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Cover photo: Protective icons inside a car. A Moldavian village with Orthodox majority,
County Băcau, Romania, 2014 (Photo by Lehel Peti)

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AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ

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Foreword

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In this issue, our research team has been given the opportunity to report on some of the results of our five-year religious anthropological research supported by the European Research Council.[1] Almost two-thirds of our 15-member research team is represented in the volume, but that does not mean that the total volume of our research, in all its aspects, can be presented: space limitations only allow for some excerpts from the main branches of the research.

The subject of our project, *Vernacular Religion on the Boundary of Eastern and Western Christianity: Continuity, Change and Interaction,* is the anthropological, historical and folkloristic research of a number of key phenomena of folk religion in a religious frontier zone of Central Eastern Europe. The core of our investigations has been the constantly changing constellations of cultural and religious relationships that have existed since the European beginnings of Latin and Byzantine Christianity, and their past and present manifestations in local religions and folkloristic representations thereof. Our research strategies were guided by the examination of a number of key issues, such as inter-denominational interactions, co-operation, contrasts and conflicts; religion as an identity-forming factor; the relationship between formal religion and lay religiosity; the religious world view and religious norms, as well as the role of the priesthood in past and present communities; the modernization and globalization of the traditional religious world view; and the emergence of the esoteric, spiritual New Age religiosity. These issues have been studied through some of the major topics of folk religion (cult of saints, cult of the dead, supernatural communication, seers and shrines, healing, demonology and witchcraft), in broad temporal frames, from the late antiquity to the present. Particular emphasis was placed on the synergic/mutually reinforcing relationship of anthropological research that is based on historical and archival sources and one that is based on fieldwork. Exploiting the opportunities of exploring cultural boundaries, influences and exchanges, our research

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was carried out in the outermost frontiers of the Hungarian-inhabited areas, in multi-ethnic, multi-denominational villages, and in shrines visited by several nations and denominations. The studies in this volume represent some of the aspects of these investigations.

The role of religion as an identity-forming factor is presented in *Eszter Győrfy*'s article based on her own archival and field research, in which she explores the changes in the linguistic/national and religious identities of the Ruthenian, Romanian and Hungarian inhabitants of the village of Kostelek/Coşnea in the county of Băcau in Romania.

Of the central themes of anthropological contemporary studies, *Judit Balatonyi* researched wedding-related festive representations of Hungarians and Romanians in Gyimes. In her article, she presents an alternative betrothal rite in the Roman Catholic Hungarian community of Gyimes/Ghimeş in Harghita county, which, in her opinion, offered opportunities to exit marginal life situations while bypassing ecclesiastical norms. *Laura Jiga Iliescu* examined several aspects of the religious life of Romanian shepherds in the Southern Carpathians. Her article is a case study of a shepherd-cum-healer, the subject of which is the examination of the use, effectiveness and social environment of a healing incantation.

Our research of the cult of saints and shrines is represented in this volume by *Bea Vidacs*'s study: she analyzes the similarities between two currently operating Hungarian and Lebanese seers and the communities that formed around them. The conclusion she comes to is that the followers of both seers perceive the performance related to Christ's suffering as a "historical drama" of their own nation.

The most active participant in our research on new religious movements and alternative Christian denominations was *Lehel Peti*, who conducted an extended fieldwork research in Romanian and Roma Pentecostal congregations in Moldavia. His article analyzes the community practices related to migration and their religious conversion aspects, and points out the role of the Pentecostal religion in the modernization changes that began in the Roma community.

Our research group's historical-anthropological and historical-ethnographic research proceeded in close association with contemporary research. The normative role of religion and the magical and religious "services" of the priesthood in solving everyday crisis situations were explored in both the present and the past, through archival sources. *Dániel Bárth*'s study presents the case of an 18th-century Csík county (today Harghita county, Romania) spirit possession cured by the Catholic priest through exorcism, which also sheds light on a number of ecclesiastical and folk demonological notions of the time. While studying the 18th- and 19th-century religiosity of Greek Catholic Romanians in Transylvania, *Valer Simion Cosma* discovered important source material that also relates to Transylvania's Hungarian populations. In this article, he analyzes *Pashchalia*, a document used in the 18th and 19th centuries for bibliomancy, both by lay people and the Greek Catholic priesthood.

In her studies of sacred communication, *Éva Pócs* combines the analyses of historical sources and contemporary fieldwork research. In her present article, she outlines the research issues surrounding the figure of the wizard called *táltos* and the presumed shamanism in the pagan religion of the Hungarians before their conversion to Christianity.

One of the major sets of themes of our research based on historical sources is the examination of religious holidays and cults in the Late Antiquity and Middle Ages. In

her study, *Judit Anna Tóth* uses the results of her own large-scale source exploration work to arrive at a new result regarding the issue of the trance-inducing methods of Pythia, the Oracle of Delphi.

The research group's textual folklore research is represented in this volume by *Emese Ilyefalvi*'s study, who is working on the creation of a large digital incantation archive. In her article, she examines the theoretical, methodological and technical issues of computational folkloristics, using the extensive international literature of digital textual folklore databases.

"They Spoke Hungarian but Were of a Romanian Faith." A Greek Catholic Community in Székely Land in the First Half of the 20th Century[1]

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Abstract: The present study examines the fate of a Greek Catholic parish in Székely Land, more specifically the inhabitants of Kostelek (Coşnea) based on the archival and anthropological field research of the author placing it within the context of the findings of earlier research on the 20th century identification struggles of Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics in Hungary. For Greek Catholics of Ruthenian and Romanian origin assimilated to the majority Hungarians, their linguistic-national and religious identities were often incompatible during the 20th century. The problematic situations resulting from this "collision of identities" were treated by individual communities in a variety of ways, and Hungarian Greek Catholics living within changing state lines chose various identification routes. The case study presented here will demonstrate that all this, beyond the political changes, was closely related to the pastoral activity of the local priesthood and to particular local conditions.

Keywords: Greek Catholics, Hungary, Transylvania, 20th century, identification, rite change

INTRODUCTION – GREEK CATHOLICS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

Greek Catholic churches were established between the 16th and 18th centuries in the middle of Europe, in the contact zone of Western and Eastern Christianity.[2] This fact has determined their operation until today, since the area often referred to in historiography

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[2] Greek Catholic churches were established primarily through the efforts of Habsburg rulers who, encouraged by the success of the Counter-Reformation, sought to promote the union of the Orthodox faithful with Rome. Some of the Orthodox bishops and priests accepted the Pope's primacy in exchange for keeping their Eastern rites, their liturgical language, and for enjoying the same rights and privileges as their Roman Catholic counterparts. For an English summary of the history of Greek Catholic churches, see MAGOCSI 2008.

as In-Between Europe (Szűcs 1988) is not only the meeting point of Western and Orthodox churches, but also the political buffer zone of the eastern and western part of Europe where different cultures and ethnic groups coexist. It is a "buffer" zone (Bartha 2001:315; 2004:193–194; Keményfi 2001:106–107) in which not only the borders and political systems, but also the linguistic, religious and ethnic affiliations of the inhabitants were constantly changing.

The "Greek Catholic space" (Keményfi 2000:33; 2001; Bartha 2001:314–330)[3] lies in the northeastern and eastern part of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, in today's Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania and Hungary. Political determinism is basically a common feature in the fate of the Greek Catholic churches operating here: they were created through political intentions; the border changes following World War I and the prohibitions after World War II were a significant turning point for their communities; and still more political changes (the Eastern European regime changes) have created the opportunity for their reorganization (Bartha 2001, 315–319).[4] Besides the political factors, the ethnic character of the denomination was also decisive. Fundamentally, Greek Catholics were ethnically Ruthenian and Romanian (and Serbian, in a small number), and religious and ethnic affiliations were closely associated in their lives.[5] Starting in the 19th century, the autonomous Ruthenian and Romanian Greek Catholic churches were central to the increasing political activity of these minorities, and their national movements started from these churches (Niessen 1994:240; Botlik 1997:66–86; Magocsi 2008:42–44).[6]

At the same time, the northeastern provinces of Hungary and Transylvania – mostly because of 18th-19th-century assimilation processes – had a significant number[7] of Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics who did not have their own church but were divided among Ruthenian and Romanian national churches. In the Ruthenian (and Serbian) eparchies, the language of liturgy was Old Church Slavonic, and in the Romanian eparchy it was Romanian (Pirigyi 2001:56; Niessen 1994:240). Hungarian-speaking members of the Greek Catholic communities were often considered strangers – "Russians", "Vlachs" – because of their religion and liturgical language (Pirigyi 2001:56; Niessen 1994:240); in fact, in many cases, state organs also confused the Greek Catholic religion with nationality.[8] The Hungarian Greek Catholics living within often changing borders during

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[3] For more information on the denominational space, see Bartha 2000:508–509.
[4] For an overview of these processes in English, see Bartha 2004; Magocsi 2008:46–58. For detailed information on the Greek Catholic churches that have been reorganized in some countries since 1989, see Mahieu – Naumescu 2008.
[5] In historic Hungary, the religious distribution partially coincided with the national-ethnic division, i.e., individual nationalities in many cases formed closed denominational units, so from the early modern era onward, there were special correspondences between denominations and ethnic groups, and some churches – including the Greek Catholic – had a specifically national character (Niessen 1991:38–39; Gergely 2008:15–17). The connection between ethnic and religious affiliation also played a major role in abolishing the Greek Catholic churches in the 20th century (Keményfi 2001:109–120).
[6] For details on the role of Greek Catholic churches in Ukrainian, Belarusian and Romanian nation-building, see Niessen 1993.
[7] According to census statistics, in 1890 their number was almost 200,000, which rose to 300,000 in 1910 (Niessen 1991:40–43; 1994:241).
[8] See the example of interwar Romania Scheffler 1942:9–11; Hámori 2007; Lukács 2009:68–71; 2010:72–75.

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the 20th century were discriminated against by different political systems because of their religious or linguistic-ethnic affiliation, so these two identity elements often became conflicting for the members of these communities. The most dramatic turn came with the abolishing of the Greek Catholic churches in the late 1940s, which resulted in some of the faithful joining the Roman Catholic (or, in a Protestant environment, a Protestant) church, and the rest joining Orthodox churches. This "collision of identities" and the related decisions resulted in the most varied forms of religious practice and identity, and often there was significant fragmentation even within a single community, which led to conflicts during the reorganization that was made possible after 1989.[9]

In my study, I present the fate of a Greek Catholic community of ethnically mixed (Hungarian and Romanian) origin on the eastern border of Hungary in the first half of the 20th century, focusing primarily on changes in local language use and the development of pastoral and denominational relations. To see these processes in a wider context, I will first discuss the national-level sociopolitical efforts aimed at resolving the conflict between Hungarian and Greek Catholic identities, then I present the narrower context: the assimilation tendencies in the parish of Csíkszépvíz, which includes the studied settlement, the roles of the secular and ecclesiastical elite, and the Greek Catholics' local compulsion to conform.

However, it is important to note that, with regard to Kostelek and the wider region, other researchers have dealt with all this in more detail in several studies.[10] My own research confirms but also supplements significantly their results, since I have added hitherto unexplored archival sources to the data they processed (census data, diocesan schematisms, parish registries and local press products), and I also relied heavily on the data of local interviews. Although I do not have the space here for a detailed micro-level analysis – the presentation of extremely diverse individual motives and decisions behind the religious and national choices – I believe that by publishing the results of my research, I can add nuance to the already existing image.

HUNGARIAN-SPEAKING GREEK CATHOLICS: A MINORITY WITHIN THE MINORITY

The case of Hungarian Greek Catholics living in a multiple-minority situation – being a linguistic and national minority in a minority church – was constantly on the agenda in ecclesiastical and political discourses in Hungary since the late 19th century.

Most Greek Catholics living in historic Hungary – of Ruthenian and Romanian origin but linguistically Hungarianized – lived on the periphery of the Hungarian language area, in ethnically and religiously mixed settlements. This, on the one hand, explains the greater

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[9] A non-comprehensive list of relevant case studies: Pusztai 1996, 1997; Geszti 2001; Domokos 2005; Pilipkó 2007a, 2007b, 2007c; Pilipkó – Pusztai 2008, 2010.
[10] Zoltán Ilyés dedicated numerous studies to the correlations of exogamy and ethnic identity and language status, as well as the processes of identity change, based on marriage certificates, census statistics, and church schematisms of the Greek Catholic parish of Csíkszépvíz (and Csíkszék in the broader sense). A non-comprehensive list of these: Ilyés 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2005. On the conflicts of the Greek Catholic communities in the former Csík county, see studies by Péter Hámori, Bertalan Pusztai and Zoltán Ilyés (Hámori 2007; Ilyés 2007a, 2007b; Ilyés–Pusztai 1994).

than the national average degree of linguistic assimilation among them (NIESSEN 1991:42), but, on the other hand, the Greek Catholic population was isolated not only in a linguistic but often also in a socio-economic sense. The Ruthenian and Romanian Greek Catholics who settled in Protestant or Roman Catholic Hungarian villages were mostly poor farmhands and day-laborers,[11] but over time, many of them not only assimilated linguistically to the Hungarians, but also acquired property and intermarried with members of the majority society, so their religion remained the only reference to their origins. In this situation, many opted to convert to the majority religion because it meant social progress and enabled them to fully integrate into the community (PIRIGYI 2001:56; NIESSEN 1994:240).

At the same time, starting in the late 19th century, the Greek Catholic secular intelligentsia tried a variety of methods to prove the "Hungarianness" of Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics on a national level. This, on the one hand, is evident in the elaboration of a unique Hungarian Greek Catholic identity and historical consciousness,[12] which was disseminated through their publications and mainly in the contemporary press, and on the other hand, at the turn of the century, Hungarian Greek Catholics established national and local organizations[13] and appeared at various events.[14] In 1900, about 400 Hungarian Greek Catholics made a pilgrimage to Rome to obtain permission for the use of Hungarian in liturgy (PIRIGYI 1982:118–119).[15] The Holy See rejected the Hungarian liturgical language at that time, but the issue remained on the agenda in Hungarian public life. The initiative, which was considered a national matter, was supported by the Hungarian government,[16] thus, as a result of decades of political and diplomatic struggles, the Hungarian Greek Catholic Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog was founded in 1912.[17]

The establishment of the new eparchy, however, did not meet the expectations attached to it. The Holy See ruled that the liturgical language was to be Ancient Greek,[18]

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[11] Overall, Greek Catholics comprised the poorest and most marginal social strata of the country, and the other religious groups living alongside them often considered the Greek Catholic religion to be a "religion of the poor." (PIRIGYI 1990.II:126; BOTLIK 1997:46).

[12] This was primarily a selective historical perspective in which they attempted to link important events of Hungarian history with the history of Hungarian Greek Catholics. More important is the development of the so-called continuum-principle, according to which the Hungarian Greek Catholics were not the descendants of Hungarianized Ruthenians and Romanians but descendants of Conquest-era groups that adopted the Eastern rite. (PUSZTAI 2002:24 –25; 2004:215 –218; 2005:125). For details on the process, means and goals of Hungarian Greek Catholic identity building, see PUSZTAI 2007.

[13] The most important of these are two of their national organizations: the National Committee of Byzantine Rite Catholic Hungarians founded in 1898, and the Society of Hungarian Greek Catholics founded in 1902. PIRIGYI 1982:116 –117; PUSZTAI 2005:121.

[14] Of these, it is important to mention that in 1896 they celebrated a Hungarian-language Greek Catholic Mass in Budapest. PIRIGYI 1982:114; NIESSEN 1991:50.

[15] The Memorial Book compiled for this occasion intended to introduce the Pope to the history of Greek Catholic Hungarians. For the discursive strategies used in the Memorial Book and the self-definition of the Hungarian Greek Catholic elite of the time, see PUSZTAI 2005.

[16] Tamás Véghseő demonstrated that the Hungarian government supported the case primarily to achieve some of its domestic policy goals (VÉGHSEŐ 2003:214 –215).

[17] For the struggles preceding the establishment of the Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog, see PIRIGYI 1982:108 –118; 1990.II:83-120. For the direct antecedents of the founding of the archeparchy, see NIESSEN 1994, VÉGHSEŐ 2013.

[18] Like in the Roman Catholic religion, the use of vernacular language – in this case the Hungarian language – was allowed but restricted to sermons and church singing (PIRIGYI 1990:127, 131; ILYÉS 2007a:737).

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which was disappointing to the Hungarian-speaking faithful and clergy, but in practice it did not suppress the use of the Hungarian language. The creation of the archeparchy led to serious struggles with the bishops (mainly the Romanian ones) who objected to the reassignment of certain eparchies, but it often gave rise to hostility among some Roman and Greek Catholic priests, too.[19] The eparchy could not fulfill its role because the peace treaties that ended World War I resulted in the disintegration of the former borders, and some of the Greek Catholics living in historic Hungary became citizens of new countries, where they were reassigned to Romanian and Ruthenian eparchies. In the successor states, measures to counterbalance Hungarian nation-building efforts were introduced, while the linguistic and ethnic affiliation of Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics led to numerous political and religious conflicts.

