one day, they would once again be who they were before. This idea vitalized their expectations and hopes as a sacred aura. After 1989, these hopes came true temporarily, and partially, but, as it turned out, the peasant order imagined as existential completeness did not return. After joining the EU, the generation that went through socialization owning and cultivating their own land and then lived awaiting and hoping as collectivist peasants had to realize that it was all wrong: the new system brought its own shortcomings, frustrations, and disappointments as their world lost its sacredness.

KEYWORDS

land use, land ownership, rurality, Romania, Transylvania, socialism, post-socialism

In a recently published book (Gagyi 2018), I examined the phenomenon of theft from the collective farms formed in the early 1960s. I looked at the historical situation when villagers recently classified as "collectivist peasant workers" were "forced to steal", since "that's how it went down at the collective, some stealing with semi-trailers, some with cars, others with carriages, handbags and baskets, as much as they could, stuffing their sacks full" (Pál Balogh's insightful remark, see: Gagyi 2012:57).

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The totalitarian state has shown its true nature in the process of collectivization. In this grandiose process of shaping society, various central and regional groups of the bureaucracy sometimes interpreted the situation differently, making one mistake after the other, causing significant political and economic damage. The division of village communities has led to moral corruption, the rise of theft, illegal accumulation, and the strengthening of individualism behind the declared communitarianism. The series of food crises that followed collectivization showed that the problem lies not with the concept and construction of structures but with the distortions, lies, and absurdities built into this process along the way. In addition to the distortions involved in the genesis itself, deficiencies in operating skills and morale, as well as less than efficient operation, were major concerns. This is why the confrontation between the state and individuals stabilized in the rural environment. It started already at the beginning of socialist state intervention, and resulted in a universal and radical lifestyle, value, and moral change. In this process, the social behaviour that can be defined as the redrawing of the circles of autonomy of the individuals, families, and communities, and as social resistance, "increased during the first campaign of collectivization; then, after collectivization, with the great advances made by the state, it was partially relegated to farmhouse production. At the same time, it was partly integrated into the large economic organizations, as in the case of other occupational groups, and found its expression in the laxity of work discipline and in theft" (Hunya 1990:92). This phenomenon was also noticed by Romanian researchers: "The disappearance of private property also led to an effect not considered by those in political power: theft, which became widespread in the period 1962–1989 under the conditions of the impoverishment of the rural population and its permanent insecurity" (Dobrincu 2001:197).

In my view, theft, ubiquitous in the collectivist village, has become a reality generally accepted and practiced by society because it had a legitimizing, sacral basis. This kind of theft was not considered a sin within rural communities but was, in some cases, even commended by the community. Perpetrators concealed it somewhat, as their act was contrary to the laws in force and subject to state persecution, but they were not ashamed and at times reassured themselves that stealing had communal legitimacy: "everyone does it, and I'm just like the others."

At the same time, the act was also a form of resistance – of course, "adaptive resistance" (Kovács 2011:5), but every action was framed by the idea, the belief behind every thought, or transcendent point of reference, that if everything returned to the old ways and the collective would disintegrate, "they could farm on their own land again. . ." – their security, autonomy, freedom, and farmer identity, based on their property, would return, and the former community of solidarity and unity would be re-established; the law of "he didn't take, but brought" would prevail again, i.e., there would once again be "decent families" that had it all. According to Pál Balogh, "decent families" were considered those which, illustrating the success of the pursuit of peasant self-sufficiency and independence, lived in such a way that "they didn't take, but rather brought". It is about how much a household (which existed in a reciprocity system with other households) needed resources that can be said to be external to its own and those of its local community: "In village life, you know, back in the day, a decent family had it all within the family: melons, pears, apples, everything. He who directed it sought to have everything, because then he was not in need of any shops, but rather brought things to the market" (Pál Balogh). Also, the "law of the rake" would apply anew. In order to protect the most valuable product, the grapes, which provide the drink for ritual occasions, the vineyards are handed over to the care of the haywards, and from then on, anyone who goes to the vineyard brings a rake – on the one hand,

to make their tracks disappear so that the hayward may see if there were any trespassers, i.e., thieves, and, on the other hand, so that everyone, including the hayward, may realize from afar that they are coming with honourable intentions, knowing and respecting the order, just to look around.

Last but not least, people would be happy once again, whistling and singing in the countryside, which would then change back into a familiar and kind landscape, and order would be restored. Then, at last, the split morality would become whole again, and theft would also cease, for then they would farm again as their own masters and would no longer need to rely upon stealing. In the assumed/accepted crystalline structure of the order, the reassuring, timeless, and cosmic security of their world: its sacredness would be finally restored.

For decades, the people of the collectivized village acted, lived, and hoped according to this faith. Not everyone, of course, and the commuter younger generations, growing up in the 1960s and onwards, have certainly not experienced their situation in this manner, as they did not have any memories from "before," and the narratives of collective memory were not associated with events that they, too, experienced. But it is safe to say that the older generation thought that the wheel of time – because everything that has happened was profoundly immoral – could be turned back; nay, it is even necessary for it to turn back, so they just need to wait for the right moment. Keeping the memories of the past awake, anticipation and readiness took about forty years of the life of the aging generation.

Finally, 1989 came, with the downfall of the so-called socialist system, and it seemed that the waiting was not in vain, and this is finally the right moment. De-collectivization and the time when they can start farming again has come. The people rightly thought that the moment of truth has arrived and now is the time of their return to their former selves, which they were forced to give up and have lost as a result of the violent change of land ownership.

A characteristic feature of de-collectivization was the opening of the space for redefining social statuses within rural society. In this process of self-definition, the former private landowners and then collectivist peasants encountered social strata with different memories and different interests than their own. When the land was taken over, different ideas and expectations met and clashed. The economic and social structure-defining toolkit of the state has changed, and there was a clear decrease in the direct influence on individual existence. It was frequently mentioned at the time that "rural society is being abandoned" – which was true insofar as it had more tools at its disposal to decide on its own. At the same time, in the new socio-economic situation, it was also more heavily influenced by all the consequences of its "past," i.e., its traditional mentality, information shortfall, and market weakness. This was the first major blow that fundamentally questioned the sacredness of the land in the emerging new situation.

Behind the conflicts unfolding and stabilizing in the villages lay the confrontation and tension between the ideas of duty and justice, the behaviours these defined, and the differently organized realities. It is the duty of the descendants of the former farmers to seek to restore the order and, as a first stage, to re-claim *exactly* the former estates. Arguments varied widely, but the most common could be traced back to the histories of suffering of the nation and the families. Blood has been spilled for the land and, once upon a time, during the war, people have suffered to protect it or to gain land as victors. They have served long years abroad to buy their land. They carried their small amount of crops on their backs to the city market so that they could save some money to buy their land, little by little. The reconquest consisted, of course, of a series of ritualized, festive situations: the descendant always had to know exactly on which plot,

surrounded and highlighted by personal memories within the neutral landscape, he should plant his feet again, to be on stable ground.

But it was also a duty to prevent damage to the unity of the family and to ensure the ongoing existence of the common heritage. What would the ancestors say if they saw that they were not asking for and taking back the estate? "They would be rolling over in their graves if they found out. . ." So, it's an obligation for the descendant of the wealthy farmer (in the 1950s, during the class struggle, the *kulak*) to try to regain and then perpetuate the remembered status. Beyond the individuals, it is the duty of the entire local society to establish, maintain, and perpetuate the order that protects the land and regulates its use, just as their ancestors did.

It is also the obligation of the state to support the efforts in fulfilling this duty. If restitution does not take place, nothing has really changed, and there is no rule of law, only the same robber state. In this case opposition and resistance are allowed. Thus, it is most natural to use the methods that have worked so far: tax fraud and theft. And the general distrust surrounding every new political and economic decision is fundamental.

In certain situations, someone who does not fulfil these duties is treated as an outsider and is alienated. He'll have to bear the shame. But this was no longer a uniformly valid principle. The otherness of the younger generation has resulted in extremely difficult situations: "Whoever is in the village, does not sell the land. It's sold by those who have moved to the city, or to Hungary, but those who remained in the village are ashamed to sell the land for which they have suffered when they acquired it, suffered when it was taken from them, and now suffer its restoration. The young people, however, think differently. Some ask themselves if it's profitable and sell it if it's not" (anonymous young man).

But how can there be order if strife and unrest are permanent? For those who were dissatisfied with the decisions of the land allocation committees, the behaviour of their new neighbours (because of abusive ploughing and roads cutting through their property), or the practice of acquiring property by their relatives, have tried again and again to seek justice – aggressively, acting out, or by the long-term re-regulation of everyday relationships (anger and hostility); sometimes trying to reach an agreement with the local authorities (i.e., paying them off), and, at other times, through judicial channels. A few have been able to consolidate (and, even more importantly, to increase) their land ownership directly by participating in local power structures and influencing decision-making (as members of the local council or the land allocation committee).

Since there were many relatives who have moved to the city or even farther away, the seeking of justice took place through activating very wide networks. Those who remained in the village could be the users of the lands of their physically distant relatives. It is therefore worth behaving in such a way as to appear selfless and acting from "true kinship attachment," when in fact this is not the case. The right of ownership and disposal, which bring little direct benefit, was regained for the relatives, consolidating their status, but the right of use was reserved for them. The evidence of this behaviour is that many of them have immediately, or over time, purchased the land reclaimed for their relatives. In other words, this was a primitive form of actually increasing their estate.

Last but not least, there were the newcomers in the village: those who came from elsewhere or from the lower part of society and now wanted to gain possessions. They also invoked justice, saying that they have settled, integrated, and worked in this community, so they can also not be robbed now. They argued that it would be in vain to give back the land to helpless, elderly people who could not do anything with it, while they themselves could indeed produce value through their full workforce. They at least must continue to take part in the use of the land, and thus also

have a right to the produced goods. During the first decade of freedom, local societies restructured not only on the basis of the emerging wealth differences but, even before these, along the arguments for justice and various moral perspectives.

It was both frustrating and sobering that open theft persisted. It spread particularly in communities where the number of newcomers and people belonging to communities traditionally conducting a gathering lifestyle has increased and where the institutions offering protection have been weakened. In these communities, when planning the crop structure, the farmers had to think increasingly about preserving the crops as far as possible, because the harvest was threatened not only by the wild animals but also by some villagers. Stories about thefts from the fields abound: "Shepherds and gypsies are the enemy. They let their animals graze everywhere they're not afraid to do so, on the fields of clover and alfalfa, and aren't bothered by the police or anyone else. If you give them a beating, you're punishable, as they say that you can't take the law into your own hands, but they steal what's yours. . . I have about one and a half acres of clover and alfalfa up there, and when I catch some of them there, they say that I should be killed, 'cause I'm the vilest person there is! They say that God didn't create the land for me! So, I tell them that I'll give them one and a half acres of land and they should sow it. . . But they don't sow, 'cause they have no money" (anonymous man). In addition to individual property, public property was also searching for its new forms. The subjects were forced to cooperate against the state provisions – in the new situation, new forms of protection of their interests had to be developed against the emerging interest groups. The "tragedy of the commons" (Hardin 1868) has become an actual everyday experience, as some sought to appropriate the benefits of the reclaimed public property.

The whole of the arable land has re-become a mosaic of individual land holdings – and the society also had to reconstruct itself from the mosaic of families and individuals searching for their place. For the time being, however, construction has been largely based on "classical" methods: individuals and groups sought scapegoats and argued about who was to blame for the lack of the desired solid ownership relations, moral order, and economic security. The attacks were targeted first at agricultural professionals and then at the state, local leaders, and members of the elite (land distributors, officials, and entrepreneurs), and even the European Union appeared as a target. The public discourse, operating at the level of generalities, began to state that everything was better in the past – back in the days of their grandfathers, or even during socialism.

No knowledge, experience, or financial resources were created for consistent community building. Rural societies in the Szeklerland proved to have basic cooperative deficits in every sense. The "circle of the restrictions on individual ownership, i.e., the real community of property" (see Tóth 1985:59; individuals, groups, or institutions) either does not work or, if it does, it is only to a limited extent, triggering individuals' opposition invoking "democracy."[1] Cooperation, however, requires bargaining, parties capable of negotiating, trust, and working structures that sanction breaching the bargains.

Slowly, after almost 2 decades, land restitution and EU accession was achieved – but those who once waited patiently became more and more shocked that all this was not, by any means, the order they had been waiting for. The same social solidarity, peace, and public good of the

[1]To put it simply: democracy, i.e., not dictatorship, i.e., when there is freedom, and everything is permitted to the detriment of others and to our own benefit.

classical age (according to their socially constructed memories, i.e., their symbolic reality) that they have lost, then hoped and waited for so much, was never to be re-established.

Not even temporarily?

It couldn't even have been possible. But the path to this realization, the acknowledgment of this sad reality, and this sudden enlightenment has eliminated all mythical relationships and sacred framing.

There was no need for resistance and revolt anymore, but hoping and nurturing illusions has also become impossible. Burdened by the new worries of a new world and stuck on their regained land, people have come to the realization that, although they are farming again, the situation is different from what it was "back in the day." They stole because they were in need, survived, but have not become heroes, and finally had to face the naked and profane fact of their new situation: that their order and hopes are shattered once and for all, and time/change is irreversible. Their ritual thefts, that is, the memorable acts of stealing that were carried out together and even celebrated, perhaps still have some space, a community. Like military stories from the World War, they have a distinguished, even beautiful place within individual and collective memory. But mostly they just talk amongst themselves about these things – the younger generation is preoccupied with other stories.

Stealing from the collective can be regarded as an institutionalized social behaviour. According to Mary Douglas, there are two components of the survival and functioning of (formal and informal) social institutions: the transactional and the cognitive. Naturally, in transactions between individuals one should seek to acquire goods, make a profit, and at least create a balance between the resources invested and gained. But the cognitive side is at least as important: how can all the activities carried out in the institution be justified, how do the elaborated explanations lead to the formation of social order and coherence, and ultimately to submission to a sacred reality (Douglas 2002:37)? The transactional character of stealing from the collective is quite clear. Pál Balogh, who explores the reality of theft, also speaks of this fact, that they were "forced to do it," and even if it is debatable that they stole for physical survival, it is certain that the members of the rural society (and not only they) had to adapt, steal, and conceal their acts because they could not otherwise access certain resources. However, the cognitive aspect, on which Pál Balogh remains silent, is also important, and it can only be understood by knowing the stories and reconstructing the reality, providing an explanation to the question of how they could remain "moral" and "clean" in spite of their stealing. I think it's partly because, according to the perpetrators, this wasn't even stealing but, if I understand it correctly, an act of "original acquisition." This concept is used by Ernő Tárkány-Szűcs,[2] referring to the folk law practice according to which, if someone took ownership of the "bona vacantia" of the forests and fields (e.g., by picking crab apples), thus devoting work to obtain them, he has become their rightful owner by this act. "It would spoil anyway, so let's take it home instead" – this was the general opinion of the goods produced in the collectives. At the same time, it was the state that acted as the initiator, making itself "immoral" and "dirty" through its actions, destroying the social communities of the "decent families" and the village, and interfering with the sacred order of the world, which can and will have to be re-established when this state/interference finally ceases.

[2]Ernő Tárkány-Szűcs (1921–1984) is an internationally recognized scholar of legal ethnography, legal customs, and folk law. The 2022/1 issue of AEH pays homage to his work (the editors).

This will be the goal to strive towards after the cessation of this state and its institutions of modernization, and the new constructed situations, acting against the functioning of the state and its institutions. This is why it is important to retroactively process and interpret the reality of theft as a social institution emerging after collectivization, adopting the point of view of de-collectivization. For now, we understand what has changed when the intervention ceased, at least in its forms suffered and hated so much by the generation of the deprived. The land, though with some delays and as a result of "bad laws," has been returned to private ownership. However, what the members of the older generation awaited and hoped for so much did not materialize. Their waiting did not result in what was so much expected by them. Neither the daily order of the world (their world), nor the sacred completeness was restored. Once again, they owned their land, but they themselves have not become farmers standing firmly on their land in the middle of their rebuilt universe. For example, the order of the family has not been restored – because the young people are gone, and the grandchildren are only available online.

There have been uplifting moments in the past, maintaining the illusion, but these didn't last. An elderly and sick peasant from Kisbacon/Bățanii Mici responded to the question why he is reclaiming his land now as follows: "I'll take out a little chair and sit down on it on my land, and then I'll feel as if even the sky above my land was mine" (anonymous elderly man). Alas, these were just fleeting moments, because he, just like other members of his generation, would soon leave his land and sky behind to find eternal peace in the darkness of the cemetery.

In the process of de-collectivization, the value and meaning of their anticipation, resignation, adaptation, bargaining, and temporary victories (of all the long decades of the prime of their lives) was questioned for one last time. This generation has come to realize that the world has become meaningless and absurd for them as well – a world in which, even in the recent past, as it now turned out, it was not only impossible to think of themselves as peasants, since it was restricted and forbidden, but also not worth it, with the hope of imagining their existence as built on their own land and an "identity tied to the land" being completely futile. The members of the older generation still alive today prepare to leave this world with this heavy feeling in their hearts, in a kind of cultural vacuum, in the face of an empty and desacralized present and future.

The fact of desacralization, its recognition at the social level, and the most important element of the reaction to it: the emptying of the symbolic role of the Earth – all these should definitely be considered as one of the explanations for the disappearance of the peasantry and the "successful" completion of the process of de-peasantization (Kovách 2003, 2012). Recently – i.e., primarily during the decade following the EU accession – the peasantry that is "moral, self-governed, farms on its own land, enjoys its individual liberty, and has a strong identity tied to the land" was replaced by a rural generation pursuing a wide range of professional occupations, and not only leaving the symbolic relationship with the land behind but even denying it.

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 181–200
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00015

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

"This Is Our Bank": Agricultural Associations and Their Role in Two Swabian Villages in Satu Mare From the Regime Change to the Present

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Received: September 20, 2021 • Accepted: October 25, 2021
Published online: December 21, 2021

ABSTRACT

The study examines the impact of the agricultural associations of two Swabian settlements – Mezőfény (Foieni) and Mezőpetri (Petrești) – on the local economy and society. Agricultural associations played an important role at the beginning of the process of agrarian transformation after the regime change in Romania. The successor organisations of the socialist agricultural associations, now established on a voluntary basis, were able to counteract the impoverishment caused by the reparcelling or forced reparcelling of land during the long transitional period, while at the same time exploiting their monopoly position to prevent the emergence of individual and family farmers. The risk-averse, self-reliant economic model of the associations is reminiscent of the peasant, self-sufficient farm organisation. The associations can thus be seen as a very specific form of post-socialist post-peasant production systems.

KEYWORDS

regime change and the agrarian question, agricultural associations, Satu Mare Swabians

In my study, I examine the impact of two Satu Mare Swabian settlements – Mezőfény (Foieni) and Mezőpetri (Petrești) – on the local economy and society of the agricultural associations[1] that

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[1] Locals refer to this form of cooperative, which has evolved from socialist collective farms (collectives), as associations [társulás] or partnerships [társulat]. In the following I will use the term *association* [társulás].

are still in operation today.[2] Agricultural associations played an important role at the beginning of the process of agricultural transformation after the regime change in Romania. The successor organisations of the socialist collective farms, now established on a voluntary basis[3], were able to compensate for the impoverishment caused by the repeasantisation or forced peasantisation, on the one hand, and, on the other, exploited their monopoly position to prevent the emergence of individual and family farmers. My analysis answers the following questions: how did the agricultural associations emerge in Mezőfény and Mezőpetri? Under what circumstances were the collective farms dissolved? What were the factors that determined success or failure? What were the local factors that determined the creation of the new partnerships? What are the economic, political, and social contexts in which the associations operate? During my research, I conducted interviews with key actors who were active participants in the decollectivisation process and the creation of the association at the local level: former leaders of the local association, mayors, association leaders, board members, association members. In addition to the internal actors, I conducted interviews with agricultural entrepreneurs and individual farmers capable of judging and evaluating the results of the partnerships from the outside.[4]

When we read about the socialist, radical transformation of the economy, the trauma of the eradication of the peasantry, and the agricultural production relegated to collective farms, we think of a long period of time that sealed the fate of entire generations, a period of completion, and carrying with it the finality of immobility. The time that has passed since the regime change – which exceeds the time that the people of Mezőfény and Mezőpetri have lived with the collective farms – is usually described as a time of constant searching for a new path and the ever-changing need to adapt. In the villages surveyed, the cooperative form of agriculture has been in existence for sixty years. But this does not mean that they are without change, nor that they have followed the same or even similar paths. Several forms of cooperative farming have also developed in Romania since the regime change.[5] It is well known that the countries of the Eastern Bloc implemented collectivisation and ran their agrarian economies in very different structures. As a result, the post-socialist transformation of agriculture has also taken place in specific and different ways in each country (Hann 2003). But there is also a consensus that the reorganisation of the agrarian sector has followed a number of different models within countries. Even a detailed description of the Romanian models would go beyond the scope of this study, so I will only summarise the more general findings on cooperative forms.

Before 1989, Romania's agriculture was dominated by three large agricultural organisations: state agricultural enterprises, collective farms, and, to a lesser extent, private farms. Of these three, the agricultural reform that followed the regime change affected the collective farms most

[2]The research was supported by the NKFIH (Nemzeti Kutatási, Fejlesztési és Innovációs Hivatal – National Research, Development and Innovation Office, Hungary) under grant no. K 120712 *Párhuzamos ruralitások. A vidékiség (lét) formái négy erdélyi kisrégióban* [Parallel Ruralities. (Existential) Forms of Rurality in Four Small Regions of Transylvania].

[3]Voluntariness will be nuanced later in the text.

[4]The present study is also based on interviews conducted during fieldwork in the framework of the Hungarian Eötvös State Scholarship MAEÖ176.

[5]There is no precise data available on the percentage of land in Romania that is farmed in the form of cooperatives. Statistics estimate a figure between 12 and 22%. The main reason for this uncertainty is the wide variety of organisational backgrounds of the forms of collective farming, from agricultural companies operating as legal entities under tenancy agreements to informal associations of individual farmers.

radically. So much so that the most decisive process in the first decade of Romanian agriculture after the change of the political regime was decollectivisation and the economic and social problems it created. An important process of decollectivisation for the present study is the creation of the successor organisations of collective farms, the co-operatives. A result of the decollectivisation that is important for the present study is the creation of the successor organizations of collective farms, the agricultural associations. One distinguishes between real and fake associations/cooperatives based on the quality of cooperation. The latter, in fact, indicates enterprises which are cooperatives only in terms of the mechanism of transfer of land use and in name (Sandu 1999; Stănculescu 1999). Katherine Verdery describes partnerships as a coercive structure in which the blurring of property rights has been exacerbated (Verdery 2003). Sebastian Lăzăroiu sees certain types of cooperatives as an institutionalisation of rationalised mutual assistance between members (Lăzăroiu 1999).

Examining the transformation of the Romanian collective farms into associations, Nigel Swain concludes that liquidation or transfer to the period after the regime change was essentially determined by the efficiency and profitability of the collective farm's operations (Swain 1997:78). Collective farms operating in an unfavourable ecological environment or with a low degree of mechanisation were immediately liquidated in the first half of 1990. It is no coincidence that associations have been established mainly in lowland settlements with good soil (Swain 1997:80). However, a favourable ecological environment alone was not a guarantee of success, as it required the active participation of social factors. In his view, only those associations could be successful whose members have accepted the compromises of becoming a member in the restitution process of the land holdings.

Looking at the reasons for the negative developments in agriculture after the political regime change, I would highlight only the factors that have pushed the rural populations who have access to land ownership towards some form of association: 1.) the small size of the estates – mechanisation is not cost effective 2.) the lack of mechanisation – there was insufficient capital either to buy machinery or to pay for the labour; 3.) the advanced age of the "new" landowners; 4.) the fact that a large proportion of the heirs were not local residents; 5.) the poor quality of the land. In addition to these local factors, the Romanian state played a decisive role in the turn towards the establishment of agricultural associations, the direction in which agricultural Law No. 18/1991 clearly wanted to steer rural communities (Verdery 1999), including by supporting the creation of the associations through several years of income tax exemptions (Vincze – Swain 1998:193). The literature on the eruption of social tensions following the activities of the land distribution commissions and the further consequences of the conflicts is extensive (Kideckel 1993; Peti 2006). Adrian Hatos is quite bold in this respect: in many cases, he believes, communities have chosen the associative form precisely to avoid conflicts between landowners. The associations, he maintains, acted as a kind of conciliatory body, helping farmers with the administrative burden of land restitution and acting as a mediator between the parties in disputes (Hatos 2006:24). In 1996, the Christian Democratic National Peasant' Party government sought to create a legal environment against cooperative forms of farming and to promote the strengthening of Western-style market-based family farms by drastically reducing agricultural subsidies. As the members of agricultural associations had to pay for the various work processes, once state subsidies – which alleviated these costs – were abolished, a more attractive alternative for many was to enter into a land lease contract with the then proliferating agricultural enterprises. In most cases, this meant noticeably less income for landowners, but no additional costs in return, which proved to be a

decisive factor in a period of severe capital shortages. Most agricultural associations were liquidated between 1997 and 2000 (HATOS 2006:208).

In the analyses of Transylvanian Hungarian researchers, the period of decollectivisation is most often associated with negative terms such as refeudalisation, repeasantisation, forced repeasantisation – as a summary of a process in which people reverted to pre-collectivisation techniques and practices (SZABÓ 2002:27; CSATA 2006:5; KISS 2005:50). Hungarian ethnographic research in Transylvania – for reasons that are understandable from the point of view of the history of science – has mainly focused on the study of small-scale and family farms (PETI – SZABÓ eds. 2006). Cooperative forms were mostly included in the analyses as opportunities to be exploited, yet unexploited (TÓTH 1995), or failed experiments (KINDA – PETI 2006). There have been few detailed analyses of their operation and role (HATOS 2006). Adrian Hatos distinguishes between four plus one[6] major periods in his analysis of post-regime change agricultural associations in Romania:

1. The period up to 1990, dominated by socialist collective farms;
2. The transitional period between 1990 and 1991, no longer socialist but preserving its legacy, mainly a period of defining new directions at the local level and dismantling the collective farms;
3. The short but all the more chaotic period between 1991 and 1992, the beginning of a radical transformation of Romanian agriculture, of which the fast and the slow versions are highlighted here. The fast transformation was the dominant form, during which the collective farms were liquidated, while in the slow version this cooperative form was maintained for a shorter or longer period of time, from one municipality to another, now in the form of a legal entity;
4. The period from 1992 to 2007 – the date of EU accession – a period of slow transformation, with a brief period of capitalisation in 1996–97 when the pace of change accelerated and the cooperative system was replaced by a land-lease enterprise system;
5. The period following accession to the European Union, characterized by land-based support and related economic strategies.

We can now see that the author's prediction of the EU accession deadline has been confirmed. The proportion of cultivated land has clearly increased and land assets have appreciated. The average price of arable land in Romania has doubled and, in some areas, tripled in the last five years. Despite this, Romania is still the cheapest country in the European Union.[7] Thanks to low prices and a permissive legal framework, around half of Romania's arable land is in foreign ownership.[8] People in the surveyed settlements consider it unthinkable that foreigners could buy land there. With a price of €4,000–7,000 per hectare, Satu Mare County is in the middle range compared to the national average. In the municipalities surveyed, the quality of the

[6]The reason for the plus one is that he wrote his analysis before the EU accession, but in the categorisation, he draws attention to the rapid and spectacular changes that are expected after the accession to the EU, especially from the time the new agricultural funding system went into force.

[7]There are also significant regional price differences within Romania, with the average price of land in Transylvania (€5–6,000 per hectare) being lower than the national average (€3–9,000).

[8]From 2014, any citizen or economic entities of the European Union or European Economic Area member state can buy land in Romania under the same conditions as Romanian citizens and economic entities.

land and the lack of fallow land mean that the price is significantly higher than average, €10–12,000 per hectare. Land for sale is rare. Of course, land tenure is not static here either, but the dynamics are more determined by inheritance procedures and intra-family sales.

THE VILLAGES

Mezőpetri lies 11 km southwest of Nagykároly (Carei), on the main road connecting Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare) to Nagyvárad (Oradea). The municipality has a total of about 2,300 ha of arable land and another 400 ha of hay fields, pastures, and orchards. Its population at the last census was 1,588, of which 46.9% (745) were Hungarians, 27.3% (434) Germans, 12.5% (122) Romanians, and 10.5% (167) Gypsies.[9] In 1977 it had 2,081 inhabitants, in 1992 1,618.

Mezőfény lies 7 km northwest of Nagykároly, next to the Romanian-Hungarian border. The distance between the Church in the middle of the village and the state border is about 5 km. Its countryside includes 1,540 ha of arable land, 96 ha of meadows, 92 ha of vineyards, 97 ha of orchards, and 538 ha of pasture. The current population is 1,840 (2,344 in 1977, 2,053 in 1992), of which 55.3% (1,043) are Hungarian, 40.9% (772) German, and the remaining 4% Gypsy.

MICA GERMANIE, OR "LITTLE GERMANY"

In 2016, Mezőpetri was the focus of national (Romanian) media attention in three different kinds of news stories. First of all, statistics published in economic newspapers have made the national news: the Agricultural Intervention and Payment Agency (APIA) paid the highest amount of aid for milking cows (€206,000) at the national level.[10] These news gave rise to the other two kinds: shortly afterwards, the leading Romanian TV stations, newspapers, and internet portals reported on the economic success of the Mezőpetri Agricultural Association, the successor of the socialist collective farm, in articles and reports with catchy titles. In sentences structured according to the logic of the missed chance, "this is what could have been if. . .," the "if" was most often followed by the thought "had they destroyed the farming collectives."[11] In the third category of news, the creatives didn't skimp on adjectives and called Mezőpetri "little Germany" (*mica Germanie*).[12] The name is both a reference to the Swabian-German origin and, from a (mostly) Romanian perspective, to the western, civilized rural environment. The settlement is presented as a positive example of the use of EU funds, where money from tenders is not going into the pockets of the elite but into investments for the benefit of the community. The Bucharest journalists compare it to a pleasant country town rather than a village, with an

[9] The ethnicity tables of the census data of the Swabian villages in Satu Mare should be treated with due criticism regarding the Swabian identity(ies). Hungarian and German are not ethnic categories, at least not in the sense like, say, Romanian. For a more detailed explanation, see: Szilágyi 2015:84–93; Baumgartner 2012:95.

[10] https://www.stiriagricole.ro/cine-a-incasat-cele-mai-mari-subventii-pentru-vaca-de-lapte-40910.html (accessed September 9, 2021).

[11] https://www.digi24.ro/regional/digi24-oradea/model-de-afacere-prospera-cap-in-comunism-societate-agricola-profitabila-in-capitalism-894490 (accessed September 9, 2021).

[12] https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/petresti-sau-mica-germanie-comuna-care-svabii-au-schimbat-aerul-locului-1454435 (accessed September 9, 2021).

infrastructure that is the envy of larger cities, with full public utilities, a modern school fully equipped with digital facilities and lifts, a nursing home, a sports hall, a leisure centre, an outdoor stage, a bowling alley, and an industrial park. The picture that emerges from the reports is deceptive, however: the achievements and successes are real and brilliant, but their glory is significantly dimmed by a few circumstances. The agricultural association is on the verge of bankruptcy, the school is only open to lower grades due to a shortage of children, the building is mostly empty, the industrial park is underused, and only one investor has settled there, the great infrastructure and environment are useless if the municipality, and even the wider region, cannot provide the necessary workforce. Moreover, there is such a high rate of emigration and ageing in Mezőpetri that the settlement, which otherwise has excellent potential, is on the verge of social viability. Although no exact figures are available, the consensus is that about a third of the houses are empty. Those passing through the village will not see any signs of this, as all the houses are being looked after. The owners who have moved to Germany do not sell them, they pay for, or use family connections, for the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings and their surroundings (garden and street frontage).