GREEK CATHOLICS IN THE PARISH OF CSÍKSZÉPVÍZ

Csíkszépvíz (Frumoasa) is a settlement in the eastern part of Székely Land near the former state line, settled by Székelys, Armenians and Romanians. The Greek Catholic parish of Csíkszépvíz is a *parochia antiqua* according to church schematisms, which means it was probably established in the first half of the 18th century (ILYÉS 1999:6). The parish had 19 filial churches (affiliates), but only 10 settlements had a significant number of Greek Catholics, and relatively few of them lived in Csíkszépvíz. The most compact and most populous affiliates were Kostelek (Coşnea), Bükklok (Făgeţel), and Lóvész (Livezi).[20] Similarly to counties in Northeast Hungary, statistics show a significant increase in the proportion of Hungarian speakers in the 19th-20th centuries, although there were significant differences between the individual affiliates.

Most of the Romanians that settled in the Csík villages – just as in other parts of Székely Land[21] – became Hungarianized by the 19th century and socially and economically fully integrated into the majority Székely society, their Romanian origin evoked only by their denominational divergence or perhaps by their Romanian-sounding name (ILYÉS 1998b:286; 1999:6–7). The Greek Catholics living in the mountains, in the cultural contact zone on the eastern periphery of Székely Land,[22] were in a completely different position. Mainly due to the geographical isolation and the strict local and religious endogamy of the inhabitants, settlements established on the alpine estates of the Székely villages were until the middle of the 19th century linguistically and ethnically dominantly

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[19] In practice, the establishment of the Hungarian Greek Catholic Eparchy did not really change the social status of Greek Catholics, so the faithful continued to abandon the Greek rite – often not in concordance with church law – which caused many disputes over jurisdiction (ILYÉS 1999:9; LUKÁCS 2009:84–91; 2010:76–78). Furthermore, about 40% of Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics remained outside the new Eparchy, which further complicated the situation (PIRIGYI 1982:133; NIESSEN 1991:51–52).

[20] Based on 19th- and 20th-century Greek Catholic Eparchy schematisms (ILYÉS 1999:6; 2003a:20).

[21] As applied to certain regions and settlements in Székely Land, see HERMANN 1999. Cf. also OLÁH 1993, 1998.

[22] Contact zone indicates areas where "the linguistic, folk and cultural interactions of two neighboring linguistic areas, populations or cultural areas are particularly strong". (KEMÉNYFI 1994:13–14; ILYÉS 1998a:91; 2005:56–57).

Romanian and religiously Greek Catholic. In the second half of the century, this isolation slowly began to ease, and with more people moving in, the number of exogamous marriages growing, and new economic relations with the neighboring Székely villages, communities with different degrees of acculturation were created.[23]

In addition to the spontaneous population and language change processes – especially since the end of the 19th century – the Greek Catholic population living in the contact zone, often of a mixed or dual identity, was also subjected to the efforts of the current ethnic-political elite to "tempt or force them to their national side" (ILYÉS 1998a:92). Around the turn of the century, Hungarian state efforts to homogenize and assimilate are marked by various public administrative reorganizations, and, in particular, the establishment of Hungarian-language public schools in border settlements (ILYÉS 1998a:92–93; 1999:11; 2003b:83; 2005:57). As a result, by 1910 the Greek Catholics of mostly Romanian origin had become Hungarian speakers, or at least bilingual, in the affiliates of Csíkszépvíz (ILYÉS 1998b:288–289; 1999:9–10; 2005:65–66; 2007a:739). The local Hungarian authorities have followed the activities of the Greek Catholic priesthood with keen interest in this era, and have tried, as far as possible, to make them serve their own national interests. Withdrawal of state aid from "untrustworthy" priests was typical, and the press provided extensive publicity for the activities of the clergy in assessing their loyalty to the Hungarians, so the local newspapers took on the role of a control mechanism.[24]

In the decades around the turn of the century, the issue of Hungarian liturgy led to serious conflicts. Even though by the end of the 19th century the majority of the faithful who had become Hungarian speakers no longer understood Romanian liturgy, the growing Romanian national movements instructed the leadership of every parish to insist on its use.[25] Nevertheless, several Greek Catholic ministers in Székely Land "preached in Hungarian, and adapted to the mother tongue of their faithful in the liturgy" (ILYÉS 1999:8; 2007b:167). In 1912, 35 mostly Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholic parishes in Székely Land, including Csíkszépvíz, were reassigned to the just established Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog (PIRIGYI 1982:130; GERGELY 1991:110; ILYÉS

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[23] Zoltán Ilyés analyzed the effect of exogamy on mother tongue and ethnic identity in three Csík county settlements: ILYÉS 1998b. At the same time, it is important to point out that, unlike the Romanians settling in the Székely-majority villages, the populations living in the alpine settlements were considered strangers not only because of their ethnic origin and religion, but also because of their land tenure (i.e., they did not own land, but rented the alpine areas of the Székelys), which significantly influenced their relationship with the majority society. (ILYÉS 1997:73–75; 1998b:286; 1999:6–7; 2003a:18).

[24] For an analysis of these aspirations, as well as the discourse of the county elite and the Greek Catholic priesthood, the priesthood's compulsion to conform, and the tropes of "nationalist rhetoric" in the contemporary press: Ilyés 2007b. The local intelligentsia also follows a discursive strategy perceptible at the national level; in the press, it tries to distance Hungarian Greek Catholics from the "Romanian" marker, calling them "Greek Catholic Székelys" and even "pure Hungarians" who have adopted the Eastern rite at the time of the founding of the state, and who now suffer under the oppression of Romanian churches.

[25] They did so, even though the Archeparchy was well aware that the majority of the faithful in Székely Land were Hungarian-speaking – which is corroborated, for example, by the Greek Catholic schematisms showing the Hungarian and bilingual parishes. At the same time, various statements by Romanian church leaders in the discussions surrounding the establishment of the Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog also reference this. LUKÁCS 2010:76–77. In Csík county, there have also been instances where the entire Greek Catholic population of a village adopted the Roman rite, mainly because of the imposition of the Romanian liturgical language. (ILYÉS 1998a:95; 2005:68–69; 2007a:748–751).

2007a:738; LUKÁCS 2010:75–76). The local press reported the "victory of Hungarians" and celebrated the new eparchy for "rescuing" the Greek Catholics of Csík for the Hungarians. (ILYÉS 2007a:740–742). At the same time, the Romanian archeparchy tried to prove the harmfulness of the reassignments, and encouraged the Greek Catholic priests in Székely Land to collect signatures of protest from their faithful that wanted to keep the Romanian liturgical language.[26] In response, the local secular elite tried to sideline these "nationally objectionable" Greek Catholic priests,[27] filling the vacant parishes with priests that were loyal to the Hungarians.[28]

The above assimilation and acculturation processes took a completely different direction upon the border changes following the First World War. Transylvania became part of Romania, and a Romanian nation-building that wished to counterbalance the Hungarianizing tendencies of the previous era commenced in the region, trying to put religious life, among others, at its service. The Romanian Constitution, sanctioned in 1923,[29] ensured the freedom of religion, in principle, but declared only Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches to be "Romanian" churches, thereby indicating that the members of these two Churches are considered Romanian by the state.[30] Under the pressure of the new laws, people throughout Transylvania converted or returned to the Greek Catholic (and Orthodox) religion in great numbers. The Greek Catholics living in the parish of Csíkszépvíz responded to the situation in various ways: while in certain settlements the proportion of those who chose or retained the "Romanian" religion because of economic or other considerations grew, in many communities the assimilation tendencies of the earlier period just reached their end, that is to say, despite the expected disadvantages, they converted to the Roman Catholic or Protestant religion (ILYÉS 1999:11). At the same time, the interpretation of religion as an ethnicizing, classifying category became also more pronounced, which is well illustrated in the denominational and national statistics of the 1930 census in the region I have studied: the majority of the Greek Catholics of Csíkszépvíz who considered themselves Hungarian in 1910 were registered as Romanian speakers and nationalities (ILYÉS 1999:12, 15; 2003a:27–28).

During World War II, in the autumn of 1940, Northern Transylvania was reassigned to Hungary, which once again created a difficult situation for the Greek Catholics in Székely Land. The new state authorities uncritically accepted the earlier Romanian position that correlated the Greek Catholic religion with Romanian nationality (HÁMORI 2007:196). Due to various discriminatory and coercive measures, Greek Catholics, having been deemed unreliable by the state, started abandoning their religion in massive numbers.[31]

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[26] NIESSEN 1991:11; Rev. Elie Câmpeanu, for example, wanted the faithful of Lóvész and Kostelek to sign a protest against unification with the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog, which, however, failed because of the intervention of Hungarian authorities. (ILYÉS 2003a:26–27; 2007a:743–745).

[27] In Csík county, for example, a lawsuit was filed against four priests for "ethnic incitement". GKPL I.1.a. 85:1912. The case and its antecedents are also mentioned by Zoltán Ilyés: ILYÉS 2007a:743–746.

[28] GKPL I.1.a.53:1913; GKPL I.1.a.372:1917.

[29] For the full text of the Constitution: *Monitorul Oficial*, No. 282, 29.03.1923.

[30] SCHEFFLER 1942:9; LUKÁCS 2010:72–73. The 1928 Religious Act, which classified the Orthodox Church as the dominant church and the Greek Catholic Church as the national church, made conversion to these churches significantly easier.

[31] For the Székely Land settlements affected by the wave of rite changes, see the map by Zoltán Ilyés (ILYÉS 2005:64).

In the parish of Csíkszépvíz, only a part of the alpine affiliates remained Greek Catholic, while the majority of Byzantine rite Székely villagers converted to the Roman Catholic religion (ILYÉS 1999:12; 2003a:29–30).

After World War II, some of the parishioners returned to their Greek Catholic religion. In 1948, however, during the abolishing of the Greek Catholic Church in Romania, they too had to choose between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches. The outcomes and consequences of these choices varied by settlement, depending on the different effects of the assimilation and acculturation processes presented above, as well as diverse individual motivations (ILYÉS 2003a:30–32). In the following case study, I would like to examine – based on archival sources and my own fieldwork – how and to what extent did the processes outlined here affect the Greek Catholics living in Kostelek, one of the affiliates of the parish of Csíkszépvíz. I focus primarily on the process of language change, the identity-forming role of religion, the role of pastoral care in the lives of the locals, and I present in detail the development of the community between 1940 and 1948.

CASE STUDY: GREEK CATHOLICS IN KOSTELEK IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Kostelek (Coşnea) became a settlement in the 18th century on the alpine estates of Székely villages in Csík, its first inhabitants being probably Moldavian Romanians and Csángós and, in part, Székelys from Csík. (SZŐCS 1999:126; TAKÁCS 2001:37–69; ILYÉS 2003a:12–15). 19th-century censuses reflect the settlement's uniformly Romanian ethnic and Greek Catholic religious character, which, besides the Greek Catholic religion of the majority of those settling here, can be attributed to the very strict endogamy prevailing both in terms of residence patterns and from a religious and cultural point of view, which can be documented up until the second half of the 19th century. Starting in the 1870s, Kostelek became more open in terms of marriage practices. Up to the turn of the century, the number of locally exogamous marriages is high, and until the Second World War, approximately half of the marriage partners came from outside the settlement. These marriages brought mostly Hungarian-speaking or at least bilingual people to the village, some of whom were Roman Catholics (ILYÉS 1998b:287–288; 2003a:22–25). The language change process, which was primarily the result of this, was facilitated by the Hungarian-language state school established in the early 20th century, so much so that according to the data of the 1910 census, the population became completely Hungarian-speaking.[32] However, it is apparent from the accounts of the locals that during the period before World War I, the people of Kostelek might have been more bilingual, (ILYÉS 1998b:288; 1999:9; 2003a:25). using both languages in everyday contact, but Hungarian and Romanian speakers diverged based on the language used within the family.

Nonetheless, the religious character of the settlement has only changed very little in this period, the reasons for which can be found in pastoral relations and, in this context, in local customs concerning mixed marriages. Kostelek was an affiliate of the Greek Catholic parish of Csíkszépvíz, but due to the remote location of the settlement, pastoral

[32] Source of census data: http://varga.adatbank.transindex.ro/?pg=3&action=etnik&id=7070 (14.03.2013), cf. Ilyés 2003a:47.

care was quite haphazard even in the first half of the 20th century.[33] The inhabitants of the village built a Greek Catholic church in 1875, but despite petitioning several times along with the inhabitants of the neighboring Magyarcsügés to have an independent parish established in one of the two villages, this never came to be (primarily because of the financial and economic interests of the mother church).[34] At the same time, Roman Catholics have also moved to the village over time. However, due to their small number and especially the long distances, no attempt was made to administer and care for their souls up until the end of the 1930s either by the parish priests of Szépvíz or by the nearby Roman Catholic parish of Gyimes; consequently, they integrated religiously into the local community and church registers listed them henceforth as Greek Catholics, even if they did not necessarily change rites as prescribed by church law.[35] It is apparent from the sources that the regionally competent Roman Catholic clergy was aware of this practice, but they did not complain, and sometimes even urged the Greek Catholic pastoral care of distant settlements.[36]

This practice began to change in the early 20th century. The 1910 census and the diocesan schematisms published at the beginning of the century already show Roman Catholics in Kostelek, suggesting that instead of the rite change that had been a common practice, the model of remaining in one's rite also began to gain force among the Roman Catholics settling in the village (ILYÉS 2003a:25). Basically, however, the people of Kostelek insisted on their Byzantine rite, which was an important part of their identity. In concert with other researchers, I think that the most important component of the identity of the people of Kostelek, to this day, is the awareness of their *divergence* from neighboring communities, a local identity that is not necessarily tied to ethnicity.[37] At the same time, the other important factor of identification was the Greek Catholic religion, both for the inhabitants of the villages and of the surrounding settlements. Like with other communities in Székely Land, the Byzantine rite was also considered a *Romanian religion* and distinguished from other Catholic rites. Because of the Romanian mother tongue and the Byzantine rite of the majority of the population, the inhabitants of the area considered the people of Kostelek to be Romanian, and they themselves defined themselves mostly as Romanian as well, regardless of their origin or mother tongue.

After the imperial change following World War I, both linguistic and religious fragmentation intensified within the community. These processes are pretty much

[33] In several late 19th- and early 20th-century petitions, the faithful indicated that they only saw a competent Greek Catholic parish priest twice a year, and in the case of death, baptism, or marriage, they could only acquire a priest for a high transport fee. Their school-age children do not receive religious education, so they cannot partake in confession or communion (HMÁL F 685/10. 16–17; HMÁL F 685/10. 76–77).

[34] HMÁL F 685/10. 52; HMÁL F 685/10. 69–70

[35] This is also indicated by the fact that the Greek Catholic parish register of Csíkszépvíz, which in the villages of Csík usually documented mixed marriages very accurately, has no records of mixed parents in Kostelek until the end of the 19th century. HMÁL F 47/251: *Parish Registers of the Greek Catholic Church of Csíkszépvíz*; (ILYÉS 2003:23).

[36] GyÉL bishopric documents 13.1981/1941

[37] The people of Kostelek distinguish themselves from the Székelys of Csík, the Csángós of Moldavia and Gyimes, as well as the Romanians of Moldavia, and simply call themselves the *people of Kostelek* or the *people of Patak*, reflecting on the unique character of their culture which differs from each of the above cultures, but also incorporates certain elements of each one. (TAKÁCS 2001:29).

contradictory to what we would expect based on the change of political and power relations and the increasing Romanian nation-building efforts, since, on the local level, this was more related to demographic factors and further changes in language use and language competences. According to the parish registers, between 1921 and 1930, the ratio of mixed, exogamous marriages was significant, and the number of mixed marriages within the settlement increased in comparison with the previous period, indicating an increase in the local Roman Catholic population sticking to their rite (ILYÉS 1999:12; 2003a:27).[38] According to recollections, in this period there were more and more Roman Catholics in the village who, on bigger holidays, and especially for confession, preferred to visit their own priest, despite the long distances.

At the same time, the community became perceptibly divided on linguistic grounds, too, for by now there were a good number of people in the village who did not or just barely understood Romanian. While, according to sources, before World War I the people of Kostelek did not – or at least did not always – require the use of the Hungarian language in church ceremonies that would have been possible within the framework of the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog,[39] during this period the Hungarian language came to prominence in terms of religious life, too, and the presence of the clergy providing Hungarian-language liturgical services also became important. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Greek Catholic parish priest of Szépvíz went to Kostelek once a month, but in many cases the people of Kostelek sought out the priest of Gyimesbükk, who provided pastoral care to the neighboring Magyarcsügés (Cădărești). While from the mid-1920s Csíkszépvíz was served exclusively by Greek Catholic parish priests that used Romanian as the liturgical language – often described as being "anti-Hungarian" in the recollections – the priest of Gyimesbükk heard confessions of the faithful who requested so in Hungarian, and, if necessary, performed baptismal and funeral ceremonies in Hungarian, too.

Kostelek, remote and difficult to access, was also significantly different from the Székely affiliates of Csíkszépvíz in that very little, if any, of the nation-building efforts of the ecclesiastical and secular elites made their way in here. The locals did not encounter directly the heated debates about Hungarian Greek Catholics that were taking place in the newspapers and public discourse, there were no compulsory rite changes in the village, nor religious or (related) ethnic conflicts within the community. According to the reminiscences of the locals, during the Romanian regime, *"everything remained as it used to be"*, there was no significant change in their everyday lives compared to the previous period. At the same time, the changed aims of state politics had a great impact on the clergy serving in Csíkszépvíz, which in time influenced the life of the people of Kostelek.