In both settlements, most of the population is of retirement age, and the current economic and social structures are difficult to maintain due to ageing. Due to a shortage of children, the school in Mezőpetri has not started senior classes this year. This is particularly painful for the people of Mezőpetri, as in the past children from neighbouring villages were brought there to study in the German language class, a dormitory was run, and a few years ago the school building was completely renovated with EU funding. Mezőfény is in a much better position in this respect. Although the number of children decreased after the regime change, in recent years it has not fallen below the level needed for the stable operation of the school and has even increased somewhat. This growth is due to the fact that Mezőfény has become an attractive destination for young residents of Nagykároly, thanks to the infrastructural improvements resulting from the presence of a German-owned factory investing in the village. Both settlements are rich, and their infrastructure is also outstanding even at the national level: the coverage of public utilities is almost 100%, and all streets are asphalted[13]. Both municipalities have industrial parks, sports halls, leisure parks, retirement homes. Mezőpetri has won the award for the "Cleanest and Best Managed Municipality" of the Sathmar County Council for several years in a row, and Mezőfény has always been a finalist in this competition.[14] The cleanliness and tidiness is not surprising, of course, as we are talking about villages where the Saturday community sweeping of roads, streets, and squares in front of houses has been preserved until recently.[15] The materialisation of economic success is very similar in the two municipalities, yet they have been achieved in very different ways. While in Mezőpetri the investments were made through national and European Union tenders, in Mezőfény the developments were mainly made

[13]The asphalting of the main field roads in Mezőpetri was taking place during the fieldwork.

[14]The prize does not only hold a symbolic value, it also comes with a valuable reward: commercial vehicles and cars have been „won" this way. Thanks to this prize, both Mezőpetri and Mezőfény have gained national recognition. They made the national Romanian news as „Little Germany."

[15]In Mezőfény, this custom has been maintained until today, in Mezőpetri it was abandoned due to the high rate of emigration and the extremely high transit traffic.

possible by the increased tax revenues from the large industrial investment[16] that settled there. From 2003 to September 2019, the Mayor's Office of Mezőpetri has won grants worth around 6.5 million EUR and 6.2 million RON for twelve projects. This was where the first industrial park in the county was established, and although its utilisation is minimal, the success of this tender has contributed greatly to the success of subsequent urban development projects. However, it would be unfair not to mention the projects that preceded the tender period, many of which date back to before or immediately after the regime change. It is also important to mention them because they bring us closer to understanding how the partnership came into being and how it survived.

THE COLLECTIVE FARMS

Before the regime change, the collectives were the main employers. Thanks to the excellent quality of the chernozem soil, both collective farms were highly successful and profitable. Of the two, it was the Mezőpetri collective farm that had the better reputation, with the cattle farm having a national reputation, partly due to Nicolae Ceauşescu's working visit to Mezőpetri in 1981.[17] The tomatoes bred and grown here have also been shown at Western exhibitions.

"The director of the ILF was Uncle Karcsi Szabó. And he said to me, – Hey, Mózer, I saw your tomatoes. I said: where? – In Munich. They, the directors of the ILF,[18] were posted every year wherever Romanian goods arrived, not only in Satu Mare County, but all over the country, and they delivered the goods there. – And I say, how did you know? The taste? – Who else has the names Mózer and Fézer and all those Swabian names written on their crates? – Because everyone put their goods in a separate box and had to write their name on it. – So that's when I saw it in Munich" (F. M., Mezőpetri).

Success did not mean that they became showcase institutions. Collectives were run by local elites who looked after the interests of both the members and the community.

"We had a good president, he was the president the whole time, Uncle Feri Orosz, and he distributed to the people more than the quota, because he knew – he started this collective – that people's sweat was in this land, so he would fetch more from the warehouse and distribute more than the quota. He was also an MP, so he could do it because he had the power. He was from Mezőfény. The water tower is to his credit, the water supply has been secured during his time, the school was built during his time, it was not built by the state, it was built by the collective farm of Mezőfény. Maybe the state contributed as well. The kindergarten was built during his time, as was the doctor's office, and that's when the streets of Nagykároly were asphalted. So, he had the attitude to not just let the state take everything away, he tried to invest a little locally. So that was our legacy. We've never denied that, that we went into the '90s with a legacy like that. We didn't have to build a school and a kindergarten then" (T. T., Mezőfény).

The collective also provided a number of services to help members who had lost their footing due to the economic and social challenges of the socialist transformation. The transformation of

[16]The German-owned Polipol furniture factory started operations in 2005 on the outskirts of Mezőfény. It currently has around 800 employees, most of whom come from Mezőfény and the surrounding Swabian villages.

[17]The Mezőpetri cooperative also received the "Hero of Socialist Labour" Medal (Merli 1999:207).

[18]Fruit and Vegetable Processing Company.

rural society, the family and work organisation, and the difficulties that this entailed, were counterbalanced by the creation of new institutions. In the early 1960s, a bakery was opened, a nursery and a kindergarten were run, construction teams helped builders, etc.

The scope of the present study does not allow for a detailed description of the Swabian community in Satu Mare and the reasons for its introversion.[19] In the community, which turned inwards due to the traumas of the 20th century – mainly but not exclusively by their deportation to the Soviet Union after the Second World War – an extremely strong solidarity based on a shared destiny developed, which could not fully resist the destructive effects of the communist regime but did not completely disintegrate either. One measure of this may be the institutionalisation of theft. The institutionalisation of theft from the collective has been highlighted by many scholars (Gagyi 2018; Kotics 2001:17). In my research, I expected that the Swabian communities I studied would refute this. My assumption was that the people here still preferred to think of the collective farm's property as their own property. With few exceptions, the local narratives about theft confirmed my hypothesis, so the stories about thefts were mostly told in a specific context.

"Now, theft. Every human being has a little bit of the will to steal. But we found out. . . Even the Gypsies didn't steal here. Understand? Here, even the Gypsies didn't steal. I mean actual stealing. Maybe some took home like ten corncobs or something. They had no one to take an example from, for stealing. Not from the former president, not from me. I didn't steal a single leu's [leu=Romanian currency] worth, and neither did he. His daughter has a flat on the fourth floor in Nagykároly [laughs], a two- or three-room apartment. His wife lives opposite me. Understand? There was no theft here" (F. M., Mezőpetri);

"What, stealing? It wasn't typical. Now, it has happened that someone brought home five tomatoes in his food pouch. Well, yes. I, for one, wouldn't steal five tomatoes from your garden, but I'd bring them home from the collective farm. Because I used to work, too, at the collective farm in the summer when I was a student on vacation. It was only natural that I would bring home something like five tomatoes" (A. K., Mezőpetri).

However: "My mother-in-law came home from potato picking, with a bag of potatoes, and then we had that for dinner, and maybe the next day's dinner, too. But she had to, because all she got was one shift, which was not enough for even a minimum subsistence. So, it wasn't theft, it was a crime of subsistence, as they say about Gypsies nowadays. Some people took stuff by the wagonload, some by the truckload. Then sold it and got rich. It happened! Here in Mezőfény, too" (T. T., Mezőfény).

In both Mezőfény and Mezőpetri, the collective farms' assets are not seen as the legacy of an external power but as the fruit of the community's hard work. On the other hand, the Swabian work ethic, which survived collectivisation, has increased this wealth with extraordinary efficiency.

"They were damn fine workers, these people. Hard-working as hell. – But why? Because that's the way they are. It was the harvest, I wasn't yet the president back then, but the president was sick for three or four months, and I was running the farm. We harvested out there, toward Piskolt [Pişcolt]. We used small combine harvesters at that time, and at half past eleven it was almost the end of the night, and the wagon drivers came and said: Sir, go home. You're so tired, you've been running around all day. We'll pack everything up. Till half past one, people were carrying everything in on their own. In the morning when they left. . . – Is that all right? That's

[19] For more on this subject, see Baumgartner 2012; Szilágyi 2014.

cool. That's it. This met with the Swabians' – by their own admission excessive – hoarding lifestyle. Anything worth more than a hatful of shit, we Swabians don't throw away, we keep it [laughs]" (L. B., Mezőfény).

The vast majority of the elderly population worked locally, primarily within the various economic units of the collective farm. As the collective farms were well-capitalised and profitable, industrial migration to the cities, although significant, especially among the younger generation, was less than in neighbouring Hungarian and Romanian villages. This does not mean, of course, that there has not been a significant migrant worker-peasant stratum[20] in these villages, since it is from among them that the agro-entrepreneurs who have become stable local economic actors since the 2000s have emerged.

However, there was another form of migration, which led to a gradual and accelerating decline in the population of settlements from the 1970s onwards. The emigration of the Satu Mare Swabians to Germany, which peaked in 1991-92, resulted in a specific social and economic environment. On the one hand, the share of the active population had already been declining steadily even before the regime change. To compensate economically for the labour shortage, the collective farms responded with increasing mechanisation, and their financial resources made this easily possible. Another consequence of emigration to Germany was that the population that stayed in the country was able to build, including through contacts in Germany, a financial base at the time of the regime change that allowed them to avoid the forced paths that were so common elsewhere during the transition. Grotesquely, a major contribution to the more stable financial situation of the Swabian population was made by the most traumatic event of the Swabian community, the deportation to Russia in 1944 (for more details, see: Baumgartner 2012; Boros 2005; Szilágyi 2017). The German state paid an annuity to the deportees as compensation:

"Under the old regime, the German state paid deportees 2-300 marks. That was a lot of money back then. There was a man from Mezőfény, he was a German soldier, and he took it upon himself to write the applications, he sorted it out for many people. Those who could prove that they had been deported were paid compensation by the German state. Mostly in the '70s and '80s. But only to those who were actually deported, on a personal basis, until their death" (T. T., Mezőfény).

"Some people, even back then, had this pension in Germany, or I don't know what they called it. Those who had been deported – and there were few here in Petri – and had some kind of permanent impairment, so that they were lame or incapacitated, so we didn't envy them, but they got some Deutsche Mark" (A. K., Mezőpetri).

Of course, the compensation could not be used freely, and the Romanian authorities strictly controlled how the money was spent. The money could only be spent in "dollar stores"[21] in county towns and tourist centres.

[20] Of the many interpretations of the social category of the worker-peasant, I consider the approach of the authors Ştefan Dorondel and Stelu Şerban to be the most valid for local conditions. It goes beyond the picture drawn by Szelényi and Kostello, according to which the peasant workers are both part-time agricultural workers and under-educated industrial workers, forced by the communist power into urban industrial units (Szelényi – Kostello 1996). They add to this the lack of market orientation (Szabó 2013; Lovas 2006), the reason for which is identified as the dependence of family farming on cooperatives (Dorondel – Şerban 2014:20).

[21] The local name for the Comturist shops that were mainly open to tourists visiting Romania and, to a lesser extent, to Romanian citizens legally holding foreign currency. Since possession of foreign currency of unknown origin was a criminal offence in communist Romania, very few Romanian citizens, mainly posted workers from Arab and African countries, were allowed to shop there.

"But they weren't just handed it; they had to go down to the shop to spend it. And they couldn't just buy anything there, and they might have needed something else, but they bought a tape recorder because their grandkid might listen to it, a gas cooker, a parchment rug, a fridge or a freezer, and things like that" (A. K., Mezőpetri).

"That was official, it was in Sathmar. If you had relatives in the West and you came home and paid in Deutsche Mark, you got whatever you wanted. You could buy a car, a Dacia or a Trabant in Romania. My wife got a Trabant. Her uncle bought her a Trabant from Germany. During the old regime. Well, if you had relatives in the West and they wanted to help people here, they could help a lot. – I heard stories that they could buy a fridge. – Sure, and furs, fur coats. 'Dollar store,' they called it. You could buy things you couldn't get for lei. And quality products, like luxury goods" (T. T., Mezőfény).

The "luxuries" thus acquired could be easily monetised, further improving the financial situation of families. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the households in the Swabian villages were equipped was better than the Romanian average. Bathrooms with running water and large domestic appliances were common at the turn of the 1980s. An important consequence of advanced embourgeoisement has been the high proportion of participants in higher education. A causal relationship between the high number of highly educated people and the continuation of cooperative farming after the regime change was pointed out by Hatos (Hatos 2006:291).

THE AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS[22]

"It's not the fault of those bricks that they were laid by the communists who built that wall. (. . .) Well, you have to preserve it, you have to give it its purpose. We didn't do anything like that here. What our fathers and mothers once built, it's a mortal sin to scatter and let it become nothing." (T. T., Mezőfény)

In the foregoing, I wanted to describe the factors that may have played a role in the continuation of co-operative farming through the agricultural associations in both Mezőfény

[22] I was nine years old in 1989. I cannot claim to have had an interpretative view of the post-regime change phenomena related to agriculture, even in my narrower life world in Nagykároly, despite the fact that my family, and to some extent myself, were active participants in the great agricultural transformation. Both my parents are agricultural engineers, both worked in this sector of the economy – my father as a middle manager (senior engineer). In addition to their permanent jobs, they/we were gardening in greenhouses on rented land, in the informal framework that was less common at the time, growing mainly tomatoes, peppers, aubergines, cucumbers. All the members of our family took an active part in this activity, and together with my two older siblings, I also had important responsibilities. We had to do certain jobs from a very young age, without parental supervision. This family garden is still running today, although we "children" are no longer the workforce.

After the regime change, my parents invested family capital and tried to privately run the gardens, which used to be their workplace, but after several years of losses and the forced liquidation of movable (machinery, equipment) and immovable (warehouses, small and large plots of land) assets, they ended this business. In this period of struggle, which lasted until the early 2000s and required year-round presence, many questions were already formulated in my mind, but real reflections only took place much later, during a research project focusing on Transylvanian rurality. In the agonizing livelihood of agriculture, it seemed inconceivable to me that this could be associated with financial well-being. Later, as a university student, during my travels on the Nagykároly-Sathmar-Kolozsvár route, I could not help but notice the large proportion of fallow fields, previously unknown to me. While everything seemed to be collapsing, there seemed to be an institution (system) that was ignoring the macroeconomic environment that could be functional and even successful.

and Mezőpetri. In the following, I will describe the process of transformation, a brief history of the associations, and their role in the local community.

Several analyses have been carried out on the possible scenarios for the liquidation of the Romanian collective farms, the restoration of land tenure (land distribution), and the typology of the main actors (Swain 1997; Hatos 2006:252–253). Their common conclusion was that the legal framework gave too much room for "flexibility of interpretation," which resulted in the local liquidation of reserves, carried out differently from one municipality to another, and the fate of the collective farms' property was thus a function of local socio-political power relations (Cartwright 2000). And it was not only a question of whether to go down individual paths or to continue with the cooperative/associative farming system, but also of deciding on the guidelines and structure of the latter. Although in both Mezőfény and Mezőpetri the co-operative form was chosen, the co-operatives were organised and functioned in completely different ways, and the land was allocated according to different principles, so I will describe them separately below.

MEZŐFÉNY

In the transitional period between the dissolution of the collective farm and the creation of the agricultural association, individual/family farming could start on plots of at least 50 ares[23] per person after the regime change. For an average family of 2–4 former collective employees,[24] this could mean up to two hectares. The farming was either done by hired labour or by mobilising family resources. In the '90s this was quite commonplace, when there were still groups of hoers organised during the collective. Every informant remembers this period as a particularly financially successful one.

"So, the collective farm was still there, but there was no agricultural association. It was a transitional period. The farming was done by hired labour, or we ourselves did it, because we were not ashamed to hoe, the whole family went out and got to it. But then the price of corn was so high that a colleague bought a tractor with two trailers of corn. At that time, there were still many animals in the mountains, and a trader came and bought ten tons of corn at once and took it by truck. Now there are no animals. But back then it was worth working the land, it was a start, and everyone got going, and then slowly it got lower and lower" (L. B.).

"At the time of the regime change, the price of crops was very high. It was a rather big leap. All kinds of agricultural products were very well paid for. At that time, 50 ares were given to us in the transition period, and we sowed corn in it; they gave one hectare to my grandfather, who was a member of the collective, my mother-in-law and my father-in-law, so, we cultivated 50 ares with the corn, we almost bought a Dacia just from that. We sold the corn in grains, back then it was selling like hot cakes" (T. T.).

Because of the general euphoria after the fall of the communist regime and the economic successes of the transition period, many farmers demanded full privatisation and restitution. Some have even withdrawn their land from common ownership, but the vast majority have opted for the cooperative form. There is not enough data available to explain why so few people chose individual farming, so instead of explaining the motive, I will only highlight a few reasons

[23] 1 are = 100 m^2.

[24] The traditional Swabian household economy was characterised by three generations living together.

given by locals. The first is more a saying than an argument, stating that "the Swabian thinks first and acts second," which is no more than an ethnically tinged proclamation of the correctness of a decision made thirty years ago. A more specific reason is that there were no farmers with extensive landholdings in Mezőfény, and Law No. 18/1991, which has been cited several times, allowed the restitution of only 10 ha. To start an agricultural business, farmers would have had to rent land, but the cooperatives were an insurmountable competition in the cultivation of this land, given their available machinery and manpower.

There are two agricultural associations in Mezőfény, the Agrofieni Agricultural Association and Agromec Ltd. The former is the legal successor of the collective farm, the latter of the machine station, and there are no individual large entrepreneurs. In this paper I will only examine the role of Agrofieni. Apart from one important difference, the two agricultural associations function in the same way. The difference lies in the fate of the assets distributed among the members in liquidation. The members of the agricultural association decided to keep most of their movable and immovable property (stables, warehouses, silos, carts, ploughs, machinery, animals, etc.) as collective property when the cooperative was liquidated. These assets were entered into a meticulously drawn up register based on a point system. The point system included the size of the farm before collectivisation, the number of agricultural machines and animals contributed to the collective, and the time worked in the collective. The points were converted into units called "shares," which accurately determined the members' shares of the assets of the established association.[25] Accurate calculations were made possible by the careful preservation of the records of the deliveries in the collective's archives. The settlement of the property relations was carried out in a way that is rare in Transylvania and with strong bonds of trust (for further details on the links between trust and decollectivisation, see Torsello 2003). A key figure in the restitution process, the reigning mayor at the time of the restitution recalls these as difficult but good times. When the land was restituted, the landowners accepted the proposal of the former leaders of the collective farm and the newly formed association's board members to join, considering the future of the association. There was not enough arable land available to allocate the mandatory 50 ares required by Law No. 18/1991. To the satisfaction of the majority, the Land Allocation Committee resolved this by allocating a uniform 7% less ploughland, with the difference being allocated as orchards or in sandy areas.

"So, we tried to comply with the law, but I would say that each municipality applied it differently. And the other big advantage we have is that we associated with each other. In the 1930s, when there was no collective farm, only private farming, the farmers from Mezőfény associated with each other because the countryside in Mezőfény was so fragmented. They hired an engineer, and then he made the map, and whoever got his land closer to the village got a bit less, whoever got beyond the railway line got more. Even back then, there were times when people went to protest with pitchforks, saying they were given their land in the wrong place, so it didn't go so smoothly either, from what I heard from the old-timers. And now, it didn't go smoothly either, but it was worth it because the 800 ha of the association are almost a single plot. Not in one piece, but in big chunks. And the former machine station works in big chunks, too, I mean with what they're entrusted with. It's a huge advantage, and that's our advantage in agriculture, that we have a cooperative, and that's how it works" (T. T.).

[25] When Agromec was launched, it redeemed the movable assets, paying the members' shares in cash.

The association, despite the trust placed in its leaders, could not have been created if the land had not been of a uniformly near-identical quality. In addition to members' land, the associations also lease land to those who opted for individual farming at the time of the regime change but who subsequently abandoned farming for various reasons. The land consolidation process has brought a lot of benefits. Primarily for the associations themselves, of course, but also for members and even non-members. The registration of land could take place under much more relaxed conditions. Whereas those who did not want to join the association received their land at the beginning of the land distribution,[26] and this was recorded in the land register, those who joined the association did not have to act so urgently to obtain the title deeds; they worked on it for ten years and in return received benefits which allowed them to plan for the long term. When the land was registered, inheritance was also considered, and the parcels were allocated by considering the size of the inheritance expected from parents and grandparents.

"As we set up the association by parcel number, we also considered where everyone would inherit, so the parcel would be next to it. If I had an inheritance from my father and my grandfather and my other grandfather, they were all side-by-side. That's the way it's been worked out. We even considered the future, let alone the current situation, for this association. For example, I have my father's and my grandfather's inheritance in one location" (T. T., Mezőfény).

The association's 800 ha were initially given a single parcel number, but later, in order to ensure the continuity of agricultural activity, the land titles were allocated. The parcelling and land registration was carried out by a well-respected, 'naturalised' professional. The same person kept the land register of the collective, so the socialist collective farm both began and ended with him. He was assisted in his work by the land register, which was kept with great care even during the collective's existence, and in which inheritance matters were also accurately recorded. The land distribution committee compiled this data, and while elsewhere the landowners themselves tried to gather the documents proving ownership, here the land distribution committee brought the data clarifying ownership to people's homes, and based on this they jointly drafted the official application. In this way, the land distribution was carried out extremely efficiently, and there were no subsequent complaints.[27]

The association was highly profitable, especially in the first decade of its operation. The high price of cereals generated significant income. The horticultural units inherited from the socialist predecessor, which required a lot of manual labour and could not be run profitably, were dismantled. A significant part of the revenue was used for development, which resulted in the company quickly becoming a stable agricultural player in the region. The shortage of staff due to the large number of workers reaching retirement age was compensated by continuous

[26] A consensus decision was sought on land distribution. The land of those who did not wish to join the association was preferably returned to the original location, but efforts were also made to ensure that the land included in the association formed coherent, large parcels. Therefore, where there was a conflict of interest, applicants were offered land in more favourable areas of the countryside.

[27] It is not the fault of those involved in land distribution that this system subsequently proved not to be viable. The land surveys carried out in the 1990s were inaccurate. The National Cadastre Programme, launched in 2015 with the intention of bringing land registers in line with the reality on the ground and creating a systematic digital cadastre, was unsuccessful. The sale of land in the countryside was largely carried out through so-called pocket contracts. The main reason for this is the uncertain property ownership resulting from unresolved inheritance procedures due to high costs.

mechanisation, and today the company has around 40 employees. The association in Mezőfény has avoided the typical fate of Romanian cooperatives, i.e., liquidation and transformation into leased farming enterprises (HATOS 2006:147), and it is still functioning as a community institution, although its aim is to achieve the highest possible profit, since it pays members' dividends and operating and development costs. The dividends paid by the association consist of the harvested crops, per hectare, on demand, in the form of produce or cash (but only for large crops: wheat, maize, sunflower, etc.), as well as oil and sugar. Additional dividends are paid based on the share of the fixed capital. If someone asks for a cash dividend, the association sells the crop instead and pays cash. Because the purchase price of grain is lowest after harvesting and then rises steadily, and the cooperatives can store longer and wait until prices peak, members always earn a higher income than individual entrepreneurs who have to sell their crops immediately after harvesting. The cash value of dividends has been around 1,300–1,500 RON per hectare in recent years, including the income from shares. This is not an extraordinary amount, but if you add the entire year's cost of basic foodstuffs (bread, oil, flour, sugar[28]), it can be considered a significant income. The association also provides other services to its members. It may seem that the people of Mezőfény have given up farming for the benefit of the association, but the opposite is true. They continue to farm and keep animals on their backyard plots, which are on average around 30 acres, but the way they do it has moved away from the traditional way of farming.

"Even those who have a couple of cows milk them by machines. And if someone has a 10 ha garden, he harvests the corn by machine, too. He pays for it, and there's a private corn harvester, or the agricultural association, so even the harvesting is done by machine. He doesn't even hoe it. Why bother? Every year he fills out a form, what service he needs from the association. 'I have a 30-ares garden here, and I need it weeded, harvested, and I'll pay at the end of the year.' The association does it, and you pay at the end of the year, and the association even stores your crops. There's the warehouse, they'll measure it out for me again, I'll just go with my cart and pick it up from there" (T. T., Mezőfény).

Farming is therefore not coercive, and definitely not a burden; backyard farming brings additional income with minimal labour investment. Nevertheless, this highly idealised picture is considerably nuanced by interviews with members who have hired labour from the association. In these, the association is often portrayed as an organisation abusing its position of power. The work requested is not carried out on time or at a higher price than the market rate.

The association's main profile is cereal production, but it also runs a cowshed, bakery, and slaughterhouse. The latter services are mainly available to members – the bakery sells bread on a ticket basis, the slaughterhouse replaces pig slaughter at home – and can therefore be seen as welfare services, the costs of which are covered by the income from the cereals. The almost 50%, due to the fall in the price of grain, has now become very burdensome for the association, and as a result there is a growing conflict of interest between the director[29] and the board. The director

[28] After the sugar factory in Nagykároly was closed in the mid-2000s, the production of sugar beet, previously cultivated over large areas, was reduced. The closure of the last regional factory in Nagyvárad (Oradea) in 2014 caused the final abandonment of the growth of sugar beet. Nevertheless, the members of the association continue to expect the association to supply them with their annual sugar needs.

[29] The director is a Romanian horticultural engineer who started his career in the collective of Mezőfény and was chosen for his skills as a manager.

is calling for a reduction in dividends and the abolition of welfare services, the board for the continuation of the current framework.

"We get the share because we left everything in the association, cattle, horses, buildings, movable and immovable property, and the return on that is the 20% today. The manager always tells us what the interest is now in the bank. Well, it's not even 1%. So, it was written into the statute that the bank interest rate would be the benchmark. He is right in a way, but we are not the bank to cheat the client, this is our bank, this association" (T. T., Mezőfény).

There are very few people in Mezőfény for whom agriculture is their livelihood, with the exception of the association's employees and a few innovative agro-entrepreneurs and their employees, but the agricultural association as an institution of *communitas* (Szabó 2004:26) provides a stable base for the life of the community while providing basic services to its members, without recourse to one of the most important economic instruments of our times, the EU's tender-based support system.

"Associations are not taking advantage of the opportunities to apply for tenders. I think they bid once for machinery, they bought a tractor combine, but it's not typical. People should use this opportunity, but they think that then they have to give as well, and they don't have anything to give, so that's how they think this works, that they'll need to give bribes. Because a private farmer will collect the bribe, so I'm talking about corruption. Or you pay a consultant to write the application the way it should be written. But they don't bother with this stuff" (Sz. U., Mezőfény).

MEZŐPETRI

While the Mezőfény association was created as a result of a consensus decision, the Mezőpetri scenario was completely different. The chairman of the collective, using his position of power, unilaterally transformed the collective farm into an agricultural association.

"I came out strongly, I told them [i.e. the people of Mezőpetri] that if. . ., you built this, your strength is in it, your money is in it, if you want to take the bricks and tiles and everything home and make a stable, I'll help you, but if you don't do that, then everything will stay here. (. . .) If anyone touches anything, I'll get on the tractor and run you over. Understand? That's how it worked. There was a stupid guy, he's dead now, and he was saying that it all should be dismantled and distributed to the last brick. But nobody dared touch it. Well, the doorknobs were stolen and stuff, but nothing else was touched. So that's how it stayed, with me, 'cause I stayed, too [laughs]" (F. M., Mezőpetri).

Land redistribution was also carried out according to his interests, he was in a position of power.

"No one here has demanded that their land be returned at the old location; that's stupid. The way I divided it up for them was fine" (F. M., Mezőpetri).

Of the 2,300 ha of arable land in the village, a total of 200 ha have not been transferred to the agricultural association. He is still the president of the association. This makes the Mezőpetri association unique in the country, and many of its practices are still in place today, which are a remnant of the days of the collective farm. It is still the largest employer in the village, and some of its 120 employees are still organised into brigades. As in the days of the collective, the brigade of bricklayers not only works within the association but also carries out external work. The

association is made up of the following main units: the major crops, the machine station, the cattle farm (including the meat processing plant), the bricklaying brigade, and the bakery. It operates a dividend system similar to the one in Mezőfény, but because of the separate economic model, it pays less, and for years it has paid nothing on shares. The separate economic model has to do with maintaining the cattle farm,[30] which in the current economic climate can only be operated with very low efficiency, mostly at a loss. This also provides an accurate diagnosis of the instability of the economic environment in Romania, where a decade ago livestock farming was the main driving sector. While in Mezőfény the income from cereals is used for community services, in Mezőpetri it is used to compensate for the losses of the cattle farm. On paper, the Mezőpetri association also has a board of directors, but decisions are made by the president alone. Even if not everyone agreed with his decisions, critical voices about the economic results have remained quiet until recent years. And no one disputes that as president he has done a lot for the village and its residents.

"Well, anyway, he took it further. It's a merit in itself that he didn't let it go to waste but tried to carry it on as long as he could. Now, he's not modernising, and many people are complaining that he's not taking advantage of these opportunities to apply for grants, to renovate the machinery, and so on and so forth, and the livestock. I don't know about that, he knows. I see it as a merit that he really kept it all as much as he could" (A. K.).

As the association in Mezőpetri is almost identical to its authoritarian president, I tried to find out as much as possible about his motivations, economic strategies, and plans during my fieldwork. From the interviews with him, a very different practice from that of Mezőfény emerged, but one that was equally in the interests of the people. While in Mezőfény the aim is to maximise profits by increasing the dividends of the members, the intention of the president of the Mezőpetri association was to keep the Mezőpetri people in their place by maintaining human resource-intensive livestock farming and anachronistic brigades and workers' groups.

"Even now, if you're from Mezőpetri and you want to work here, you have a job. So, I'm not leaving anyone behind, I'm hiring everyone. (. . .) I have so many people because I have the zootechny. So as to have work for the people. But that's a separate issue. That's the way I see it" (F. M., Mezőpetri).

But the number of dissatisfied people is growing, with more and more people withdrawing their land from the association. Not with the intention of farming independently – they are renting the land to a local agribusiness tycoon. Paying higher dividends – although in this case the term *lease* is more accurate – he already farms more than 800 ha. Thanks to his modern machinery, acquired through several successful EU tenders, and employing five people in total,[31] he is able to cultivate the land he leases in a much more cost-effective way than the agricultural association. He's a very successful entrepreneur, but his success has few benefits for the local community (those whose land he farms receive a slightly higher income) or none at all. He regards the association's mode of operation as outdated, its running of the animal farm wasteful, and its failure to respond to tenders as incompetent. He is not alone in this criticism, as many members of the association are calling for the cow farm to be shut down. Their argument is also valid: the president should not run the association as a charitable organisation, at least not with their money. The rejection of tenders, like that in Mezőfény, stems from a rejection of corruption.

[30]The cattle population of the Mezőpetri cattle farm was the largest in Satu Mare County at the time of the research.

[31]None of them is from Mezőpetri.

"I have submitted projects twice and not once have these bums approved it. Then, I would need just two milkmaids and two men, and amen. I'd have a stable and a truck driver to bring in the food. It could be done differently, but those dirty bums didn't approve it. Well, they didn't approve it because of those Westerners, because the West gives them money if you buy everything from the West. If you buy the calves, cows, all the milking machines, shit, everything. But here we had everything, I didn't have to buy cows, in fact, I sell them all over the country to farms. And I told the people in Bucharest, there were some guys here, they said: no, no. Then a few days later one of them phoned me and said I was right, this why it wasn't approved. There couldn't have been any other reason" (F. M., Mezőpetri).

The president of the association is well over retirement age and plans to step down soon, which he believes will mean the end of the association. I think he is being realistic: the association in its current form will certainly not continue to operate, most likely the profitable agricultural division will be taken over by the business tycoon and the other units will be liquidated.

The history of the agricultural associations may seem like an absolute success story, and in fact it is one by national standards. However, the analysis has also revealed the downsides of their functioning. The post-socialist elite who presided over the associations (engineers working in the former cooperative or even the former chairman of the socialist collective farm), and especially the all-powerful leaders of the associations (in local parlance: the "chairmen"), were the main beneficiaries of the association in all municipalities. Over a period of more than thirty years, they have grown wealthy to an extent that, at the very least, calls into question the fairness of dividends. Without exception, the chairmen have run the associations according to their individual ambitions, in many cases channelling the partnership's resources into parallel individual businesses and amassing vast movable and immovable assets. They used their power to influence the local political process throughout. The truth is, they also tried to meet some of the needs of the community.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

I would describe the associations of Mezőfény and Mezőpetri as not only economically but also socially successful organisations, which, in addition to providing a stable financial base for the communities in the difficult times following the regime change, often took over state responsibilities and represented social cooperation and social localism based on trust. This success required the simultaneous presence of several factors:

- an ageing population,
- labour shortages already at the time of the regime change,
- Swabian mentality, work ethic,
- the availability of capital through contacts in Germany.

A finding of the analysis of co-operative forms of farming in Romania is that the wealthier a village, the more likely it is to choose individual farming over farming associations, as the necessary start-up capital may be available (Hatos 2006:238). The case of Mezőpetri and Mezőfény contradicts this, as they were particularly wealthy settlements already at the time of the regime change, and yet they opted for the co-operative form of farming. Furthermore, this has been done consistently in a way that has strictly excluded external elements, be it foreign labour or even European Union funds. As a result, none of the associations are taking advantage

of tendering opportunities. They do not participate in the tendering system because of the inevitability of corruption. Their representatives perceived the EU accession not as an opportunity but as an attack on their production practices that guaranteed their independence. In the common market, their competitiveness has declined, and their incomes have fallen as a result of the different agricultural support systems in different countries.

In this risk-averse, self-reliant economic model, it is perhaps easy to glimpse a memory of the typically peasant, self-sufficient farm organisation. Thus, we should look at the agricultural associations as a very specific form of post-socialist post-peasant production systems.

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 201–239
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00018

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

Economic Adaptation and Individual Livelihood Strategies in a Swabian Village in Satu Mare County

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Received: November 2, 2021 • Accepted: November 20, 2021
Published online: January 27, 2022

ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes the first partial results of economic anthropological research conducted in the Swabian settlement of Mezőfény (Romanian: *Foieni*) in Satu Mare County (Romania). The aim of the research is to describe the livelihood and income-earning strategies among agricultural production groups in local society and to interpret different forms of economic adaptation (individual, household and community level) in the settlement within the context of the post-socialist transformation from a planned to a capitalist market economy.

KEYWORDS

agriculture, economic adaptation, local livelihood strategies, diversification, pluriactivity, post-socialist transition, property transformation

My study summarizes the first research experiences and partial results of a micro-level economic anthropological study.[1] The research, which began in 2018 and – with minor interruptions – was

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[1]The primary data collection, resource exploration and empirical fieldwork was carried out within the framework of the internationally collaborative research project *Párhuzamos ruralitások. A vidékiség (lét)formái négy erdélyi kisrégióban* [Parallel Ruralities. (Existential) Forms of Rurality in Four Small Regions of Transylvania] (K 120712) of the NKFIH (Nemzeti Kutatási, Fejlesztési és Innovációs Hivatal – National Research, Development and Innovation Office, Hungary). The writing of the manuscript was supported by the Institute of Ethnography of the ELKH BTK (Humanities Research Centre – Eötvös Loránd Research Network), topic no. 57001, Lendület grant (LENDULET_2020-56), and by the NKE (National University of Public Service) Central European Research Centre's individual research grant no. 34000/1995/2021.

based on about four weeks of fieldwork and participant observation, focusing on the contemporary conditions of several Swabian settlements in Satu Mare County,[2] with a special emphasis on the economic, social and political changes in local communities after the regime change.

The present study deals with one Transylvanian village among the settlements covered by the research (Mezőfény). The aim of the analysis is to describe the most important economic strategies and income-earning techniques of local groups involved in agricultural production. My study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Which economic adaptation patterns (repertoires) and strategic solutions were developed during the post-socialist years by the families and households engaged in agricultural production in the village under study? What are the most typical contemporary forms and types of agricultural production in local society?
2. What were the major "external" structural (economic, political, social) and/or "internal" local (individual or community level) changes in the decades after the regime change that led individual households and family farms to develop divergent economic strategies or complex adaptation techniques?
3. Is there a more general (systemic) relationship between the individual economic strategies and income diversification techniques of each household?

In Romania – as in most Central and Eastern European countries – the post-socialist economic and political transition, and as part of it the employment and livelihood crisis that unfolded, especially in the first half of the 1990s, encouraged the rural population to use the scarce resources at their disposal (land, labor, capital) in a simultaneous and diverse i.e. a "creative" way. Over the past three decades, this – and a number of other factors not specified here – has led to the emergence of very complex, variable patterns of income accumulation and/or survival strategies on family farms in rural areas (Davis 2001; Peti 2013; Sofer – Bordanc 1998). These everyday techniques of economic and socio-cultural adaptation are usually addressed by international literature as the concepts of "diversification" and "pluriactivity".[3]

A classic and often quoted definition of the former term comes from Brian W. Ilbery. According to Ilbery, farm diversification is the combination and reallocation of agricultural

[2]Between 20 and 27 June 2018, we conducted a questionnaire survey with twelve students in four Swabian settlements in Satu Mare County (Kaplony/Căpleni, Csanálos/Urziceni, Mezőfény/Foieni, Mezőpetri/Petreşti), in about 250 households. Sándor Béres, Zsolt Csordás, Emesz Sár, Teodór Gaál, Veronika Kécza, Réka Kész, Annamária Kiss, Borbála Labancz, Csenge Molnár, Vivien Pajtók, Rita Szabó, Krisztina Tompos (students of the Institute of Ethnography, Department of Ethnography, Faculty of Humanities, Eötvös Loránd University, the Department of Ethnography, Faculty of Humanities, University of Debrecen and the Department of Ethnography and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Pécs) participated in the research, and I would like to thank them for their contribution. Subsequently, during the spring and autumn of 2019, I carried out several weeks of fieldwork in one of the three villages, Mezőfény, where I conducted a total of 25 narrative life history and/or semi-structured interviews based on the previously compiled questionnaire database. This paper builds on the synthesis, processing and analysis of the experiences from notes, research observations and narrative accounts generated during the three field studies.

[3]According to Vik and McElwee, the boundaries between the two terms are somewhat blurred, but the literature generally defines diversification as farm-centred income-generating activity, i.e. the category of activity that is formed by the reorganisation of assets and resource stocks within or associated with the farm. In contrast, the term pluriactivity is used in economic geography discourse to refer primarily to capital accumulation strategies outside the farm economy (Vik – McElwee 2011:394).

resources (land, labor, capital) that leads to the emergence of novel enterprises (different from the original agricultural activity of the farm household) within a given farm (Ilbery 1992:102). Among these "non-traditional" (alternative) income-generating strategies, the author distinguishes two major types (structural diversification and agricultural diversification) along with several other subgroups.[4]

Ilbery's model has been criticized for its lack of detail and clarity in connection with the concept. Examining the economic system of Italian farms, for example, Dries and his co-authors argued that off-farm employment (e.g. foreign employment) cannot be excluded from the concept of diversification as it very often provides an important economic background and resources for the maintenance of basic activities on the farm. They argue that a mechanical separation of on-farm and off-farm incomes among agricultural households is therefore not possible since these economic strategies are often not mutually exclusive but rather comprise correlative i.e. interdependent relationships between them at the household level (Dries et al. 2012:8).

Walford, on the other hand, stresses that marketing, processing, the provision of certain services or the intensive relationship between seller and buyer, which Ilbery explicitly considered a specific feature of structural diversification, are also characteristic of some forms of agricultural diversification. As he writes, "unconventional businesses as defined, especially non-food products, do not have established markets, and therefore farmers have to create them or find outlets in unknown areas" (Walford 2003:53).

The notion of "non-traditional (alternative) enterprises" in Ilbery's definition, like the conceptual categories of "traditional" and "conventional," is also problematic since the referential meaning of these terms cannot be determined by objective criteria or can only be determined to a very limited extent. Deciding where to draw the line between traditional, quasi-traditional or non-traditional economic activities (together with the social perception of economic phenomena denoted by these terms) is usually a dynamic process. To give just one example, organic farming, initially described in the literature as a novel form of diversification, is now becoming a more widely known and socially accepted economic practice (sometimes with a history of several decades and with its own "traditions"). This change of status – even without taking into account the details – gives a good sense of the conceptual and theoretical difficulties arising from the historical variability of economic phenomena (Phelan 2014:35; Walford 2003:53).

Partly in the wake of the critiques above, by *diversification* I mean conscious model shifts or shifts in micro-level resource management policies or in the management of individual households. I therefore use the term to refer to everyday strategic actions and forms of economic activity through which agricultural households attempt to adapt to new economic and environmental changes (on and off the farm) by modifying their previous economic behavior and/or current income-earning activities.

"Farm diversification," in my approach, is very important, and yet it is only one possible (particular) component of the economic adaptation of rural households, and from this point of

[4]Ilbery distinguishes between the following subtypes of structural on-farm diversification i.e. diversification other than traditional agricultural activity: 1) tourism; 2) increasing added value; 3) passive diversification. In contrast, he includes in the category of agricultural diversification: 1) unconventional enterprises; 2) the forest farm; and 3) various cases and forms of agricultural contracting (Ilbery 1991:210).

view it is not system-building, but only a systemic element. As the literature points out, the adaptation techniques of family farms can vary widely. They can include: the concentration and intensification of agricultural production by increasing land use or livestock, adding value or even cooperating with other farmers; the specialization of agricultural practices (by redistributing existing capacities); the diversification of agricultural activity, various techniques of formal, informal and illegal off-farm income generation (non-farm employment, farm abandonment, external business activities, increasing dependence on state and EU compensation payments), or even the reduction, partial or total abandonment of agricultural activities (Barbieri – Mahoney 2009; Breustedt – Glauben 2007; Meert et al. 2005; Moreno-Pérez et al. 2011; Oude Lansink et al. 2003; Smith et al. 2017). However, as McElwee aptly points out, we should also consider as part of economic adaptation those seemingly negative (but in the longer term not infrequently profitable) strategies wherein members of a family farm, under external pressure – e.g. an economic crisis – decide to simply do nothing in the given situation (McElwee 2006:187).

In examining these everyday economic adaptation techniques, I take the *process-oriented* approach of Bowler and his co-authors as the theoretical starting point for my study. These researchers conducted a questionnaire survey of 34 households in the North Pennines of England (Bowler et al. 1996). Based on the data collected, it was found that family farm businesses can follow seven typical paths of farm business development. Thus, a local society may develop in the following ways:

Path 1. The "industrial" model of productivist agricultural development based on scale enlargement, intensification and specialization using traditional farm products or services.
Path 2. Recombination of farm resources (including human capital) into new non-conventional agricultural products or services on the farm (alternative farm enterprise type I).
Path 3. Recombination of farm resources (including human capital) into new non-agricultural products or services on the farm (alternative farm enterprise type II.)
Path 4. Redeployment of farm resources (including human capital) into employment off the farm (other gainful activity).
Path 5. Maintaining the "traditional" model of conventional farm production or services.
Path 6 Winding down to hobby or semi-retired farming.
Path 7. Retirement from farming.

Bowler's model thus distinguishes between three broadly defined adaptation strategies and one status quo strategy (adjustment) – the latter being type 5, the maintenance of traditional agricultural production and way of life. Strategy 1 corresponds to the concentration and intensification of agricultural production, the next three (2, 3, 4) to the diversification of the economy, and the last two (6 and 7) to an exit strategy (Dries et al. 2012:9). All of these are systemic elements of an open, dynamic structure: in practice, these households may follow several different behavioral patterns at the same time.

In this paper, I will first briefly describe the settlement and some of the ethno-demographic, social and other features of the population living there, which I consider to be characteristic. In the following, I will deal with the most important economic and social processes of change (collectivization, labor migration, property transformation after the regime change), which, in my view, have determined the situation of agriculture and the local agricultural market in the village over the last three decades. Given this context, in

the second part of the paper, I will analyze the lives and business histories of individual farmers in order to describe micro-level resource management strategies among the residents of Mezőfény and some of the main types of adaptation practices that emerge from them.

THE RESEARCH SITE

Mezőfény (Foieni) is a village on the Satu Mare Plain, belonging to the former Ecsed marshland area, located 10 km from Nagykároly/Carei, in the north-western part of Romania. According to the official census data, the village has a multi-ethnic population: in 2011, a total of 1,840 people lived in the village, of which 68.8% (1,266 people) were Hungarian, 20.8% (384 people) German, 5.6% (104 people) Roma and 3.8% (69 people) Romanian.[5]

The image that which emerges from the population statistics is, however, nuanced by the fact that the population identifying themselves as "Hungarian" is – in keeping with the experience of the field research – mostly made up of linguistically assimilated[6] people with a strong sense of Swabian origin.

Historical records show that the first Swabian inhabitants of Mezőfény moved to the village in 1720 as part of a longer and deliberately organized settlement policy.[7] By the first quarter of the 20th century, however, the majority of these families had developed multiple, complex (Hungarian-Swabian) national-ethnic ties due to intensive acculturation processes and language change within the group. This population has been recorded from time to time in national censuses – from the beginning of modern-era mother tongue and ethnicity statistics to official censuses such as the one above – as representatives of different ethno-linguistic groups, or as members of mutually exclusive ethnic categories. The majority of the inhabitants of Mezőfény, however, still define their own multiplicative cultural-national ties using an intermediate, transitional or hybrid term, "Swabian-Hungarian,"[8] which simultaneously points to the local significance of the Swabian sense of origin and its close ties to

[5]Source: https://nepszamlalas.adatbank.transindex.ro/?pg=etnikai&id=2251; downloaded: 05.11.2020.).

[6]The language shift is clearly indicated by historical statistics. In 1930, 53.9% (998 people) of the village population (1,851 people) still spoke German, 43.3% (820 people) Hungarian and 1.6% (30 people) Romanian (Statisztikai kéziratos közlemények 1940:77). By 2011, however, the proportions had changed completely: only a fraction of the total population (1,840 people), 0.2% (5 people), indicated German as their mother tongue, and 3.4% (63 people) indicated Romanian as their mother tongue. The absolute majority of the inhabitants of the village, 95.3% (1,755 people), already had Hungarian as their mother tongue. Source: http://nepszamlalas.adatbank.transindex.ro/?pg=anyanyelvi&id=2251; downloaded: 05.11.2020.).

[7]Count Sándor Károlyi, the former landlord of the region, played a prominent role in the settlement of the Swabians of Satu Mare, recruiting settlers to his depopulated estates, mainly from the south-western part of Germany (Württemberg) in the first half of the 18th century. As a result of the deliberate settlement policy of the count and his successors, within a little more than a century a total of 31 settlements, partly or entirely inhabited by Swabians, were established in the area of Nagykároly and Szatmárnémeti/Satu Mare. The first village to be settled was Csanálos (1712) and the last was Tasnád/Tăş;nad (1815) (Baumgartner 2012).

[8]For methodological, epistemological and conceptual problems arising from the phenomenon of multiple, divergent ethnic-national attachment and the "external" categorisation and "internal" identification, see: (Beck-Gernsheim 2011; Tátrai et al. 2020).

Hungarian national-cultural identity and enhanced by the ethno-national revival movement after the regime change.[9]

Among the defining events in the history of the village in the 20th century, the deportation of Swabian inhabitants in 1945[10] and the international emigration process that began in the late 1980s are of particular importance. Due to the latter, the population of the municipality decreased by 12.4% (291 people) between 1977 and 1992 and by a further 10.3% (171 people) between 1992 and 2011, with ethnic return migration to Germany undoubtedly playing a major role.[11] According to locals, because of families moving away in the nineties, "there is now a generation missing from the village, as if there is a gap between generations." International migration has also changed the population reproduction capacity of the settlement, which – in the absence of other sources – is illustrated by the enrolment data of the local school. During the 2017/18 school year, the year before my fieldwork, the total number of children enrolled in this school was 135, a drop of almost 56.1% compared to the pre-regime change figures of 1987/88 (See the enrolment data in: Merli 2001:227). This negative overall picture is, however, somewhat nuanced by the fact that in recent years the proportion of people moving into the settlement (mainly from the surrounding urban centers and agglomeration) has been increasing. This trend has significantly reduced the negative demographic trends resulting from natural loss, emigration and ageing, although it has not completely reversed them.

Nevertheless, the external appearance of the village – the built environment, the tidiness of the houses – still gives the impression of a "wealthy" village, typical of Swabian communities, which is attractive to the inhabitants of surrounding urban centers (where property prices are high) and to young people living there. Add to this that the village has a relatively developed infrastructure. The public institutions established before the change of regime (kindergarten for

[9]The complex meanings of the term "Swabian-Hungarian" – articulated through various dimensions of cultural identity, lifestyle and traditional customs – are very vividly depicted in the following interview excerpt. "S.B.: What does the term "Swabian-Hungarian" mean in Mezőfény? T.T: Well, that our ancestors are Swabians, but our culture is Hungarian, because in the late 1800s – let's be honest – a process of Hungarianization has taken place. Cultural attachment means the way we were taught at school: we grew up on Petőfi and Arany, not Goethe. There was a German school between the two world wars, but after the war it never became a German school again. There is one in Károly, but Hungarian education has been kept in Fény. S.B.: And how does the "Swabian" attachment manifest itself in everyday life "apart from the sense of origin? T.T.: Well, in traditions, mainly, and in the way of life. The fact that we eat strudel, for example, or noodles and angel wings (csöröge). Or how you slaughter a pig, the butcher knows the Swabian way - he doesn't roast it, he boils it. Now they're roasting the pig here too. . . And how he marinates it, because he marinates the bacon in garlic sauce in a completely different way. They don't do that anywhere else." (60-year-old man, Mezőfény).

[10]Among the villages around Nagykároly and Szatmárnémeti, after Tasnád and Kaplony, most of the inhabitants were deported from Mezőfény because of their German/Swabian origin. According to the local history of Rudolf Merli, a former parish priest in Mezőfény, 315 people were deported from the village to the Ukraine and various parts of the Soviet Union in January 1945 for the Málenkij Robot (forced labour). Of those deported, 63 did not return (Merli 2001: 140.). In his list of the names of Swabian deported from Mezőfény, another author, Ernő Boros, publishes the data of 320 deportees and 73 people who died as prisoners (Boros 2010:275–278).

[11]For the concept of ethnic migration, see: (Giorgi et al. 1992; Fassmann – Münz 1995; Brubaker 1998; Okólski 1998). According to a household census taken by Rudolf Merli in 2000, a total of 420 people emigrated from Mezőfény to Germany in the first decade after the regime change. The data on the households concerned (names, number of families and family members who emigrated, along with their house numbers) are provided in a list by the author (Merli 2001:340–343).

80 children, primary school, medical clinic, community center, mayor's office) have undergone a complete renovation in recent years. Since the end of the 2000s – mainly with the help of EU funds – the settlement has seen a number of economic developments and institutional investment: a new home for the elderly, a sports hall and sports grounds with artificial grass were built; the reconstruction of the road connecting the village with Nagykároly was completed in 2014; in autumn 2018 – during my fieldwork – a complete reconstruction of the village pavement system, water drainage ditches and public spaces was launched.

According to the local government, in a settlement of around 2,000 inhabitants,[12] only 63 people received social benefits in 2017;[13] of these, only about 20 persons were cumulatively disadvantaged (11 persons in need of home care, 2 persons with disabilities, the others in need of social care for other reasons, such as an unstable family background, addiction, etc.). The vast majority of the claimants – 99% according to the social affairs officer – belong to the Roma minority.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY: COLLECTIVE FARMING DURING THE YEARS OF STATE SOCIALISM

At the current stage of research, there are no accurate and detailed data available for the historical reconstruction of the first decades of the Swabian settlements in Satu Mare County/ Bervebni after 1945 i.e. the years of compulsory deliveries, tax increases, land distribution, confiscation of property and land, "dekulakization," forced collectivization, etc.

However, on the basis of interviews and fragmentary information from the settlement, it can perhaps be said that the socialist reorganization of agriculture (the abolition of private property and autonomous individual economic production) among the national minority (the Swabians of Satu Mare County), who were specifically engaged in agricultural production, took place more slowly than usual.[14] Among the (contemporary) reports of the time, an article in the 12 April 1956 issue of the *Romániai Magyar Szó* (Hungarian Word of Romania) refers to this issue. In this article, propagating the usefulness of collective farming and the economic advantages and "superiority" of socialist large-scale farming, the author reported that in the villages of the Nagykároly district "the transformation of agriculture [to 'socialist' – S.B.] unfolded slowly. Months passed, for example last year and the year before, without the

[12]According to the municipality, there are five households with 1 person, eleven households with 2 persons, eight households with 3 persons and only three households with 4 persons. One of the conditions for receiving the allowance is a month's community service, which varies according to the size of the household. People with children under 7 or with a long-term illness are exempted.

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[14]During the post-1945 process of economic, political, social and cultural transformation in settlements with a mixed ethnic composition, nationality appeared as a kind of disqualification criterion from the point of view of the dictatorial power. In this context, see: (Tóth 2014; Varga 2015).

formation of a collective farm or association in the region. The welfare among members of collective farms in Börvely/Berveni, Mezőpetri/Petreşti, Kismajtény/Moftinu Mic, and the associations of Csomaköz/Ciumeşti and other socialist units, however, has surely given many individual farmers in the village a reason to think. (. . .) Even so, in many municipalities, state and party organizations have only occasionally campaigned for the expansion of the socialist sector of agriculture. And in some places (for example in Mezőfény), on the principle that 'the ice won't break here anytime soon anyway', there was little attempt to organize a large-scale farm." (Deme 1956:3)

However, in the third (last) phase of collectivization in Romania, after the Second Party Congress of the Romanian Workers' Party (23–28 December 1955), the process of restructuring agriculture in this region also gained new momentum. Although a so-called TOZ-type agricultural cooperative was established in the village as early as 1952, according to local memories ("there were not many members, they had maybe like 50 ha in all"),[15] the consolidation and institutional reinforcement of socialist forms of agricultural production in the region – i.e. (a) state farms, (b) collective farms and (c) agricultural cooperatives – intensified during the second half of the 1950s. As a result of this process, 16 collective farms (with 1,991 families and 6,908 ha of land), one agricultural cooperative (with 52 families and 2,007 ha of land) and 60 agricultural associations (with 6,088 families and 13,150 ha of land) were established in the villages of the district of Nagykároly by the end of 1958. By the end of the decade, the region thus had a total of 77 TOZ type agricultural cooperatives, with 7,131 families as members. However, despite rapid and forced collectivization, the total area of land under cooperative cultivation during this period did not exceed 20,265 ha, which represented just over a third (36.9 per cent) of the region's arable land (Kovács 1958:2).

During these years, by the end of 1958 – in the space of just one or two years – four TOZ type agricultural cooperatives were established in Mezőfény, operating in parallel. Membership consisted of 470 families/households, who farmed 1,029 ha of arable land and 60 ha of meadow. These four associations were merged into a single collective agricultural holding in August 1959. (After integration, "another 60 families joined the collective with 117 ha of land".)[16] As in most rural settlements in Transylvania and Hungary, resistance by the local population, protesting against the abolition of private property and autonomous farming, was broken by physical violence, the confiscation of property, and harassment.[17] According to the recollection of one resident in Mezőfény:

[15]The establishment of agricultural cooperatives of the TOZ type was ordered by a decision of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party on 18 September 1951. Hotărărea CC al PMR din 18 septembrie 1950. *Scânteia* [The Spark] (Issue no. 2146) 18 September 1951, 1–2. This form of organisation, in contrast to the collective economy, allowed private ownership (the land, livestock and some or all of the means of production could remain in the hands of the farmers) and only required collective production (the division of land into sections, the joint execution of the main agricultural tasks) (László 2009:60.).

[16]Életerős mezőgazdasági társulásokat [Successful agricultural cooperatives]. *Előre. A Román Népköztársaság Néptanácsának Lapja* [Go Ahead: Journal of the People's Council of the Romanian People's Republic]. November 17, 1959. 13(3749):1.

[17]Violence as one of the most fundamental means for institutionalising communist regime and political power in the context of collectivisation is examined in detail in: (Ö. Kovács 2012; Horváth – Ö. Kovács eds. 2015).

"This was the last village in the area where a collective was founded. In Fény, 3 people were locked up in prison because no one would bend. They were deprived of their land, dispossessed, and had to give it to the collective in Károly, just to be pestered. The kulaks were killed 'to the maximum.' There were some kulaks, one of our neighbors, who farmed on 22 ha of land with a family of six and didn't take home a single bushel of wheat. And then they spoke up, maybe something they shouldn't have, and then three people were jailed. Then, within a month, 80–90% of the village joined the collective." (80-year-old man, Mezőfény)[18]

As a contemporary propaganda report tells us, the newly created "23 August" collective farm "started on its very first day with fixed assets of 82 milking stalls, 131 Merino sheep, 167 horses, 30 seeders, many, many carts, 72,000 lei cash, etc. – the members of economically and organizationally strong associations have formed a collective farm, associations which bear witness to the fact that the real rise and prosperity of our villages can be achieved through socialist agriculture, as the Party has shown."[19]

This organizational framework of local agricultural production (established in the early 1960s) essentially remained in place until the time of the regime change. The Mezőfény cooperative has always been a collective farm with a distinctly agricultural profile, mainly engaged in crop production and large-scale livestock farming (cattle, sheep and pigs),[20] which provided livelihoods for a total of around 340–370 people in the 1970s–1980s. The majority of the employees worked in the primary production sector (240 people in crop production and 80–100 in livestock farming), while a smaller number (10–20 people) worked in the industrial plants belonging to the farm (locksmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters and wheel makers). The technical conditions for industrial agricultural production – combine harvesters, tractors, trucks and other large agricultural machinery – were provided by the local machine repair plant (locally called "Szemete"),[21] which was spatially and organizationally separate from the collective farm in Mezőfény, employed about 20 people and belonged to the national network of machine and tractor stations (more specifically, to the district center in Nagykároly).

From the early 1970s on, part of the working-age population – mainly the younger generation – took jobs at the industrial plants (biscuit factory, textile factory, hemp factory, furniture factory, machine and iron factory, canning factory, milk powder factory, sugar factory) in nearby

[18]In order to protect the privacy of the interviewees, I have not disclosed any personal information about them. I use fictitious first names and sometimes initials to describe them, and at the end of each interview I only include their age, gender and place of birth.

[19]Életerős mezőgazdasági társulásokat [Successful agricultural cooperatives]. *Előre. A Román Népköztársaság Néptanácsának Lapja* [Go Ahead: Journal of the People's Council of the Romanian People's Republic]. November 17, 1959. 13(3749):1.

[20]László Szekernyés, one of the authors of the *Új élet* [New Life] magazine, in his 1971 field report on the economy of Mezőfény, wrote the following: "The farm is not one of the largest. There are 1,400 ha of arable land, 93 ha of meadows, 111 ha of orchards and 38 ha of vegetable gardens. These are the main fields. 850–900 cattle, 1,100–1,150 pigs, 1,500 Merino sheep. The phrase 'model farm' keeps coming to my mind and finally sneaks into my notebook." (László 1971:5).

[21]"Szemete" is the local vernacular form of an originally Romanian acronym (S.M.T. = Staţiuni de Maşini şi Tractoare, i. e. "Machinery and Tractor Station").

regional centers (Szatmárnémeti and Nagykároly), where the population commuted or went to work on a daily basis.[22]

ECONOMIC STRATEGIES FOLLOWING THE REGIME CHANGE

During the economic, social and political transition following the regime change, different factions emerged among local agricultural production groups, which have developed diverse solutions and strategies for economic adaptation over the last three decades. In what follows, I will describe the divergent economic strategies (land tenure and ownership, land use, forms of operation, etc.) of these groups.

Agricultural associations

After the change of regime in 1989, two associations performing agro-industrial activities were established in the municipality. One of them is the so-called Agrofieni (in local parlance: "Nagytársulás," i.e. the Great Association), founded in 1992 as the successor to the former Mezőfény collective farm. The other company is Agromec (known locally as the "Kistársulás," or Little Association). This resulted from the reorganization of the originally state-owned machine station serving the former collective farm and has been in operation since 1996.

Both collective farms in the village were created on the initiative of the socialist-era administrative and power elite (collective farm chairmen, engineers, machine station managers, etc.) who led the predecessors of each respective company. Despite personnel changes in recent years, 5 of the 11 board members at Agrofieni and 3 of the 4 board members at Agromec are members of the pre-regime elite. This *post-socialist layer of agrarian managers* continues to determine the daily functioning of the two agricultural associations, and through them the local labor market and agricultural production: they are both owners and employees of the institutions they have created and now manage.

[22]Levente Szilágyi does not consider the urban labour migration of the population of Mezőfény before the regime change to be significant, since (as he writes) the local "collective farms were capital-strong and profitable, and industrial labour migration to cities was less prevalent than in neighbouring Hungarian and Romanian villages." (Szilágyi 2020:30). My interviews, however, paint a different picture. According to this study, commuting by the local population for employment since the 1970s was motivated by a number of factors: industrial underdevelopment in the village, dynamic population growth, low agricultural incomes, relatively small areas of agricultural land (in terms of population). According to one interviewee – formerly an industrial worker in Nagykároly: "The number of workers in the collective has decreased every year since the 1970s and 80s because young people have gone to work in factories. It was natural for us to have to commute. We completed eight grades in Fény, and then everyone commuted. There was a bus, a proper bus service, and then there was a time when there was nothing, when we walked in the snow in the winter." (60-year-old woman, Mezőfény) This is also supported by historical sources. According to a newspaper article of the time, János Gyarmati, the secretary of the basic party organisation of the Mezőfény farm, for example, said as early as 1960 – after the first year of collectivisation (!) – that "currently, the biggest problem in the village is the employment of labour. The total area of the farm is 1,510 ha, and the number of workers is 1,100, which means that there are less than one and a half hectare of arable land per person. And how are they trying to find employment for their members? János Gyarmati answers in two words: inefficient farming. In addition to cereal crops, they grow labour-intensive and profitable industrial crops such as sugar beet, hemp, poppy, oilseeds, etc. And they try to harvest two crops a year from a large area. (. . .) They cultivate the land in such a way that one ha is worth two for them" (Nagy 1960:2).

Agrofieni is involved in large-scale arable farming on 870 ha and Agromec on 380 ha (wheat, barley, triticale, corn, sunflower, soy, rapeseed). Together, the two associations own and/or farm about 81.1% (1,250 ha) of the arable land in the village (1,540 ha) (Fig. 1).