In the 1930s, a kind of *pastoral rivalry* began between the parish priests of the two Catholic churches who, until the end of the 1940s, tried various arguments and accusations to enforce their faithful's belonging to one or the other side with the ecclesiastical and state authorities. In Csíkszépvíz, there used to be some unwritten norms – at times diverging from official regulations – about the coexistence of the different churches: priests of Greek, Roman and Armenian rites often baptized, married and buried each

other's faithful;[40] reciprocally visited each other for the New Year's blessing of homes; and, in many cases, the question of mixed marriages and the religion of the children born thereof was settled not on the basis of state regulation but on the understanding of the faithful and the two parish priests.[41] The pastoral practices, sometimes different from official regulations, that had evolved over a long period of time first led to conflicts amidst the intensified Romanian national aspirations of the 1930s. Although this cannot be detached from the individual local Greek and Roman Catholic parish priests – it is clear from the sources that both were agile and ambitious people – it was mainly due to the political atmosphere of the era: the priest of the "Hungarian" (i.e., minority) religion became very defensive vis-à-vis the Romanianizing state authority, as if he felt that he had to defend, even "get back" his faithful.

Understandably, this was more of a concern for the inhabitants of the affiliates of Csíkszépvíz, because the mother church and the neighboring Székely villages had fewer Greek Catholics who, moreover, and for the reasons outlined above, often converted to the Roman rite, while the alpine population often stuck to their religion, and many of the Roman Catholics who moved there also converted to it. Besides the local affairs in the strict sense, the rivalry of the two parish priests spiked primarily over the pastoral care of the affiliates and, above all, the "baptisms away".[42] The first to call attention to the neglected situation of Roman Catholics living in the affiliates was the Roman Catholic priest of Gyimesbükk. In 1937-38, he reported several concrete cases to the competent parish priest of Csíkszépvíz, where Roman Catholics became Greek Catholics because of their unresolved spiritual care.[43] The Roman Catholic priest therefore sought to take the faithful neglected by the representatives of the Roman rite church under his spiritual care, or at least register them. According to his later reports, this was classified as a Hungarianizing, therefore anti-government action in the eyes of the current state authority, and he was repeatedly prosecuted following the allegations of the Greek Catholic priest.[44]

In the dispute between the two parties, the Roman Catholic parish priest was citing church law, while the Greek Catholic priest was citing Romanian state regulations – which put him in a more favorable position in that situation. Instead of the details of this litigation, however, I would like to emphasize the evolution of the perspective of the Roman Catholic parish priest. While in the initial stages of the dispute he complained only of the irregular rite changes of the few Roman Catholics married into the Romanian population of the affiliates,[45] in 1939, after compiling detailed accounts of the Greek and Roman Catholic records, he wrote to his superiors that a "whole series" of originally

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[38] I must agree with Zoltán Ilyés's conclusion that the interconnection of village endogamy and religious-cultural exogamy may also reference the baptism of some of the children born of mixed marriages from the previous decades in the Roman Catholic faith (ILYÉS 1998b:288).

[39] GKPL I.1.a. 443:1942; published in: HÁMORI 2007:219.

[40] The relevant entries of the parish registers always include the name and denomination of the officiating priest (HMÁL F 47/251).

[41] GyÉL bishopric documents, 28.208/1941

[42] "Baptism away" (*elkeresztelés*) is a legal/canonical term that, in a strict sense, denotes the baptism of the children of parents of mixed marriages not conforming to the principle of "gender follows gender". Since in Kostelek this principle was not followed in the baptism of children born of mixed marriages anyway, in our case, this term refers to its broader meaning of a baptism (or marriage, funeral) performed by a priest of a denomination who, according to current church and/or state law, is not entitled to it.

[43] CSP 54/1937; CSP 329/1938

[44] GyÉL bishopric documents, 10.1021/1940

[45] CSP 44/1939

Roman Catholic faithful have been "Romanianized" in name and religion as a result of the above-mentioned baptisms away expressly supported by contemporary laws.[46]

The dispute of the two sides took a completely new direction after the Second Vienna Award of August 30, 1940, since the reassignment of North Transylvania to Hungary brought about fundamental changes not only in the lives of the two states involved, but also in the two denominations discussed here. The Greek Catholic parish priest of Csíkszépvíz left in the spring of 1940,[47] thus, the Greek Catholics of Kostelek were served the following year, whenever possible, by the Greek Catholic parish priest of Gyimesbükk.

Until November 26, there was a military administration in effect in the reassigned areas, and in Kostelek – since the new border was only a few kilometers away – gendarmerie and border patrol offices were also installed. The population of Kostelek, partially Romanian-speaking and largely Greek Catholics, were subjected to extremely violent discriminatory measures by the armed forces. The gendarmerie and military installed in the village viewed the locals with suspicion from the start: they were considered Romanians and therefore untrustworthy. For many, it was a decisive experience in this regard that since the entry of Hungarian soldiers, "no Romanian word could be heard" in the village – for the military and the school teacher demanded that local people speak only Hungarian. But the most dramatic consequence of the changed political power relations and the anti-Romanian public sentiment was the large-scale rite changes of the local Greek Catholics. According to archival data, in October-November of 1940, most of the population reported to the public authorities their conversion to the Roman Catholic rite.

Although there were certainly some Roman Catholic individuals and families who welcomed the change, pretty much all related reminiscences allude to the fact that the majority of the rite changes were forced, since all who intended to remain in the Greek Catholic rite were threatened with being transferred to Romania. The Roman Catholic parish priest of Csíkszépvíz firmly took the spiritual care of the affiliates upon himself: from December 1940 onward, he made great efforts to establish a permanent Roman Catholic ministry in Kostelek.[48] Naturally, his request aligned with the current goals of Hungarian national politics (which paid special attention to diaspora and border communities), thus, because of the "religious and racial vulnerability" of the people of Kostelek, the ministry outpost (*expositura*) of Kostelek was set up as of January 1, 1942, led by a Franciscan Pater assigned by the procurator for the bishop.[49]

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[46] GyÉL bishopric documents, 28.208/1941
[47] GyÉL bishopric documents, 28.208/1941
[48] In this respect, it is worth pointing out the transformation of the discourse on the Kostelek faithful in the wake of this changed political situation: in comparison with his earlier complaints, in the early 1940s the parish priest had already argued that most of the Greek Catholics of Kostelek were people of Hungarian origin from Székely villages, who, because of the difficulties of Roman Catholic pastoral care and the unlawful "baptism away" and re-registration practices of Greek Catholic priests, have over time become Greek Catholics. GyÉL bishopric documents, 28.658/1940; GyÉL bishopric documents, 10. 1021/1940.
[49] GyÉL bishopric documents, 32.778/1942; CSP 17/1942, 18/1942

Naturally, the Greek Catholic parish priest of Gyimesbükk[50] could not ignore this: starting in November 1940, he sent a series of complaints to the leaders of both churches about the atrocities, forced re-registrations and the illegal use of Greek Catholic churches in his neighborhoods.[51] The tension between the two parish priests was also compounded by the division of the parishioners. Although officially most of the people of Kostelek were members of the Roman Catholic Church, many regarded the Greek Catholic religion as their own despite the formal policy. The masses of the Greek Catholic parish priest were visited in large numbers; alongside some of the families remaining in the Greek Catholic rite, occasionally families that converted to Roman Catholicism still wanted him to baptize their children or bury their dead, and some would only confess in front of him. Many described the activities of the parish priest of Gyimes in Kostelek as some sort of a secret, almost underground activity: to avoid conflict, the participants often opted to hold the ceremonies at someone's house, in secret. In addition to the religious divisions, the litigation documents of this time reveal some Greek Catholic – Romanian and Roman Catholic – Hungarian correspondences in the testimonies of the locals who often reported each other by projecting their personal conflicts onto the two denominations (and onto the nations associated with them).[52] Although in most cases these seem to be more the opinions of the priests of the two denominations "fed" to the parishioners, it is important to note that in the situation of the early 1940s, the correlation of religious and ethnic categories prevailed on the local level as well.

The ecclesiastical-political power relations, however, soon changed radically again, as the end of World War II brought the Romanian administration back to Northern Transylvania. I have very few data from the post-war period, but in any case, there were three important events in the religious relations of Kostelek: 1.) According to the sources, the majority of Kostelek's rite changers returned to the Greek Catholic faith in the first half of 1945.[53] 2.) In 1946, the Roman Catholics commenced the building of a church, which some of the local Greek Catholics had burnt down in a semi-finished state, but the fire was extinguished in time and eventually the work was completed. In my opinion, it is important to point out that the conflicts between the two denominations – formerly merely theoretical-political and perceptible only on the clerical level – had at this point already escalated to blows among the locals, and this event had affected the relationship between the two local churches for years to come. 3.) In December 1948, the government abolished the Greek Catholic Church by decree and transferred

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[50] The story of Viktor Gergely, the Greek Catholic parish priest of Gyimesbükk, is a good example of the 20th-century fate of Greek Catholics in Székely Land: while before the First World War, the county elite referred to him approvingly as a patriotic priest (along with his father, György Gergely, the parish priest of Csíkszépvíz, see ILYÉS 2007a:742, 746-747; 2007b:175), during the Romanian era, he was subjected to a series of attacks by his own church and the press because of his loyalty to the Hungarians, and the returning Hungarian power also considered him a potential enemy because of his being a Greek Catholic priest. All this is revealed in detail in his letters sent in 1942 to the Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog (GKPL I.1.a.443:1942, published in: HÁMORI 2007) and from other archival documents. See, for example: GyÉL bishopric documents, 8.208/1941, GyÉL bishopric documents, 28.3515/1942.
[51] GyÉL bishopric documents, 32.778/1942; CSP 17/1942, 18/1942
[52] See, for example: GyÉL bishopric documents, 10.151/1942; GyÉL bishopric documents, 28.131/1944.
[53] GyÉL bishopric documents, 32.778/1942; CSP 17/1942, 18/1942

all its movable and immovable property to the Orthodox Church.[54] The mostly Greek Catholic inhabitants of Kostelek were thus faced with a dilemma. Contrary to the other Greek Catholic communities of the parish of Csíkszépvíz in the same position (Lóvész, Bükklok), where the majority of the community became Orthodox (ILYÉS 1999:13; 2003a:30) in Kostelek, one half of the population became Roman Catholic and the other half Orthodox, so the community was permanently split.

The period following the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church is described by most like a political campaign: the "recorders" went from house to house and tried to persuade the locals to join one or the other religion. Certainly, there must have been some that they managed to compel to make a decision in this way – through persuasion or intimidation – but in general, people were guided by far more complicated considerations, revealed only in the light of individual life paths and motivations. Although the detailed presentation of these may be a topic of a separate study, it is worth briefly reviewing my relevant data.

For locals not speaking or barely speaking Romanian, an important argument for the Roman Catholic church was the language aspect, which is the same reason Romanian-speaking families became Orthodox without exception. It is an often-repeated story in Kostelek that some of the confused faithful turned to their former priest, the parish priest of Gyimesbükk, who suggested they "remain Catholic". This latter aspect, i.e., whether the Orthodox or the Roman Catholic religion is closer to the Greek Catholics – often appears among the arguments of both sides: while the Roman Catholics converted into another Catholic rite, the Orthodox continued to follow their former Eastern rite. The former Greek Catholic church of the village (and the cemetery and rectory) was given to the Orthodox church in 1948. Many have chosen the Orthodox Church simply out of attachment to their temple or to their family tomb. However, the most important factors influencing the decisions regarding religion were kinship and fictive kinship relationships, and different individual or family alliances; the importance of social relationships often overrode individual preferences in denominations. Conversely, some people or groups decided along their conflicts of interest, that is, they chose a denomination not on the basis of positive arguments, but to avoid their nemeses. The choice of denominations, however, has in many cases proved to be disruptive to the former unity of families and kinship networks. Brothers and close relatives choosing different paths in the new situation were going to separate masses, celebrated holidays at different times, buried their dead away from one another, etc., which in many cases led to serious conflicts even among family members who had up until then been on good terms.

Apart from the friction among individuals or within families, the community, as a whole, was not left untouched by the changes either. At the time when the Greek Catholic Church was abolished, an ethnic division based on religion was also established, or rather reinforced: Orthodox people were considered Romanian and Catholics Hungarian (ILYÉS 1997:78; 2003a:30; TAKÁCS 2001:109). The relationship between religious and ethnic identities is, however, much more complicated, and in everyday life it is more about symbolic division, not true interethnic coexistence. Moreover, both religious affiliation[55] and ethnic identity can evolve and change in the life of a single person, so

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[54] For the full text of the Regulation, see *Monitorul Oficial*, No. 281. 02.12.1948.
[55] I have addressed the local social practices and norms regarding mixed marriages and religious conversion in a separate study (GYŐRFY 2017).

it can only be described through a detailed analysis of life paths and intra-community distancing practices. All in all, however, the boundaries between denominations can easily be transcended on a day-to-day level: relationships of kinship, matrimony, and godparentage are independent of denominational affiliation, and the interactions of the two religions in both formal and lay religious practice are conspicuous (ILYÉS 2003a:21–22, 30–37). The presentation of the interpretation of religions as an ethnicizing category and of the many other aspects of denominational coexistence, as well as the analysis of the effects of Romanian and Hungarian nation-building efforts observed in the second half of the 20th century and nowadays are beyond the scope of this study.

CONCLUSION

Significant assimilation and language change processes took place among the Greek Catholics of Ruthenian and Romanian origin living in the northeastern and eastern part of historic Hungary during the 18th–20th centuries. Having remained "suspect" and in an intermediate position in public opinion because of their religion, Hungarian Greek Catholics have tried many ways to prove their Hungarianness and to integrate into the majority society. Starting in the second half of the 19th century, the Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholic secular elite sought to communicate the Hungarian *and* Greek Catholic identity and the Hungarian origin of the group with the help of its national organizations and events, and later primarily through the press, to remove the "stigma" of nationality from the group (ILYÉS 2007a:747). Their greatest achievement was the establishment of the Hungarian Greek Catholic Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog set up in 1912, which, however, could not fully fulfill its role. On the one hand, despite the positive attitudes of the Hungarian secular elite and the press, the memory of their "foreign" origin prevailed among the Protestant and Roman Catholic Hungarian communities sharing spaces with Greek Catholics, hence many saw the conversion to the religion of the majority society as the only possible way of their social integration. On the other hand, after the First World War, some Greek Catholics came under the jurisdiction of new states, where they continue their identification struggles to this day.[56]

A smaller group of Hungarian Greek Catholics lived in Transylvania, in the mostly Hungarian-inhabited Székely Land. Unlike Transylvanian Greek Catholicism, which played a prominent role in Romanian identity building, the Hungarian secular elite of Székely Land, in concert with national tendencies, attempted to distance the linguistically assimilated Greek Catholics from the Romanians by both practical (Hungarian-language education) and symbolic (media disputes) means. The activities of the local Greek Catholic priesthood were closely monitored, and Romanian-sympathizer priests were dismissed. The establishment of the Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog was not able to properly solve the situation of the Hungarian-speaking faithful that professed a Hungarian identity,

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[56] After the First World War, the Archeparchy of Hajdúdorog continued to operate with the parishes that remained in Hungary, as it does today. Although Greek Catholics in Hungary, like the people of the successor states, struggled to have their Hungarianness, their Hungarian and Greek Catholic identity acknowledged (PUSZTAI 2002, 2004), since the end of the Second World War, these two identity elements have been coexisting mostly unproblematically.

and after the First World War, even the former parishes of Hajdúdorog were returned under the authority of Romanian bishops. In Interwar Romania between the two world wars, Greek Catholicism appeared as a "national church", its followers were considered Romanian irrespective of their mother tongue, and the tendencies of Romanian nation-building continued among them. During the period between 1941 and 1944, Northern Transylvania was reassigned to Hungary. Although the official conception of Hungarian Greek Catholics returned to pre-war positions, in practice, the invading military saw them as Romanians and therefore considered these communities untrustworthy and forced them to convert to "Hungarian" religions (Roman Catholic, Protestant) by various means. Consequently, the early 1940s brought the mass and almost complete abandonment of the rite by Hungarian Greek Catholics in Székely Land.

In the first half of the 20th century, for the Hungarian Greek Catholics in a multiple-minority position, the only way to fully integrate with Hungarians was to abandon their religion, for their religious and linguistic-national identities were incompatible in all political arenas. At the same time, in the case of partially Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics living in the cultural contact zone of the eastern part of historic Hungary, a kind of double attachment was characteristic (ILYÉS 1999:12–13; 2003a:25–28), which resulted in very diverse routes of identification. Moreover, the identity-building aspirations observable at the level of the ecclesiastical and secular elite did not always reach the level of a local community. To illustrate this, I presented the fate of the Greek Catholics living in Kostelek, one of the affiliates of the parish of Csíkszépvíz.

Of the Greek Catholics in the Greek Catholic parish of Csíkszépvíz, linguistic-cultural assimilation was already advanced in the 19th century among the ones living in Székely villages. Greek Catholics here often established marital relations with Roman Catholics, and from the turn of the century, many of them even converted to the Roman rite. Their integration between the two world wars was stalled (in some communities even reversed), but after 1940, Greek Catholics completely disappeared from these settlements. In contrast, the alpine settlements far away from the mother church were characterized by a kind of seclusion: marriages with those of the Roman rite were rare, and the proportion of Romanian speakers and bilinguals was high. The Greek Catholic religion and a connection to Romanians were an important part of the identity of the people here. During the years of Hungarian sovereignty, some of the Greek Catholics had stayed on these settlements, and after the war, those who had been forced to convert returned to their original rite. In 1948, when the Greek Catholic Church was abolished, most of them became Orthodox.

Kostelek can be placed roughly between these two types. The Greek Catholics living here had a strong connection with the Hungarian villages in the area, there was a large number of marriages with Roman Catholics (most of whom were religiously integrated into the Greek Catholic majority), and before the First World War, speaking Hungarian had basically become the norm in the village. At the same time, a sense of attachment to Romanians remained an important part of the identity of the locals in the largely uniform Greek Catholic community. After World War I, certain linguistic and religious fault lines appeared in the community: on the one hand, Roman Catholics living here became more "visible" because of their increased adherence to their rite; on the other hand, because of changes in language competencies, the presence of the clergy who provide Hungarian-language ecclesiastical services became important to some of the

Greek Catholics of Kostelek. Although locals did not perceive much of this at the time, a kind of rivalry began in the 1930s between the Roman and Greek Catholic priests of the mother church over the pastoral care of the people here. While the Hungarian language and the Greek Catholic religion – deemed Romanian in the perception of locals and neighbors – did not really pose a conflict in the identity of the people of Kostelek, the strife of the local priests disrupted the established traditions of the coexistence and spiritual care of the faithful of different rites. The correspondence of linguistic-national and religious affiliations – perceptible at the state level, too – was becoming more and more prevalent in the conflicts of the rival priests serving the Romanian and Hungarian aspirations of "national strategy." Although religion and language were not originally indicators of ethnicity in Kostelek and did not cause internal conflicts in the community, in the 1940s, the events presented above and the ethnopolitical ideologies mediated by the local intelligentsia – primarily by the priesthood – reinterpreted local identities and transformed the traditions and norms of coexistence. In the litigations of the 1940s, and then in the religious decisions of the people of Kostelek, one can already distinguish the new contexts of religious and national categories that evolved and further changed in the second half of the 20th century. Although the people of Kostelek were more passive sufferers than conscious participants in the events presented here that forced them to choose religion and identity (ILYÉS 1999:10; 2003a:29), all in all, it can be said that, throughout the 20th century, the attachments and affiliation of the people living here were constantly relativized by the changing context, and it was these different "perspectives" that created the diversity of local identity patterns still observable today.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR ARCHIVAL SOURCES

CSP = Roman Catholic Parish of Csíkszépvíz (Csíkszépvíz / Frumoasa)
GKPL = Archives of the Greek Catholic Archeparchy (Nyíregyháza)
GyÉL = Archives of the Archdiocese and Cathedral Chapter of Gyulafehérvár (Gyulafehérvár – Alba Iulia)
HMAL = Harghita County State Archives – Direcția Județeană Harghita a Arhivelor Naționale (Csíkszereda – Miercurea Ciuc)

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From Deviancy to Norm: An Alternative Betrothal Rite in Gyimes[1]

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Abstract: In my writing, I examine the formation and transformation of the betrothal practices of the Roman Catholic Hungarian community of Gyimes based on the results of my fieldwork research from 2005 to 2016. Betrothal came into practice in the 1980s; prior to that, ethnographic sources only mention the ritual occasion of proposal. According to Roman Catholic church norms, the ring could not be worn before the church wedding; only newlyweds were allowed to put it on their finger. For a long time, they used borrowed rings for the blessing of the rings. I explore why it was important for young couples to buy or have their own precious metal wedding rings made, despite regulations that virtually prohibited, but certainly did not support, the pre-wedding wearing of rings. Why did ring wearing and betrothal itself become fashionable? I identify the ideologies and concepts that transformed the earlier rites and views and how they contributed to the popularity of wedding ring sets and companion rings offered by jewelers. I argue that an alternative betrothal rite, the act and ideology of the Csíksomlyó ring exchange, could have greatly contributed to betrothal and ring wearing becoming a common practice in Gyimes. Until the 1990s, this was a strategy adopted by the local community which, similarly to the secular, profane passage into womanhood or emergency baptism, offered an opportunity to exit marginal life situations.

Keywords: Double ring ceremony, cult of Virgin Mary, alternative church marriage, invented tradition, Gyimes (Ghimeş, Romania), Csíksomlyó (Şumuleu, Romania)[1]

In my writing, I examine the formation and transformation of the betrothal practices of the Roman Catholic Hungarian community of Gyimes[2] based on the results of my fieldwork research from 2005 to 2016. The betrothals of today are unimaginable in Gyimes without the exchange of gold wedding rings or the offering of bridal companion gifts (gold signet rings, necklaces). The rings are worn after the betrothal and are blessed during the Roman Catholic church wedding. That was not always the case though. If we look at the processes a little more broadly, we can see that the description of a 15th-century Catholic church ceremony in Hungary already mentions the blessing and exchange of several rings (BÁRTH 2005:127). We also know that wedding rings have been presented in noble betrothals since the 17th century, but the use of wedding rings has only spread among the Hungarian peasantry in the 20th century. Most would only put on a ring, which was typically borrowed, for the wedding ceremony itself (HLATKY 1938). All of this, of course, varied according to local religious traditions and economic conditions. In Gyimes, the exchange and blessing of rings has only become an integral part of the Catholic church ceremony in the last fifty years (since about the 1960s). For a long time, here, too, the rings that were being blessed were borrowed. The borrowed rings had to be returned to the lender at the conclusion of the wedding. According to the relevant Roman Catholic church and community norms, the ring could not be worn before the church wedding; only newlyweds could put it on their finger. Until the 1980s, instead of the betrothal, the ritual event of asking for a girl's hand in marriage is mentioned in the relevant ethnographic notes (ANTAL 1983:146–147), and my conversation partners also emphasized primarily the act of proposal, which was held a few weeks prior to the wedding. Sharing a meal, conversation, and setting the date of the wedding were integral parts of this event. We have records of betrothal gift exchanges up until the 1950s, and the bride would often receive as many as five sets of bed linens. *Clothing gifts* (local collective noun of these former obligatory gifts) were presented to each other, as well as to the relatives and bridegrooms, most often during the wedding, rarely before the wedding. As a 70-year-old woman recalled in 2005:

"It was the fashion, the bride sewing for the groom. She sewed three sets. And for herself, too. Everything she wore was brand new, one was the bridal dress, the second, another bridal dress for when they took off her bun, and one that she wore during the week, it was also Csángó-style, and she sewed for the groomsman ['násznagy'],[3] for both of the groomsmen, and at that time there were still co-groomsmen ['násztársak'],[4] eight or ten or twelve, their gifts were purchased."

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[2] Until 1820, Gyimes was part of the Transylvanian Principality, from 1940 to 1944 it belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary, and in 1919 it was annexed to Romania. It consists of three settlements: Gyimesközéplok (Lunca de Jos) and Gyimesfelsőlok (Lunca de Sus) in Harghita County, and Gyimesbükk (Ghimeş-Făget) in Bakó County. While the population of Gyimesközéplok and Gyimesfelsőlok is almost completely Hungarian and Roman Catholic, Gyimesbükk is ethnically and religiously heterogeneous. In a broader sense, the areas affected by the migration of the populations of Gyimes (Hárompatak, the Csángó settlements in the Úz valley, and Háromkút [Trei Fântâni, Neamt County]) should also be included here.

[3] The groomsmen (there are usually two or more groomsmen/women invited to the wedding by the bride and groom each) have an advantaged role at the church wedding (witness to the marriage) and the wedding party (they give the largest monetary gifts).

[4] Until the 2000s, co-groomsmen were also invited to the wedding, but they were only obliged to give half as many gifts than the groomsmen.

The emergence of ecclesiastical ring exchange was followed in 10-20 years by the betrothal practice of secular ring exchange that preceded, occasionally even substituted the church ritual. These profane betrothals came after the proposal. The suitor usually did the proposing by himself, but his parents and godparents could also accompany him. In the more prominent families, they asked the prospective professional best man (called *wedding host,* 'lakodalmi gazda' in Gyimes)[5] to conduct the proposal. In that case, there were several people attending the proposal, and the girl's close relatives were also present. A 70-year-old wedding host told me in 2008:

"(...) The host enters first, followed by the groomsmen, they go to the proposal. The groomsmen go into the thingy, then a couple of friends or relatives, then the parents, and then the bridegroom at the end, and he shuts the door. It was not like (...) they set the table and the girls and womenfolk retreated to a separate room, it was not like this in my time, but it could have been so in the past. And he says, 'Praise the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us give thanks to His Divine Majesty, that His Divine Majesty has preserved and protected us from all sad changes of heart, and all harm to body and soul. We continue to ask the Holy Father to keep His sacred blessing on us, to protect us from evil, and to abandon us not without leaving us the good.' I'm starting to slowly forget it. (...) And then the parents say this and that, and then that they do not mind. Then the bride is usually hidden in another room, we go find her, lead her by a leash on her hand, that is just a formality."

The betrothal was only arranged on a Saturday or Sunday night, "if both parents approved the proposal". The above-mentioned host remembers it like this:

"(...) they bring in the ring in this small basket, and they fill it with flowers. And the host takes it out and he says, "Here are a couple of rings, a gift from my heart and soul, wear them with love and peace, etc." And then the man says, do not cheat on each other, he says that joke, and then he puts the ring on his finger, and if there is an engagement ring, that one too. Because most of the time there is a wedding ring, but in some places, where they are more well-off, they might buy a signet ring as well."

The betrothal complemented the event of the proposal. At first it marked a separate occasion shortly before the wedding, and then it slowly merged with the festive events of the earlier proposal. Occasionally they would already exchange rings at the betrothal: they would exchange casual rings made of silver, bronze or copper coins, while more affluent families bought gold rings from Gypsy goldsmiths. The rings were not worn permanently, and they were only put on right before leaving for the wedding. Then in the early 1990s, instead of the casual, simpler rings, they switched to gold wedding rings and companion rings offered by jewelry shops, and they proudly wore them on their fingers. Betrothal has become a fundamental milestone in wedding customs.

In my thesis, I explore the reasons why despite the cultural-historical antecedents, and the virtually prohibitive, but certainly not supportive, regulations about wearing rings before the wedding it would become important for young couples that they buy or have

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[5] The best man organizes the wedding; he gives speeches during the festive event, entertains the guests, and also provides practical assistance with the gifts or any emerging complications.

their own precious metal wedding rings custom-made. Why did ring wearing and betrothal itself and the exchange of rings outside the ecclesiastical context become fashionable at all? What meanings were associated with ring wearing in Gyimes? What may have been the exceptional situations which, overriding the previous rules, required the betrothal and the constant wearing of engagement rings? In my writing, I identify the ideologies and concepts that have transformed the earlier rites and views and how they contributed to the popularity of wedding ring sets and companion rings offered by jewelers.

1970–1990: DEVIANT, "ABNORMAL" BETROTHALS – THE TEMPORARY SUBSTITUTION AND REPLACEMENT OF THE CHURCH WEDDING

First and foremost, we need to clarify that the act of proposal highlighted above was not the only occasion for the announcement of the intention of marriage; eloping was also frequent. This was most commonly done with the mutual agreement of the couple, when the young people who had chosen each other and got along well as lovers could not hope for the parents' consent to their marriage. The elopement was carried out without the knowledge of either set of parents, or at least without the knowledge of the girl's parents, and often despite their physical resistance. However, in the majority of cases, the parents agreed to the marriage eventually. The eloping girl had to dress for the wedding under the most modest of appearances, without a bridal headdress. Because after the elopement she no longer belonged to the girls but neither to the honorable married women, her transient, peripheral situation was made clear through various symbolic methods: until the late 1960s, it was customary for the mother-in-law to put the eloped girl's hair in a bun, a quasi-passage into womanhood, becoming a woman who did not receive the sacrament of matrimony. As a 72-year-old woman remembers this:

> – (...) Now there is not much of it, but back then it happened that they stole the girl, and then they put her hair in a bun, and for some others they did not even do that, but then, when the time came to go to the priest and get married, that's when they did her hair. There was one that had been a while ago, but it was a long while ago when she eloped, and then they did put her hair in a bun.
> – Who did the bunning[6] [i.e., putting the bride's hair in a bun] at that time?
> – This was at the parental house where she was taken. There were some friends in the parental house, and they did the bunning. It was rare that they were bunned, rather, the ones that eloped were bunned eventually, and some others were not even bunned but wore it the same way until the wedding.

Young people whose child was conceived or born out of wedlock could also expect to have a more modest wedding. Nevertheless, weddings did not always immediately follow an elopement or the birth of an out-of-wedlock child. Sometimes young couples cohabited for a period of time, unmarried. It was also not unheard of that a big wedding

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[6] Doing the bride's hair as a women's initiation ritual was also part of the local wedding party until the very beginning of the 21st century.

could not take place for some time due to the unfavorable financial situation of the family or some external limiting circumstances, and in such cases, the young couple was forced into a marginal life situation considered to be deviant, which neither the community, nor the young couple or their close family found to be a comforting state.

The betrothal rite at the nearby Virgin Mary Shrine of Csíksomlyó[7] (local term *Csíksomlyó betrothal* or *Csíksomlyó ring exchange*), an alternative rite of ring exchange, offered a temporary solution to these marginal life situations. During the Csíksomlyó rite, the young couple attended mass (either in Gyimes or in Csíksomlyó), then exchanged rings while kneeling at the feet of the statue of the Virgin Mary in the Shrine of Csíksomlyó. Prayers and supplications were part of the rite, as were the accompanying promise, oath and vow to one another. Some would kiss Mary's feet, touch the statue with their rings, and sometimes even money would be placed in the slot under the statue. Quoting from the recollections of a 35-year-old woman from 2008:

> – In 95, we went to Somlyó [i.e., Csíksomlyó], that's when I came here to be married. We went to the Somlyó pilgrimage, and then they came out, the mass ended and all.
> – Then you went to the pilgrimage site, and you put on the rings after the mass?
> – (...) We went up, kissed Mary's feet, and X and I put on the rings.
> – And did you say something to each other at that time, or were you just silent?
> – We were silent, we said nothing, there were so many people there.
> – And you prayed silently?
> – Yes.
> – You prayed to the Virgin Mother?
> – Yes, we even knelt down.
> – It must have been very nice.
> – Indeed! That's when we put them on, in 95, that's when I first went to Csíksomlyó.

An important and special feature of the rite is the precious metal wedding ring that has been blessed, and which, as I have already pointed out, was not very typical of other types of betrothals until the late nineties, as exchanging and wearing rings was only permitted after the church wedding. The ring was officially blessed by the priest only during the church wedding ceremony. Before the Csíksomlyó betrothals, the blessing of the rings was in many cases carried out by the priest indirectly: typically, the young couple would hide the rings in the branches of their Christmas tree, so when the priest came to bless the family's Christmas tree during the annual *house blessing* – at Epiphany – he would also bless the rings. As a 35-year-old woman told me in 2008:

> – It was said that we should not wear the rings before the wedding and all, and so it was that we put them on top of the Christmas tree when the priest came. And the rosary, too, because I could not go to the church to have the priest bless it. (...) When he came to bless the house, he blessed it.
> – So the rings are also taken in to be blessed?

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[7] In Csíksomlyó [Şumuleu Ciuc], about 19 miles from Gyimes, there is an extremely important Roman Catholic pilgrimage site which attracts numerous Hungarian pilgrims every Pentecost. Csíksomlyó is a neighborhood of Csíkszereda (Miercurea Ciuc, Harghita County, Romania).

– No, he blesses them when we get married.

– So was it already blessed then?

– Yes, we put them on the Christmas tree, but we did not tell the priest, he did not know, had no clue.

According to my conversation partners, the first Csíksomlyó betrothal may have been arranged in the eighties by a (Romanian or Hungarian) couple from Háromkút, after which more and more couples from Háromkút and Gyimes were getting betrothed in Csíksomlyó. They found the ritual to be *so simple* yet *great, so beautiful* and *effective* that more and more young couples from Gyimes that were cohabiting and/or had an out-of-wedlock child tried to legitimize their relationship by getting betrothed according to the script of the rite they came to know. The rite also became a strategy adopted by the community that, similarly to the secular "passage into womanhood" or the "emergency baptism" of nonviable fetuses not carried out by priests, provided an opportunity outside of the church for exiting a deviant state. As Eszter Csonka-Takács pointed out in connection with the secular initiation of women who have recently given birth: through a private rite of going around a sacred object, like a roadside cross, the unmarried mother could be exonerated, purified, and enter into a new social status (CSONKA-TAKÁCS 2008:140–141). Dániel Bárth mentions several examples of women's initiations that substitute official church rituals, and, like Csonka-Takács, he also attributes the existence and communal acceptance of these "paraliturgical" customs to taboos of impurity, as well as to the individual and community interests in lifting these taboos (BÁRTH: 2007:91). To this day, the aforementioned emergency baptism functions in Gyimes as a rite that substitutes the official church ritual. The rite can be done by all Christians. Its essential accessories: the holy water or ordinary water, perhaps saliva, used for the blessing, and the text of the baptismal formula.