Three quarters of the machinery needed for agricultural production is also included in the "undivided co-ownership" of the farmers belonging to the two agricultural associations. This fleet of machinery – at the time of my fieldwork in 2018 – consisted of 19 older (UTB, TZ-type) and 9 newer (New Holland, Claas Arion) tractors, 6 (Claas and New Holland) harvesting combines, as well as a number of related technical tools and large machines. Consequently, until a few individual farmers and family farms became stronger in recent years, the two associations ultimately carried out the mechanized custom farming of agricultural land in the village without competition; their monopoly position was thus, according to some, frequently abused. As one agricultural entrepreneur put it: "When the association was the only one with the machinery, every morning we were out at 7 o'clock for some work, begging them to come. The people of Fény were used to it, they were taught to go to bed thinking: it's OK, they'll come in the morning. I get on my bike, I'm out at 7am. Now, is the combine coming? No. Are you coming to sow today? No! It took people who grew up in it, who are now 70 years old, or dying out. It's gone. I'm paying you, my friend to come now because if you don't come, I'll go somewhere else. That's how it works in today's world. We say we have mobile phones, so why should I go out in the morning? I'll call you in the morning to see how things are going. So, we created our own business and bought our own machines." (47-year-old man, Mezőfény)

In terms of their profile, ownership, asset structure and role in local income allocation, the two agricultural associations show several important differences.

Agrofieni, for example, in addition to agricultural production on the land pooled by the owners, also provides various additional services to members of the agricultural association: a mill, a bakery and a slaughterhouse. It also has a large livestock herd (130 head of beef cattle, calves and dairy cattle) and is involved in livestock farming as well. The company has a total of

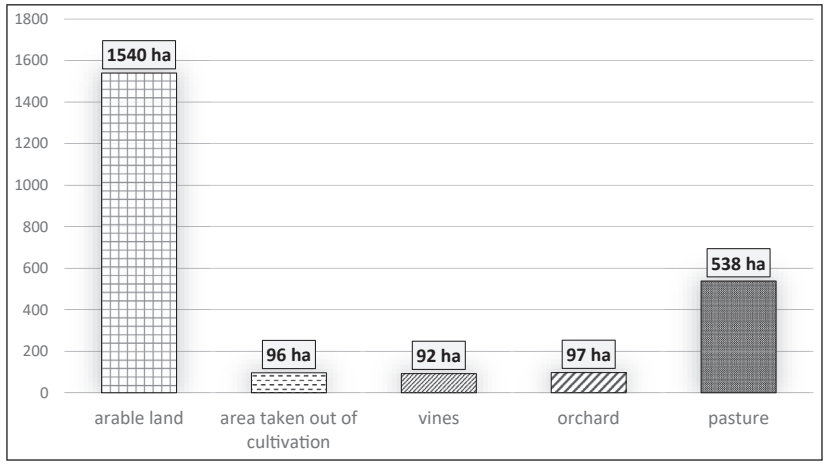

Fig. 1. The distribution of agricultural land by type of farming (in hectares, 2018). Department of Land Affairs, Mezőfény Mayor's Office (drafted by the author)

40 – mostly local – employees (managerial staff, office workers, machine operators, warehouse workers, laborers). Agromec, on the other hand, is involved exclusively in agricultural production. The 15 people working here (agricultural engineers, machine operators, auxiliary staff) cultivate land owned by the farm as well as rented land. In addition, it also provides machinery services (contract farming) for the inhabitants of the village, to a much greater extent than Agrofieni: it uses jointly owned machinery to work around 150 ha of arable land and 15 ha of garden every year for farmers who are not members of the association.

From the outset, the two agricultural associations have been formally registered and have legal status; both are limited companies. An important difference, however, is that while the smaller agricultural association (Agromec) is a community of property only in respect of land pooled for common use and machinery purchased from the annual profits, Agrofieni, as the successor to the collective farm, has the entire asset base of its members at its disposal. Accordingly, Agrofieni – unlike Agromec – not only pays dividends on the annual crop yield or on the rented land,[23] but also gives the owners a share of the total fixed assets "left in" at the time of the regime change, i.e. the total value of the movable and immovable assets (land, parts of buildings, animals, machinery, tools, etc.) to which the former collective farm members were entitled.

In the two farms with industrial agricultural production, the number of retired or non-agricultural members reaches 90 percent. This owner category is dominated by smallholders of between 0.2 and 2 ha, with only a few farmers/shareholders (7–10 people for Agrofieni and 3–5 for Agromec) with holdings of between 8 and 12 ha. The fragmented nature of the landholding structure is illustrated by the fact that Agrofieni and Agromec have around 700 and 200 owners respectively, giving an average of only 1.3 ha per holder (out of a total of 1,250 ha) of the land cultivated by these two agricultural associations.

Several mutually reinforcing factors (political, economic and socio-historical) have played a role in the development of these unfavorable local land market and/or land ownership conditions. One of them was undoubtedly the complex and uncertain legal environment governing de-collectivization, which, like most post-socialist successor states in Central and Eastern Europe, allowed Romania to undergo a controversial economic transition (Verdery 2003; Nölke – Vliegenthart 2009; Swain 2012). An example of this is one of the first land restitution laws in Romania, adopted in 1991 (Law no. 18/1991, Chapter II, Article 8), which formally ("on paper") guaranteed full ownership, but which, until the turn of the millennium, allowed only partial ownership,[24] since it capped the amount of land that could be reclaimed at 10 ha (Sabates-Wheeler 2005:18). For this reason, for example, in the village under study, pre-1945 middle-class peasants (e.g. Swabian families classified as "kulaks" or their descendants) could not start their own private family farming again in the early 1990s with the entire (collectivized or confiscated) land property, but only with a certain part of it.

[23]In 2018, the owners received a share of the crops produced (wheat, corn, triticale), in cash or in kind, at a fixed rate of 30% per hectare, plus 30 kg of sugar and 10 L of oil (also per hectare). The area-based aid is not paid to the owner but to the company cultivating the land (the farming association as a legal entity). According to one interview with a farmer, for 0.74 ha of arable land contributed by the shares and the family, in 2018 the farming association paid/gave to the household a total of 46 lei dividends (for their shares), 30 kg of barley, 17 kg of sugar, 6 bushels of wheat, 6 L of oil, 400 kg of corn.

[24]This was changed by the new Agricultural Law No. 1/2000, which capped compensation for claimants at 50 ha instead of 10 (Sabates-Wheeler 2005:23).

However, the transformation of the German (Swabian) inheritance system in the 20th century also played a decisive role in the fragmentation of the estate structure. Informal strategies to keep family assets together and accumulate them, such as "impartible inheritance" ("the first-born inherits everything, his siblings become his servants"), local endogamy ("we don't marry beyond the railway line"), or class-based partner selection procedures ("land married to land," "property married to wealth") gradually lost their regulatory role in the late 1930s, no longer normatively determining life management practices in local society.[25] In the years before the Second World War, in typically large Swabian households with several children, movable and immovable property was – in contrast to the previous inheritance system – divided among descendants in equal shares, which led to the slow fragmentation of family landholdings, even during the years before collectivization. Thus, the property relationship transformation of the 1990s – i.e. the return of individual private property, family landholdings and land plots – in practice meant the restoration of the small-plot landholding structure of the early 1950s. After the change of regime, this not only made it more difficult, but in many respects impossible to (re)establish independent, viable and economically profitable family farms: "It used to be, back in my grandparents' time, if there were 5–6 children, the older one got the whole estate along with the duty of supporting the parents. I got a house, with the parents, plus the estate. The other kids got nothing; they became serfs. In my father's day, they divided the estate. For example, even now, in the area called the meadows, the plots are so small, 1,000 square meters per plot, with 12 owners, and then it sits fallow because no owner can farm it because of the other." (80-year-old man, Mezőfény)

Since the early 1990s, these historical land tenure and property relations have structurally determined the development of the private producer sector. They have severely limited and continue to limit the external (extensive) growth opportunities and estate size of small and medium-sized individual family farms (Fig. 2).[26]

Accordingly, after the collapse of the communist regime, cooperative economic organisms bringing together individual family farms played an essential role in the maintenance and operation of local agricultural production and agricultural markets as well as their internal mechanisms of operation. The two agricultural associations of Mezőfény have facilitated cooperative members' easier access to economic resources (machinery, credit, training, information, knowledge capital) and improved their bargaining power vis-à-vis larger market players. They have also helped the family farms concerned to productively reduce the high transaction costs resulting from their relatively small size and low production capacity (Liverpool-Tasie 2014; Markelova et al. 2009; Sabates-Wheeler 2002, 2005).

The two farming associations sell most of their agricultural products (cereals, industrial and fodder crops) for cash and a smaller part in the form of barter transactions (non-cash economic

[25]Two different types of succession systems, including "impartible inheritance," which provides for the succession of property to a single heir, and the so-called "equal division," which, unlike the former, establishes equal succession between descendants as a basic principle, are well summarised in Faragó (2008).

[26]According to Biga Agarwal and his co-authors, the very small size of individual farms is a typical feature of agricultural production in Romania. As of 2010, the average farm size was 3.45 ha, and about 71% of all farms had less than 2 ha of land (Agarwal et al. 2021:149). In recent decades, the importance of cooperative, associative or group farming at the national level has therefore not only always been high, but is still growing, in no small part due to the state agricultural policy supporting large-scale farming. According to the authors' data, some 962 new cooperatives were created in Romania between 2008 and 2018 – 77% of which were engaged in agricultural activities (Agarwal et al. 2021:149–150).

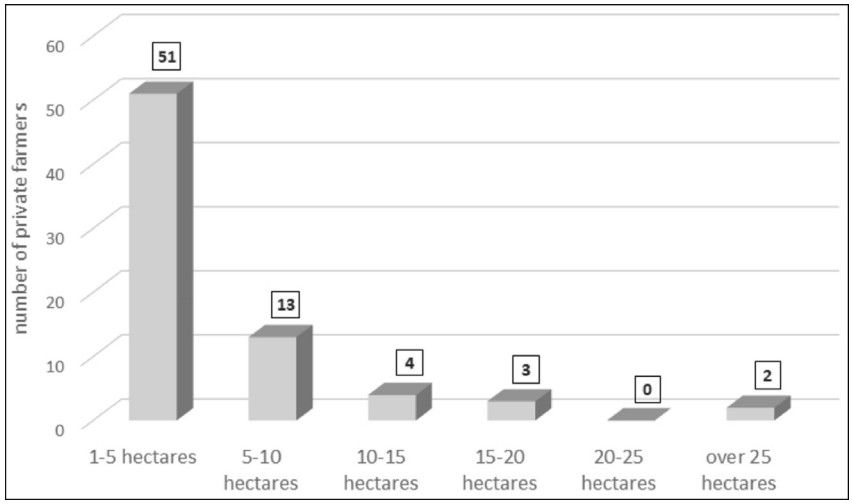

Fig. 2. The number of private farmers with more than 1 ha of land by size of landholding (2018). Department of Land Affairs, Mezőfény Mayor's Office (drafted by the author)

transactions) with individual firms and companies (Humphrey 1985) on the domestic and international free market.

"Quasi-farmers," groups involved in home food production

The majority of owners in the two agricultural associations belong to mixed-income households whose economic activity is characterized by strong pluriactivity. I consider these to be "quasi" agricultural farms since most of the families concerned are primarily involved with the land only *as owners*. They are not actively involved in the effective cultivation of their own agricultural land, or only to a very limited extent, due to their age or for other reasons (e.g. their jobs).[27] Of course, all households in the municipality are linked to some extent and in some form to agriculture through *domestic food production* (backyard farming, garden or orchard cultivation). However, within the agrarian population, the aforementioned category mainly includes families with low levels of subsistence food production and high levels of purchasing from shops and external markets.

The majority of the village population belongs to such "quasi" agricultural households. One of the defining features of these households is that they generate the bulk of their own market consumption (on an annual basis) not from agricultural production – their leased-out land and backyard food production – but from other non-agricultural forms of income (formal labor markets, pensions, social assistance and other income transfers).

This type of income diversification has been described by Meert and his co-authors as an adaptation technique that is generally used by small economies to compensate for disadvantages

[27] According to interviews with company managers, the average age of shareholders in both farming associations is 55 years old.

arising from insufficient local resources and the internal consumption constraints they impose (Meert et al. 2005).

Partial or total abandonment of agricultural activity as a strategy reflecting the lack of local resources (labor, capital, land, technical means) is a phenomenon common to post-socialist rural societies in Central and Eastern Europe (Abrahams ed. 1996; Granberg et al. eds. 2001; Kovách 2012). The decline of agricultural functions in the village and the intensification of post-productivist countryside and agricultural regimes is therefore also a clearly observable tendency in the municipality I studied (Wilson – Rigg 2003).

According to the local government, only less than a quarter (13.4%, 127 people) of the economically active adult population (942 people) in Mezőfény were employed in agriculture in 2011, and almost half (49.9%, 470 people) were employed in secondary or tertiary sectors (industry, services, trade).

The significant decline in the role of agriculture – including subsistence food production – in the income structure of individual households in the village under study is indicated by the fact that important but rather labor-intensive sectors such as viticulture or animal husbandry, which were important for traditional peasant farms, have rapidly declined in recent years. According to the mayor's office, in 2000, 82 ha of vine (12 ha of noble and 60 ha of direct production) were still owned by private family farms in the village. This area had decreased by more than 64% (to 29 ha) by 2017. A part of the abandoned land (30 ha) was bought by a foreign (French) agricultural investor who, after the liquidation of the plantation, launched large-scale blueberry and raspberry production on the purchased plots.

It is also revealing that during the same period (2000–2017), the number of cattle owned by the population decreased by 73.4%, the number of horses by 78.1% and the number of pigs by 50.6%.

The cow herd in the village ceased to exist two years ago. The lease of 550 ha of pasture owned by the local population was granted to two Romanian shepherds, who keep thousands of sheep on the land on the basis of a decision by the village community. The families that still keep cows (in 2018 only 28 households had cattle, 51 in total) cannot afford the grazing fees. Therefore, in recent years, they have switched to stable animal husbandry (Table 1).

In the local community, a total of 75 people outside the association are engaged in crop production, horticulture, viticulture and forestry on an area of more than 1 ha. These private farmers (or, as they are called in the village, *privátok* or *pirivisek*) farm less than 20% of the

Table 1. Changes in the livestock population of family farms (2000–2017). Source of data: Department of Land Affairs, Mezőfény Mayor's Office (drafted by the author)

	2000 (heads)	2017 (heads)	*N*	%
Cattle	271	72	−199	−73.4
Swine	1,560	770	−790	−50.6
Horses	137	30	−107	−78.1
Poultry	7,300	4,700	−2,600	−35.6
Total:	9,268	5,572	−3,696	−39.8

agricultural area in the settlement (370 ha in total) and also form different sub-groups according to various external formal criteria such as the size of the holding, the organization of work, machinery, work mentality, etc.[28]

Post-traditional commodity producing/self-sufficient peasant farms

In my approach, this category includes family farms with a mixed structure (specialized in livestock farming and crop production) whose members are engaged in the production of agricultural goods (both for sale and for subsistence) as their main occupation. There are four or five farms of this type in Mezőfény. Based on life history interviews, the owners of these farms belong to the first generation who lived through collectivization as children or the following second generation (over 55 years old). Members of this group worked part-time, or less frequently, on major occasions (e.g. harvesting), as family helpers on the independent family farms of older relatives – parents or grandparents – that were re-established after the regime change. The management of these holdings was gradually taken over or inherited by the current owners as the older relatives became inactive. As a result, their economic behavior, work mentality, their use of tools and resource-management strategies are still characterized by a kind of "transitoriness" i.e. a combination, mixing or coexistence of traditional ("peasant") and modern elements (Gagyi 2007; Kotics 2006; Kovách ed. 2002; Lovas 2006; Oláh 2004; Szabó 2013; Peti 2019).

Born in the village in 1967, Imre belongs to the group of "post-traditional commodity producing/self-sufficient farms." Until the middle of the communist regime, he and his family made a living from industrial wage labor. In those years, Imre took a job in Nagykároly: initially in the ironworks, later in the furniture factory (from 1981 to 1997), and his wife was also a sewing worker in the same town. The family, including parents and two children, only started farming during the second half of the 1990s at the same time as the massive decline of the region's manufacturing industry. Before that (apart from some backyard farming), the household had not carried out any significant independent agricultural production.

The primary reason for this is that in the 1990s, during the Romanian property restitution process, nationalized family land was returned not to the descendants (in this case Imre and his wife), but to the original owners, i.e. the parents who were directly involved in collectivization and were still economically active after the regime change. As the following interview section shoes, this older age group, while relatively reluctant and late in transferring the ownership and land use rights of reclaimed land and the resulting income to descendants, relied heavily on the labor available within the extended family, i.e. the kinship producer and worker network:

[28]This formal division of everyday farming strategies according to group categories ignores a number of factors, such as the internal heterogeneity of groups and economic behaviours, their hybrid forms, their dynamic transformation over time (even within the lifetime of a single person), and cooperation between different social strata, and is therefore problematic in several respects, the methodological and epistemological dangers of which I am of course aware. (For a critique of groupism in the context of another topic – "ethnicity" – see: Brubaker 2004). The terms I use ("quasi-farmers," "groups involved in home food production," "post-traditional commodity-producing/self-sufficient peasant farms," etc.) are not analytical but descriptive, and basically denote ideal-typical economic attitudes, behaviours and situations. The aim is to examine simultaneously – or, if you like, through one another – the more general (group) level features of individual family economic strategies and more specific traits, which vary according to the idiographic structural, power and social position of the individuals and households concerned.

"Imre: The elderly, my in-laws took the land back in '91 and couldn't work it. They took out these 9 ha 'for us' which they divided between my wife and her brother. Wife: Ah, but when was it divided? We were just helping to farm it, but all the income was theirs, not ours. We didn't even get it when my father died in '97 because that's when it was transferred to my grandmother's name. Because they were so attached to the land. And we were also working on my mother's land, inherited from my father. (. . .) They had the income; we only had the work. It was exploitation in its own way because they couldn't stand it. So it was that when farming was worthwhile, into the '90s, when there was big profit, we didn't farm the land. We just helped out after hours. And then we got something from it. . . Now if they slaughtered a pig, we also ate from that pig, and if there were two cows, we also drank milk, got some weal, stuff like that, but we didn't get any extra money from it. Now that it's ours, now that it's not paid, it's not worth it."

The difficulties of access to land are well illustrated by the fact that even after two decades of ownership Imre and his family still own only the 4.5 ha of arable land, 0.15 ha of vines and 0.45 ha of forest that he inherited – in its entirety – from his wife's parents in 1997. The family has not purchased any new land in recent years; they have leased 5 ha of meadow from the inheritance, where they cultivate grass and green fodder to support their existing cattle.

Over the past decades, the family has sought to compensate for the lack of agricultural land by diversifying into other sectors, supplementing small-scale crop production with large-scale livestock farming. Accordingly, in 2018 – at the time of my fieldwork – the farm had a total of 13 cattle (6 milking cows, 1 heifer and 4 growing calves, 1 fattening bull, 1 dairy calf), 4 pigs (1 sow, 3 porkers) and more than 100 heads of poultry (hens, ducks, geese). Since the beginning of the regime change, the family also had a herd of draft animals, but these (2 horses and 2 foals) were sold in 2015 because "the horse, as the head of the household put it, is no longer worth keeping".

The economy is characterized by partial and multi-level (informal-formal, internal and external) market integration (Szabó 2013). Part of the products produced is used to cover the consumption and needs of the household and the extended family (children and relatives living outside the village). The surplus (milk and dairy products – sour cream, cottage cheese, cheese –, eggs, meat, livestock, vegetables, cereals) is sold mainly on local, internal, informal markets (to neighbors, other villagers or the workplace community) and to a lesser extent on external, sectional or formal markets (the Nagykároly wholesale food market or purchasers and traders).[29] State subsidies are also an important element of the household's income. Every year,

[29]"The milk is sold from home. For example, last night I went to bed at almost midnight because I was making the cottage cheese. Then it was sour cream, cottage cheese and milk, but there was a time when they brought it in to Polipol. My sister-in-law would work there, I would make the cottage cheese, take it to my sister-in-law, she would take it to the factory and the people from Fény would buy it. But that's over, because my sister-in-law doesn't work there, so it's okay for six cows, but let's say if I milk all six, a lot of it goes to the pig, but she'll still give it back to us. We sell one or two of the pigs, slaughter them for the boy and for us. We have the customers for the young meat, the veal, and we weigh it. We've raised it, it was 17 lei, now we're raising it to 20 lei, so there's always someone who says 'oh, I'll buy it for 15 lei elsewhere.' If you can only sell it for 15, then they will pay you live weight now, then it's not worth weighing it. It's better to sell it that way. The reason why it is worthwhile is that if we keep so many animals, there is always fresh meat. I know that we raised them, I know what they fed on; the chicken does not grow up in 6 weeks, but in half a year, and then we always slaughter the rooster, and the hens and the pullets are kept to lay eggs; there are always eggs for sale, so it's a lei here, a lei there, but we will never get rich from it. We sell the surplus." (53-year-old woman, Mezőfény).

they receive EU and Romanian subsidies based on the number of cattle and the greening subsidies, which, in my approach, also constitute a specific form of external, formal, quasi-market integration.

Most of the production process is carried out by the nuclear family (the head of the household and his wife). The elder of the two sons lives abroad (in Budapest), holds a university degree (in psychology and English-Spanish) and has found a job at a multinational company. Their youngest child did not continue his education and is a furniture worker in the Mezőfény factory of the German company Polipol, where he goes to work every day from his new home in a nearby village (Csomaköz). Although their son, who has stayed at home, can only occasionally help his parents, the family occasionally uses foreign labor (mainly for harvesting).

The number of animals kept on the farm has changed dynamically several times over the last decade. This, in my view, suggests that one of the constitutive elements of economic adaptation on the family farm in question was to maintain the flexibility of the production structure. This is supported by the struggle of the family farm to modernize and expand its own machinery and equipment.

Over the last two decades, the household has not been able to finance its expenditure on improving production capacity and technology (i.e. buying new machinery and equipment) solely from agricultural activities, which have a lower income and production value. At the same time, the permanent shortage of agricultural labor in the local labor market and patterns of production modernization, reinforced in part by international labor migration (Faist 2008), have also forced the household towards a certain degree of mechanization in production processes. ("Here, if you don't automate, if you don't improve, you'll be left behind." /54-year-old man, Mezőfény/.) However, in recent decades, the family has been able to generate the necessary financial capital, mostly by selling livestock, the only asset of the household that is of higher value and relatively easy to mobilize. This strategy of adaptation, which ultimately meant a temporary, partial suspension of sectoral diversification within the holding, was accompanied by a temporary restructuring and reduction of the established production structure. In addition, the capital from the sale of animals was supplemented by informal loans (loans within the family or by relatives) and income from off-farm work (e.g. seasonal work abroad) in order to buy the machinery and equipment needed for agricultural production: "I bought my first tractor in 2000, a second-hand Romanian tractor and a trailer. That was the first thing we did, so we emptied the barn, sold all the cattle, and were left with one horse and one cow. Since then, we have repeated this twice more. In addition, for 8 years, I went to Germany every spring for 6 weeks to work for the German peasants, so that I could mechanize. Or we borrowed money, and when I came back from Germany we gave the money back the next day." (54-year-old man, Mezőfény)

The low capital-generating capacity of the farm is demonstrated by the fact that, despite great efforts over the course of more than 20 years – with repeated sales of livestock and almost a decade of foreign employment – the family has only managed to acquire a low value (older and less technically advanced) machine park. In 2018, this stock consisted of a single older Romanian tractor (year: 1997) and its accessories (trailer, plough, mower, collecting and baling machine, fertilizer distributor, seedbed cultivator, bale loader, windrower).

The slow accumulation of machinery and tools over the years and the resulting difficulties were mitigated by the family's relational capital (Esser 2008), embodied in informal networks of individuals and households. Therefore, the first purchases of higher-value appliances were those that were not directly available within the kinship. Until recently, the persistent shortage of

machinery and tools that hampered agricultural production was thus solved through labor exchange (Sík 2012:29–51) and the mutual sharing of resources (machinery, tools), i.e. through economic cooperation and interaction between households: "We worked in such a way that, for example, we had a fertilizer distributor, my brother had a seed drill, he had a disc, we had a seedbed cultivator and then we would go and do the work for him, and then my brother would come and cultivate the land for us, and he would sow it. It worked like that for a while, then it gradually stopped. Because now everybody does their own first." (53-year-old woman, Mezőfény)

Small and medium sized post-traditional subsistence/productive family farms use heterogeneous adaptation techniques that also differ from one another. I would like to illustrate the differences within this category of household farms and some of their more characteristic features with the help of two further examples, which will be presented in less detail than above.

One is the economic strategies is the one followed by Lőrinc, who, like his brother-in-law Imre, also became an agricultural entrepreneur by necessity after his previous industrial job was terminated in 2009. Lőrinc was born in 1959, graduated in 1976 from a woodworking vocational school in Nagykároly, then worked for a short time at the local collective farm, after which he spent 31 years at the furniture factory in Nagykároly (from 1978 until the closure of the factory). His wife worked for the same company as a professional accountant.

The family currently cultivates 10.58 ha of arable land (2.2 ha of wheat, 3.9 ha of sunflowers, 3.1 ha of maize, 0.32 ha of triticale, 0.64 ha of alfalfa, 0.42 ha of potatoes), excluding details. It also has a small forest (0.40 ha), a meadow (0.64 ha) and a vineyard (0.6 ha), so they lease only a minimum amount of land (0.4 ha).

A smaller part of the total land (4.5 ha) comes from the household head's capital assets (divided between Lőrinc and his sister-in-law), while the larger part comes from other family inheritances (the holdings of his affinal relatives: his mother-in-law, father-in-law and his spouse's grandparents). Thus, about 11 ha of arable land are spread over 10 different plots, which makes efficient production very difficult. The average size of the holdings nevertheless allows a household within a mixed production structure to develop a model of the proportions and interrelationships of different sectors that is quite different from the example above. Whereas in the case of Imre and his family we saw that the small size of the holding necessitated a conscious increase in the weight of livestock farming, the opposite strategy is evident here: the structure of production is shifted towards intensive arable farming (cropland management), while livestock farming becomes more of a secondary or auxiliary sector. The livestock on this farm is also significant (in 2018, there were 2 horses (mares), 1 foal, 6 cattle (3 of which were milking cows, 3 calves), 6 pigs (3 porkers, 3 piglets) and a large number of poultry (about 60–70 heads). Most of the food of animal origin (milk and dairy products, eggs, meat) was used as part of the family's sustenance (own consumption), and the remaining surplus was sold in directly available local informal markets. However, unlike Imre's family, the bulk of the household's annual income is not derived from this but from farming specifically for the production and sale of goods, which also means that the family's external market integration (both sectional and formal) is much stronger than in the case of the household presented earlier.

Fundamentally different from these economic strategies (but also within the group of "post-traditional commodity producing/self-sufficient farms") is the example of a third villager, István, whose behavior in the last few years – due to his advanced age – has been characterized mainly

by the conscious dismantling and gradual liquidation of the family farm, in short: a slow withdrawal from agricultural activity.[30]

István was born in 1941, and as a young adult (18 years old) he experienced the abolition of individual private property and the introduction of socialist-style large-scale farming in the village. In 1945, his father was deported to Russia and returned from captivity ill. Even as a child, István had to work hard on the family farm. "I sowed the wheat, . . . in the morning my father set the seed drill, and he said, 'you're going out today, the horse knows where to go, you follow it.' I ploughed up three ha or so, and the next day he hooked up the machine."

He was the only one of his three siblings who was could not continue his education (his brother graduated as an architect and his sister as a mathematics teacher). After finishing primary school, István had to work on the family farm, which he took over fully after the fall of communism due to his father's failing health:

"I wanted to be an apprentice, but my father wouldn't let me. He said, 'you can work for me too.' A carpenter called me, and there was a blacksmith across the street. He was a relative. They told my father to let me go, but my father said, 'I need him too.' Then he divided the land he had, 5 ha and 5 acres into four. 'You'll do all the work and give everyone what is due.' That's what I did for my sister and my brother. I paid them what was due."

During the communist regime, István's first job was at the collective farm in Mezőfény, where he worked as a manual laborer (crop bagger) after 1960. Then, from 1966, he worked for 25 years as a lorry driver ("sofőr") at the collective farm in Nagykároly.

In the 1990s, he was one of the first to start his own family farm on the 3.8 ha of land he inherited from his father. Over the years, he has bought a further 4 ha, which he added to the family's property. (In addition to the aforementioned land, the household also owns 0.6 ha of meadow, 0.30 ha of vines and 1 ha of forest.) More than half of the arable land (3.6 ha) is still farmed by the family (husband and wife). The remaining 3.4 ha of the land was returned in 2016 to the local agricultural association, which, due to the couple's advanced age, carries out all the work on the land on a contract basis and also takes over the storage and selling of the family's produce (cereals, corn, sunflowers).

István has two daughters. The eldest has been living in Germany with her husband and children since 1995. Although the younger one stayed in Mezőfény, she is a bank employee and her spouse works as a civil servant (secretary). Therefore, none of the children are directly involved in the parents' agricultural activities as helping family members. For the more important work, István seeks help from his two grandchildren – the sons of his daughter who has stayed in the village – who have also started farming on their own in recent years. ("The children who stayed at home don't want the land. We give them the benefits, and they come to help whenever they want.")

István's family farm profile for the past three decades has been livestock breeding: in the 1990s he still kept 20 pigs a year and several large animals, and in 2016 – at the age of 75 – he still had 2 horses and 3 milking cows, but sold them in 2018 because, as he says, "I ran out of strength, and when it comes to the sourcing of forage, one person is not enough, and my wife

[30]Thomson and Davidova distinguish three different development paths for small farms. Older, heirless farmers tend to dismantle the farm (disappearance), while other groups of farmers tend to maintain (continuation) or even expand (expansion) their farm and production, which may be accompanied by diversification, pluriactivity and the co-opting of younger people (Davidova – Thomson 2014).

can't load the cart anymore." He also stopped growing labor-intensive crops during this period. He used to grow potatoes on 0.8 ha, which he had to stop in 2017 due to his failing health. ("I started not being able to carry the bag.") By the time of the field survey in 2018, the total livestock population of the household consisted of only 1 dairy cow, 4 pigs and a few heads (20–25) of poultry.

Unlike the two farms presented earlier, the majority of the household's income is derived from the pension of István and his wife (2000 lei/month), which the family supplements with income from crop production. In 2018, the 3.4 ha of land under custom farming, including the area-based aids, generated an annual household income totalling 9,180 lei. This amounted to just over a third (38.2%) of the total amount of the old-age pension (RON 24,000/year).