Like the secular passage into womanhood, the Csíksomlyó ring exchange is about seeking out a sacred place or sacred object (the statue at the Csíksomlyó church), usually on a feast day (most often at Pentecost), where they essentially perform an analogy of a church wedding with a roughly defined series of rites; without the presence of a priest and witnesses, they confer on each other the sacrament of matrimony. Thus, the most important motivation of the earliest Csíksomlyó betrothals was to ensure the legitimate and consecrated nature of the partnership and its personal and community acceptance.

The Csíksomlyó ring exchange did not permanently replace the church wedding; it only temporarily replaced it, sometimes for an extended period. Csíksomlyó ring exchanges were often followed by long engagements. Cohabiting couples expecting a baby wanted to legitimize their illegitimate relationship through this rite. Wearing a ring changed the social status of unmarried mothers, lifting them out of a role stigmatized as deviant, while in the case of men, it symbolized the responsibility of their roles as a "pater". In "A Real Man's Ring: Gender and the Invention of Tradition" (HOWARD 2003), Vicki Howard also emphasizes the divergent social gender interpretations of the wedding ring. In the USA, the groom's ring became popular in the post-WWII era when wedding, marriage and the "tamed man" became symbols of prosperity, capitalism and national stability. The groom's ring also symbolized new kinds of obligations. Women interpreted the wedding ring set differently, and many maidens were wearing a wedding ring because it represented a kind of expected social status (HOWARD 2003). In Gyimes, the social

representation of betrothal (people talking about it) and wearing the wedding ring also communicated to the community that when their economic situation or family problems are settled, they will indeed marry. In his work, "Premarital Prediction of Marital Quality or Breakup", Thomas B. Holman argues that the success or failure of marriages is related to the positive or negative nature of communication between the married parties. He also points out that the quality of communication between couples before marriage predicts the success of the marriage. Referring to Robert N. Bellah's 1985 research, he considers contemporary marriages a metaphor for communication (CARROLL – HOLMAN 2001:142). In terms of communication processes between couples, the Somlyó ring exchange was also essential in Gyimes because it counted – and still counts today – as a sort of "couples therapy". After all, young couples are clarifying their relationship and their prospects under ritual conditions. The wedding ring is meant to represent a legitimate, community-recognized relationship and indicates the upcoming marriage.

ADAPTABLE PATTERNS – ANALOGIES OF ROMAN CATHOLIC AND ORTHODOX CHURCH WEDDINGS, CSÍKSOMLYÓ PILGRIMAGE, MARIAN DEVOTION

The most important feature of the Csíksomlyó ring exchange is that the couples tried to confer on each other a sacrament similar to marriage. But how and from what patterns was the betrothal rite of Csíksomlyó created? I assume it is not merely a matter of imitating the Roman Catholic church wedding or of the spontaneous expansion of "normal" betrothals, but rather we are looking at much more complex relationships. I identify here all the possible adaptable patterns and parallels that could have determined, ideologically and/or at the level of practices and rites, the concept and creation of the tradition of the Csíksomlyó ring exchange.

During the ring exchange, the elements of the Roman Catholic wedding ceremony that are considered to be most important are being utilized and placed in a new context. If we take the most important ritual elements of the ring exchange (attending mass; certain lines of the marriage vows, the declaration of intention of marriage; ring exchange while kneeling at Mary's feet; prayer/supplication to the Virgin Mary of Csíksomlyó; monetary or flower offerings to the Virgin Mother), and compare them with the liturgy of Roman Catholic church wedding ceremonies, we can discover striking similarities. In the Gyimes wedding ceremony, among other things, the couple proclaims their intention of marriage, the "ancient Hungarian custom" of sworn promise is made, and the priest blesses the rings, which the husband and wife then put on each other's fingers as a sign of love and fidelity. After the blessing of the marriage, the newlyweds bring white flowers to the altar of Mary and pray for a happy marriage, asking for Mary's help. Here I must note that after the wedding, Gyimes brides often hid the *lucky coin* concealed in their shoes behind a representation of Mary: it may have been a public sculpture, or even in the private sphere, a painting of Mary on a wall. The offering of flowers and prayers to Mary was followed by a common prayer, after which the priest blessed the newlywed couple.

According to the logic of the people of Gyimes, through these betrothal rites, they hope for the blessing of the Virgin Mary (and her statue at Csíksomlyó), who had an important

role in their daily religious life, for which there is no possibility (yet) within the framework of the Roman Catholic Church. By the way, in the 2006 Hungarian edition of the "Order of the Marriage Ceremony (Roman Ritual)", there is already a reference to the ceremony of the blessing of the betrothed couple. The diocesan priest of Vác said the rite should be conducted so that it is clear: it is not a marriage ceremony or some kind of anticipation of it, "for we cannot create the semblance of the church blessing pre-marital cohabitation. For this reason, according to the rules, it never can be done during the Holy Mass" (KÁPOSZTÁS 2008: 64). In Gyimes, there has not (yet) been such a local ecclesiastical initiative, young couples may only request a mass after their betrothal, but the function of the betrothal rite of Csíksomlyó best corresponds to this ecclesiastical ceremony, with the difference that in Gyimes this is done bypassing the local church. The ritualistic features of Marian devotion in Gyimes are highlighted in the script of the Csíksomlyó betrothal: the prayers, the gestures of asking for a blessing, help and absolution, and the various offerings to Mary are present in both festive and everyday religious practices (KAJÁRI 2008; PÓCS 2008). I emphasize the particular veneration of the Csíksomlyó statue in Gyimes, including the intent to meet Mary, to touch the statue, the offerings, the act of asking for help, and the miraculous, healing power attributed to the statue. I mentioned the act of touching the statue with the wedding rings among the associated elements of the Csíksomlyó betrothal, which can be paralleled with other magic-religious acts related to the statue practiced by the Csángó of Gyimes: for example, when they arrive at the Csíksomlyó shrine, they try to wipe the statue with their handkerchief or a piece of clothing (not just during feast days). In the past few years, due to the preservation of the sculpture, two girls in a "Székely/ Sekler outfit" have been tasked with the touching during the Csíksomlyó pilgrimage. The handkerchief that touched the statue is preserved and cherished, and used for healing if in need. Special powers are also attributed to the rings that came in contact with the statue, which is further reinforced by the ecclesiastical blessing. The wedding ring protects the betrothed and newlyweds and their relationship, but it can also be used for removing a curse. Csíksomlyó church weddings (of friends, acquaintances or relatives), of which the statue of the Virgin Mary is often a central element (through prayers, asking for blessings, offering money and flowers), may also have served as examples. Essentially, we may be talking about an extension of a religious aspect of the Csíksomlyó pilgrimage,[8] a new motivation for visiting the statue of Our Lady.

Due to the origins of the Csíksomlyó betrothal in Háromkút and the long-term coexistence and interaction between Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics and Orthodox Romanians and Hungarians (as well as Gyimes, and primarily the Orthodox minority of Gyimesbükk), we must also consider the possible effects and parallels of Orthodox and Greek Catholic betrothal and wedding liturgies. Of particular interest to us is the ring ceremony of the Orthodox and Greek Catholic wedding liturgy, which involves

not only the blessing and exchange of rings, but also a complex betrothal ceremony. Because of the similarity of Greek Catholic and Orthodox betrothal rites, I mention primarily the Orthodox betrothal. The exchange of rings is technically not even part of the Orthodox wedding ceremony, but a separate complex complex *church betrothal ceremony* (Romanian term 'logodna'), which in Gyimes, up until the 2000s, may have preceded the *church wedding* ('cununie') by a month or two. Ecclesiastical betrothals are already mentioned by 8th–12th-century sources (GAVRILĂ 2004:119–148; CANONUL ORTODOXIEI 2008:909–1032; VANCA 1998:82–98). Orthodox betrothal is today an integral, independent unit of the church wedding. The newer church wedding is a mixture of these two previously separate rites (betrothal and actual wedding). In Orthodox weddings in Gyimes, members of the wedding party – bridegroom, bride, wedding host, and priest – meet at the back of the church. During the betrothal ceremony, the priest traces the sign of the cross in the air over the young couple's head three times, thereby "betrothing" them to each other, then touches the rings to their foreheads. They exchange rings three times, the bride's ring is put on the groom's finger and vice versa. The rings symbolize the betrothal itself. After the exchange of rings, the coronation ceremony – the actual wedding – begins. The priest and the betrothed go to a small table. Before the 2000s, Orthodox betrothal could also take place in a family circle (*profane, civil betrothal ceremony*, 'logodna civilă'), which, although not mandatory, was in most cases followed by the church blessing and confirmation. The betrothal ceremony was held in the home of one of the betrothed's parents over a family lunch or supper. The festive betrothal was not a preparation for the marriage but the genuine commencement of it. In many cases, ecclesiastical betrothals were regarded as a temporary substitute for the wedding. For parents, young couples and the community, it also meant the anticipation of marriage, a firm promise to marry. In many cases, the young couple moved in together after the betrothal.[9] The ecclesiastical limitation of the ecclesiastical betrothal preceding the Orthodox church wedding by months is interesting: merging the betrothal with the wedding. Local priests, and Orthodox churches in Romania in general, wanted to prevent church weddings from being postponed and quasi-substituted by sanctioning the betrothals and legalizing the status of the betrothed. Many considered the ecclesiastical betrothals preceding the church wedding as the *legalization of cohabitaion* ('legalizare a concubinajului'), which is in no way permissible. In any case, the ecclesiastical and secular rites of the Orthodox betrothal ceremony, and especially the notion that the exchange of rings and wearing of rings is the precursor and temporary substitution for the church wedding, may, in my view, have influenced the rite organization and the ideology and interpretations of the Csíksomlyó betrothals. The marriage-substituting, precursory role of the Csíksomlyó betrothal can be definitely paralleled with the similar function of Orthodox and Greek Catholic ecclesiastical betrothals.

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[8] Here I just note the most important comprehensive works: Tamás Mohay's work on the Pilgrimage in Csiksomlyó addresses the research history of the topics in question (MOHAY 2009), Sándor Bálint's work surveys his research on the St Mary Shrine in Szeged-Alsóváros (BÁLINT 1983).László Székely's book, "Devotion in Csík", is important for the St Mary cult of the Székely people (Székely 1995).In terms of my subject, Krisztina Frauhammer's 1999 book, "Letters to Mary" (FRAUHAMMER 1999) are important, as well as her 2009 doctoral dissertation, in which she undertook a comparative analysis of the guest books of Hungarian shrines and specifically analyzed the prayers written to Mary regarding love and partnership (FRAUHAMMER 2009).

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[9] Until the publication of the new *Civil Code* (Volume II, paragraphs 266–270), which entered into force on October 1, 2011 (and which also affects the legal aspects of the engagement), the obligation of the betrothed couple to marry was only moral in nature, not legal, both civic and in ecclesiastical terms.

2000–2016: FROM DEVIANCE TO NORM – NEW TENDENCIES IN THE CSÍKSOMLYÓ BETROTHAL

From the late 1990s, early 2000s, the elimination of a deviant state and the pursuit of community acceptance slowly faded from among the motivations of the Csíksomlyó ring exchange. The formerly deviant, "abnormal" nature of the rite as a wedding substitution or replacement for a wedding was clearly de-emphasized. All this was related to the slow change in local opinions on premarital cohabitation. Because even though the Church continues to urge expeditious weddings, cohabitation and premarital childbearing are condemned by local priest to a much lesser extent. Indeed, Catholic priests in Gyimes emphasize that the conception and birth of a child in itself cannot be a reason for marriage. The bride's pregnancy may actually be a barrier to marriage because of the risk that the parties are not getting married for love but rather for the child's sake, especially when it comes to a pregnancy following a short acquaintance. As one of the priests said in 2011:

> When they come in, I ask, of course, is there a reason for the wedding? And then they say they are expecting a baby. And I'll ask, is that why you are getting married? Because it could even be an obstacle, for if she feels compelled, the boy's parents coming with honor this, honor that (…) if we look at it that way, it's a compulsion, that cannot be a reason for marriage. I had one such case. (…) In another case, the girl became so very fond of that boy that she would have done anything she could to keep him. (…) So she got pregnant, and of course the boy married her. Then of course I heard from the faithful that there was no child, but there could still be, I said, and they said, Father, there never will be. Because she did not want one, she just wanted the boy to marry her. Well, what can be done in such a case? The interest; and of course she's surprised later that things are not going well. (…)

At the same time, the Csíksomlyó rite remains more overrepresented among those who had somehow violated the community standards, cohabited or had a child before marriage, and it was therefore not appropriate to organize a larger, more festive betrothal. In such cases, the simpler, more modest Csíksomlyó betrothal is considered as a kind of sanction. I asked a groom's mother in 2007:

> – So you did not even participate in the betrothal?
> – No, I was not there, only they were. There was no big ceremony. (…) The older one had it like that, too, my older son, his bride got pregnant, too, and this one is pregnant, too, she is not so big, but if she is pregnant, they say this is what's appropriate. So this is what we do.

In this context, the new Csíksomlyó betrothals are often the beginning of shorter betrothals. A 45-year-old woman explained this in 2008 as follows:

> – And why would that be [i.e., why are Csíksomlyó betrothals arranged]?
> – (…) because whoever puts on a ring is already sworn to be preparing for the wedding, because it is not a long-term betrothal, not that they will be getting married in a year, but in three or four months. They put on a ring when they count on getting married … But they usually betroth each other when they know they will be getting married. In the old days, there were some that went on for a long time and in the meantime they broke up and the rings were returned.

Between 2000 and 2010, the Csíksomlyó ring exchange became an integral part of local betrothal practices. It had several different narratives and interpretations attached to it. Like, for example, the rhetorical strategy by which young couples distinguished their own, newer Somlyó betrothals from the previous versions of it as a "marriage substitute". The new betrothals were considered *modern* and *fashionable* and fundamentally *beautiful*. Another characteristic was ignoring the history of the Csíksomlyó rite, i.e., thinking that it was a completely newly created tradition with no precedent. Some of my conversation partners even assumed the rite had its origins in Hungary. It was also common among rite organizers to assume a kind of cultural continuity, and referring to their own Somlyó betrothal as a traditional "Csángó" betrothal: "I am preserving the old Csángó traditions". In addition to highlighting the old or modern features of the rite, the practical, economic and religious motivations of rite organization were often emphasized. According to my conversation partners from Gyimes, young couples are now getting betrothed in Csíksomlyó because it is an important cost-saving aspect, as is asking for a blessing for the betrothal. When choosing the Csíksomlyó betrothal, "no big fuss" is required, thus saving costs, and they are also putting their "trust in the Virgin Mary of Csíksomlyó".

Here are a few examples of the newer, highly fashionable Csíksomlyó betrothals between 2000 and 2010. During a 2006 Csíksomlyó betrothal, the young couple put the rings on in front of "Mary of Csíksomlyó", and after the ring exchange, they shared a supper in the presence of parents, siblings and grandparents. The young couple decided jointly that they would like such a betrothal because, as they said, they used visit Csíksomlyó often to ask for "Mary's help". The rite took place as follows. At home, they attended mass in the morning because they did not know the order of masses in Csíksomlyó. Then, as they told me:

> – (…) your betrothal, how was that for you?
> – Well, it was at Christmas, in our family home. And it was just that we went to Somlyó, we put on the rings in front of Mary, then there was a supper in the evening, with only my parents, her parents, and the siblings, and my grandparents.
> – And who had the idea to have the betrothal in Csíksomlyó?
> – Both of us together. (…) we used to go out there and ask for Her help.

The young couple traveled to Csíksomlyó by bus, where they exchanged rings while kneeling in front of the statue of Mary in the shrine. During the ring exchange, "they said something to each other, something simple, a promise: "so God help me, Our Lady the Blessed Virgin Mary, that I love you, X, and I am marrying you for love …". During the vow, they touched the feet of the statue. They also decided on the Somlyó betrothal so they would not have to spend much on the betrothal. A 42-year-old conversation partner of mine was present at her daughter's Csíksomlyó betrothal on February 14, 2008. The bride was already living with her fiancé in Csíkszereda before the betrothal. Kneeling before the statue, the young couple put on their rings, which they kissed before exchanging them, and accompanied them by some words: "Do you want to be my wife? Do you accept to this ring?" "Wear this ring as a symbol of my love and fidelity, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." The parents and the younger, unmarried siblings were present, and the ring exchange was followed by a dinner at the

groom's family. It was the wish of the young couple to get engaged in Csíksomlyó and on Valentine's Day, on the day of lovers.

I also mention a 2008 ring exchange that practically never took place, but family members and neighbors nevertheless referred to it as a Csíksomlyó betrothal. The young couple set their betrothal date for the time of the pilgrimage in Csíksomlyó. According to the 21-year-old bride, they planned the betrothal in Csíksomlyó because they did not want anything big so they would not have to make preparations. The bride's early pregnancy was also a factor in the simple betrothal. Eventually, it did not happen because of the Pentecostal crowds:

> – Well, the betrothal was nothing much, we did not want anything bigger, as it was the Pentecostal pilgrimage [to Csíksomlyó], and we thought we would just put on the rings there. There were a lot of people, and we could not go up to Mary, but that's where we wanted to do it, so we did not put them on that Saturday, and on Sunday I could not go in, it was very warm. So then, on Monday, we just put them on here at home, the two of us.
> – And why did you decide that you wanted it to be just the two of you?
> – We did not want a big fuss.

Talk of the rite was confined to the planned but unrealized rite. Relatives who knew about the failed betrothal attempt considered the intention of the young couple to be more important, and despite the fact that they did not exchange rings at their chosen site, they still referred to it as a Csíksomlyó ring exchange because the young couple went to the holy place on the holy day, and the betrothal took place shortly after their stay in Csíksomlyó, in the bride's home, "between the two of them". A newlywed girl from Bükkhavas, according to the bride's sister-in-law, also had a Csíksomlyó ring exchange, and the bride's 51-year-old mother spoke of a Csíksomlyó betrothal. She was not even aware that the young couple did not exchange rings there but at home:

> – Well, they went to the Csíksomlyó pilgrimage, took the parcels with the stuff for under the cross, their clothes, and the food. And then they went up to Mary and there they put on the rings there.
> – And did they say something?
> – Well, they prayed silently.
> – And nothing else happened after the ring exchange was done?
> – No.
> – Did they not plan a dinner or something?
> – Well, we did not plan one because our other daughter did not have one, so we did not do it for her either.

I heard news of a number of Csíksomlyó betrothals up until the early 2010s; it was very popular among young people. By now, the rite has slowly become only one of the many betrothal rites that one can opt for.

There are two major types of betrothals distinguished in Gyimes: larger ones that take place in the presence of groomsmen, and *smaller ceremonies*. Smaller betrothals are further divided into two more types: *family* and *individual betrothals*. The rite of the Csíksomlyó ring exchanges falls into the latter two subgroups. The shift away from it

is mostly due to the fact that lately they are more likely to prefer bigger betrothals with more participants. According to the latest opinions, the Csíksomlyó rite is not the most perfect option because the most important actors of the rite are missing: the family, the relatives, the groomsmen, all of whom bear witness to the betrothal and also bestow their blessing on it. With regard to individual betrothal, the objection is that the young couple betroth each other in secret to bypass their parents, without asking for their parents' permission or blessing, thus sort of acting behind their backs. This opinion was shared in 2011 by one of the priests of Gyimesközéplok:

> (…) They go to the statue of Mary in Csíksomlyó. There are some that tell me this, because of our relationship. They are more confiding, open, and they used to say they do not want big expenses. Although, although both are correct. There is an official formula in which the godparents, the groomsmen come and there is a proposal. And there are also cases where the parents do not know about it, and that is uncomfortable. In the old days, they would elope, if the boy was a coward. If he dared not say what his intention was. And then they took a liter of pálinka and went to appease the father. But it would still be the right thing, for the family to be there, for a small celebration.

In a 50-year-old woman's opinion from 2014:

> – But I do not condone it. I mean, it's good to put on a ring, but a betrothal is a nice thing, at least with the family. But I think it is good that we are devoted to the Virgin Mother, Our Lady, and that we adore her, but a parent is a parent, and why should the parent not be present. Isn't it so? (…)
> And the parent deserves as much. (…)
> – And those who put them on there are doing it in secret?
> – No, they just do not want such a big fuss.
> – So there would not be a big expense?
> – This is not so much either [i.e., a larger betrothal], because there were not so many of us, it was not such a big gathering, just the groomsmen, and the siblings, and the parents.

The other common criticism of the Csíksomlyó betrothal is about hypocrisy and "sanctimoniousness", i.e., that the participants of the rite create the appearance of religiousness by arranging for a Somlyó betrothal. All this is not directed at specific persons, but rather at the institution of the Csíksomlyó betrothal. According to a 24-year-old man:

> – Well, that's just putting on airs. Individual grandstanding.
> – So, then, is this a religious thing?
> – It's not religion. They are holier-than-thou. Comes out of the church and trash already coming out of his mouth. Ah, sorry, sycophants, adulators. Going up to Mary.

A 60-year-old man thought likewise:

> And they would hold the wedding, and in about a week or two, or after a month they are getting divorced because they do not like each other. Well, then why go to the Virgin Mary? It does not

help anything, nothing. Be honest in your soul, not just to show off where I put on the ring or something like that. It does not matter if I'm putting on the ring in front of the Virgin Mother or where I put on that fucking ring, but it must last a lifetime.

So, it seems that Somlyó betrothals are no longer able to fit the ever-changing local betrothal practices or the local norms and ideas regarding betrothal. While in the past, until the 2010s, the fact that the rite was simple and could be carried out with less financial resources was a positive attribute, nowadays this is considered more of a disadvantage. Instead of the smaller, less public Somlyó betrothals, they now prefer larger, more showy betrothals.

CONCLUSION

In practice, the Csíksomlyó ring exchanges and betrothals of the 1970s-1980s were occasions for ring exchanges outside of the church and preceding the church wedding where young couples exchanged gold or silver wedding rings bought solely for this purpose and wore the rings after the betrothal. In Gyimes, the act and ideology of the Csíksomlyó ring exchange may have greatly contributed to betrothal and the wearing of engagement rings becoming customary. Until the 1990s, the rite was a strategy adopted by the local community which, similarly to the secular, profane passage into womanhood or emergency baptism, offered an opportunity to exit marginal life situations. Young couples performed a roughly defined series of rites as an analogy of a Roman Catholic church wedding and presumably following the ideologies of Orthodox betrothals, which was a sort of stopgap remedy. From the early 2000s, it became an integral part of betrothal practices. Today, this rite is interpreted in a completely different way. We can speak of a kind of fashion or norm following. After its heyday between 2000 and 2010, the rite has slowly lost ground again, becoming but one of the options among small-scale betrothals. Lately, bigger, more festive betrothals are preferred. The Csíksomlyó betrothal is also an example of invented traditions, in the course of which a betrothal tradition has been created by reinterpreting an earlier cultural pattern and adapting certain elements of Marian devotion, pilgrimage, and weddings to meet contemporary expectations and needs.

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New Contexts for the Transmission of Sacred Knowledge: A Case Study from the Carpathian Mountains[1]

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Abstract: This paper inquires about the social reasons and epistemological consequences of sacred knowledge (charms) outside its "original setting", toward an archive of folklore or to a new age journal. Some local specificities of relationships between knowledge and power are explored through multiple contextualisations of an interview we conducted with a former shepherd and healer in the Carpathian Mountains, Romania.

Keywords: charm, serpent, shepherd, Carpathian culture, New Age culture

"There are hardly any shepherds who cannot say charms or cast spells, especially if they are elderly males" (Marian 1875:357). This study concerns such an old man and his 21st- century survival.

FOLKLORE DOCUMENT AND THE SACRED

When we record a certain folkloric piece which has a ritual function in its natural setting, we generally do not expect that its numinous power will be preserved *outside*, during its *second life* (Honko 1998:108). On the contrary, we behave as if it loses any sacred component once turned into a document stored on shelves or in precious boxes, from which different scholars may bring it out, listen to it and then put it back, each having a specific attitude toward its original status and function. But informants do not necessarily

share our ideas over the subjective and relative character of the ritual power and they may consider it absolute and unquestionable. This is why our informants sometimes allow us to record such pieces, but not at other times, each situation having its own mechanisms, meanings and consequences.

The tensions between the etic (e.g. sacred is a concept, a cognitive or aesthetic category of social reality) and the emic (the sacred is a vivid and fundamental component of reality) perspectives are not wound down by avoiding the differences, but possibly through an understanding of how the two approaches over the same reality could relate to one another.

THE STORY

Being interested in the connection between folk religiosity, the configuration of mountainous space and local professional expertises, in 2014 I conducted field research in the Cindrel Mountains (South Carpathian Mountains, Romania) and in the Mărginimea Sibiului area, famous for its intense pastoral activity, including the practice of transhumance. Here I met D. Ș. He was born in 1924, in village G. R., in a family whose members "have been shepherds for generations". Still attached to its pastoral profile, the village opened its gates to rural tourism as well. Besides the economic impact of this new life, the changes that have occurred in recent years are linked with this specific context/frame of intercultural contacts, regarding the (local and foreign) attitudes towards the past and tradition as well. Things are working quite well, and D. Ș. takes part in these new challenges at his turn.

The main reason I wanted to meet D. Ș. was *to talk* with him about mountains, borders, narratives about meeting with supra-natural beings, rites and pastoral practices. In the time spent together, stories, comments and gestures shaped the profile of an intelligent and communicative man; proud, quite humorous, religious, a bit cautious and a bit shy, somewhat difficult to catch, and a fine story teller. He was *the head of the mountain* for 40 consecutive years, chief of all the state-owned sheepfolds. Such a position requires special physical, moral and mental abilities, as well as the quality of being the bearer of professional shepherding knowledge related to zoology and ethology, gastronomy, meteorology – "the sign of the times" – astronomy and spatial orientation, topography, arithmetic, legislation and, last but not least, a repertoire of ritual and empirical therapeutic practices. D. Ș. possesses all of these qualities at the age of 90 and was respectfully referred to by locals as *Babu* (meaning *father, chief*). People in the village said that D. Ș. *knows a lot*, an ambiguous phrase which combines admiration, recognition of authority and a trace of mystery, because not just anybody knows what he *knows.*

D. Ș. spent most of his childhood among shepherds. According to his autobiographical story (which I did not check with the other villagers), when he was 16 years old, he healed an ox and thus became known as a healer within the local and professional community. He continued healing not only animals, but humans as well, and this is the most important quality that he assigned to himself. Actually, the first words he said when saw us were: "No matter what might hurt you, just tell me, and I'll help you." This somehow unexpected situation reshaped the interview, and so therapeutic issues came to be included among the topics of discussion.

In this regard, I became interested in what D. Ș. meant by *therapeutic act,* asking myself the following questions: How does he define himself on light of the authority of knowledge that he bears and transmits? What value does it have for him? What are the circumstances when he agrees to use this special type of knowledge and skills, and how are all these connected with shepherding and with his position? What does tradition signify to him? What does an outsider mean to him?

This article aims to articulate an answer that will integrate the questions above in order to catch some aspects linked with the contemporary dynamic of traditional knowledge and of attitudes towards sacredness, namely the alterations of functions that a certain charm and narrative suffer while transmitted through different means, within different contexts, including an archive of folklore or a mass media journal.

One case study will be presented here, one which will not serve as the basis for assumptions ready to be mechanically extended to the entire phenomenon integrating the topic of our study. However, as a result of successively examining different contexts (genetic and generic, social, political and religious), we will be able to make an extended set of general remarks regarding the status of *sacred knowledge,* of the *secret* and of *those who know* in our times, when (even) traditional society is adjusting to new paradigms of disseminating information, characterized by widely spreading any type of data, by promoting anybody's unlimited access to any type of knowledge, anywhere.

– (…) Long time ago there were no remedies, there were plants! (…) When you see [your sheep – L.J.I.] are not well, you make some bran, take it to the priest, he does this… then, you give it to the sheep to eat. There are sheep … you see them how they lower their ears and stop eating and they're hungry. *"Whoops! Evil eye!"*
– Evil eye you said?
– There are [people] with evil eye.
– What do you do when you see this?
– Well, you mumble, you grumble.
– What are you mumbling?
– Well, not all secrets can be told.
– How shall I find them out if you aren't telling me?
– Let me tell you something. Have you ever gone to a priest to confess?
– Yes, I have.
– Did you tell him everything then?
– [pretends she hasn't heard the question] Apart from that mumbling that we don't want to find out, what else do you do? Do you burn something around them…?
– You say something.
– Aloud?
– *Mmm*… [a few seconds of silence]
– But were there any charms to bring back the [magic] stolen of the sheep's milk?
– I don't want to learn those any longer.
– But there were some charms?
– [after a few seconds of silence, he started to narrate] 'Cause the sheep were there, from one side of the mountain to the other. They said: "Bring here the polenta caldron" (…) And stabbed the fir tree with a knife. And put the cauldron. Stole the milk. And if the sheep were barren, it was blood streaming out. And if you didn't know what to do, all of them would

die. And I hired a shepherd. I was – above the shepherds it was somebody called head of the mountain – for 40 years the head of the mountain was me (...). And I hired a shepherd I didn't know [he sighs]. And I *felt that he...knows something.* When I hired him, he asked me which my sheep mark is. And I told him how they are marked. "Who else is watching the sheep with you?" I said: "My brothers". "Which are their marks?" "This and that." Good. Each summer three, four of the sheep die. *And he went to the barren ones.* These are sent out to graze on a higher level, on a peak. And I was working in the hayfield, near Păltiniş. (...) A hut, like this, a hut. (...). And, my shepherds called me [up] there, as I had more sheep and I had to take the cheese. (...) I left my wife at the lower sheepfold and mounted the horse and set off. I went there and the shepherds were waiting for me. The shepherds said: "Bade, the ones from the barren sheep, wretched lot. They have some bad sheep. And (...) there is an unclear thing there; the new one, they said, the one that you've just hired, he is not good". I didn't say anything. (...). "Don't worry, I'll see to it." We started to take the cheese. It was the shepherd there and one more person. And we left the horses in the field. And that one from up there, he saw the horses at the sheepfold. He said: "Oi, Ş. has come. The boss came". I just saw him. [And he said:] "You, Babu, have you come?" "I have." "Come to the sheep, come and look at the sheep. Your men mock me and I am going to kill somebody!" "Don't be stupid! Can't you just get on well for three months? What do you want? Do you want to go to prison? Don't you like to be free? Ok, I'm coming. Just to put the cheese in." [explaining to us] I was being cunning. (...) – to put the cheese in to run down the mountain. But he, more cunning than me, said: "I'll stay here to help you." We put the cheese in and when we finished, "Let's go now." I left. (...) The others, the shepherd and the others said: "We're also leaving, Babu D." "All right, lads." Walking back *... I saw he knew something. To hear what he was mumbling,* those words I was interested in, I went up to a certain place. There the path branched off. "This guy", I said, "is going to Tică's hut. And this other path takes us up the hill to Niculiţă's place, where the hunters shoot wood grouses. Ion, would you like to see it?" He said: "I would, Babu." "You'll see where they shoot them, I'll show you the wood grouses and *the two of us will walk this way and the others walk the other way.* The first one who reaches Tică's hut should give us a loud shout." And I left with this guy. And we walked. Here, up the hill, at Niculiţă's place, there were no more fir trees and we walked across that clearing. And I said: "You, Ion, when you stab the fir tree with a knife and blood streams down...and if you don't know what to do, the sheep will die...". He said: "I don't know anything". "Hey!! I don't need anything but the words! I turn the lamb coat inside out and beat it with my crook as strongly as I can, and (...) the one who harmed the sheep, feels the pain." And [explaining for us – L.J.I.] you need the kid of an un-yeaned goat (...) You need its skin. He says: "You know more than me." "Hey, Ion, just tell me the words!" He was walking ahead and I followed him. He had a crook as thick as a man's arm and I had just a thin one like a broomstick. And I kept asking him to tell me the words. Then I couldn't take any steps: snakes surrounded me! God is above us and He hears if I lie! And what snakes! With hairy heads, so hairy that they couldn't see! And they stood up on their tail, as tall as me, and stuck out their tongues, to bite me. I waved my hands and couldn't take any steps forward. If I was standing like this [he shows us that he was standing still – L.J.I.], they were down. If I was moving, they were making a ssssshuuuu sound. "Hey, Ion, hey!" I was shouting; he was as far as that gate is now. He sat down. Me: "Hey, Ion! Come, dear! Give me your crook!" "What do you want to do with it? Don't you dare to kill any of them, 'cause you'll not see another good day in your life!". I crossed myself and...said to myself: "I'm travelling with the devil". Each time I moved, the snakes were standing on their tails to bite me! I cried out to the other shepherds: "Hey!

Come down here, hey you!" This one saw that it wasn't a joke. "Hey, Ion, give me your crook!" "What to do with it?" "I want to take the crook, jump over, to run away from here!" He came over there and gave me his crook. I didn't attack and hit any snakes to see what happened. I just waved the crook as if I had mowed. And when I did it, there was ...only dust. And all around, no snakes. He asked: "Where? What did you see? You didn't see anything." "You, I said, you are not clean". And I went away. (...)

And it was another shepherd together with this Ion. When I got there, I've never seen such sheep. Black wool and good and nice. "Where do you take them to graze? Where do they eat?" He says: "For a week now we've been walking on all the mountains, *we're afraid of nobody.*" And in the autumn, from all the flock, only two sheep of mine there were missing. And the one who had a quarrel with him [with the outlander – L.J.I.] had only few sheep left in the autumn; they would die one after the other.

– Well, this boy protected your sheep a bit.

– He protected them, but he didn't do good things; he did devilish things. Since then, I've never wanted to ask about those mumbled words.

– Where did he go to then? Did he leave this place or stay with other shepherds?

– He went away. He was from another village. In Jina. All sorts of people.

– Have you ever met somebody, not necessarily a person, on the road?

– [with tears] Don't ask me all these things.

– All right.

– I once took my cart through a forest. And there were low branches and I had to duck my head. And I see a woman at the side of the road. (...).

He went on telling us another memorate about Good Friday. The dramatic core of the narrative above is represented by the transmission of the *words* of the therapeutic charm meant to recover the barren sheep, collateral victims of the spell for milk stealing. However, the entire message of the memorata (not only *what Babu* D. Ş. says but also *to whom, why* and *what he means* when he says what he says) is less obvious and is shaped by many layers – the text, the meta-text and the para-text – which also includes us, the fieldworker, in the transmission of the charm, along with the two characters directly involved in the events. We have included the transcription of the story in the discussion which triggered it (the evil eyes), because, as we will mention further, this very beginning helps to build the message. The entire interview (30 pages long) cannot be transcribed here but, when necessary, we will quote some other excerpts. The document can be found in the Archive of the Ethnography and Folklore Institute (AIEF), Information Fund, no. I. 34883.