The family farm produces milk and dairy products for their own consumption (they no longer sell milk to buyers) and sells the surplus from pig farming locally. The small cash incomes thus earned are used to reduce the input costs of farm labor (e.g. hiring day laborers, seasonal workers). The ultimate purpose of agricultural production in their case is therefore not to meet intra-household (residential) needs, since (according to the farmer) the members of the two-person household could live on the amount of the old-age pension without any additional income. Redistribution of the farm's agricultural assets - the distribution of the goods produced or the monetary income - takes place within the wider kinship network, i.e. between the children and grandchildren of the family who have emigrated abroad (to Germany) and those who have remained in Romania (cf. Oláh 2004; Peti 2013):

"My daughter's family is doing very well out there, in Germany, because my son-in-law is earning very well. I never asked how much, but I can see the progress. They bought a house last year, I'm not going to lie, for 340,000 euros, and I sent a little bit into that, but what's my money worth there? I gave them 20,000 euros as a gift. I also gave my other daughter 100,000 lei when she bought the house here in Fény. It's hard to help from here [in Germany - S.B.], because for that much money you could have bought a whole street here, but we're still working to help them. Now we have 4 pigs, and we'll slaughter them when the Germans, my daughter, come home." (80-year-old man, Mezőfény)

Comparing the three economic behaviors, the examples I have discussed (based on the unique internal and external conditions of each household: different material, social, relational capital; farm size, productive capacity, goals; structural position of each family) represent in many respects different forms of economic adaptation and market integration within the group of post-traditional commodity producing/self-sufficient farms. The first was a low cash-flow holding, moderately supplied with production resources, specialized in livestock farming and stagnating in terms of its development potential, with the strongest informal, i.e. local, internal market integration. In the second example, I presented a family farm specializing in arable crops, with a relatively greater orientation towards commodity production and working capital than the first. It was also characterized by economic stagnation, different in the fact that trade in the goods produced was dominated by presence on external, formal markets rather than local ones. The third case, unlike the two previous examples, highlighted a technique of adaptation where owners consciously sought to leave the agricultural sector. Here, the decline in the level of commodity and food production has been accompanied by a gradual disintegration (dis-embedding) of the family's former economic (external-internal, informal-formal market) embeddedness; the production and sale of the remaining goods from agricultural activity are

transferred to quasi-market systems (institutional networks of producers and sellers in the local agricultural association).

One of the common features among the three economic strategies – despite the clearly visible differences – is that the economic activity of the households concerned is not primarily motivated by profit-oriented business aspects, but rather by normative economic practices, i.e. the following of traditional agricultural production patterns based on the principles of private ownership and autonomous land use: "Now, if we sit down and calculate how much everything costs, we bought the wheat for 150 lei per hectare. The amount we sold is paid at 56. And then we had to weed, sow, fertilize, pay for the harvest, everything. If we sat down like this, it would be worth calculating how much it costs, we would realize that it's not worth it. We're often in the red. . ." (80-year-old man, Mezőfény) "If the association leases the land, you get 1,000 lei per hectare of land. But here, for example, someone who works the land, like me, who no longer ploughs or sows, but just goes out and goes: 'plough it, sow it for me. . .,' I get maybe 1,200 lei per hectare, plus the subsidy, 1,500 lei per hectare. If it's in the association, you don't have to do anything with it and you get your dividends. Economically, there's no difference between the two: if you don't want to move, it's better to give it to them. But I don't, because I'm happy to go and cut the sunflower, then the corn, and it's my property." (54-year-old man, Mezőfény)

Agricultural entrepreneurs

In contrast to the previous group, the economic activity of these households is not primarily driven by traditional agricultural production patterns, but explicitly by business- and profit-oriented perspectives. There are 6–7 such agricultural entrepreneurs in the village. Most of them did not start their own family farms after the regime change, but later, after the millennium and in the late 2000s. Their consolidation coincided in part with Romania's accession to the EU and the development of a macro-level system of public support for agricultural production, which is still a very important element of their economic strategy and income.

The following two young farmers, who are also very different from each other, are two distinctive representatives of this agricultural entrepreneurial stratum.

One is Gábor, who was born in the village in 1976. His parents did not engage in significant independent agricultural production, neither before collectivization nor after the change of regime in 1989. His father was an industrial worker (lathe operator) and his mother a post-woman. His knowledge of agriculture, therefore, comes mainly from personal observation and practical experience. (S.B.: "Where did you get your knowledge of farming? Gábor: Simple common sense, nothing else. And you ask questions. What is the best teacher? Experience. . .")

Gábor graduated in 1994 from the vocational school in Nagykároly, where he studied as a field engineer, but never worked in his original profession. From the age of 18 he was a cantor in the Roman Catholic parish of Mezőfény, and during the second half of the 1990s he made a living from craftsmanship (cooperage) as a sideline. After the turn of the millennium, when the new Romanian restitution law allowed for the restitution of forest land over 1 ha and the construction of the gas network in the village caused the market value of forest land to drop significantly, he began to work in forestry. In 2002, he purchased 9 ha of (acacia) forest, 90% of which is by now fully harvested. From this and from his felling services for local residents, added to the sale of an inland plot of land, he earned the cash to start up as an agricultural entrepreneur. In 2005, he bought a small plot of land (1.6 ha) and an older tractor (a 1982 Fiat).

However, it was not until much later in 2011 (at the age of 35) that he started farming as his main occupation. The success of his business is duly reflected in the fact that in less than a decade (by 2018), he had bought a total of 12 ha of arable land, excluding any family inheritance, currently worth 60,000 euros. In addition to the land he owned, he rented a further 15 ha from other farmers in Mezőfény after 2011. In total, he currently farms 27 ha of large-scale arable land and produces cereals and various industrial and fodder crops (wheat, sunflower, corn, rape, alfalfa). His wife is employed full-time by the local educational establishment, where she works as a kindergarten teacher. However, most of the total household income is not derived from this, i.e. off-farm (formal) employment, but from agricultural activity. From the latter, the family's annual income, including state subsidies, amounts to 36,000 euros, of which 41.6 percent (15,000 euros) is net income. ("...I say, that from this [agriculture – S.B.] you can easily support a family. Because a salary of 15,000 euros, if you divide it by the month, you have 6–7,000 lei per month, right?")

The individual life path of the other farmer, József, can be described as a story of emergence from the post-traditional commodity producing/self-sufficient group; in short, successful economic mobility and status change. József was born in 1972 and, unlike Gábor, has a family history of explicitly peasant origin. His grandparents were already smallholders and private farmers; his father – after the second Vienna decision – completed the *aranykalászos gazdatanfolyam*, i.e. the "golden stalk agricultural management course" in Hungary and later worked as a brigadier (in the Mezőfény collective farm). Therefore, József's farming behaviour reflects not only self-taught agro-ecological knowledge, but also the traditional patterns and practices of family farming. ("S.B.: How did you know how to farm? József: I learnt it by the books and from my father, because I used to go with him make hay and to hoe carrots.")

After finishing high school in Nagykároly, he worked for a few years as an ironworker and toolmaker at one of the city's industrial plants, the Unió. Based on the life history interview, the start of small-scale family farming was also not a voluntary choice, but an economic necessity, a forced livelihood strategy. József lost his job in 1995 and so as a result took over the family farm and started farming as his main occupation, but also for other reasons: his father had died in 1991 and his two older brothers had emigrated to Germany in 1988.

Since the 1990s – for two decades – the size of the family farm has remained unchanged: József has been producing goods on the 8.1 ha of arable and 2.26 ha of other land (0.53 ha of meadow, 1.6 ha of forest, 0. 13 ha of vines) inherited from his parents. For a long time, as he had no agricultural machinery or technical equipment, he farmed most of the land with the hired help of the local agricultural association (Agromec). In 2015, however, the family managed to buy more land. As a result, the head of household currently farms 17.5 ha of arable land (7 ha of corn, 5 ha of wheat, 4 ha of sunflowers, 1.5 ha of soy), with his own machinery, which has been gradually expanded over the past decades. In addition, in order to sell the surplus capacity, József farms a further 50 ha under custom farming for other local farmers, for which he is paid by the villagers in cash, labour exchange or in kind (using a fixed proportion of the cereals, sunflowers and corn produced).

On the first family farm, agricultural production is carried out by only one person (the husband), on the second by three members of the family (husband-wife and father-in-law); foreign labor – day laborers, seasonal workers – are not employed, or only very rarely. Both households have a relatively higher value and better equipped machine park and equipment than the average, compared to members of post-traditional agricultural producer groups. In

addition to the most important large equipment (plough, disc, seedbed cultivator, fertilizer distributor, trailer, mower, rotating machinery, etc.), which are also found in other agricultural enterprises, Gábor's farm also has a more powerful tractor (John Deere 6,210, year: 2000) and a combine harvester (Claas Dominator 108 SL, year: 1992). This is the only privately owned harvester in the village (the former was purchased by the head of household in 2016 for 25,000 euros and the latter in 2017 for 30,000 euros).

Unlike Gábor, József started farming independently in the early 1990s with draught animals ("horses"). However, in addition to the most important auxiliary tools and technical equipment (wheat seed drill, corn seeder, ploughs, discs, trailers, etc.), the family's machinery now includes two older Romanian tractors (year: 1974) and a larger-capacity imported tractor (John Deere, year: 1981). The total value of the three machines is approximately 13,000 euros. However, the fact that József purchased almost all of the machines and equipment (unlike Gábor) in a heavily depreciated, worn-out condition, and then renovated them himself (sometimes over several months), manufacturing most of the necessary parts himself as a former machine fitter, is a sign of this household's persistent lack of capital and income: "Year after year we always bought some machine, all old, nothing new. Because there was no money, I always bought second-hand seed drills, tractors, everything, and then I renovated a little bit. I repaired it here, so that I didn't have to buy anything for it. I did it myself, and they were all outdated machines. They're not new machines that I could sow 30–40 ha of land with. (. . .) Here's the hoeing machine, I made that too. I welded the spokes, took the axle from an old tractor for it, bent the irons and welded them together. I worked on it in the winter, and I just bought the hoes. I always take the wheels out of the seed drill because I made the seed drill so that they would fit. The plastic containers of the seed drill are attached to it, and I put them on the hoeing machine and distribute fertilizer with them. I brought the fertilizer distributor from Germany. It's also from the year 1954, it's painted, it's welded. . . we don't call a mechanic, I do everything myself. This here is an old wheat sieve, pre-war, pre-1944, and I'm still using it. I refitted it to a motor because it was hand-driven. I made this weeder myself. I mounted the cistern on the front of the tractor. I fitted the weeder rings on the seeder drill, and as soon as I sow, I'm weeding the ground in one go. I also made the harrows myself, took them to Kálmánd to have them forged, so I didn't have to pay any money for them. They cost much less."

There are also two other full-time agricultural entrepreneurs in the village who are engaged in economic activity alternative to the dominant local sectoral specialization, i.e. the cultivation of arable, industrial and fodder crops. One such farmer is Zoltán ("the gardener"). Since the early 2000s, he has been growing potatoes, peppers, celery and carrots on 2.5 ha of land owned by the village and primary vegetables (peppers, radishes, onions, cucumbers) on 0.25 ha of land in his backyard using a combination of open field and greenhouse techniques. This enterprise is characterized by a self-exploitative work system due to the high labor time and manual labor requirements of gardening. Most of the economic work is done by the family labor force (the head of the household and his wife), as both their children live and work abroad (in Hungary and Germany). For labor-intensive gardening, unlike on the other farms, the family also employs foreign labor (two permanent day laborers) for most of the year.

The other agricultural entrepreneur is Csaba, who farms 37.5 ha using conventional methods in Mezőfény while growing oil pumpkins organically on 30 ha in other municipalities in the region (Bonchida/Bonțida and Kolozsvár/Cluja-Napoca). The family got involved in farming this crop in 2012, not as a planned activity, but ad hoc on the advice of a relative. There are no

major economic and/or social historical antecedents of organic commodity production and large-scale pumpkin growing in Mezőfény.[31] In no small part because of this – and because Csaba unexpectedly gave up his seemingly stable job and business (selling his own pharmacy) – the family is seen by the local public in the village as somewhat eccentric. The situation is further complicated by the fact that organic farming usually requires a special cultivation technology, which is different from local agricultural traditions and free of chemicals, while often being associated with lower yields and higher weed density. In this particular case, this not only goes against local norms of agricultural production, but also fundamentally violates stereotypical community representations of "Swabianism" (i.e. the "careful," "precise," "industrious" farmer). Csaba and his family have therefore had little or no access to land rented from private farmers in recent years. (As one young farmer put it: "They're afraid to lease their land to him, because it'll become weedy. He gets some smaller parcels, but not any bigger area, just the sandy parts on the outskirts.") In 2018, the family owned 7.5 ha of land; the rest of the cultivated land (30 ha) was leased from the village community.

Although the four agricultural enterprises mentioned above have higher annual incomes than post-traditional subsistence/commodity producing farms, their level and form of market integration differs significantly at several points (also when compared to each other).

While the first household (Gábor's family holding) usually limits its trade to external, formal market transactions, the second household sells its agricultural produce on hybrid regional (external formal and external informal) markets: "The soy and the sunflower go to the oil mill in Nagykároly. I sell some of the wheat to Agrotec and some of it I sell on the black market. These truckers take it. . ." (József, 49-year-old man, Mezőfény).

Unlike the former two, the horticultural farmer sells the goods produced in short supply chains, i.e. directly, mainly through informal marketplaces outside the village (the wholesale market in Satu Mare and the farmers' market in Nagykároly[32]) and to a lesser extent through local market channels (door-to-door sales). Finally, the market strategy of the organic farmer differs from the behavior of all three previous models. The household's production is not directed towards external regional markets, but mainly towards international (translocal) ones: most of the pumpkin seeds are sold in natural form by a Hungarian organic producer. The family delivers the product directly to the foreign buyer's premises, using its own vehicle and/or a subcontracted carrier. A small part of the product processed in Hungary (the pressed and bottled organic pumpkin seed oil) is bought back by the family from the company on a producer discount and then sold on local and regional informal markets (with the help of family, relatives and friends) in Romania.

Nevertheless, irrespective of the divergent market integration and strong sectoral specialization of individual private family farms, one of the common features of these small and

[31]The fact that both farmers came from outside the local society, i.e. they were not born in Mezőfény but in other settlements (Zoltán in Hadad/Hodod, Csaba in Szatmárnémeti), may have played an important role in the creation of a production structure/sector specialisation that differs from local traditions. The status of the respective actors (as "strangers," "outsiders") has presumably contributed in no small measure to the fact that the individuals concerned have developed their individual farming strategies relatively independently of local farming traditions and the regulatory norms that govern them.

[32]All year round (from spring to autumn) the family rents and maintains its own stall at the farmers' market in Nagykároly, where the head of the household's mother-in-law sells the vegetables (peppers, tomatoes, carrots, etc.).

medium-sized farms is that they have retained, to varying degrees, some of their peasant character (Szabó 2013). For example, three of the four families, with the exception of the organic farmer, do not have an officially registered business. None of the households has used external grant resources (other than area-based aids) to support these unregistered businesses in recent decades. All the owners concerned see state or international agricultural support programs as an obstacle to individual (autonomous) production and marketing, and they are primarily concerned with the economic and financial risks resulting from increased control ("I have never applied for it and never will. I have heard that many people regret it, controls are coming, the movement of goods must be followed, what goes where, so no one controls me now, and we are fine"). Neither of the farmers keep accounts of the income and expenditure of their enterprise ("I push the paperwork away, I hate it, I don't keep any accounts," "I don't keep any accounts, I only note the dates of spraying, I don't like to write"). The profile of each farm is not determined by a well thought-out, detailed medium- or long-term economic or business plan, but usually by yearly changes in turnover and income, along with the experimental economic solutions and traditional practices that respond to them.

Foreign labor migration: the group of seasonal agricultural workers and other, non-agricultural workers[33]

Economic migration, i.e. the temporary or permanent abandonment of local agricultural production and the local labor market, has a long tradition in the settlements under study and can be considered a widespread and observable phenomenon in the individual household farms, essentially irrespective of the type of farm (i.e. both for larger and for smaller farms with a higher production volume and income).[34] Although I do not have representative data at the settlement level, my interviews and empirical observations suggest that the majority of private family farms living from agriculture are mostly left without a leader and successor due to the inactivity of the older generation and the emigration of young people, who work off-farm (and abroad). From this point of view, it is noteworthy that a total of 15 children were born on the 7 family farms described in greater detail above, and among these, as of 2018, two thirds of the adult age group

[33]The economic activity of foreign workers not engaged in agricultural work, but in the secondary (industrial) or tertiary sector (services), is intertwined with the local agricultural market and processes within it in several ways. (In the economic transition after the regime change, higher incomes from foreign, mainly industrial wage labour – as seen in several of the above-mentioned farmers' life paths – were and still are one of the important external driving forces of the agricultural sector in the issuing municipalities, including, for example, the technical and economic development of private family farms (the purchase of higher-value machinery and equipment). In addition, the costs of entering international labour markets in the more prestigious and higher-paid non-agricultural sectors (skilled and wage labour) in the society of origin are primarily borne by households with more capital, among which the more productive and higher-paid agricultural enterprises and family farms with a higher capacity and income are over-represented in local society.) Therefore, although the analysis of the economic strategies of migrants working in the non-agricultural (secondary, tertiary) sector seems to be outside the narrower scope of this study, i.e. the analysis of the *agrarian* population of the society of Mezőfény, in view of the organic, practical connections between the different economic sectors I will have also have to discuss the latter in the following, however sketchily.

[34]According to the relevant literature, income diversification and intensification of production - given that these strategies require greater capital generation potential - mainly occur on larger family farms, while off-farm pluriactivity and the more permanent emigration and labour migration of the younger generation are more characteristic of smaller family farms (Jervell 1999:109; Ilbery 1991; Meert et al. 2005).

(6 out of 9 people), meaning over 18 years of age, are no longer living in their country of birth but are permanently living or working abroad (in Germany and Hungary). Like their older siblings, some of the minors who have stayed at home (6 people) also plan to continue their studies or work abroad after leaving school. (As one young girl I interviewed put it, "To work hard, to suffer at home for nothing? We'd rather go to university, get a degree, that's worth something, or go to work abroad. Staying at home is not an option." 17-year-old girl, Mezőfény)

Nevertheless, the different types of migration practices seen in the village today (emigration for study, health and retirement tourism, short or longer-term employment abroad, temporary or permanent relocation) constitute complex phenomena and issues that at this stage of the research lack sufficient interviews and empirical data of sufficient quality and quantity to allow a thorough analysis. In the following, I will therefore limit myself to making a few observations and sketchy comments on the subject, with relevance to migration and local resource management.

Unfolding from the life trajectories of farmers and migrants, one such link at a more general level is that past and present patterns of migration to foreign countries, i.e. those emerging in the 1990s and post-2010s, show different features in several respects.

From the late 1980s onwards, for example, one of the most important rhetorical elements in decisions that triggered, sustained and promoted migration and in the community interpretation thereof – apart from the obvious economic motivations – was the emphasis on national-cultural affinities (the "common" German-Swabian or Hungarian language and sense of origin) in the older generation. This is the reason why I earlier described the first period of mobility among the inhabitants of Mezőfény towards Central Europe, mainly Germany, Austria and Hungary (in the chapter on the history of the settlement) using the concept of ethnic migration.

However, the last three decades have also seen the accumulation of a wealth of new knowledge regarding community and individual experiences of labor migration within local society. The loss of status in foreign host countries, the experience of ethnic and economic discrimination, the influence of international capitalist big business (e.g. Polipol, Phőnix and other multinational companies) in the Satu Mare region, or even the strengthening of far-right nationalist-populist movements in the Central and Eastern European countries of origin (Feischmidt et al. eds. 2014) have also shaped new interpretations and perceptions of working abroad (especially in Germany) among the local population: "The Germans don't want to give us any money. The bigwigs come here to earn, not to cultivate their kinship ties: they promise big salaries, but they pay nothing, they just make us work for nothing" (53-year-old woman, Mezőfény); "Germany is not what it was – we know that, we see that. The migrants are in Germany, the city is unliveable. We have a much calmer life here." (60-year-old man, Mezőfény); "Sorry, I'm not going there – to the West – to work. My money and my sweat won't feed the Germans. Maybe it's silly that I'm just a down-to-earth peasant, but I like it when I plough and sow the land and see the future of it. I made it and it grows so well. That's the way I am" (49-year-old man, Mezőfény).

This partly explains why ethnic identity (the Swabian sense of origin), as a symbolic resource that reduces the costs of migration (Fox 2005; Gödri 2010; Pulay 2005; Sík 1996), no longer plays a role, or at least only a very restricted role, in the discourses and everyday interpretive practices of the young people I interviewed.

The second aspect – perhaps more important than the previous one – is that today's migration decisions among younger people are not determined by the mass unemployment of

the post-socialist economic and political transition, but rather by consumption-centered considerations. From the point of view of the age group concerned, the labor migration practices observed in the Mezőfény region are therefore no longer primarily aimed at counteracting the employment crisis, but rather at levelling out local inequalities (asymmetrical property and land ownership, growing income disparities) within a global framework. To this end, foreign employment provides the social groups concerned with alternative economic resources (material and non-material goods), the production, consumption and redistribution of which are currently not available within local society.

In Mezőfény, preliminary experience suggests that contemporary transnational movements for economic purposes, best described by the category of circular migration,[35] take two main forms.

One is seasonal agricultural work abroad (picking and growing raspberries, strawberries, asparagus, carrots and apples, mainly in Germany and France), the social base of which is made up of the more disadvantaged sections of local society without higher education and language skills. Among these workers, the Roma ethnic population is over-represented, but by no means exclusive. Its members (after Romania's accession to the European Union in 2007 and as borders became more porous) have gradually left the local (informal) labor markets, which offered low wages, and migrated to the agricultural markets of Western countries, which offered better financial conditions. In 2018, a French agricultural investor involved in large-scale berry growing in the village employed 16 Roma and 1 non-Roma day laborer in France, where he tried to replace the local labour force missing from his own land with cheaper Transylvanian guest workers. The recruitment of seasonal agricultural workers for Germany is also carried out by a local subcontractor ("recruiter"), to whom dozens of Mezőfény residents have been coming for years. The age limit for both groups is relatively low, up to a maximum of 45 years, because of the particularly difficult physical work involved. "There you have to bend all day, lift the big boxes and work 15–17 h a day or more, 'cause they drive like crazy. 17 h a day is a bit much. And then they come home with 3–4 thousand euros, and they can do something with that money here." (22-year-old woman, Mezőfény)

Roma workers usually travel to these destinations to work with their families, while non-Roma tend to travel alone, spending 3–6 months a year. Income earned abroad is spent within the sending society, in family household economies (paying off debts, buying a house, land or car, renovating and/or expanding housing and purchasing higher value consumer goods). The rapid absorption and utilization ("consumption") of the income from guest work induces new/further migration movements in the families concerned - acting as an institutional economic factor that reproduces migration.[36]

Another type of labor migration is skilled or semi-skilled work abroad (mainly in Germany), carried out by Romanian nationals as employees of various companies, mainly in the food

[35]Migration movements of a circular or commuting nature are described by Stola as "quasi-migration" (Stola 2001) and by Okólski as "unfinished migration" (Okólski 1998). Under these two terms, both authors mainly discuss the phenomena of seasonal, occasional employment and pseudo-tourism (merchant and shopping tourism), in which the refusal to settle, i.e. short-term stays abroad, is a strategic element for migrants.

[36]The factors motivating the reproduction of migratory movements (the asymmetric distribution of economic, cultural and social capital between sending and receiving countries) are analysed in detail in: (Czaika – Vothknecht 2014; Blaskó – Gödri 2014; Gödri 2016.).

industry or trade sector (meat processing and/or packaging plants, warehouses in supermarkets). One of the conditions for employment in these formal labor market segments is formal residence, the cost of which (high property rents in Germany and several months' deposit paid in advance) can only be met with considerable difficulty by the people concerned. Compared to seasonal agricultural work, this type of employment is therefore mainly observed among young people with higher qualifications (i.e. language skills, at least a high school diploma) and a more consolidated financial background. Among the young people I contacted, such stable existential circumstances were characteristic of a 28-year-old young man, who (after two semesters, having dropped out of higher education) has tried his luck in several countries since 2015 (having dropped out of higher education after two semesters). At the age of 22, he first lived in Cambridge for a year – with the help of family connections – working as a manual laborer in a grain storage plant ("granary"). Then (through an international employment agency), together with his girlfriend and several other young people from Mezőfény, he looked for a job in Germany at an online warehouse, where he is currently working in logistics (transport, purchasing). In the case of this longer period of work and expatriation, as reflected in the following interview extract, the motivation was not merely to acquire material goods, but more complex aspects related to lifestyle and *quality* of life, including: (a.) a higher wage earned abroad with shorter working hours, i.e. the amount of free time available; (b.) a household's increased ability to accumulate capital, i.e. a more flexible budget, adapted to the family's consumption capacity; (c.) the higher social prestige and stable labor market position associated with professional qualifications; (d.) the more democratic functioning of public bureaucratic institutions (rational administration without ethnic discrimination, corruption and privileges); (e.) or even the sense of individual security and subjective satisfaction associated with a relatively higher standard of living.[37]

"S.B.: It didn't even occur to you to look for a job here in Romania? M.S.: No. How should I put it. . . Out there in Germany, you do less work for about four times as much pay as I would get for more work at home. (a.) If we want to achieve something, it is difficult from here. Our children should grow up in an environment where they don't always have to worry about money like they do here. We shouldn't have to budget money like we do here, depending on whether we have enough of it or not by the end of the month. If it's the last week of the month, you can't afford more here. (b.) Or if you go to a university here, your child is not guaranteed a job. If he does the same thing out there, the university puts him to work, the university already provides him with a job. (c.) Everything is much simpler there. S.B.: So, you're not coming back? M.S.: No, it's not worth it. Everything is easier there. Whatever needs to be done can be done much more easily than here. The people in the offices are nicer. It's not like if you don't speak Romanian, they look down on you. . . S.B.: But you speak Romanian, that's not a problem for you at home, is it? M.S.: Of course, but if you speak Romanian, people here are still condescending. (d) S.B.: So, it's not just a question of money to live abroad? If they raised your salary here, would you come back? M.S.: No, not anymore. I might think about it, but the comfort would not be there [in Romania - S.B.]."

[37] According to Fred Hirsch, in modern society, more and more products are becoming *positional products* whose function is not to satisfy needs but to demonstrate social status (Hirsch 1976).

The aforementioned young man and his girlfriend spend their income from working abroad (a net total of 2,750 euros per month) in the country of destination, mainly on their own social integration expenses (renting a property, learning German, making deposits to a savings account for a house of their own, and buying certain prestige items, such as a higher value car).

The new norms of life management, consumption and value preferences reinforced by international migration – through social remittances[38] – encourage young people remaining in the sending settlements to leave family farming (based on strong self-exploitation, physical work and economic pluriactivity), which may lead to a further decline and erosion of the importance of the remaining farms in the village. (One farmer put it this way: "In order to create that financial security – I'm talking about ourselves – we have to work a lot: we have animals, we have cows now, we used to have to go to the dairy – even when we were working –, we had bulls, we worked a lot. I think young people today don't want that anymore. Everybody wants to live on what they earn at work from 8 o'clock in the morning, so nobody wants to work extra anymore. . ." (62-year-old man, Mezőfény)

SUMMARY

In my study, summarizing the first experiences of economic anthropological research conducted in a Swabian settlement in Satu Mare County (Mezőfény), I sought to answer the question of how local groups specializing in agricultural production adapted to the changed political, economic and social environment – new property, land and market relations – with the help of everyday livelihood and income-earning strategies.

In the 1990s, the transition from a planned to a market economy – along with economic recession as well as an employment and livelihood crisis – changed the financial conditions and other circumstances of individual households in the village under study, which led to the emergence of a new decision-making cycle (Bowler et al. 1996:289). Accordingly, the local population adapted to the changing economic and structural conditions with a wide variety of rather complex solutions and techniques (Table 2).

In the village under study, one of these techniques, as illustrated in Table 2, was the horizontal integration of individual, small-scale agricultural production (land, capital, means of production) into large-scale (industrial) production. In the early 1990s, this status quo strategy – based on the preservation and maintenance after the regime change of the collective form of farming that had developed during the state socialist era – was mainly chosen by individuals and families with a lack of capital (small land area, few technical tools and low labor force, etc.) or formal employment. In terms of numbers, this quasi-agricultural group is still the largest in the local agricultural market.

[38]The concept of "social remittances" was introduced into the academic discourse by an American sociologist, Peggy Levitt, in order to draw attention to the importance of social transfers, starting from a critique of the economic paradigm of migration phenomena. According to this approach, migrants are transnational travellers who exchange not only material goods, but also novel ideas, knowledge practices and identities as well as cultural and social capital between sending and receiving countries. In this framework, "social remittances" are one of the dominant forms of cultural diffusion, driven by migration at the local level, which can bring about radical changes in the internal structure of both societies, sometimes even in their political institutions, among others (Levitt 1998, 2001a, 2001b).

Table 2. Divergent economic strategies in the society of Mezőfény (2018)

1. Type of farming	2. Economic groups	3. Types of action	4. Adaptation techniques
Large-scale collective production	Agricultural managers	Expressive actions, an "economic policy" based mainly on the acquisition and use of local resources (land, money-land, financial and human capital, labor, etc.)	Horizontal integration and institutionalization of individual agricultural production (land, capital, means of production) – Institutional diversification: processing of goods (bakeries, mills, etc.), provision of special services: "sale," "putting on the market" of surplus capacity (machinery, equipment)
	Quasi-farmers		Reduction of the agricultural holding: – Reducing the level of individual/family agricultural production (partial – total, temporary – permanent abandonment) – Carrying out off-farm non-agricultural activities and occupations – Lease, transfer of the right of use or permanent sale of family land
Individual/family private production	Groups involved in backyard food production		
	Post-traditional commodity producing/self-sufficient peasant farms		Diversification of agricultural production; maintaining farming levels, increasing or temporarily reducing production and commercial capacity:
	Agricultural entrepreneurs		

(continued)

Table 2. Continued

1. Type of farming	2. Economic groups	3. Types of action	4. Adaptation techniques
			– Purchase, lease and/or sale of new land (field, meadow, forest, etc.) – The introduction of new production technologies and alternative crops (different from the economic traditions of the local society) – Agricultural specialization (within or between production structures) – On-farm and off-farm diversification
	Foreign seasonal agricultural workers Industrial workers, factory workers, service sector workers	Instrumental actions, "economic policy" aimed at the acquisition and involvement of external resources (land, money-land, financial and human capital, labour force, etc.) outside the local social structure	Income diversification: channeling in off-farm agricultural and non-agricultural income: – Selling personal labor on a foreign market ("commodification")

The other was the revitalization of individual farming, i.e. the (re)establishment of small family farms or medium-sized agricultural enterprises for subsistence/production. This return to agricultural production (forced, experimental or conscious) has given rise to occupational groups with very different links to agricultural activity: subsistence farmers, self-employed farmers, necessity-driven agricultural entrepreneurs and assisting family farmers, part-time workers, etc. – who have also adopted very different adaptation techniques (reduction of the farm, diversification of agricultural production, maintenance of the farm, increase in production and commercial capacity, temporary or permanent reduction).

Dominant actors in the local agricultural market (the agro-managerial class, quasi-farmers, backyard food producers, post-traditional commodity producing/self-sufficient farms, agricultural entrepreneurs) use these techniques primarily to mobilize, expropriate, acquire or redistribute internal, already existing local resources in the settlement (land, financial and human capital, labor force, means of production).

Even so, there is another form of economic adaptation, different from the previous one, through which the local population (in the early 1990s, mainly members of the social strata who were excluded from public employment and left without significant property and mobilizable financial capital, and later also members of other social strata) tried to channel external markets and economic resources outside the local area. In my view, such instrumental actions[39] can be regarded in the municipality under study as strategies based on the state border as an economic resource, including certain types of labor migration (activities among groups of workers engaged in seasonal agricultural work abroad or in skilled and industrial wage labor).

From this perspective and from a more general point of view, it seems to me that in local societies the economic actions of a population specialized in agriculture form a disintegrated income-generating system (variable almost from family to family/household). In this system, even for a single family, on-farm (endogenous) and off-farm (exogenous) resources and activities are interlinked in various ways: they can complement or replace one another, or one income source and type of economic activity can compete with another.