Therefore, we will start from the fragment transcribed above, which will be integrated into the entire interview, then into the performance event, which in turn will be seen as part of a series of events prior to our field work.

THE CONFRONTATION

1. Shepherd's Crook

It is a crucial element in the props of any shepherd, used as weapon against wild animals and humans, as a stick for travelling, as support for the standing body, and as mark of the owner's identity. In order to decode *Babu*'s message, we have to reintegrate the story into the larger system of folk beliefs, at their turn expressed through legendary narratives. In this regard, its essential role in the narrative quoted above is to mark the fundamental difference between the two opposing characters: one is placed under the sign of magic, while the other chooses God's authority. Allow me to explain this statement interpretation with a fragment from Exodus, Chapters 4 and 7:

> "The Lord said to him [to Moses], 'What is that in your hand?' And he said, 'A staff.'
> Then He said: 'Throw it on the ground!' So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent. And Moses fled from it. But the Lord said to Moses: 'Stretch out your hand and grasp it by its tail.' So, he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it turned back into the staff in his hand" (Exodus, 4:2-5). "Later the Lord said: 'And you shall take this rod in your hand with which you shall work the signs'." (Exodus 4:17).

It should be considered as fact that, at that moment, Moses was a shepherd; hence he was holding a shepherd's crook, which God endowed with miraculous power! Later:

> "So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the Lord commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs." (Exodus 7:10–11)[2]

At least for the Orthodox milieu (to which *Babu* belongs), the popularity of this episode derives from the fact that, alongside the Biblical text, it is inserted in sermons, one of them being *The Sunday of the Thin Man*.

Tangentially relevant to our topic, we would like to mention a belief recorded in the Eastern Carpathians Mountains, in Valea Bistriței: "The shepherd thought that his arm is powerful only when he is holding the crook adorned with the figure of a serpent. At night, before going to sleep, he would say the same charm and make the sign of the cross because he was afraid that if he didn't do so, the serpent could escape from his power, free itself, turn into a dragoon (Ro *balaur*) and eat the sheep" (PRUT 1972:32). Such a crook was not and is not a common object and we do not think that anybody can have one. In our story, no serpents carved on Ion's bludgeon are mentioned. However, D. Ș. remarked the difference in status, mirrored by the difference in the proportions of the two rods

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[2] We use the translation available on www.biblegateway.com.

– He had a crook as thick as a man's arm and I had just a thin one like a broomstick – and that only Ion's staff had power over the serpents.

However, Ion's real identity as a powerful wizard (which was hidden at the profane level), was revealed by his very bludgeon, which turned into a sign of power.

Therefore, the confrontation between Aaron and the sorcerers is relevant to our story because D. Ș. had two options: the magic authority (represented by the Biblical sorcerers and in our story by Ion, whose power is illusory, considering that the snakes turn into dust), and the religious one (represented by Aaron, whose snake swallows the sorcerers' snakes). Apparently, D. Ș. chose the latter one: *"God is above us, so help me God. (...) I made the sign of the cross and ... I said: 'I'm travelling with the devil!'"* (We will return to this aspect later).

2. D. Ș.'s failure as a knowledge receiver and the meaning of the serpents' appearance. The hidden spell

Considering that the efficiency of the ritual is ensured by a functional systemic relation between gestures, verbal structures, props, performers and rules of space and time, D. Ș. knew very well that without the *words*, the *bomboroaie,* the scenario would not work. The very *words* that he requested represented a form of sacred knowledge placed under the interdiction of explicitly transmitting them or revealing the verbal structures only in ritually conditioned contexts.

Ovidiu Bîrlea wrote:

> "The ritual practice recommends learning the charm by stealing it, by spying on the one who is performing it for you, which seems to be linked with its numenal efficiency. It is known that its efficiency is annihilated when the charm is told to somebody else, and some even have punitive effects, turning the evil thing against the charmer who dared to break the interdiction of the secret. (...). Such numenal virtue is guaranteed firstly by the mystery veil which covers all its forms of manifestation, starting with its indirect, clandestine learning" (BÎRLEA 1983:12–13).

With some local particularities, similar situations are attested to all over Europe and Asia (see KÕIVA 1996; PASSALIS 2011; ROOPER 2009; SMALLWOOD 2004).

Knowledge as a source of power
Although *Babu* seemed to have the upper hand (as head of the mountain and employer), the situation changes when they display their magical and therapeutic abilities. Therefore, social hierarchy is not the same as the ritual one: Ion's boss becomes his subordinate, asking for access to the sacred knowledge, access which is finally denied.

The transmission of a charm is in itself a ritual articulated on an initiation structure, the success of which depends on observing the rules and on the vocation or talent of the apprentice.

In our narrative, these are highlighted by the following contexts, in which D. Ș. hopes *to receive the words*: a) in consecrated space: on the road – *Walking on the road...* space of liminality and transition, similar to an initiation ritual – and on the high mountain area, away

from inhabited places, an area which in this case is the pasture level for all the sheep, even for the barren ones; b) without any witnesses (D. Ş. sends the other shepherds to follow a different path); c) within the professional pastoral community; d) from man to man.

D. Ş. seems to have the qualities necessary for a receiver of the charm, sensing the hidden, covert side of Ion's personality – *I saw this guy knows something* – thus activating the abilities favourable to sacred communication: enhanced attention, the ability to listen, to hear and to *understand* (closely connected with this requirement can be placed the strategy of whispering the charm, barely audible to the untrained ear), to memorize (the charm must be learnt after being heard for the first time). Being alert and on the prowl are the conditions for initiation that *Babu* tried to fulfil. Yet, we still do not know why Ion does not say anything (or he might have said something, but was not heard?!), refusing to teach D. Ş. the *words*. We already know that *stealing* the words of the charm is one of the fundamental conditions for preserving the magic power and must be observed by both the one who *has* the sacred verbal structure and the one who *receives* it. However, *Babu* forces the rule and makes the mistake of *requesting* the charm – he asks for the secret of knowledge – explicitly and insistently. Consequently, Ion's reaction is prompt and violent. The power given by the sacred knowledge comes not only from knowing the unique verbal or gesture elements, but also from being aware and observing the rules which articulate the updating and transmission process, by ritually performing the structure. Without the latter elements, communication (horizontal, between the two people, and vertical, with the numen) remains incomplete and the initiation fails.

Therefore, even if he proved to have some special faculties that could recommend him as a charm receiver, *Babu* was denied the special status of somebody who knows the requested verbal structure. The appearance of the snakes functions as a warning, blocking D. Ş.'s access to a path he was not destined to be on (as the serpents' barrier may be decoded).

However, apart from the frame of unsuccessful magical initiation, what happened during the ritual confrontation influenced D. Ş.'s further social and professional identity: as a good shepherd and a leader, he was supposed to be able to take care of the flocks, a responsibility that meant, alongside other duties, protecting them from magic intervention and, if necessary, annihilating the influence of such attacks. "You cannot be a sheep breeder if you don't know the sheep. Only by looking at a sheep, you must know what remedy to give. (…) And if they were barren, blood would stream out. And if you didn't know what to do, they would all die."

We conclude that for *Babu*, healing animals (combining empirical techniques, plants and magic practices, if necessary) is not valuable only in itself, but is also a component of pastoral science which gives professional fame and recognition.

Therefore, his entire career was marked by this failure: D. Ş. will not know how to protect the barren sheep from the terrible magic attack which brings death. If needed, he will not be able to integrally respect either his position as *head of the mountain,* or his trade; his competencies will be shadowed by fragility.

This is the reading key in which his self-image was altered and he needed an excuse focused on his opposing attitude: Ion *did some devilish things. Since then, I've had no interest in charms.* The refusal of magic will define the religious character of his healing acts. Significantly, he also emphasized it: "It's God who heals with His power, not me.

(…) My parents taught me never to steal anything[3] and always believe in God. And with these two, you can go further. Make the sign of the holy cross and all devils will run away."

3. Babu as knowledge deliverer

Any kind of knowledge works as a process and system among the components of the same information corpus (open!), thus giving rise to fluent cohabitation relations which are centripetal, in the case of a balanced structure. The integrative quality of knowledge, configured by the interdependence of many ideas and reality domains, does not imply the absence of contradictions in data, approaches and principles.

What D. Ş. *knows* goes beyond the domain of healing. We artificially limit our approach to the healing element, considering that even when he tells a story or applies some empirical medical knowledge, his whole information repertoire (including the supernatural characters and religious narratives) is re-evaluated and somehow updated. Trying to slightly and relatively improve the fragmentation resulting from the material selected above, in the next phase of our analysis, we will consider other segments of this interview. In this wider context, to whom, how and how much does D.Ş hand down his *secrets*?

I. Within his family, to his own offspring:

"We have children. I took them to the mountains to show them the plants, but they don't want to deal with this. They started in this, and they ran away. (…) When the rain started, I have two grandchildren, I told them: 'Come, the times are changing. (…) I'll break them in, eventually: I'll die and you'll be asked: whose son are you? Ş.'s. Well, your father knew many things. What do you know?'"

His son is a vet, not interested in his father's empirical therapy. (We will return to this detail).

II. Within the local professional communities, to an apprentice. In fact, he did not mention anybody who had taken over his profession, with everything it entails, including therapeutic competencies, empirical or magic.

III. Within the context of the interview, to the foreigner, who becomes a link in the process of oral transmission and the first source in branching out the *first* network, thus spreading the formalized information outside its natural frame, towards new contexts which will articulate *the second life* of the charm. I was part of this third situation and therefore I have an internal view on it, useful for analysing the meta-cultural expressions and para-textual functions of D. Ş.'s memorate. These appeared as a result of the narrator's interaction with the listener, of the effort to captivate the researcher, not only in the dialogue, but also in the narrated experience, with consequences on the final form of the folkloric document and on the meanings it is given.

The reasons a story teller narrates a certain story differs from one situation to another and they are part of the integral message. In this regards the question is: what we think about *Babu*'s reasons to tell us the story with Ion.

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[3] Is this a possible allusion to the very magic practice of stealing the sheep' milk?

I participated in the interview having different hypostases of *my* multiple identity:[4] I asked, answered, reacted like an outsider, a possible patient, an investigator, a tourist, a (younger) woman talking with a (older) man, and, in fact, mainly like a field folklorist researcher. From all these facets there is one that is missing: the real professional and magic follower of D. Ș. Still, I do not know which of these *Babu* was dominantly addressing. At his turn, he asked questions, gave answers and reacted as a shepherd, a church singer, an old man, a local person, a bearer of pastoral traditions, a healer, and an owner of charms (charms other than the one he requested from Ion).

As I have already mentioned, the interview was not reduced to healing or incantation topics, although their weight was consistent. While being asked about the charm against evil eyes, indirectly but suggestively enough, he mentioned that we should not talk about it. *Babu* observed the requirements of keeping the spell undisclosed, using different strategies (similar to those that Ion used when D. Ș. was insisting): explicitly refusing to say the spell (*You see, not all secrets can be disclosed*), elusively delaying the answer with equivocal words or simple sounds (*Mmmm*), denying his own competence (*I don't know anything*) or even miming incompetence and subordination to the one who asks (*You know better than me*), and, not least important, telling narratives. It was not a coincidence that he inserted the serpents' episode immediately after my questions about the evil eye charm formula. *Babu* used this story about the barrier of snakes, which prevented him from stepping forward (to continue his initiation) as a warning addressed to *me*! He stopped me from asking more questions. Thus, he acted according to the main requirement of the ritual mechanisms of transmitting this folkloric category, namely keeping the secret. Moreover, he considered *me* a possible applied receiver of the charm, which from his point of view does not lose its sacred power when recorded. (It would have lost its efficiency only when uttered in improper conditions).

As for *me*, I used persuasive strategies (e.g. whispering, speaking as a presumptive patient) for making him *say the words*, but totally ignored the ritual conditions of the charm performance or its *hidden* quality, requirements that I had read about in books and archive documents but did not apply during field work (probably because I was interested in words only as a folklorist and not as a charmer seeking their ritual efficiency).

However, *Babu* was the one in possession of the knowledge – not only sacred, but integral – I was interested in. He skilfully used his authority, feeling entitled to test *me* with regards to the level of knowledge and familiarity with the very questions we were speaking about, but also as to how bright I was. To his challenging questions (which were not the result of his real need to be informed, but a manner to express his superiority), my elusive, truncated and undertone answers were – up to a point – strategies similar to those he also used with me, and which Ion had used with him. In a way, I behaved as a bearer of the undisclosed knowledge, as the keeper of the *secret*, although I had no secret, being just a folklorist doing fieldwork, miming her ignorance and negotiating her position, declining her own knowledge (I must confess I could have answered some of his questions) or, on the contrary, uttering it in a controlled manner, in accordance with the principle of field work which states that the researcher should not induce or influence the interviewees' answers, but at the same time trying to obtain as much data as possible from them.

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[4] According to Dégh 1994:7.

Both of us were involved in creating a narrative whose message was shaped by overlapping the subjective component of the very content of the story on the subjective meta-narrative and emotional components of the performing context. The latter cannot be archived but leaves its mark on the final form of the field document. Finally, *I* took on my own *insider's* involvement, becoming a *second* hand story teller.

In the end, I coped honourably with D. Ș.'s challenges – "Well, my lady, you made me confess as you wished!" – listening to a set of narratives with supernatural characters, remedies, shepherding routs – topics which mainly interested me – yet not recording any charms.

ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE,
THE OLD TRADITION AND THE NEW WORLDS

Moving on with the topic analysed above, every time I answered *I don't know*, D. Ș. would reply: *But what do you know? What have you learned from your books?*, rhetorical questions whose real message was to oppose the empirical, vernacular knowledge, which also integrates an obsolete numinous component, represented by himself, to the modern, theoretical or applied sciences, represented by his urban audience and ... by his son, the vet: "I asked him: what do you know? And he says: 'I give them injections.' 'You give them injections, but with what?' (...) He has to know the herbs, the ones good for remedies, the poisonous ones!"

Following a different *path*, although a therapist himself, his son strays from the old practices and, more importantly, rejects his father's knowledge. At his turn, as he belongs to older times, D. Ș. has to redefine his authority status and reassess or adjust the traditional expressions of therapeutic knowledge from a modern perspective. He did not give up the healing practices; he did not turn to allopathic medicine, but found his niche: alternative medicine and the press.

Returning from the field, I was surprised to discover D. Ș.'s name on the internet. Journalists working for *Formula As* magazine[5] had visited him and he had shared with them many of his autobiographic narratives, legends, beliefs and remedies (including his confrontation with Ion!), which he also told us in 2014. Reading the four articles published between 2002 and 2012 (APOSTOL 2009; *no author* 2006; ȚEPOSU 2002; ȚURCANU 2004), which have also been republished by some blogs, we noticed the high formalization of narratives, probably a consequence of repeating them in contexts which D. Ș. considers similar: to an ethnologist or journalist, and therefore the information is given to an outsider who takes it and spreads it. He probably considered us as sort of journalists. In both situations, *the other lives of folklore* can be found *in nuce*. The one in the research archives gives a context for scientific documents which intend to reflect a segment of reality as impartially and as neutrally as possible and represents an authority centre for reading cultural phenomena. The other one is represented by the very manner in which folklore is taken, adjusted and spread by mass media.

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[5] A New Age magazine well known to the Romanian public.

The information newspapers and magazines publish follows the reasons and priorities triggered by the characteristics of literary journalism or by the policy of each publication. In the case of *Formula As* magazine, we are (also) referring to promoting *green* medicine,[6] considering itself the successor of *the old tradition*, followed (but on different coordinates!) by *Babu* himself. This time, however, the tradition represented by D. Ş. acquires a mystic aura, re-valued and adjusted by the journalists' pens.

Although closely linked with our topic, an analysis of the newspaper texts dedicated to D. Ş. (focusing on their connections with the illustrated reality and the rules observed when publishing a document) would exceed the length of the present study. However, we would like to highlight the impact of journalists' inquiry on the evaluation of the traditional knowledge and on the informant's self-perception. In other words, the previous meeting between D. Ş. and the journalists influenced our own meeting with the informant and, mainly, the narratives he decided to share with us.

Turning him into an invented character, the semi-fictional texts describe *Babu* with elements taken from the stereotyped portrait of the archaic shepherd: "For him who has spent his life in the wilderness, God is the closest. He can see God, he can talk to God anytime he wants" (APOSTOL 2009). "At 81 years old, after an entire life spent on the top of the mountain, with the sheep, he knows the rules of the seen and of the unseen world, as if he stays on the right side of God" (APOSTOL 2009). Released from the influence of the sacred, *the secret,* which is no longer meant to be kept or ritually transmitted, becomes an exotic mark of the past and of tradition, in fact, fuelling a new myth of authenticity, convenient for legitimating *new* religious and spiritual movements: "The world seen by *Babu* is a special, secret world, a world that he learnt to understand by listening to it" (APOSTOL 2009).

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Translated from Romanian by Anca Stere

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[6] The alternative medicine magazine issued by the same editorial office is Asul verde.