These forms of economic and income diversification in the years of economic recession after the regime change have created a very flexible, multi-level (multiplicative, individual and community) structure of production, consumption and market exchange of goods, which have allowed the development of hybrid local resource management policies. My assertion is that in recent decades this has increased the resilience of individual households in local society.[40] It has thus helped family/community farms to develop relatively effective solutions to unexpected or unforeseeable events as well as economic and other crisis phenomena.

[39]For the concept of expressive and instrumental actions as strategies for the production of different types of resources, or types of capital, see: (Lin 2001:17–19). In everyday economic actions – "external" (trans-local) and "internal" (local) resources, income-generating activities – they are of course not sharply separated in reality. Even in the case of a single household, we see that they usually do not form "pure" but rather mixed economic structures. As we have seen from the main text of this study, for households involved in agricultural production, off-farm income from the European Union, public subsidies or, for example, temporary income from international employment, is as important a part of family income as income from economic activity on the farm. However, the distinction between the different types is – in my opinion – analytically important, since the aforementioned types of activity represent resource management decisions with different modalities in a given local society. Thus, they reflect rather differently structured networks and economic policy models of production, conversion and the distribution of goods.

[40]The definition of resilience and the related research paradigms are well summarised in: (Székely 2015).

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Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 241–259
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00005

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

The Third-level Digital Divide among Elderly Hungarians in Romania

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Received: January 26, 2021 • Accepted: February 24, 2021
Published online: November 8, 2021

ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to examine the characteristics of the third-level digital divide among elderly Hungarians (over 65 years of age) in Romania. The third level of digital divide indicates the emergence of digital habits in the Bourdieusian sense, which provide real benefits in different areas of everyday life. Hungarian elderly people in Romania are clearly lagging in terms of the third-level digital divide. The explanation for this is partly to be found in the limits imposed by the characteristics of their age and partly in their socio-economic situation. Elderly Hungarian people in Romania tenaciously adhere to their usual ways of life and previously established daily habits, and their repertoire does not integrate the use of digital technology. The results obtained in this study of elderly Hungarians in Romania are in line with the research results of digital inequalities, according to which there is a relationship between the degree of digital competence, the structure and usefulness of digital activities, and inequalities according to the traditional dimensions of social stratification (economic, cultural, individual).

KEYWORDS

digital inequalities, third-level digital divide, elderly Hungarians in Romania, social inequalities

INTRODUCTION

In the Europe of the third millennium, large-scale social aging and the rapid development of digital technology are phenomena whose consequences manifested in social change are inevitable (INS 2019).

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According to 2019 Eurostat data, the proportion of the European population (EU28) using the internet reached 87 percent in 2019, which means that except for the eternal laggards (Rogers 1995), the majority of the population in EU societies are active internet users. There are even more encouraging figures for European businesses, where 97 percent of companies with more than 10 employees (EU28) have internet connection.

The global coronavirus epidemic in 2020 has given increased impetus to digital transformation in various areas of social and economic life. Following the stagnation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to relaunch social functioning and revitalize economic life, vocal social and economic actors in some European countries are looking for the solution in the online world.

The issues of aging European societies have also come to the fore as a result of the coronavirus epidemic, since the problems of the epidemic have affected the elderly population to a greater extent, revealing that these societies are not at all prepared to deal with the problems of an aging population (Kucsera 2020). The first world conference on aging societies was held in 1982, where it was concluded that social interventions for the elderly were needed to ensure financial independence, social participation, health and social care, self-fulfillment, and human dignity throughout people's lives, including old age (Lampek 2015); yet, in all these areas, even the welfare states of Western Europe have remained ineffective.

According to European standards, a society begins to age when the elderly (over 65 years of age) population exceeds 7 percent (Tiago 2017). According to 2019 statistics, the proportion of the European population over the age of 65 was 18.79 percent. Aging is even more pronounced in Western European countries (20.84 percent).[1] In 2019, 13.9 percent of the Romanian population belonged to the 65–74 age group and 4.7 percent to the group over 75 years of age (Eurostat 2019b). The explanation for the aging of Romanian society lies in the declining number of births and a robust international labor market migration (INS 2019).

The integration of digital technology in the media practices of the so-called traditional mass media generation (Hepp et al. 2017), i.e., the elderly, is lagging both in Romania and internationally (Tőkés – Vajda 2019; Ștefăniță – Ivan 2018; Schreurs et al. 2017; Quan-Haase et al. 2016). Elderly Hungarians in Romania are a social group lagging in the use of digital media, which has both individual (motivational and situational) and group (cultural), as well as socio-economic (SES) reasons (Schreurs et al. 2017; Tőkés – Vajda 2019).

The catching up of the elderly population with the increased technological requirements at the dawn of the third millennium has been a timely issue even in the period before the COVID-19 pandemic, as the migration of a significant part of social and economic life to the digital space has long been foreseen. In the emergency situation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital catching up of elderly people deserves special attention both regionally and internationally. Otherwise, these age groups can be expected to be completely excluded from the socio-economic processes of the post-COVID-19 pandemic period (Farkas et al. 2009).

The purpose of this study is to examine the third-level digital divide among elderly (65+) Hungarians in Romania. The third-level digital divide refers to the degree of the practical benefits of internet use in different areas of real (offline) life. The research was carried out during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, i.e., in June 2020, using the possibilities of online data

[1]Our World in Data: Age Structure. https://ourworldindata.org/age-structure.

collection. During this period, 51 online interviews were conducted with Hungarian people over the age of 65.

The study starts with a theoretical presentation of the third-level digital divide, the mapping of the characteristics of elderly people, and the description of the internet use of elderly people in Romania. The second half of the study presents the methodology, results, and conclusions of the online research conducted in the summer of 2020.

Levels of the digital divide

The widespread use of the internet has given impetus to the techno-optimistic view, according to which the infinite amount of knowledge available on the internet is accessible to anyone, creating equal opportunities for members of the information society (Webster 2007) to improve their living conditions and quality of life, whether in individual, social, cultural, economic, or political terms (McKeown 2016). This idea is not new, as the proliferation of traditional mass media has raised similar expectations. However, this optimism proved unfounded (Tichenor et al. 1970; Viswanath – Finnegan 1996). The techno-optimistic view resuscitated by the spread of the internet is not supported by research on the social impact of the internet (Hargittai 2002; van Dijk 2005; Witte – Mannon 2010; Helsper 2012; van Deursen – van Dijk 2015; ven Deursen – Helsper 2015, 2018).

Initial research on the spread of the internet has used the concept of the digital divide to characterize the social integration of digital technology, suggesting that society can be divided into those who have access to the internet and those who do not. Studies soon showed that not all individuals who have access to the internet take advantage of the opportunities/benefits of this access. This is when the concept of the first-level digital divide was introduced (Hargittai 2002). Over time, it has become apparent that internet use is not uniform, as there are differences in the quality of use, skills, and commitment. The totality of the differences that result from differences in the quality of internet use has been termed as the second-level digital divide (Hargittai 2002). Current research focuses on the third-level digital divide. There are significant differences in internet use between different social groups if the focus is on the social, economic, political, or individual benefits of internet use in different areas of life (van Deursen – Helsper 2018; Helsper et al. 2015; Helsper 2012).

THE THIRD-LEVEL DIGITAL DIVIDE

If the sum of the first-, second-, and third-level digital divide is simply termed as digital inequalities, the relationship between digital and traditional social inequalities is supported by research findings (Ragnedda 2017, 2018, 2019; Park 2018; Ragnedda – Ruiu 2020). This means that social groups who are in an advantageous position according to the traditional dimensions of stratification are also in a more advantageous position regarding digital inequalities, especially in terms of acquiring and exploiting useful digital skills (van Dijk 2005; van Deursen – van Dijk 2015; Ragnedda – Ruiu 2020).

Literature on first- (van Dijk 2005, Hargittai 2002) and second-level digital divides (Scheerder et al. 2017; Hargittai 2002, 2007) is abundant, laying the groundwork for further research into the links between traditional social and digital inequalities. Differences in access, levels of competence, and the structure of different levels of digital skills are intricately linked to

inequalities in the traditional dimensions of social stratification (economic, cultural, political, social, individual) and are a precondition for the emergence of the third-level digital divide (Ragnedda 2018, 2019; van Deursen et al. 2017; van Deursen – Helsper 2015).

The development of digital inequalities cannot be limited to differences in digital competence levels. It is much more appropriate to link it to the benefits and gains from the use of valuable content available in the digital space and to the use of various digital services. Life chances in different areas of real life are appreciably influenced by the level of digital competence, the motivation to use the internet, and the valuable knowledge gained online. Joint observation of the use of digital technology and traditional social inequalities has led to the introduction of the concept of a third-level digital divide. The third-level digital divide refers to users' ability to reap real-life benefits from their digital activities in different areas of life (Ragnedda 2019).

Based on the assumption of the theory of tertiary digital inequalities, people who are advantaged according to the criteria of traditional social inequalities are more likely to be able to take advantage of the valuable knowledge and digital services gained through internet use. The internet is a democratic media channel accessible to all, yet many members of society are unable to take advantage of the opportunities offered by digital platforms (Ragnedda 2019). Consequently, the study of digital inequalities is impossible and meaningless without considering traditional social inequalities.

Van Deursen and Helsper (2015) demonstrated that meaningful internet use leads to practical benefits when the user also has significant resources in various areas of real life. In their view, the usefulness of the online activities of users with similar digital abilities and skills depends on their traditional capital.

Based on van Dijk's (2005) classification, Van Deursen and Helsper (2015) have monitored the benefits of digital activities in the economic, social, political, administrative, and educational fields. They included in the economic category the online sale and purchase of goods and services and the online involvement in labor market processes. The various online forms of social collaboration (networking, online dating) have been assigned to the social field. The possibilities of online connection to political and public life were relegated to the political field. The acquisition of various educational materials and the use of online trainings were listed under education. The administrative area includes dealing with public authorities and the search for health information.

Van Deursen and Helsper (2015) have established that digital activities in different areas of life do not in and of themselves lead to real-life benefits. The prerequisite for this is that users in these areas have a high level of motivation, competence, and access. In addition to the availability of traditional resources, a high level of digital competence, integration of technological, informational, content production, and social skills is essential for the implementation of useful digital activities (van Deursen – van Dijk, 2019).

The relationship between traditional socio-economic and digital inequalities is clearly presented by van Deursen and Helsper (2015) in the model below (Fig. 1).

The relationship of socio-demographic factors to traditional socio-economic and digital inequalities is the basis of the model. Research confirms the influence of age, gender, education, occupation, place of residence, health status, and digital competence level on the extent of digital inequalities (Ştefăniţă – Ivan 2018; van Deursen – Helsper 2015; van Deursen – van Dijk 2014). The model highlights that the real-life benefits of digital activities in different areas of life can be derived from the blending of traditional capital and a high level of digital competence.

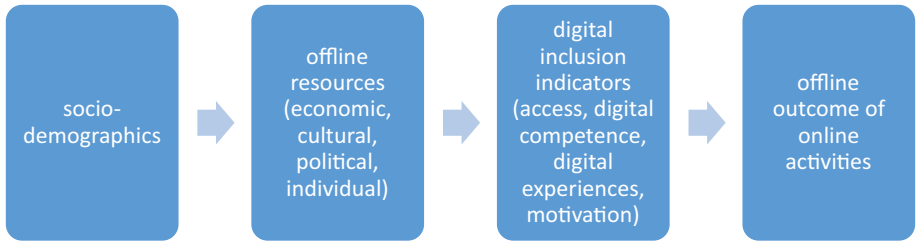

Fig. 1. Model of the reproduction of inequalities in digital society (based on VAN DEURSEN – HELSPER 2015:33)

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDERLY PEOPLE

Man is not only a biological but also a social being. Thus, as we age, our place and role in society also changes. The duties and rights of social age are institutionally regulated, thus varying from period to period and society to society (ROTH 2004).

According to Mária TÖRÖCSIK (2015), the image of the old man/woman is associated with the type of the sage in the Jungian archetypes. In legends, the sage is portrayed as someone who is experienced, understanding, and knowledgeable about the world. Thus, he/she is perceived positively. András A. GERGELY (2013) considers that, in traditional societies, respect for age has developed because the elderly person "has actually lived, experienced, and carries, through his/her own personal growth, the traditional knowledge elements, values, norms, and legal customs, as an intermediary between the 'ancients' and the current 'moderns'." However, the reality of the 21st century is more nuanced than that. As ROTH (2004) emphasizes, perceptions of social age vary by historical age and society. In Eastern European societies at the beginning of the third millennium, the perception of older people tends to be negative. The pace of change in post-modern society is faster than ever. Thus, the growing environmental distance between different social age groups becomes an obstacle to interest in and cooperation with each other. The elements of knowledge, norms, and values represented by today's elderly people seem useless to the younger generations. The designation as an "elderly person" has acquired a pejorative interpretation, carrying the connotation of backwardness and the inability to catch up. "Aging is really just a symbol of redundancy, a path of obsolescence and invalidity" (GERGELY 2013). The term "old age" is unpleasant even to the elderly; members of this age group are reluctant to identify with it (TÖRÖCSIK 2015).

Gergely emphasizes that "the basic game of all generational debut is to push previous generations off the stage." This statement is especially valid in the postmodern period that is strongly influenced by technological development, globalization, and labor migration. As GERGELY (2013) very aptly puts it, "the sustainability of traditional community values is declining. This also reduces the prestige of older people's position, origin, livelihood, knowledge transfer, family organization, and decision-making. As a result, the system of child—parent responsibilities seems to evaporate, the network threads breaking. Desocialization is beginning to characterize the social environment of the increasingly lonely elderly, and the reverence towards older people, which was previously uncontested, is increasingly replaced by the

pragmatic efficiency principle, which would prefer to banish from the circle of consumers these 'obstacles' to youthful dynamism."

This social opinion is supported by the fact that aging is indeed the "descending branch" of social engagement (Roth 2004) and is characterized by biological and social processes that make it difficult to keep pace with the cultural changes triggered by rapid technological development through continuous learning and adaptation.

"In many areas of life, there is a measurable decline in the physical, mental, and social performance associated with aging, as well as the emergence of persistent chronic diseases that impair health and often the quality of life" (Lampek 2015). As age progresses, more and more obstacles to adaptation and learning emerge, such as lack of information, health problems, passive or negative attitudes towards aging, lack of interest, physical difficulties in access, and lack of learning assistance (Nagy 2011). As a result, elderly people avoid unknown situations and give up making significant changes in their lives (Maróti 2013). Narrowing interests and thinking strengthens adherence to established habits and repetitive behaviors, which brings with it the "ossification" and inflexible application of beliefs.

The biological and psychological degradation processes associated with aging occur more rapidly if the individual has become comfortable already at a young age, giving up learning, reading, and solving problems that require intensive thinking (Maróti 2013).

Catching up with digital technological advances also requires older people to further develop their knowledge and experience. Adaptation means completing new learning tasks, particularly in the field of digital culture, and the acquisition of English language skills. This already requires a serious effort from older people, as learning is not just about "memorizing information, but rather about organizing it into logical relationships, interpreting connections, drawing new conclusions, and raising issues that need to be clarified. (. . .) Elderly people are rarely able to do such learning unless they have become used to it at a younger age" (Maróti 2013).

Older people perceive their situation and their separation from younger age groups by increasing distances. "The fact that young people speak a different language and they are interested in things that are foreign and incomprehensible to the elderly enhances their belief that change has passed over them, and no one cares about their experience and knowledge anymore" (Maróti 2013).

The successful adaptation of older people to the cultural transformation brought about by the development of digital technology could be the realization of active aging. However, this presupposes cooperation and solidarity between the age groups. The first definition of active aging can be attributed to the OECD. This definition was laid down and proposed for implementation by the organization in 1998. The solution is "enabling older people to remain as active as possible in society and the economy. This means that they should be given the opportunity to decide freely how they spend their free time: with study, work, rest, or benefiting from care and nursing" (OECD 1998).

METHODOLOGY

The research on which this study is based examined the characteristics of the third-level digital divide among elderly Hungarian people (over 65 years of age) in Romania. In the course of the research, using the model of van Deursen and Helsper (2015), we sought to explore digital

practices in the Bourdieusian sense, from which the members of the target group benefit in different areas of everyday life.

The research targeted the Hungarian population over the age of 65 in Romania. The research process was hampered by the COVID-19 epidemic, as there was a state of emergency in Romania until May 16, 2020. The state of emergency was followed by a state of urgency, which is still in effect. The aging population is particularly vulnerable to the coronavirus epidemic. Therefore, the data collection was done online or by phone (Lupton ed. 2020).

Sampling was limited to available subjects. During the data collection period, in June 2020, an online interview was conducted with 51 subjects. The subjects came from the three Hungarian-inhabited Romanian counties – Harghita, Mureş, Covasna – mainly using the snowball method (Table 1).

The sample has the following composition:

The sample shows an over-representation of rural female subjects with a secondary education, who proved to be the most accessible but form a more disadvantaged group among elderly internet users. The data analysis method was the thematic content analysis of the transcribed interviews. The criteria of the content analysis were the theoretical dimensions of the third-level digital divide.

The socio-economic and technological environment of elderly people in Romania

The social welfare status of the Romanian population is poor. Data for Romania lag significantly behind EU27[2] and EU15 countries, and even compared to the former socialist (EU8) countries (INCCV 2017). Presently, the majority of Romanian society is characterized by a lack of material well-being, poor quality of life, low income, job shortages, and poverty. These processes are even more pronounced in rural areas (INCCV 2017).

The social organization decisions made in Romania after 1989 have led to the deterioration of Romanian society. In 2015, the employment rate was 66 percent, one of the lowest in the EU28. 60 percent of the rural population was employed in agriculture. However, this refers to

Table 1. The composition of the research sample by age, gender, place of residence, and education

Gender of subject	Age: 65–74 years				Age: over 75 years			
	Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural	
	Secondary education	Tertiary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education
Male	1	3	6	–	–	–	2	–
Female	8	4	21	3	–	2	–	1
Total	**9**	**7**	**27**	**3**	**–**	**2**	**2**	**1**

[2]EU27 (2021), EU15 – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, respectively EU8 – Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary.

self-sufficient agriculture and not agricultural enterprises. As a result, this population does not receive social and health care benefits from the state (INCCV 2017).

Romania has the lowest income among EU countries. The average annual income of the Romanian population is 25 percent of the average annual income of the EU15 countries and 60 percent of the average annual income of the EU8 countries (INCCV 2017). 23.8 percent of Romanian workers and 31.2 percent of the total population are at risk of poverty and social exclusion (Eurostat 2019b). The elderly population is particularly affected by this financially disadvantaged situation. Since the regime change in 1989, the Romanian state has chosen the path of the least social intervention. Romania is unique among the former socialist countries from this perspective. The purchase value of Romanian pensions has been steadily declining since the socialist period. A slight increase became apparent after 2008 (INCCV 2017).

Among the EU28 countries, Romania also has the highest level of inequality within society. The value of the GINI index is 37.4 percent, which indicates that there are significant income inequalities in society (INCCV 2017).

Under the socio-economic conditions outlined earlier, the application and exploitation of rapidly evolving digital technology is a real challenge for the Romanian population. Successful internet users are typically urban, young or middle-aged, with middle or upper socio-economic status (Tufă 2010; Eurostat 2019a). However, only a small proportion of the Romanian population has such characteristics. This characterization of the successful internet user implies the disadvantages of rural and elderly people with low socio-economic status in catching up with digital technology (Ştefăniţă – Ivan 2018; Dascălu et al. 2018).

According to 2019 Eurostat data, 45 percent of elderly people in Romania (aged 65–74) use the internet. This ratio increased tenfold between 2009 and 2019, but is still below the EU28 average (67 percent). The rate of internet use increases in proportion to the increase in educational attainment. Thus, 70 percent of the Romanian population with the lowest educational attainment and more than 90 percent of the Romanian population with the highest educational attainment are internet users (Eurostat 2019a; Ştefăniţă – Ivan 2018). Available statistics and analyses clearly indicate a substantial distance between the urban and rural population in Romania in the use of digital technology (Ştefăniţă – Ivan 2018). The Romanian urban population has twice as many people with digital competences at least at or above the basic level as the rural population. However, a maximum of 40 percent of the total population has digital competence at the basic level or higher. The comparison of statistical indicators of the information society between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary) confirms the regional lag of Romania, which, along with Bulgaria, has fallen behind in catching up with digital Europe (Ştefăniţă – Ivan 2018).

RESULTS, INTERPRETATION

The research results presented below can be considered a continuation of a study started in 2018.[3] Based on the data collected in 2018, a qualitative survey about digital practices and digital

[3]The title of the research was: *Digital media and social diversity – Digital literacy of different social groups*. The research was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 2017–2018 within the framework of the Domus Homeland Scholarship Program.

literacy was conducted among elderly Hungarians in Romania (Tőkés – Vajda 2019). However, research confirms that digital inequalities cannot be limited to differences in digital competence levels. The nature of digital inequalities is much more prominent if the focus is on the implementation of valuable digital content and on the use of digital services. The analysis of the data collected during the coronavirus epidemic in 2020 was aimed precisely at exploring this aspect, and the question, "what do elderly Hungarians in Romania do on the internet," was further expanded into "how do they benefit from what they do on the internet."

The 2018 survey showed that the attitude of elderly Hungarians in Romania towards digital technology was characterized not so much by rejection as by concern due to the unknown, as they did not have the basic digital skills that would encourage appropriate use of the technology. In the appropriation of digital technology, elderly Hungarians in Romania would need the help of both their narrower and wider social environment. However, their level of social support is unsatisfactory. Younger family members are impatient, so older people only ask them the most important questions about their internet use in order not to abuse the patience of the younger ones. They do not receive any free institutional support, and few of them would resort to paid courses or organized training (Tőkés – Vajda 2019; Schreuers – Quan-Hasse – Martin 2017; van Deursen – Helsper 2018).

Based on the online interviews conducted during the first wave of the 2020 coronavirus epidemic, the digital practices of elderly Hungarians in Romania and their benefits in various areas of everyday life after two years will be revealed to the reader. For ease of language, we are talking about elderly Hungarian people in Romania, but the results reflect the responses of 51 elderly Hungarians from three Transylvanian counties (Harghita, Covasna, Mureş).

The attitude towards technological development

Older people in Romania are aware of the technological revolution taking place around them, and their ideal expectation of themselves is the appropriation of the tools of digital technology. At the declarative level, subjects find it inconceivable not to keep up with the challenges of the digital world (I27[4]), as modern life requires them to keep pace with technological change (I2, I14). Nevertheless, there is generally a lack of interest in the real opportunities offered by technological development. Elderly people are no longer motivated to make new intellectual investments because they do not see the return and benefits of these investments (I3, I4, I12, I40). The disinterest is also implicitly manifested in the fact that respondents consider technological development good but not vital or necessary for them personally (I13, I48). A positive opinion of digital technology without its real use is typical for less educated social groups who have no personal experience in the matter but feel pressured to conform to the prevailing majority's opinion (Hasebrink et al. 2012).

Nevertheless, most of the respondents expressed fears and anxieties. Because they are no longer able to acquire new knowledge and technological skills, even trying to do so is considered an unnecessary effort and a waste of time (I6, I8, I9, I38). For those who have set out to master a higher level of computer or smartphone use, the obstacle to their progress is that they forget what they have learned before (I3).

[4]The I27 designation refers to the interview with the 27th interviewee. Hereinafter, the Ixx notation refers to the interview with the corresponding serial number.

Device use: computer or smartphone?

The proportion of the Hungarian elderly population in Romania using the internet has increased over the last ten years. This is largely due to the proliferation of smartphones and mobile internet services. Elderly Hungarians in Romania see many benefits of the smartphone and even invest it with symbolic meaning (I8). A significant number of interviewees pointed out that the smartphone, as a successor to the mobile phone, easily fits in a small space (I5, I22, I33). Therefore, they can carry it with them everywhere – to the forests and fields, shopping, excursions, while going about their daily business, etc. (I15, I18, I22) – ensuring contact with the world, including important people (I3, I22, I31, I36). In addition to connectivity, the smartphone is also a source of security, as older people worry about the expected negative events in the downward period of their lives and are significantly reassured by the knowledge that they are indirectly, but permanently, in contact with relatives or health care institutions. Some of the research subjects even personified their smartphone and called it a companion (I36) that is sometimes smarter than them (I51).

The first-level digital divide

The first level of the digital divide refers to technology, and the importance of the emergence of smartphones among elderly Hungarians in Romania is worth highlighting here. For as long as internet use required a PC or a laptop, older people had been severely affected by the first-level digital divide. Due to a lack of motivation and interest, those who did not directly benefit from the use of the internet did not invest in the acquisition of basic digital devices. Smartphones replacing mobile phones have contributed to the reduction of first-level digital inequalities in several ways. On the one hand, the smartphone has replaced the already "tamed" mobile phone, which was a necessary and useful tool for everyday life. On the other hand, compared to a computer, a smartphone is small, handy, and comfortable, which is an incentive for its use.

Level of digital skills and social support

Conversations with elderly Hungarians in Romania revealed that most of them learned how to use the internet features of their smartphones from their grandchildren or children (I1, I10, I22, I25, I45). However, they are also aware that using the internet would have many more opportunities for them if they understood it better (I1). Learning about smartphones and their internet features was primarily motivated by the need to keep in touch with their faraway children (I1, I14, I15, I16, I18, I20, I26, I45). In this case, the children also provided their parents with the necessary tools and taught them the basics of using a smartphone (I1, I3, I9, I45). Keeping in touch with old acquaintances, classmates, and co-workers for occasional conversations about the "good old days" is not to be overlooked either as a motivational factor (I13, I16, I26, I44, I8).

In the case of the early elderly, self-taught learning was common (I21, I22, I26, I29, I48). Self-taught learning generally had an incentive in the workplace (I6, I9, I27). Some of them were required to use a PC or laptop for work during their active period (I13). Thus, with the advent of smartphones, they already had sufficient self-confidence and interest in learning to use these devices on their own, at the cost of trial and error. When problems arise or they get stuck, however, fatalistic coping responses are typical for them, i.e., shutting down the digital device (I13, I15, I22, I25, I29).

Most of the respondents highlighted the abundance of information on the internet and its many benefits in different areas of life (I5, I6, I7, I20, I21, I26, I28, I30, I32, I34). Some also used the internet for fun and entertainment when they had the time (I22, I29, I30, I33, I36, I48).

A major barrier to digital device and internet use is a lack of English language skills (I25, I27, I53). Thus, respondents often stated that they did not understand "what the device wanted from them." In such cases, the internet was usually stopped and the device shut down (I20). As they are not able to make optimal use of their older devices, the respondents did not consider it necessary to purchase newer smartphones with constantly updated features (I1, I10, I27, I35). Hence, although they have learned the basic functions of smartphones, their arc of adaptation to technology was later broken.

As far as barriers are concerned, health status has also played an important role in the development of internet use patterns, as several of the respondents indicated that they are able to use the smartphone only for a short time because they do not see well and get tired of browsing on the small screen (I13).

Respondents also included people who, due to their insufficient knowledge, considered the operation of internet search engines some kind of miracle, the miracle being that you just type in your question and the answer pops up (I5, I6, I11, I46).

In addition to the possibility of keeping in touch with people, most respondents also appreciated the capacity of internet channels to provide information. Many emphasized that they have a more encompassing view of the world and are more informed than before since they started using the internet (I1, I10, I11, I24, I27, I36). In such cases, the respondents did not have informational competence, so they considered the first news that popped up to be true.

In rare cases, respondents would also embody a victim mentality, i.e., they would demand that "someone," a person or institution from outside, teach them how to use digital technology if society expects them to use it (I1). Lack of social support is a real obstacle that affects older people in the face of technological challenges. However, in this case, the focus is on dissatisfaction with society which expects older people to catch up digitally.

The majority of respondents were satisfied with the basic knowledge with which they operated their smartphones, and although they would accept additional instruction from family members, they would not be willing to pay for institutional training to develop their digital literacy (I2, I8, I 14, I22, I39). In rare cases, respondents with higher educational levels were willing to invest money in computer courses (I27), some had even attended such courses already (I27), especially during their active working years (I6). There was one competent elderly internet user acquainted with an IT professional whom they could turn to for help in the event of getting stuck (I13).

The second-level digital divide

The second-level digital divide is the result of the intertwining of digital skills and commitment. For our respondents, their motivation for internet use was mainly the possibility of keeping in touch with families, as communication situations that combine sound and image are seen as more satisfying than simple phone conversations. The second motivating factor for internet use was the acquisition of useful knowledge to support daily or professional activities. Those who took advantage of the information potential of the internet during their active period maintained this habit in the years after retirement. However, the majority of respondents had a number of

cognitive barriers, which has hampered the development of high-level digital competencies. Respondents had a basic level of digital skills that allowed them to perform the simplest orientation and communication tasks. The majority of subjects were passive users, as their digital practice was not shaped by an understanding of the logic of digital technology and media but by knowing the mechanical sequence of steps by which the desired knowledge acquisition or communication situation was achieved.

Even elderly people with higher educational levels are not generally digitally proficient. Digital competence above the basic level was common for those who have needed to use digital technology in the course of their work in the past and remained active after retirement, in some form retaining an interest in the ongoing developments of their profession. In this sense, the motivation to use digital technology has directly influenced the emergence and development of their competence.

The real-life benefits of using the internet

Using the internet alone promises little benefit if it is not done consciously and purposefully. In our study sample, users were already at a disadvantage in terms of secondary digital inequality. Thus, the resource-increasing benefits of internet use are only present in the case of some elderly Hungarian people in Romania. The majority of the respondents enjoyed two advantages of using the internet: namely, the ability to gather information on demand, and keeping in touch with family and friends.

Two-thirds of those surveyed (30 people) saw the benefits of the internet in enabling them to access news according to their own interests (I1, I10, I11, I24, I27, I36) or gather information of specific concern, and having wider access to information than ever before (I5, I6, I7, I20, I21, I26, I28, I30, I32, I34, I35, I39, I44). Most of the men read the news; women sought information on health, baking and cooking, gardening and plant care. For knowledge acquisition, respondents prioritized internet resources over traditional media sources (TV and newspaper), since they could not influence the supply of traditional media sources, while on the internet they could search for what was of particular interest to them. In this area, people with secondary and tertiary education show similar behavior. The need for information was heightened during the coronavirus epidemic, especially since official information in Romania was quite incomplete. Official sources only reported the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths. However, neither dissemination of information nor situation assessment or possible future scenarios were addressed. Thus, uncertainty, panic, and the need for information among the Romanian population gradually increased during the period of emergency. This public mood may also have influenced our subjects' responses.

The second area where users have experienced the benefits of using the internet was keeping in touch with family members. More than half of the respondents have mentioned that because their children work abroad and they do not have the opportunity to meet in person too often, video chatting provided them more joy than phone conversations. On the one hand, the internet video chat is free, so you can have longer conversations, which is very expensive in the case of a traditional phone call. On the other hand, due to their parasocial nature, video chats have the capability of creating a feeling and/or illusion of family togetherness. Even joint virtual home activities could be organized (e.g., cooking, having coffee or a meal together, playing and chatting with kids). Half of the respondents (24 people) mentioned that they regularly used this

feature of the internet; this activity was slightly more common for women than for men. This is in line with the traditional patterns of communication, according to which women are the keepers of the family nest and as such are responsible for staying in contact with relatives.

The third way respondents took advantage of the internet has been to gather the information they needed in their daily activities, or spurred on by professional or individual curiosity. They most often searched for DIY or educational videos. Watching DIY videos helped with practical problem-solving and learning. One third of the respondents (14 people) have used this option. In their view, the knowledge gathered in this way is timelier than the descriptions found in books.

None of the respondents turned to the possibility of institutional learning or political participation in online platforms. Five respondents have used the internet for communicating with authorities. Three of these five individuals established an online relationship with the authorities because of their occupation, two for individual problem-solving. The doctor contacted the health insurer, the accountant the financial authorities, and the teacher the directorate of education, while the other two private individuals contacted the forestry authorities and the mayor's office, respectively. The elderly people involved in our research emphasized that they have more trust in the personal form of administration and that, in their view, state agencies exist to address the concerns of the population locally.

The third-level digital divide

The third-level digital divide refers to the ability of an individual to reap the benefits of online activities in real life. However, it is important to mention that internet activities can benefit users if they have traditional resources at their disposal, which can be augmented by the opportunities offered by the internet. The answers of the respondents support the reality of this theoretical assumption. Due to the difficulties posed by the coronavirus epidemic, our arbitrary sample was made up of mostly Hungarians in rural areas with no higher education or people who retired from non-intellectual occupations. These individuals were characterized by a limited availability of traditional resources, and did not, in fact, have the conditions that would have encouraged the resource-building potential of online activities in different areas of life.

In the course of our research, the beneficial potential of internet activities was monitored in six areas: personal development, economic gain, social networking, training and learning, political participation, and public administration.

Based on the data, it can be concluded that the examined elderly Hungarians in Romania utilized internet platforms for their individual development and the maintenance of their social networks. In the field of individual development, online activities have contributed to increased awareness and openness, as well as to spending their free time more pleasantly. However, these rarely resulted in lifestyle changes or, more generally, major changes in the daily lives of older people. For those with a secondary education, the internet was seen as necessary to keep in touch, but it was also dispensable, since maintaining a network of close relationships can also be facilitated by using the phone. Persons with a higher education who used the internet in their early old age and were still pursuing professional activities recognized the internet's potential for their individual development and building professional relationships.

Harnessing the potential offered by online activities in the economic field can be seen as an untapped opportunity. At this age, people are no longer looking for work, which nowadays is

mostly done online, nor did they engage in any gainful activities hosted by online platforms. Online shopping and online banking were not typical either. Most people claimed they did not even have the kind of money that would require banking. Only in a few cases have respondents reported purchasing cheaper products from online stores. Still active subjects with tertiary education gained a financial advantage through the internet by gathering professional information that would otherwise have required a financial investment.

In the social field, there have been real benefits from online activities for those surveyed. However, respondents kept online contact only with members of their close family circle. Internet connectivity has been used to a small extent to maintain a loose network of personal connections. They did not contact people with similar interests, participate in self-help groups, or engage with local communities online. Social capital-building activities are not typical for the real lives of the respondents either, although we observed that they attributed their connection-deprived situation to the spread of digital technology.

The literature on aging highlights that older people have difficulties with learning, and if they were not used to practicing any activities for intellectual development at a younger age, they will not begin to do so in their old age (Maróti 2013). The interviews reveal that the elderly Hungarians in Romania are aware of their learning and resocialization difficulties, and some of them even displayed a sense of guilt about this. However, the main obstacle to learning is the lack of motivation, the disinterestedness of old age (Nagy 2011).

Active participation in political life did not even appear among the needs of the studied population. However, this was not caused by the opacity and obscurity of online spaces; this issue has been thoroughly studied within other disciplines.

The last area in which we studied the role of online activities was public administration. The online form of official contacts in Romania is still in its infancy (Bakó 2017). In fact, regardless of digital literacy, not too many issues can be resolved online. Thus, it is not a viable option even for the digitally savvy. There are some official platforms whose use is mandatory for certain professional groups, since they report to the public authorities through them, but these platforms have a professional and closed character.

Respondents did not link their digital lagging to their lagging related to other resources. Instead, they believed that internet use had little real benefit to them. And although the majority of the respondents found that digital technology makes their everyday lives easier, with a few exceptions, they also stated that the absence of it would not constitute a real loss.

Based on Van Deursen and Helsper's (2015) model for the reproduction of digital inequalities (presented on page 4), some final theoretical assumptions can be made regarding the internet use of the elderly Hungarian population in Romania, which require further evidence:

- Various traditional resources available in old age (individual, material, social, political, educational) have an impact on the real-life benefits of digital activities. The more diverse one's traditional resources, the more likely their digital activity will also be meaningful and enriching.
- Access to traditional resources is necessary but not enough for meaningful and profitable digital activities. In order to increase one's traditional resources through digital activities, they also have to be able to: a) access and operate digital technology at a high level; b) make meaningful and expedient use of the opportunities offered by digital platforms; c) have a high level of digital competence; d) feel the urge to use digital technologies to increase their existing resources, i.e., be motivated to use digital technology appropriately.

CONCLUSION

The research presented here examined the third-level digital divide of elderly (65+) Hungarian people in Romania. The data collection for the research was carried out in June 2020 in the form of online interviews. The accessibility limitations of the subjects resulted in the predominance of a certain social segment – persons with secondary education, mainly living in rural areas – in the sample, which can be considered a shortcoming of the present research. At the same time, this bias of the sample sheds light on the multiple disadvantages of elderly rural Hungarians in Romania regarding the examined issue.

The first-level digital divide of the surveyed subjects improved significantly after 2010 due to the proliferation of smartphones, since the majority of elderly Hungarian people in Romania had their own personal smartphone, or there was a person in the household who had one. As service providers for smartphones also provide mobile internet, all of the respondents had (mobile) internet service.

There was a significant division in the study group in terms of motivation for use and digital literacy. The answers of the respondents showed that they managed to operate their devices at a basic level but could not perform more complex tasks on digital platforms. Elderly Hungarians in Romania were taught by their children and grandchildren to use smartphones and laptops. However, both parties were content to offer and accept only the simplest operating advice. Older people believe that the digital skills they possess are sufficient for them. Few felt the urge to improve in this area. This was illustrated by a reduced use of smart devices in the target group, and presumably there is no prospect of changing this situation for them on their own. Another obstacle to development is the lack of English language skills, which shaped their digital practice through mechanical learning rather than comprehension. At the same time, due to their health status – as some of them do not see well or are in pain – they did not have the patience to gain significant experience in the digital world.

Under these circumstances, elderly Hungarian people in Romania were a social group clearly lagging in terms of the third-level digital divide. The explanation for this is partly to be found in the limits imposed by the characteristics of their age and partly in their socio-economic situation. The conversations revealed that the subjects rigorously adhere to their normal lives and habits developed earlier, a repertoire which does not integrate the use of digital technology.

The results also confirmed that examining and explaining digital inequalities is meaningless without taking stock of social inequalities. For the persons in this study, there is a connection between the degree of digital competence, the structure and usefulness of digital activities, and the inequalities stemming from traditional social stratification dimensions (economic, cultural, individual), all of which are determinants of the emergence of the third-level digital divide (Ragnedda 2018, 2019; van Deursen – Helsper 2018 van Deursen – Helsper 2015).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The research presented in this study was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 2020 within the framework of the Domus Homeland Scholarship Program. The title of the research was: The Third Digital Divide Among the Hungarian Elderly in Romania.

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Reviews

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 261–267
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00007

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

BOOK REVIEW

Frauhammer, Krisztina – Pajor, Katalin (eds.). (2019). *Emlékek, szövegek, történetek: Női folklór szövegek*. [Memories, Texts, Stories: Women's Folklore Texts]. Budapest: Hungarian Ethnographic Society. 400. ISBN 978-615-80634-6-3

Reviewed by ***Sándor Borbély****

The paradigm of feminist theory, along with postcolonial studies, has had a prolific influence on postmodern cultural and social science discourses since the 1980s. These trends, as we know, not only brought into focus subjects that were novel and less often discussed in previous studies (body, sexuality, violence, biopolitics, prostitution, madness, gender-based division of labor, alternative female and male identities), they also helped to raise awareness of the existing asymmetrical political, power, social and economic relations in the production of anthropological knowledge. In recent decades, all this has led to a wide-ranging critical rethinking, or at least a strong ethical, conceptual revision of scientific categories, methods, and representational practices, not only in ethnography/cultural anthropology but also in many other areas of social research.

From this – scientific and metacritical – point of view, the tome *Memories, Texts, Stories: Women's Folklore Texts* (2019), published by the Hungarian Ethnographic Society and edited by Krisztina Frauhammer and Katalin Pajor, seems a particularly exciting endeavor that could be of interest to the wider Hungarian scientific public. This book focuses on the analysis of women's folklore texts, i.e., gender relations constructed through various discursive practices – on topics that have not received enough attention within the disciplinary boundaries of Hungarian ethnographic research – and promises a textual folkloristic study of them. At the same time, all this carries within it, among other things, opportunities for (self)reflection in terms of research traditions and normative methodological and theoretical approaches of the given discipline.

The 400-page volume presents a selection of materials from a scientific conference organized by the Folklore Department of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society and the Folklore Department of the Institute of Ethnology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The book contains twenty-five studies which the editors, partly retaining the original thematic grouping of the conference, have divided into eight different chapters.

In the preface to the book, Krisztina Frauhammer briefly describes the Hungarian ethnographic history of women's research, the concept of the conference, and reviews the topics and research questions of the studies included in the volume. Even after having read this concise and meticulous introduction, the reader may wonder how these truly diverse studies – with divergent

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topic formulations, research methods, conceptual and interpretive-theoretical horizons, etc. – could be linked. It may seem that there is no organic connection between the studies of the volume, except for the women's theme defined in a "loose," very abstract way; the relationship between the individual chapters and parts of the book is not always cohesive, while on their own, the individual studies are generally important and profound writings.

The coherence of the volume perhaps could have been increased by an introductory study, which would theoretically – albeit schematically – position and frame the writings in the book within the disciplinary boundaries of folkloristic research. Such an editorial preface would have been particularly justified by the fact that, because of poststructuralist, postmodern, and especially postcolonial critique, contemporary feminist theories have increasingly shifted emphasis from monolithic, one-dimensional women-centered studies to the analysis of multiple or multiplicative inequalities (the interaction of discrimination mechanisms marked by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality) since the nineties. "Female" subjectivity, that is, the (homogenized and essentialized) experience *of* women, as a concept suitable for describing complex social relations, has therefore lost its former significance in recent decades, at least in the international literature. At the same time, by the nature of its topic, *Memories, Texts, Stories: Women's Folklore Texts* seems to revitalize this analytical and conceptual perspective which, given the trends in international gender research, would have required an explanation.

In this respect, the problematization of the postulation of the subtitle is also justified. The acceptance of the categorical assertion that women's folklore texts *exist ab ovo* (may) in itself raise a number of questions that may have been addressed in the introduction to the volume. Throughout the volume, the question remains open as to, for example, what makes a text "women's" (feminine, or vice versa: non-women's, masculine), or more specifically: in Hungarian folklore texts, what are the discursive codes, shifters, or markers (gender, social position, the content of the text, the gender of the reader, etc.) that determine whether it is a "men's" or "women's" text? In general, is it justified (i.e., rationally grounded) to talk about women's folklore texts? And if so, how can the question of gender arise in relation to historical folklore phenomena, i.e., auto-referential texts in which past (non-textual) social reality is not accessible or only to a limited extent? What does the category of "women's folklore" mean in the case of fictional texts and narratives where an organic connection between the real author outside the text and the gender roles within the text does not necessarily exist? What distinguishes this type of historical folkloristic research, which focuses on gender identity and discourses, from research in the history of mentalities that emerged within the discipline of history? In this context, where can we draw the disciplinary boundaries between historical folkloristics and contemporary historical research?

In this sense, the book contains not so much of the more general or generalizable findings that serve as a theoretical basis for subsequent gender-based folklore research. The reader gets a feeling that the organizers of the conference and the editors of the volume did not necessarily intend to build a theoretical framework at this early stage of the work; instead, they wanted to start an important dialogue, raise some questions, rather than provide explicit answers with a not so refined synthesis.

However, the analyses included in the book – despite the genre specifics of the case studies and their particular or individual research horizons – elaborate topics and empirical examples that can be used to revitalize Hungarian anthropological/ethnographic debates and discourses related to gender.

The first major structural unit of the volume (Historical Sources) contains four studies. The first of these is an excellent article by Ildikó Landgraf, in which the author, in contrast to the title of the chapter, deals not with the study of primary historical sources but rather with issues of institutional history and the history of science. Landgraf paints a portrait of three female researchers (Zsigmondné Gyarmathy, Zsófia Torma, and Mara Crop-Marlet), each of whom headed up various departments of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society established in 1889. She then describes the roles of women scientists, teachers, and (aristocratic) patronesses in the institutionalization of contemporary ethnographic collecting and research.

In the same chapter, Petra Bálint examines the records of 18th–19th century criminal lawsuits (from Heves and Külső-Szolnok counties) and the testimonies recorded in them. By analyzing everyday scenes (mundane conflicts), the text provides powerful examples of what kind of regulatory gender, sexual, and behavioral principles worked behind the norms violations (infanticide, husband poisoning, adultery, taking a lover, etc.) and the punishment mechanisms (physical and sexual abuse) in modern Hungary.

The first part of the volume concludes with an article by István Horváth and Imola Küllős. Both authors analyze an exciting, previously unknown Reform era manuscript, the so-called Urbarium of Liberal Women. Horváth briefy describes, and presents in the appendix, the actual source document created in 1835, which applies the linguistic and genre features of the centuries-old feudal power relations (between landlord and serfs) chronicled in the urbarium to ironically depict the – sexual – relations between contemporary men and women.

Imola Küllős provides a very thorough and complex cognitive linguistic, stylistic, and historical textual folkloristic analysis of the same manuscript, with special emphasis on the semantic stratification and multi-complex language games (which symbolically "subvert" and mock the relationships between men and women) of the allegorical piece of writing. In the context of the political pamphlet or lampoon written (presumably) by men, the author provides a detailed analysis of the genre history of the text as observed in 18th–19th century public poetry (complaints of husbands and maidens, woman- and slut-shaming, amusements in verse, sermon parodies, etc.) and folklore texts (tales of lying), as well as of its most important intertextual, stylistic connections. We can state, perhaps without exaggeration, that this is the only study in the volume that discusses the problem of culturally constituted meanings (from the point of view indicated in the title of the volume) in a narrower folkloristic, i.e., specifically language- and text-centric framework.

The second chapter of the volume deals with the role of women in folk religiosity. In describing various archival and other data and documents, the author of the first article, Jenő Szigeti, argues that it was the 18th–19th century household worship services, private piety practices (*praxis pietatis*), and the religious women who primarily organized them that facilitated the survival of the institutional framework of Protestantism in Hungary despite the expansive Catholic restoration. Éva Vörös, in her less scholarly, rather essayistic piece, provides examples of everyday sacred communication. She presents excerpts from the religious poems and rhymes related by a Transylvanian woman, Aunt Padzsi from Györgyfalva, which, according to the author, help the narrator to experience the sacredness of everyday life and to maintain their own mental hygiene. This structural unit of the book concludes with a study by Ildikó Tamás. The article introduces the reader to the revival movement of the Lutheran pastor, Lars Levi Laestadius (1800–1861), which led to certain elements of the pre-Christian Sámi faith – including (mythological and historical) female figures, female deities and symbols – being

incorporated into modern Christian theology and religious discourses. Tamás points out that these female attributes and spiritual notions still play a very important role in the ideological legitimation of contemporary Sámi ethnic identity-building projects, as well as political and artistic (pan-indigenous, neo-pagan, and other) movements.

The next part of the book ("Midwives, Healers, Cunning Women") includes articles examining the issues of gender roles in the context of the human body – especially the female body – and the related traditional and modern regulatory discourses (folk medicine, curing, public health). Annamária Kocsis introduces the 18th-century Hungarian-language herbarium of Anna Zay and Kata Bethlen and the recipes contained therein (related to gynecology, military wound care, plague prevention), which may provide important supplementary data for contemporary research on the Hungarian antecedents of modern body politics. Based on less focused and methodical research, Erika Koltay's article presents quotes about several specialists of folk medicine (herbalists, cunning and wise women) in order to clarify, in specific community interpretations, certain (presumably) characteristic features of the personality traits of women healers. The final study of the chapter deals with the topic of formal control of the female body. Analyzing an interview with a midwife from Nagyatád, Fanni Svégel explores the different norms of behavior and value developed in relation to the female body in different obstetric practices (midwives, doulas, physicians) in different types of institutions (home birth, maternity home, hospital). The author argues convincingly that in the mid-20th century, despite the gradual standardization of health care, certain elements and regulatory rules of premodern and modern gynecological and obstetric culture were not isolated but complementary, existing in a kind of "hybrid" (mixed) form.

As in the first chapter, two of the three studies in the thematic block called Deportation, Emigration (by Csilla Schell and Balázs Balogh) are also analyses of archival sources – private letters and other ego texts (private notes, personal documents, wills) – from the point of view of communication theory and historical ethnography. The first study of the chapter, an article by Bence Ament-Kovács, presents the history of the deportation of four different German (Danube Swabian) women in Hungary, primarily focusing on descriptions of the consensual content and narrative components (confiscation of assests, humiliation, Swabian work mentality, intra- and extra-group solidarity) in the specific retrospective narratives. Csilla Schell continues with the same topic. The author analyzes, very meticulously, the private letters of German women in Hungary preserved in the estate of the well-known ethnographer and linguist Eugen Bonomi, with particular interest in the ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and gender specifics that determined the written communication of Swabian families displaced in the 1940s. Balázs Balogh, on the other hand, delves into the personal effects (letters, notes, and other documents) of a Hungarian woman from Transylvania (Ágnes Bükkös) who emigrated to the United States of America. Despite the scarce and fragmented source material, the author paints a very accurate and detailed picture of the dramatic decision-making situations at the individual and household level (emigration–remigration, acculturation–dissimilation, integration–disintegration, etc.) which most immigrants from Eastern Europe to the United States, including the Transylvanian Hungarian family presented in the study, had to face in the first decades of the 20th century.

The fifth chapter, Female Versions and Values, comprises four studies. The first of these is the work of Szilvia Czingel, who paints an exciting anthropological portrait – based on contemporary press materials and diaries – of the first beauty queen elected in 1929, Böske Simon, who was of Jewish descent. Through the specific – and seemingly individual – life story

and event, the reader gains an insight into the far-right (anti-Semitic, nationalist) political and social atmosphere of the Horthy era, as well as the radical domestic and European transformation of the discourse of 19th-century conservative body politics (female beauty ideal, relationship to body and fashion). Next, Dóra Pál-Kovács, examining the 20th-century Hungarian dance tradition of Magyaród, compares the women's and men's version of the slow lads' dance named szegényes in order to shed light on the gender division in Hungarian movement and dance culture and some of its characteristic features (local social embeddedness, functions, symbolic mechanisms). The other two studies of the block (by Viktória Földi and Katalin Pajor) approach the issues of gender and femininity in terms of identity change, group status, and individual career paths.

Like Balázs Balogh, Viktória Földi examines the phenomenon of labor migration and 20th-century emigration to the United States of America. At the center of her analysis is the 1930–1940 correspondence of a Palóc family from Mátraterenye (Nógrád county) who emigrated to New Waterford, Canada. Through an accurate and meticulous source analysis, the article seeks to answer the question of how translocal social, cultural, and economic exchanges were established by the emigrant Palóc woman, and how foreign emigration transformed or changed her female roles accepted in the traditional society of her home country. At the end of this chapter, Katalin Pajor analyzes a single interview (her own grandmother's life story), primarily from a narratological, thematic-semantic viewpoint. We learn that the narrative focus of this specific atypical narrative (barely or not at all covering the subjects of childbirth and childraising, marriage, private relationships, individual emotions, etc.) is primarily organized around the interviewee's teaching and pedagogical career (professional motivations, biographical turning points, role and prestige as a teacher), in which the motif of individual adaptation skills is one of the most emphasized elements.

The next section of the book, Marginalized Life Situations, examines the topic of gender and female identity in the context of ethnicity and migration. Gábor Biczó analyzes biographical interviews with four Vlach Gypsy women. According to his findings, new identity narratives (interpretations of women's social empowerment, community responsibility, increased self-esteem, and adaptability) have been emerging within the Vlach Gypsy community, leading to the gradual institutionalization of autonomous female subjects and identities as opposed to traditional Vlach Gypsy women's roles. Réka Kész sheds light on another aspect of the same problem, the issue of women's actions and roles. Her article presents the situation of Transcarpathian women employed (informally) in Hungary as elderly caregivers and the difficulties related to their status in the labor market, focusing primarily on conflicts of values and interests that characterize the interactions between Hungarian employers and employees of Ukrainian citizenship.

Within the discourse of feminist or women's history research, gender inequalities in the labor market have been perhaps one of the most researched topics since the beginning of scientific research. The fifth chapter of the volume, Women in Socialism, provides an insight into this issue. It paints a detailed picture of the living and working conditions of women in the 20th century and their difficulties in changing status, chiefly from the perspective of economic history and labor anthropology. However, while Katalin Tóth follows the status change of a female member of a rural working family (mother) as she becomes an agricultural entrepreneur in the socialist second economy sector of small-scale or backyard production, Eszter Bartha presents gender segregation in the context of industrial wage workers. To put it very succinctly, ultimately both studies come

to the conclusion that the structural (economic, political, ideological) features of the Kádár era, the reproductive work within the family (housework, childraising, limited leisure time, the financial/privacy concerns of single mothers) and the social norms that ensure male hegemony have fundamentally limited actual opportunities for the economic and social mobility of female industrial and agricultural workers. This chapter concludes with an article by Judit Dobák, which examines the spatial objectivations of gender hierarchies in the Diósgyőr Ironworkers' colony in Miskolc. With the help of mental maps, interviews, as well as archival documents, family photos, etc., of the former employees, the author explores the interesting issue of how the perceptions of differences between men and women are related to categories indicating other ethnic (Gypsy–Hungarian) or social (poor–rich) inequalities in the hierarchical spatial practices and spatial use of the members of the former ironworkers' colony (under post-industrial conditions).

In the last chapter of the volume, Female Cultural Informants, a study by Veronika Lajos looks at the issue of female gender identity in connection with the methodological and epistemological issues inherent in anthropological research. The author provides a thorough and extensive overview of the most important recent international research trends in feminist anthropology. Then, in the context of her own empirical research among the Csángó, she presents fieldwork and research situations that illustrate the intertwining of gender, ethnic, and social hierarchies that determine the cognitive and ontological position of the researcher and the researched subjects, as well as the situational and performative determination of female identity and gender norms (which changes from situation to situation). Laura Iancu's article approaches the same issue from a different perspective, through the encounters between female cultural informants and a woman studying her own culture. The author reflects on three important components of the fieldwork situation from a methodological and other perspectives: the statuses and roles that can be assigned to a researcher by the local community in a discursive way (disciple, interlocutor); the researcher's perception of informants; and the gender hierarchies within the examined society. The volume concludes with a particularly subjective, personal piece by Janka Nagy. In it, the author reflects upon her intense, intimate relationships with her own female interviewees, searching for the female, gender characteristics and narrative specifics of life story narratives.

In conclusion, it is safe to say that this volume could prove to be a very important piece, in several respects, of the inception and revitalization of Hungarian ethnographic/anthropological studies related to gender. On the one hand, the book approaches and discusses socially constituted gender relations (female subjectivity, women's roles and values, gender-based division of labor, sexuality, body issues) at fundamentally different levels of analysis (in the context of historical sources, religion, health and biopolitics, ethnicity, labor, anthropological field research). In this way, it can provide abundant examples and empirical evidence for other interdisciplinary studies in the future. On the other hand, one of the common features of the studies in this volume is that they all analyze oral or written sources, i.e., linguistic phenomena at the heart of folklore research (discursive markers, popular language codes, narratives, rhetorical elements, literary motifs and narrative strategies, textual meanings and connections). The problematization of these linguistic, textual dimensions – which determine the anthropological/ethnographic fieldwork and the entire process of scientific knowledge production – and the clarification of its epistemological issues and methods could become an essential task for contemporary scientific (ethnographic, anthropological, historical) discourse dealing with the contemporary phenomena of popular culture. The first step taken by the authors and editors of

the book – namely the effort to integrate the findings of gender studies and the feminist critique of science into today's folkloristic analyses – could certainly contribute to the more precise definition of the disciplinary meaning, rules of use, and operational value of the concepts used in Hungarian cultural research, as well as to the addition of novel analytical aspects to the research traditions developed in the given discipline.

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 269–271
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00008

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

BOOK REVIEW

Balogh, Balázs (editor in chief), **Ispán, Ágota Lídia – Magyar, Zoltán** (editors), **Landgraf, Ildikó** (guest editor). (2018). *Ethno-Lore* XXXV, Budapest: MTA BTK NTI. 520. ISSN 1787-9396

Reviewed by ***Zsuzsa Török****

This impressive collection of essays in Ethno-Lore, the Yearbook of the Institute of Ethnology of the Research Centre for the Humanities, is an excellent contribution to the field of folklore and literature that brings new insights into the ever-problematic distinction between popular and high culture. It has been occasioned by the bicentenary celebrations of the birth of János Arany (1817–1882), a defining voice of nineteenth-century literature elevated to the status of Hungary's national poet during his lifetime. The main objective of this conference proceeding comprising fifteen papers, a preface, and an introduction is to evaluate the presence of folkloristic elements in János Arany's oeuvre and the intersection of his writings with other forms of popular literature.

The discovery of folk culture during the nineteenth century, similar to other European countries, was an integral part of emerging Hungarian nationalism. The collection and research of folklore took off on a large scale during this time when folk culture was considered the very embodiment of the nature and character of a nation. Consequently, many Hungarian writers and poets of the so called 'popular-national' school, including János Arany, participated in the discourse of popular and national literature. They addressed the issue of the poetry of 'the people' and the possibilities of a return to it for the purposes of creating a 'national' literature. They also conceptualized the notion of 'popular-national' poetry, a kind of polished literature that self-consciously uses elements of folk or popular poetry in order to renew itself. Thus, during his successful career as Hungary's national poet, János Arany, an intellectual with a rural agricultural background, returned to popular tradition on many occasions in order to integrate its elements into a more cultivated 'national' literature. Arany, however, not only incorporated certain elements of folk poetry and popular literature into his work, but contributed to the discovery of popular culture on many other levels. As editor of two prestigious journals, *Szépirodalmi Figyelő* [Literary Observer] (1860–1862) and *Koszorú* [Garland] (1863–1865), he promoted the importance of the budding Hungarian folktale collections, while also publishing reviews of contemporaneous foreign collections of folklore materials. As head of the Kisfaludy Society, a literary society founded in 1836 in Pest and a major advocate of Hungarian literary life in the second half of the nineteenth century, Arany also encouraged the publication of

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collections of folktales. Additionally, he created his own *Dalgyűjtemény* [Songbook] in the 1870s (published posthumously in 1952), in which he recorded popular and folk songs that he remembered from his childhood and adolescence. Finally, many of his own works of poetry became popularized on the pages of nineteenth-century chapbooks or were used as political propaganda in twentieth-century communist education. As demonstrated by the papers in this volume, János Arany's entire oeuvre illustrates the plurality of overlapping cultures (popular culture as a quasi-mythical, rural 'folk culture,' or 'mass culture,' and a high culture becoming a significant institutional space in the second half of the nineteenth century), as well as the multiplicity and diversity of all cultural activity.

Accordingly, the authors of this volume explore not only the uses of certain folk motifs in János Arany's poetry, but also his engagement with other forms of popular literature, the popularization of his own works, as well as his family's involvement in the nineteenth-century collecting, recording, editing, and publication of folktales. Studies that explore Arany's reworkings and adaptations of particular motifs and folk beliefs concentrate on revealing intertextual connections and their poetic function within the poet's own writings (*Szilágyi, Mikos*). Some of the papers investigate the combination of written sources, such as medieval legends, and oral narratives, highlighting the ethnographic and cultural historical contexts of Arany's poems (*Magyar, Iancu*). The blending of orally transmitted folk beliefs with written sources in the process of creating a narrative poem is also presented in one of the studies that consider the folkloristic aspects of János Arany's poetry. As a former attendee of Debrecen Reformed College, the poet not only had extensive knowledge of the orally transmitted folk legends that circulated among students but was also well acquainted with the manuscript culture that flourished within their circles, often making use of these sources when composing his poems (*Landgraf*). Other essays demonstrate that even when displaying a scholarly discourse, Arany benefitted from his knowledge of folk and popular poetry by quoting entire passages of songs and poems while reflecting on the theoretical issues of prosody, literary history, and linguistics. Most of these quotes are related to his *Dalgyűjtemény* compiled in the 1870s and offer valuable insights into the early nineteenth-century musical culture of their recorder (*Csörsz, Küllős*). One of the interpretations focusing on János Arany's editorial undertakings examines how the issue of foreign (mainly Finnish) folk poetry translations and reception is being addressed in Arany's periodicals. Moreover, these translations were closely related to questions about the creation of the 'Hungarian literary language,' an idealized mixture of native and translated folk poetry for the sake of a more elaborate literary style (*Tamás*). Another examination of Arany's editorship presents his efforts to advocate for the significance of mid-nineteenth-century Hungarian folk poetry collections, with a special emphasis on the editor's Transylvanian network of collectors (*Szakál*).

Studies in this collection reveal that János Arany not only relied on his comprehensive understanding of folklore while composing his own works of poetry, but he himself contributed to the production of popular literature, and his own works became popularized in diverse media and historical contexts. Arany wrote several occasional poems throughout his career, and as a practitioner of light verse, he composed humorous short poems on trivial or playful themes aimed at entertaining and amusing his readers (*Czövek*). In other instances, he adapted chapbook narratives while writing his poems, but his own verses were also occasionally recycled and thus popularized on the pages of nineteenth-century chapbooks (*Chikány*). Finally, the collection also discloses how twentieth-century communist propaganda recontextualized the poet's

works through textual and visual elements for the purposes of cultural and political education of the 'working classes' (*Eitler*).

A final set of articles asserts that János Arany's multifarious contribution to the discovery of folk culture in mid-nineteenth-century Hungary impacted his family members as well. As a result, his son, László Arany, became the collector and editor of one of the most influential folktale collections, *Eredeti népmesék* [Original Folktales] published in 1862. Even more interestingly, the majority of these folktales, which included 79 riddles (of which only 54 were eventually published), were recorded by his mother and sister in the 1850s. Besides collecting folktales, László Arany formulated relevant principles for the publication of folktale collections in his reviews written in the 1860s, and elaborated his own concept of the folktale. Similar to many of János Arany's poems, László's tales, following their publication, were instantly popularized on the pages of children's books, fairy tale collections, and nineteenth-century textbooks, and have remained representative elements of this particular segment of the book market to this day (*Gulyás, Domokos, Vargha*).

All in all, this collection of fifteen papers examining the relationship of folklore and literature in the output of Hungary's most canonical poet offers useful findings for the study of overlaps between popular and elite culture. János Arany's mastery of various folkloristic elements alongside the practices of high literature, as well as the popularization of his own works supports the idea of shared cultures and a cultural interaction between high and low, learned and less learned. The studies in this volume all reinforce the idea of the circularity and appropriation of culture between different groups, with careful attention to transmission and exchange between orality and manuscript and print cultures. To conclude, this special issue of Ethno-Lore on the points of intersection of János Arany's oeuvre with folklore and popular literature is of remarkable significance for the multivalent character of culture that involves complex processes of acculturation, appropriation, assimilation, competition, control, dissemination, evaluation, or rejection of any given set of cultural values or practices.

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 273–276
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00009

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

BOOK REVIEW

Csíki, Tamás. (2018). *Eltűnt falusi világok: A 20. századi paraszti társadalom az egyéni emlékezetekben*. [Rural Worlds Lost: 20th-Century Peasant Society in Individual Memories]. Budapest: L'Harmattan – Debreceni Egyetem Néprajzi Tanszék. 276. ISBN 978-963-414-378-9

Reviewed by ***Katalin Tóth****

Beyond ethnographic collection and oral history, Tamás Csíki's book, *Rural Worlds Lost: 20th-Century Peasant Society in Individual Memories,* aims to contribute, along a novel logic and vision, to the knowledge of the life and everyday existence of Hungarian peasant society. In addition to articulating the topic of the volume in a simple yet tangible way, the chosen title is also a methodological reflection as indicated by the use of the plural in "memories": approaching the subject not through the often-generalizing spectacles of the macro perspective but by examining fragmented, incoherent individual memories.

Presenting different forms of narratives, the author analyzes in detail the memories of the principal characters of the peasant world related to the main thematic units of ethnographic collections. In his analysis, he relies not on his own empirical research but rather on statistics, archival sources, folk sociographic literature, memoirs, and – making his work truly exciting and innovative – interviews conducted by Hungarian ethnographers. The main question Csíki poses is whether it is possible to add to the existing historical-ethnographic knowledge base by analyzing memory and memory construction. Although the author would certainly have had the opportunity to conduct and analyze his own interviews, findings and conclusions of this type of research are not lacking in his work, as he succeeds in establishing new interpretive frameworks through secondary – and at times critical – analyses of data systematized by other researchers.

Excluding the introductory, theoretical, and research methodology basics, as well as the summary chapters, the volume consists of seven units. These seven content units examine individual peasant memory in terms of how the characteristic terrains of ethnographic interest appear in it. The volume focuses on the following topics: 1) family, household, kinship; 2) work; 3) production culture, income, market; 4) social stratification; 5) social mobility; 6) everyday life; 7) the appearance of the historical and local past.

The chapters *Introduction – Objectives, Methods, Antecedents* and *Ethnography – The Science of National (Folk) Memory* are organically linked. In addition to professional and thorough theorizing of the chosen topic and outlining the methodological principles, the author also states

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the poetics of cognition: "Based on these, we believe that cognition is defined this time by the unity of personal identity and ethnographic role" (p. 29). This finding is internalized by the chapters insofar as the author pays constant attention to the researcher's self-reflection. Csíki emphasizes on several occasions that the recollections recorded by ethnographers were born in a reality formed by the researcher and the "informant," in an interpersonal interaction, whereby the resulting scientific product is influenced by the researcher's person and his interpretation of narratives (this statement is highlighted several more times later on, for example: pp. 87, 161). Consequently, in the author's opinion, the "secondary analysis" of the data and the analysis of the narration may reveal information that has remained hidden thus far.

The chapter *Family, Household, Kinship in Peasant Memory* seeks to provide an anthropological reading of actions and interactions, emotions and ways of thinking, habits and rites related to family life in the light of available sources and interprets them from an emic point of view – considering the interaction between the "informant" and the ethnographer (p. 55). The author uses exact wording from the methodology of memory research when he states that, in terms of narrative self-identity, a distinction must be made between the "informant's" words as expressing a lived experience or merely reflecting upon an experience (p. 58). This distinction greatly aids the researcher in determining what to accept from the recollection as historical knowledge.

The section titled *Memories of Work* expresses a sharp criticism of the 20th-century approach to ethnographers researching in villages in the wake of Lenard Berlanstein and Patrick Joyce: "ethnographers researching in villages were not excited by the cultural turn either, so the informants' narratives were seen as a source of exact historical-ethnographic knowledge and not as a culturally determined past or present discursive way of working" (p. 90). For example, the chapter seeks answers to questions such as "what image do we get of agricultural employment, social, reciprocal, and wage labor if we try to capture it based on the narratives of former actors? " (p. 98).

The third chapter, *Production Culture, Income, Market – in Peasant Memory*, states, among other things, that the recollectors thought about the use of borders along mental maps instead of specific geographical areas and data (p. 113), and also highlights that economic innovation appears in memory as a form of collective knowledge, even if a particular innovation has been realized by an individual initiator (p. 125). At this stage, the author also asks how customs and traditions and ethical norms may have influenced market transactions (pp. 125–130), but he also wonders how the different characteristics of Jewish and non-Jewish coexistence can be achieved through farming and in the memories of market production (pp. 131–133).

In the chapter *Serfs, Ordinary Citizens, Peasants. The Memory of Stratification*, the author examines peasant memories from the perspective of the former actors of social reality, asking "what perceptions they held of their social environment, how they perceived their status," while also focusing on whether the analyzed texts reveal anything about the discursive process of group formation (p. 140).

In the fifth part, *The Memory of Social Mobility*, the author reverses the cognition mechanism of the examined topic in the "usual" way: he does not use recollections to illustrate a social situation, but on the contrary, he looks for what we can learn about social mobility from recollected stories (pp. 167–168).

The section titled *The Memory of Everyday Life in Peasant Society* emphasizes that if a contemporary ethnographer wants to get to know the reality of everyday life, he must also make

the experiential world of the past the subject of research. However, as the revival of the past is created by the reflection of the "informant" and the ethnographer, it is not only the content elements of the recollection but also the framework, linguistic elements, and manner of narration that provide a wealth of information. In this chapter, the author admits to the marginalization of the views of ethnographers when exploring everyday life in individual memories, including topics such as clothing and fashion, "folk" nutrition, social occasions such as a pig slaughter, or communal works like spinning.

The seventh and final unit of the volume differs in some respects from the previous sections. In the chapter *The Memory of the Historical and Local Past*, the author examines the memories of King St. Stephen, Dózsa's Peasant Uprising, Rákóczi's War of Independence, and the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence, selected from the texts created by ethnographers. As the identities of the informants and the interview situations are not known in this case, the author's methodological apparatus narrows: he focuses exclusively on the narratives of stories, the use of language, and the examination of possible rhetorical conventions (pp. 225–226).

Overall, Csíki's volume has many virtues. The author's continuous change of position between the narrative realities, the reality of the circumstances of the narrative, and the reality of the ethnographer authenticates his claims. His reflections on what the passage being analyzed is suitable for and when the construction or the way of construction is attention-worthy support the critical researcher attitude. Although the author underlines the arbitrariness of selecting passages of text several times, he also explains his expectations of his particular selection; he bases his theoretical and methodological ideas on domestic and international literature, the bibliography of which can be reviewed at the end of the volume (pp. 255–276).

Csíki begins the content units with a broad, dynamic overview of the history of science and research, and, where appropriate, confronts the omissions, political determinations, and methodological errors of ethnography (pp. 74, 83, 90, 135, 149). The author uses professional source criticism, clearly separating the passages from sources of various natures – ethnographic collections, memoirs, biographies, recollections recorded through interviews.

By analyzing the rhetorical elements, the use of time in narratives, the subject and associations of the recollecting individual, the mnemonics of the individual (including elements of removal, highlighting, rewriting, condensation of life history, repetition), the author follows the differentiation of the culture of peasant society. He provides an anthropological reading of the data set examined throughout the volume, not even suggesting a "revelation." Instead, he constantly calls attention to the diversity and mosaic-like nature of the historical-ethnographic knowledge.

However, in addition to its many virtues, the volume would have benefitted from a more thorough elaboration on certain points. The table of contents orienting the reader is schematic, simplified, and unfavorably articulated. The lack of chapter numbers makes it difficult to navigate the volume.

As recollections and narratives within a unit appear in a mosaic of different geographical localities, eras, political and social contexts, and socializations, a well-developed conclusion of the chapter and an edification about the next unit would have been useful.

Although the author's specific intention was to draw conclusions from the study of memory and not to examine a particular geographical unit or era, a summary overview of the period(s) that the interviews or sources referred to may have been informative. A more thorough systematization of knowledge and data would be necessary simply because, for example, a memoir

written in 1932 and recalling the preceding seventy years (pp. 168–169) would highlight different features of peasant society than an interview recorded by an ethnographer in 1952 (pp. 171–172).

The aim of Csíki's book was to provide a social history of 20th-century Hungarian peasant society from new perspectives. He wanted to explore the hidden dimensions of peasant memory by reinterpreting archival and data sources, as well as interviews recorded by Hungarian ethnographers.

With his book, Csíki voted in favor of the scientific application of reflection, which is increasingly needed in interdisciplinary social research. Moreover, it encourages contemporary researchers to delve into the materials from ethnographic collections in repositories, to rethink the questions and methods of 20th-century ethnographers, and at the same time to point out the diversity of discursive reality. It also encourages the exploration of a wide variety of concepts from the past that live side by side, are equally legitimate, but "can never come together into a unified knowledge" (p. 254). Tamás Csíki's book is meant primarily for Hungarian readers, but we considered it important to present it for its methodological innovations and the data it provides for the study of Hungarian peasant culture.

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 277–279
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00012

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

BOOK REVIEW

Gagyi, József. (2019). *Régi ember, új világban: Sztrátya Domokos életútja*. [An Old Man in a New World: Domokos Sztrátya's Life Story]. Budapest – Kolozsvár: L'Harmattan – Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság. 277. ISBN 978-963-414-613-1; 978-606-9015-13-1 (Dissertationes Ethnographicæ Transylvanicæ)

Reviewed by ***Zsolt Nagy****

József Gagyi's career as a social researcher only really started in the early 2000s. Although he has previously reported significant results – e.g., in 1998, on popular beliefs from the Szeklerland, titled *Jelek égen és földön* [Signs in Heaven and on Earth] – Gagyi became a widely known and respected expert on the phenomena of popular religiosity and the social conditions of the second half of the 20th century in Romania and Transylvania at the turn of the millennium. From among his key informants in Maros/Mureş County in the last decades (Pál Balogh from Jobbágyfalva/Valea, Zsuzsanna Nagy from Marossárpatak/Glodeni, etc.), this volume presents the life story and personal profile of Domokos Sztrátya or "Uncle Domi" (1931–2018) from Jobbágyfalva, intended by the author as a kind of historical document of the age, which the title references. The volume, which appeared in 2019 in the *Dissertationes Ethnographicæ Transylvanicæ* series launched in 2018 by the Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca-based János Kriza Ethnographic Society, is co-published by the L'Harmattan publishing house in Budapest. Without any exaggeration, we can say that the news of the publication of the monographic work on "Uncle Domi, the electrician" – previously presented only in excerpts, teasers, and lectures (e.g., in 2014 in Ottomány/Otomani, under the title *Sztrátya Domokos archívuma. Miért nincs?* [The Archive of Domokos Sztrátya: Why Does It Not Exist?], or in case studies (e.g., booklet no. 2/2019 of the Transylvanian Museum Society, under the title *Vidéki villanyhasználat. Egy villanyos esete* [Rural Electricity Use: The Case of an Electrician] – has excited not only the narrower circle of social researchers but also the wider, laic readership.

Let it be noted that an undertaking of this volume and subject matter, with a focus on a single informant and supported by written sources, was last seen a quarter of a century ago. In 1994, based on a farmer's diary, Tamás Mohay attempted to describe and analyse a 20th-century farm and household, focusing on its creator and organiser, Sándor Nagy from Ipolynyék/Vinica. However, while Mohay's subject was a peasant with a rural farm, József Gagyi's informant was considered partly peasant and partly official (uniquely, in his own community he was both a peasant and an intellectual), i.e., a literate individual who can be classified in a transitional "category" and whose life falls in a transitional period (Domokos Sztrátya handled various documents as a soldier, later held a job in the office of the collective farm, and ultimately worked

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as an "electrician"). Hence, the author had at his disposal a considerable amount of written source documents and materials that facilitated the presentation and reconstruction of Sztrátya's life. Moreover, from October 2014 until Uncle Domis' death in March 2018, the author recorded about 190 (!) interviews. The documents and records uncovered by the author thus provide an insight into not only the structure and operation of his farm and household and the daily practices of farming but also into the life of his village and the region. At the same time, I consider it fortunate that the volume also includes photographs, some taken by the author in the field and others digitized from the family archive (even though few photographs were taken of Uncle Domi during his lifetime, most of them related to major life events), since this also gives a picture of the "lifeworld" of the studied individual.

It is interesting to note that, from all his encounters with Uncle Domi and their numerous (recorded) conversations, for his introduction, the author chose a "day after," 1 July 2015, when after a "tour" and "inspection" of the farmyard, the garden, and the square in front of the house, they engaged in a conversation and some ritual wine tasting ("which rarely happens"), a moment that came to play a decisive role in the birth of the current book. By reviewing the local municipal archives and processing its data, József Gagyi – very sensitively and with an eye for all relevant details – places the individual life within the broader context of administrative-economic and social processes, in the world of the village, its cultural and political framework. The author describes the processes Domokos Sztrátya and his contemporaries "were part of (. . .), wittingly or unwittingly," such as the period between 1948 and 1962, which resulted in the restructuring of property control, i.e., collectivisation. At the same time, he also draws attention to the fact that the manner and pace of the lifestyle change – which Gagyi attempts to explore in his book – is much harder to research than the more technical, "better documented" changes. For instance, the introduction of electricity, an important factor in the life of an "electric" individual, is well-documented, while the actual spread and local perception of electric consumer goods is more difficult to grasp. Another interesting fact about the book is that Domokos Sztrátya knew the subject of an earlier work of the author, written about Uncle Domi's contemporary and fellow villager from Jobbágyfalva. When József Gagyi visited him, he was already aware of the purpose of the conversations, prepared for the meetings, and knew about the further fate of the recorded material. Perhaps (also) due to this circumstance, the basic motif of "then" and "now" always emerges, consciously or instinctively, in the semi-structured conversations, be it with Domokos Sztrátya the farmer, the collectivist vine-grower and winemaker, or even the "electrician" of twenty-four years (i.e., meter-reader and tariff collector, *cititor-încasator* in Romanian). It becomes clear even to the laic reader that Domokos Sztrátya, with his tremendous knowledge of place and society and having visited every house with electricity more than ninety times in the twenty-four years, would make an excellent key informant in a socio-ethnographic, sociological, and sociographic research focusing on the socio-cultural changes in the countryside. "Uncle Domi was not a simple interlocutor. He was perhaps also more than just a key informant" – Gagyi writes at one point in his book – "because he was a curious observer of people, villages, and the times. So the conclusion I've come to from our conversations is that he was a social researcher in disguise," an "electrician" researching his own culture.

At the same time, it is not just the informant who is introduced to us through the published interviews but – in a way that has become customary for József Gagyi – also the researcher, as a humane anthropologist, often struggling, wanting to stand his ground, seeking understanding—an interlocutor seeking to know the "depth of life." The lengthy quotations have been included

in the main body of the volume "so that it is possible to see into and follow the course and details of the joint construction of the narrative." Without going into a more detailed description of the contents of the volume, I would like to note that the structure of the work – following the introduction – can be divided into two main parts. The first (*A kapcsolatépítés fordulatai. Első beszélgetések* [Turning Points in the Building of a Relationship: Initial Conversations]) and second (*Az idő hosszában. A módszertanomról* [Through Time: On My Methodology]) chapters highlight the motivations and methodological issues of the research. In the third (*Sztrátya Domokos, paraszt és írástudó. Életútja a villanyossá válás előtt* [Domokos Sztrátya, the Peasant and the Writer: His Life Before Becoming an Electrician]), fourth (*Sztrátya Domokos, a villanyos* [Domokos Sztrátya, the Electrician]), and fifth (*Mi van Sztrátya Domokos lelkének legközepén?* [What's Right in the Middle of Domokos Sztrátya's Soul?]) chapter, the author systematizes his knowledge of the life of his informant. Following the summary, the Appendix contains the transcribed and edited text of three interviews. The volume also includes a bibliography, as well as Romanian and English summaries.

Finally, it should be noted that since only a fraction (about a quarter) of József Gagyi's interviews with Domokos Sztrátya were included in the volume, this "old man", Uncle Domi, will likely appear as a main character in further monographs. In any case, the complete processing of these collections, together with the previous volumes published by Gagyi – *Ha akartam, fütyöltem, ha akartam, dúdolászgattam* [If I Wanted, I Whistled, If I Wanted, I Hummed] (Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş, 2012) and *Aki tudta, vitte* [If You Could Take It, It Was Yours] (Csíkszereda/Miercurea Ciuc, 2018) – presenting the relations in the village of Csíkfalva/Vărgata, will go down in the history of Hungarian social ethnographic research as a unique and exemplary undertaking. They also further nuance the findings of the personality studies of Gyula Ortutay and the various popular literacy studies (e.g. the so-called "peasant archive studies" initiated by Irén Sz. Bányai in the 1970s, the "rural letter-box research" promoted by Károly Kós, or the "farmer's diary studies" represented by Tamás Mohay, etc.). Thus, from the first ethnographic work – János Jankó's publication, *Kalotaszeg magyar népe* [The Hungarian People of Kalotaszeg/Ţara Călatei] (1892) – which just named the informants, it took a century for Hungarian ethnographers to place an individual informant and interlocutor in the spotlight in their monographs. József Gagyi's volume serves as a model for further research. Perhaps a similar monograph will be written about the "chroniclers" from Geges/Ghineşti, about Uncle Domi's former friend – who appears several times in Gagyi's volume and is also mentioned by name – the key informant of the reviewer, András Szabó, who is still alive, or the reviewer's own grandfather, Ernő Nagy Sr. from Geges/Ghineşti, who passed away this year. The latter, as the dairy supplier of the region and the owner of a "*pálinka* factory" operated by electricity, was also a social researcher in disguise, a farmer-writer-documentarian, just like Domokos Sztrátya, who deserves the spotlight. Gagyi's volume also mentions that Ernő Nagy Sr., as a contemporary, acquaintance, and friend of Uncle Domi, invited the "electrician" from Jobbágyfalva in his home on several occasions. They drank wine together, and more importantly, Ernő Nagy Sr. was the keeper of the often-mentioned bicycle – which becomes important and almost symbolic in Gagyi's volume – while Domokos Sztrátya read the electricity meters and collected the electricity fees in the village. Uncle Domi could never suspect at that time that a book would be born from all this after his passing.

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 281–283
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00010

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

BOOK REVIEW

Jakab, Albert Zsolt – Vajda, András (eds.). (2020). *Ruralitás és gazdasági stratégiák a 21. században* [Rurality and Economic Strategies in the 21st Century]. Kolozsvár: Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság. 281. ISBN 978-606-9015-15-5 (Kriza Könyvek 47)

Reviewed by ***Ákos Nagy****

As we have become accustomed to in recent years, Kriza Books published another proceedings of a recent scientific conference. With the 47th volume of the series, the Kriza János Ethnographic Society presents to the interested reader the papers of the traveling conference on *Rural and Economic Strategies in the 21st Century* (October 11–12, 2019). The presentations, and thus the studies included in this volume, revolve around such phenomena and topics as the continuous change of tradition and the community framework that sustains it; the effects of globalization and modernization processes, as well as the impact of the widespread use of information and communication tools on the daily life of rural areas; tradition in an age of life based on translocal and transnational networks; tradition and daily life in an age of increasing cross-border migration and presence in changing media environments; the social and economic consequences of the changes of tradition at the community level, etc.

The introduction to the volume, bearing the title of the conference, i.e., *Az erdélyi vidék jellemzői az európai integrációt követő időszakban* [Characteristics of the Transylvanian Region in the Post-European Integration Period] and authored by the editors, summarizes the characteristics of the Transylvanian region of our time along with the processes of the 20th and 21st centuries. The previously known rural environment, well mapped out and described by ethnography, may only be partially found today, as modernization and globalization – also reflected in the spread of information and communication technologies – are gaining ground in various forms in the life of the villages. All these phenomena can be experienced in action both at the level of everyday life and at the level of economic strategies and practices. The Transylvanian village at the beginning of the 21st century is characterized by modernization present side by side with the rural masses that are unable (or unwilling) to develop. All of this has led to the decline of previous community models, the faltering of tradition, and a change in its role in the community. The study volume also reflects upon these phenomena in connection with particular cases.

In their study titled *Reprezentáció és reprezentativitás. Lépésváltás és léptékváltás a (kalotaszegi) hagyományőrzés módozataiban* [Representation and Representativeness: Step Change and Scale Change in the Ways of Preserving Traditions in Kalotaszeg/Ţara Călatei], Balázs

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Balogh and Ágnes Fülemile examined the changes that have taken place in the traditional culture of one of the most famous and important ethnographic landscapes of Hungarian folk art as a result of modernization and globalization. The authors outline more general questions about today's ways of preserving traditions, as well as the contexts and processes that lead to the development of new concepts, contents, and practices. They model and illustrate the individual phenomena and main trends through the example of Kalotaszeg/Ţara Călatei.

József Gagyi presents one of the most spectacular areas of modernization, i.e., motorization in the rural environment, in his study titled *Változások és rurális válaszstratégiák* [Changes and Rural Response Strategies]. He introduces the processes related to the spread of motorization and shows us how it is incorporated, accepted, and interpreted, as well as the way in which it operates in the given social environment.

Levente Szilágyi's case study on the agricultural associations still operating today in the villages of Mezőfény/Foieni and Mezőpetri/Petreşti, titled *Önerőből. Gazdaságfejlesztési és közösségszervezési különutak – két szatmári sváb példa* [Self-Reliance: Economic Development and Community Organization – two Swabian Examples from Szatmár/Satu Mare County], focuses on how the cooperative form of agriculture has survived to this day and what factors made this possible. At the same time, the author also discusses the local economic and social impact of cooperatives.

Töhötöm Á. Szabó's study, titled *Menedzserek, munkások, napszámosok. Mobilitási minták, migráció és társadalmi pozíciók egy roma közösségben* [Managers, Workers, Day Laborers: Mobility Patterns, Migration, and Social Positions in a Roma Community], examines a Hungarian-speaking Roma community in Transylvania. In this context, it analyzes in more detail the mobility and migration practices of economically and socially successful families, presenting both local and non-local contexts, as well as the complex and dynamically changing relationship between ethnicity and social class.

The study of Zsolt Nagy, *Parasztkertektől a nagyüzemi (virág)termesztésig – gazdasági modellek, stratégiák és gyakorlatok a 21. században a Maros megyei Udvarfalván* [From Peasant Gardens to Large-Scale Floriculture – Economic Models, Strategies, and Practices in the 21st Century in Udvarfalva/Curteni, Maros/Mureş County] analyzes the economic strategies of flower growers in a settlement near Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş. It presents the antecedents and early versions of flower growing in Udvarfalva/Curteni, as well as the economic, social, and cultural processes of the communist period. We then learn about 21st century strategies and practices for flower growing and flower trading through the example of a family.

The study by co-authors Gyöngyvér Tőkés and András Vajda, titled *Digitális médiahasználat a Maros megyei időskorúak körében* [Digital Media Use among the Elderly in Maros/Mureş County], presents the findings of a study of the use of digital media and new media-based communication practices by the elderly living in Maros/Mureş County. We learn about the process of social embedding and integration of digital media into everyday life, as well as about the peculiarities of acquiring knowledge and skills necessary for the use of digital media. Last but not least, the study also covers the everyday practice of digital media use by elderly people in Maros/Mureş County.

In her study titled *Gazdából borász? A kisüzemi szőlőtermesztés néprajzi vizsgálata a Villány-Siklósi borvidék nyugati részén a TSZ-szervezéstől napjainkig* [From Farmer to Winemaker? An Ethnographic Study of Small-Scale Viticulture in the Western Part of the Villány-Siklós Wine Region, from the Organization of Producer Cooperatives to the Present Day], Réka Kurucz

carries out an ethnographic change analysis of the Túrony and Hegyszentmárton vineyards in the western part of the Villány-Siklós wine region of Hungary. The study also offers a picture of the transformation of the economic role of small backyard plots in Hungary and the changes in the related economic strategies. These transformations are tracked by the author from the regime change to the present day.

Veronika Lajos and Gusztáv Nemes present their research conducted in the microregion mentioned in the title of their study, *Megalkotott valóságok: sokszínű kisvilágok a Káli-medencében* [Created Realities: Diverse Little Worlds in the Káli Basin]. The authors analyze the ongoing process of change by presenting the three stages of the migration of metropolitan intellectuals to the Káli Basin. They are also looking for an answer to the question regarding the impact of the Káli Basin – interpreted as an imaginary landscape – on the geographical space (built and natural environment) and the people living in the basin.

Judit Balatonyi's study, *Változó értékek és hagyományos minták, globális összefüggések: A lakodalmi hagyományok kortárs és 20. századi megközelítései* [Changing Values, Traditional Patterns, and Global Contexts: Contemporary and 20th-Century Approaches to Wedding Traditions], examines the old and new theoretical approaches to the changing and classical traditions in connection with weddings. She enumerates classical ethnographic approaches to wedding-related traditions and then presents contemporary, altered roles of wedding traditions.

The volume concludes with the study of Emese Pál, *Hadjáratok imitálása. A kitalált hagyományok identitáserősítő és közösségformáló szerepe* [Imitating Military Campaigns: The Identity-Strengthening and Community-Building Role of Invented Traditions], which examines the structure of a contemporary memorial ceremony, the "Autumn Campaign" in Szentegyháza/Vlăhița. The multi-day event – rich in customary elements and symbols, reviving the historical events of 1848–49 and held regularly since 2006 on the outskirts of this small town of the Szeklerland – is also presented in the text, and we even get an answer to the question regarding the role this event plays in the life of the local community.

This volume of studies could be a good starting point for ethnographers, anthropologists, and sociologists interested in the economic and social processes taking place in rural communities in the 21st century, and, at the same time, the average reader may also be encouraged by the writings to think about the issues of tradition and its changes.

Acta Ethnographica Hungarica 66 (2021) 1, 285–287
DOI: 10.1556/022.2021.00011

AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

BOOK REVIEW

Vajda, András. (2019). *Változó létformák vidéken: Egy Maros menti falu gazdasági-kulturális szerkezetének átalakulása*. [Changing life forms in rural areas: Transformation of the economic and cultural structure of a village in the Maros/Mureş Valley], Kolozsvár – Budapest: Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság – L'Harmattan. 327. ISBN 978-963-414-614-8; 978-606-9015-14-8 (Dissertationes Ethnographicæ Transylvanicæ)

Reviewed by ***Ákos Nagy****

The publisher of the János Kriza Ethnographic Society launched its latest series, titled Dissertationes Ethnographicæ Transylvanicæ, in 2018. The series includes doctoral dissertations and basic ethnographic-anthropological works. The latest publication of the series is the volume of András Vajda, which analyzes the economic and cultural structure of the author's home village, Sáromberke/Dumbrăvioara, located at the meeting point of the Transylvanian Plain and Szeklerland.

Following an introduction to the topic, presenting the antecedents and subject matter of his research as well as sources and methods and an outline of the expected findings, the chapter about the theoretical framework – first published in 2019 as part of the Kriza Könyvek series, in a volume of studies titled *Változó ruralitások. A vidékiség mai formái* [Changing Ruralities: Today's Forms of Rurality] – provides a comprehensive picture of the transformation of the Romanian village after the EU accession. It examines rural communities and changing localities, farming strategies, transforming and diverse, parallel, and chronologically separate mentalities in an ethnographic-anthropological approach.

This is followed by a presentation of the research field itself, with a special focus on the geographical and cultural context. The latter is especially important in the case of Sáromberke/Dumbrăvioara because the village is located in a border and contact zone, thus forming a kind of transition between the Transylvanian Plain and Szeklerland. However, in the absence of striking ethnocultural features, this fact has so far escaped the attention of researchers.

From the detailed chapter presenting the evolution of the economic structure, we first get to know the social factors influencing these developments, thereby getting an idea of the structure of land ownership and agricultural activities, as well as about the development of livestock and the production tools of the village. This is followed by a presentation of agricultural and commercial units, associations, cooperatives, and various interest groups, large agricultural holdings and agro-industrial establishments, as well as commercial and service units. Next

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comes an account of the institutional endowment of the settlement (state and municipally maintained institutions, service units, educational and cultural institutions, Church facilities, sports associations and facilities, non-governmental organizations). The part presenting the industrialization (industrial facilities of the Teleki estate, gas industry, construction industry, wood industry, metal industry, baking and milling industry) is followed by the subdivisions describing the construction of the infrastructure and the motorization and mobilization processes, which show how these shaped the economy and the immediate environment of the settlement.

The chapter on social change begins with a demographic summary and identifies and presents three major periods: from the settlement becoming an independent estate to the liquidation of the Teleki estate, the period of communism, and the period after the 1989 regime change. The subchapter describing the transformation of the social and occupational structure reveals how the settlement developed in this regard, with serfs (villeins and cottars) becoming smallholders and day laborers, and later the peasants becoming commuter workers. This part of the volume also sheds light on the processes that took place after the regime change in 1989. The author addresses the issue of women's employment and the changes that have taken place in their social and economic role as well. Of course, various forms of temporary exits, migration processes, and mobility – significantly influenced and defined by historical events – are also present in Sáromberke/Dumbrăvioara. These are illustrated in a short subsection of the volume. This is followed by a description of literacy and cultural life. The institutionalization of school education, literacy, and educational attainment, and cultural institutions and cultural life are addressed in separate subchapters. Considering the author's previous research on folk writing, it is only natural that his monograph also includes the personal and public use of writing. Thus, he discusses the use of writing in public spaces and the information centers of the village, as well as in various profane and sacred spaces, along with the use and functions of writing within the private spheres of life.

The last major chapter, presenting the transformation of the built environment and the distribution of plots, begins with the description of the development of the settlement structure. Then, dealing with the "modernization of the peripheral areas," the author presents the wave of emigration that started in Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş and reached the settlement in the 2000s, along with the process of suburbanization and its consequences. The development of a number of residential buildings is introduced by presenting the antecedents covering the period between 1784 and 1910, after which the author outlines the findings of a 1940 survey by András Mózes. Finally, the period after the fall of communism and the regime change is also presented. A separate section deals with the changes in the quality of houses and housing itself. It sketches the transformation of the structure of residential houses in Sáromberke/Dumbrăvioara, their supply, and the use of interiors. This is followed by a section analyzing in detail the evolution and change in the number and functions of economic and outbuildings: stables, pigsties, grain storage, eaves, wells, various versions of smaller pens, ovens, and summer kitchens, as well as garages, which are relatively new in the rural setting. The subchapter on the development of the structure of the site is followed by a description of the local aspects of a very interesting and rarely researched/presented topic. The author analyzes in detail how the attitudes of people living in rural environments have recently changed towards smells and sounds. Even though smells and sounds are present in all cultures and are closely related to the development of economic and cultural life, in the last decade these have often become sources of conflict.

The author summarizes his work in the chapter *A gazdálkodó gyári munkásoktól az urbanizálódó parasztokig* [From Farming Factory Workers to Urbanizing Peasants]. Here, he states that the settlement still reflects its former agricultural character in terms of morphology and structure. However, the former living space of the population set up for agricultural production is gradually beginning to take on an urban appearance. In these spaces, locals are increasingly living according to urban lifestyles. Today's spatial structure reveals an imprint of the slow transition process, from which the peculiarities of the changes of the last century can also be traced. This section is followed by a list of informants, a rich bibliography, and appendices of various maps, photographs, and documents, the latter providing monographic completion to the volume, along with the tables, population pyramids, and bar and pie charts found in each chapter.

András Vajda's book is not only a well-structured, comprehensive work that explores the economic and social development and transformation of a village community in the immediate vicinity of a large city, presenting the topic in an accessible way, but also a scientific work that serves as an excellent model for researchers and local historians who examine similar issues and intend to present a settlement in detail.