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A Hungarian and a Lebanese Seer[1]

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Abstract: The paper compares the visions and activities of a Hungarian and a Lebanese female seer, both of whom relive and re-enact the Passion of Christ on a regular basis. The former performs the Passion on the first Friday of the month and weekly, during Lent, while the latter does so once a year on Good Friday. Based on fieldwork by the author among the followers of the seer in Hungary and the work of Emma Aubin-Boltanski and Nour Farra-Haddad in Beirut, Lebanon, the paper discusses the history and background of the seers, the locations where the apparitions take place, and the followers who gather around them. It describes the performance of the Passion itself, the messages the seers convey to the faithful, and the many ways in which the women's activities and the mis-en-scene of the apparitions connect to the larger world and thus fit into universal patterns of modern, apocalyptic visions. While strengthening the faith of the followers, the devotees also receive reinforcement in questions that seem existential to them existential, in as much as members of both groups see the historical drama of their own nation.
Keywords: Vision of Christ, the Passion of Christ, Hungary, Lebanon, nationalism

INTRODUCTION: TWO VISIONARY WOMEN

On April 25, 1993, a 36-year-old Catholic woman, married with two children and living modestly in Southern Hungary, had a vision. Although at first she did not know what was happening to her in the weeks and months that followed, she came to realize that she had seen Jesus Christ, who from then on appeared to her on several occasions, speaking to her and instructing her. The event was greeted with enormous curiosity and a small group formed around her, coming to her abode in the village almost daily to witness the presence of Jesus Christ. During this initial period, the woman also healed through the laying on of hands, and in addition to the core group, a very large number

of curious visitors also came to see her. The gatherings took place in the family home of the woman's husband or, in good weather, in the family's yard. As autumn came, the core group, many members of which still belong to the most trusted circle of the woman, erected a marquee in the yard. This was the first step toward the creation of a holy place, later complemented with a chapel and an open air Way of the Cross. During Lent the following year, at the request of Jesus Christ, she first experienced parts of the Passion of Christ on Fridays, and then on Good Friday, after further entreaty by Christ and lengthy soul searching, she accepted the call to undergo the entire Passion. Ever since this first occasion, she has been reliving the suffering of Christ, "walking the Golgotha"[2] again and again every first Friday of the month and every Friday during Lent, at the time of this writing for twenty-three years.

At first, enormous crowds arrived to witness these occasions, even though her fellow villagers never quite accepted her and the Catholic Church has been adamantly opposed to the visions, having regarded the seer with animosity from the very beginning. Over time, the number of pilgrims has decreased, but even today "the Golgotha" takes place in front of 100 to 140 people.

Besides the reliving of the Passion on first Fridays or during Lent, the seer meets twice a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) with a smaller group of her followers for the purpose of a prayer evening of atonement. In addition, they hold a morning of prayers on the thirteenth day of each month in memory of the appearance of Our Lady of Fátima. On first Fridays and each Friday of Lent, pilgrims arrive from all corners of the country, and to a lesser degree this is also true of the thirteenth of each month.

In Beirut, Lebanon, a Maronite Christian woman, married with three children and living under modest circumstances, has also been undergoing quite similar experiences for more than twenty years. Her activities resemble those of the Hungarian seer in that she also relives the suffering of Christ, albeit only once a year, on Good Friday. Unlike the Hungarian seer, at this time she also develops stigmata. In addition, every Tuesday morning she has visions, when primarily the Virgin Mary or a locally important saint, for example Saint Rafqa[3] or St. Charbel[4], "seize" or "overtake" her (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:519).

Both are marginalized women of little education to whom their surroundings did not attribute much importance before they had begun to have visions. Their modesty, simplicity and ignorance, as in the case of many other seers, contributes greatly to their credibility in the eyes of their followers because it proves that they owe their knowledge to their direct links with the divine. One of their most important traits is that they are both completely ordinary, yet extraordinary.

In addition to both women being considered "holy" people, their comparison is warranted by the fact that they both claim to relive the Passion, which can be classified as instances of *Imitatio Christi*. Although the comparison of these two particular women may seem arbitrary, I believe that the enormous geographical distance between them may help shed light upon the most important characteristics of this type of seer.

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[2] This is how members of the community collectively refer to the seer's reliving of the Passion
[3] Saint Rafqa (1832–1914), Lebanese Maronite nun, canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2001.
[4] Saint Charbel (1828–1898) Lebanese Maronite monk, canonized in 1977.

SOURCES

The material concerning the Hungarian seer comes from my own anthropological fieldwork, based primarily on participant observation and supplemented with information from the publications of her pronouncements by the group surrounding her as well as the not too numerous, mostly religious publications about her.

I only know the activities of the Lebanese woman from secondary sources, contextualized in different ways. Two researchers have written about her. One of them is Nour Farra-Haddad, who teaches at St. Joseph University in Beirut, the other being Emma Aubin-Boltanski, who is a researcher of the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) in France. In addition to reading their articles, written both separately and in collaboration with each other (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2013, 2014; AUBIN-BOLTANSKI – FARRA-HADDAD 2014; FARRA-HADDAD 2013), I have also closely studied a documentary prepared by Aubin-Boltanski and thus have a relatively thorough impression of Catherine's ecstasy. There is considerable overlap between the publications in terms of ethnographic detail: the analysis is based on the same empirical material (the 2011 Passion enactment by Catherine), although the articles approach the phenomenon from differing points of view. The descriptions consist in part of the sociological characterization of Catherine, a brief discussion of the composition of her visitors as well as of her relationship to the Maronite Church. In part, the authors also acquaint the reader with the family, surroundings, social position and the apartment of the seer, all the more so as the latter, as the backdrop of the visions, is important for understanding the phenomenon. In addition, the authors analyse in detail the most important vision, that of Good Friday, when Catherine experiences the Passion. As core information, these themes appear to a greater or lesser degree in all of the publications, and besides providing analyses from various points of view, the individual articles do not contain much additional information, or rather they help give a more nuanced understanding of the same set of data. This may sound like criticism, but it is not intended as such. I merely wish to point out that despite there being four publications about Catherine (totalling 66 pages), my empirical knowledge of her is in fact rather limited. The documentary film helped a great deal in visualizing and understanding what one reads about. However, it seems that much of it is the video recording of the same vision (Good Friday 2011) which Aubin-Boltanski's analyses in two of her writings (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2013, 2014).

Besides introducing the phenomenon, the studies partly concentrate on how Catherine becomes credible (for example, how her ordinariness and extraordinariness complement each other, or how uncertainty and indeterminacy contribute to her credibility as a seer.[5] Besides these factors, the authors discuss aspects of Catherine's visions that need explanation because they do not fit into our expectations: for example, the way in which Catherine is touched by her followers during her ecstasy would be unacceptable outside it, (the phenomenon is explained with the concept of iconicity), or the seeming contradiction to the teachings of the Church when Catherine seems to merge the sufferings of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary in the course of her vision.

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[5] The majority of these traits are remarkably similar to those appearing in the Hungarian case.

Initially, I conducted interviews among the followers of the Hungarian seer. However, due to external constraints, this form of data gathering had to end fairly soon. As the authors dealing with the Lebanese seer do not cite from interview materials (the documentary constitutes something of an exception to this, partly containing interviews with some of the participants while certain individual reactions are simply there to be seen), wherever possible, I too will refrain from citing from my interviews for greater comparability.

SEERS

In a 1973 article, William Christian differentiates between seers of local and universal significance (CHRISTIAN 1973). It seems clear that the content as well as the "target audience" of the visions can vary depending on place and time, and can adapt to expectations and circumstances, but it is impossible to make a one-on-one correspondence between eras and types of seers.

The visions of modern seers often take place publicly, at a predetermined point in time, and usually they see the Virgin Mary, who conveys a message that is not merely of local significance but addresses the whole of humanity. The two seers discussed in this paper happen to undergo the sufferings of Jesus Christ, but the visions also take place in public and at a point in time known in advance. Precisely because of these characteristics, Christian refers to this kind of vision as *public visions* (cf. ZIMDARS-SWARTZ 1991). Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the number of these has multiplied. The visions held to be the most important in our day and the shrines that came into being in their wake belong to this category: La Salette (1846), Lourdes (1858), Fátima (1917), Garabandal (1961), San Damiano and of course Medjugorje (1981).

The shrine of Szőkefalva in Transylvania (Seuca, Romania) (GYŐRFY 2012; PETI 2012; PÓCS 2008, 2010) can also be regarded as such, but the Bulgarian visions studied by Galia Valtchinova also belong here (VALTCHINOVA 2009) just as do the visions of the women examined here. In these cases, the messages primarily have national relevance, or at the least they reach the universal through the national. It may also simply be the case that the objectives of the messages are universal but that the conditions under which the seers perform their activities are such that they do not become well-known to a wider audience and therefore cannot be really considered universal. Christian also recognizes this possibility when he writes that shrines of which the Church does not approve eventually cease to exist, or that their activities and influence are much reduced and felt to a lesser degree (CHRISTIAN 1973:109). At the same time, it is characteristic of accepted shrines that the Church "co-opts the movement" (CHRISTIAN 1973:108) and that the seer is bypassed as a potentially detrimental factor in the development of the shrine as the Church is far more capable of making the cult universal without the seer. For this very reason, the death of the seer is frequently not an impediment to the functioning of the shrine.

THE TWO LOCATIONS

The two sites provide a backdrop for the activities of the seers and contribute greatly to the effect they have, but also influence how they function as well as the opportunities open to them. The Hungarian seer lives in a village of about 4000 inhabitants, 18 kilometres from a small town. Prior to the time she began to have visions, she had lived with her husband and her two young children at her in-laws'. She herself was born in a nearby village in a rather poor family with many children. She abandoned her studies after primary school at the age of fourteen and began working in a factory at an early age. She was a sickly young woman, who had undergone several operations. Following her first vision, she was "cured" of her ailments, but even currently she is on a disability pension. In the eyes of her followers, her unimportance prior to becoming a seer serves as significant proof of the divine origin of her transformation.

When the woman began to have the visions, a large number of visitors began to flock to her. The local priest was so opposed to her that at one point he banned the group from attending mass. Under these circumstances, Jesus Christ suggested to her that they should build a chapel in her husband's family yard with the active participation of the members of the group and the financial support of her followers, some from as far away as Australia. They also constructed living quarters for her and her family at the same time. In the course of just a few years, the group created a "multi-functional" sacred place: three spaces that are considered to be sacred; a marquee, where the vision of the Stations of the Cross and the enactment of the Passion of Christ takes place; a chapel, where pilgrims gather, mass is held, and where the faithful can listen to the messages of Jesus Christ after the Passion is over; and an open-air Stations of the Cross with a Crucifix at the far end. Among these, the marquee was the first to be erected. Although the chapel began functioning in 2000, the marquee retained its sacred status, as Jesus Christ had announced that it was a holy place that must not be dismantled. The visions take place here. The walls of the marquee are laden with a variety of images considered to be holy: primarily representations of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, roughly of equal measure. In addition, we can also see a series of smaller prints showing the Stations of the Cross. These are partly placed between the larger images and some are hung on the wooden poles holding up the marquee. There are also images of Pope John-Paul II, the Cardinal Mindszenty[6] and an image of the Shroud of Turin. The layout of the chapel was inspired by Jesus Christ. Unlike the marquee, its furnishing is completely undecorated, lending the building an almost puritanical air.

Catherine, the Lebanese seer, lives in a rather poor neighbourhood in a suburb of the city of Beirut, with her husband and two children. Her oldest child, now married, had also lived with them earlier. She receives the faithful in her three-room rented apartment, where her living room serves as the venue of her visions while she uses the family

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[6] Cardinal József Mindszenty (1892–1975); imprisoned for his views by both the Hungarian Arrowcross Party during World War II and the communist regime in 1949, Mindszenty became a symbol of resistance to both fascism and communism. After 1956 he was granted asylum by the United States and lived on the premises of the US Embassy in Budapest until 1971, when he was allowed to leave Hungary. He died in Vienna four years later.

sleeping quarters for occasional consultations. Roughly fifty people can fit into the living room where the visions take place, so many members of the crowd gathering for the visions are obliged to stand on the landing of the building. For this reason, it is a special task for someone to repeat Catherine's words into a microphone during her visions so that those standing at the back or outside can also hear them. At the same time, there is also a "secretary", who writes down by hand all of Catherine's manifestations, including not only her words, but also the meta-communicational elements (she smiles, she suffers, etc.) (FARRA-HADDAD 2013:49).

Similarly to the marquee of the Hungarian seer, Catherine's living room is decked with holy images and statues and here too there appear some saints of local significance: especially St. Charbel and St. Rafqa, who are represented in the room in both picture and statue form. These images have further significance in the Lebanese case as they "ooze" oil that is held to have curative powers and as such contribute to the holiness of the place; cotton wool saturated with this oil is carried far afield by the faithful. In the documentary, we can also see that the priest who is present draws a small cross on the forehead of the faithful with the liquid seeping from the statue of St. Charbel. The fact that this substance is in continuous supply is a contributing factor to Catherine's fame and serves as proof of her holiness.

Neither woman refers to herself as a Saint or holy, nor as a visionary or seer. In the following, I will refer to the Hungarian seer as Erzsike (a pseudonym, diminutive of Erzsébet i.e. Elizabeth). Usually she is referred to as Erzsike, especially, it would seem, when she is spoken of in her capacity as a seer. When talking about the ordinary woman, people tend to use the more prosaic Erzsi – most often within the family. Jesus Christ originally called her "my chosen servant Erzsébet", but lately He has been using the term "chosen Erzsébet" or "my chosen sibling Erzsébet", at times referring to her simply as Erzsébet.

The publications discussing Catherine use the word visionary *(visionnaire)* as an etic category and tell us that her followers refer to Catherine as "little saint", or "mother of all". As Aubin-Boltanski and Farra-Haddad point out, if seers were to refer to themselves as visionaries or prophets, it would be unseemly as this would not convey enough humility (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:513). The term "holy" is not used in connection with the Hungarian seer either, the closest designation being when she is referred to as the "chosen one," but this occurs very rarely.

THE FOLLOWERS

With regard to their social background and place of origin, the followers of the Hungarian seer are rather mixed. Perhaps it is worth differentiating between the "locals", who are either from the nearby town, neighbouring villages or the village of the seer herself, and pilgrims who come to see the apparition from further away. Part of the former constitute the small core of people who are responsible for overseeing the smooth functioning of the apparition event. Those who participate in the prayer evenings once or even twice a week with more or less regularity in addition to the monthly apparitions and Fátima prayer meetings constitute a somewhat larger group. The pilgrims come from all corners of Hungary and there are some who regularly arrive to see the apparitions from beyond the borders of the country.

The participants at the apparitions are primarily women, just as at all other events that take place around the seer. There are peasant women from rural areas among them, but there are also urbanites as well as those who perhaps live in villages or were at least born in villages but became factory workers, in addition to those who work or have worked as office workers or in the service sector (trade, health services, entrepreneurs, transportation, etc.).

Although I had no opportunity to collect systematic information regarding either occupation or education history, I think it likely that a relatively large number of them have had a secondary education, and there are even university graduates and PhD holders among the regular attendees. With regard to age, the composition of the followers of the seer is much more uniform. The overwhelming majority of the faithful are above 65 years of age – there are very few young people among them. Based on personal conversations, interviews and the witnessing that takes place (at the behest of Jesus Christ) after the apparitions on first Fridays, I have the impression that the number of widowed (especially, widowed young) and divorced women among the pilgrims is relatively high, which is only to be expected.

In the aforementioned article, William Christian describes the visitors of international, public apparitions, thus: "The typical follower of these cults on the international level is a quiet, anguished person, often with a personal life marked by tragedy, who is struggling to know God. The apparitions for them provide information on divine will, confirmation of divine justice, and reassurances of divine love" (CHRISTIAN 1973:112). The second part of the statement can be applied to the majority of the pilgrims visiting the Hungarian seer without misgivings. However, the first sentence of the quotation does not quite fit the case. Although I have the impression that many have been afflicted by some tragedy and that some are seeking to "know God", there are a considerable number of people among the followers of the seer who, both for the external viewer and according to their own reckoning, are at peace and happy precisely because of their connection with the seer.

In my view, the difference may stem from the fact that the international pilgrims characterized by Christian do not visit the same shrine with monthly regularity as do the followers of the Hungarian seer. At the same time, these repeat visits create a community around the seer, which brings friendship and solidarity to the pilgrims and strengthens their sense of belonging. Naturally, there are also those among the pilgrims who are "seeking", and Christian's characterization fits them much more precisely (cf. SUTCLIFFE 2000). In any case, as we shall soon see, many of them frequent several pilgrimage sites.

The majority of the few men who attend are married; often they come to the apparitions, and somewhat less regularly to some of the other events, together with their wives. Men hold a disproportionately large number of organizational roles. This is partly due to the fact that one of the possible and very important "offices", the role of "bastion", can only be fulfilled by men. Their task is to protect the seer in general and, at the end of the Passion, to carry the "dead" Jesus Christ out from the marquee in a blanket, as well as some other tasks, such as the handling of the technical equipment.

Many have attended the Hungarian seer's apparitions faithfully since the very beginning, and even among those who came at a later point, there are many who are present at the enactment of the Passion month after month. Some of them are also present at the prayer meetings in remembrance of the Virgin of Fátima on the thirteenth, while some pilgrims only come to one or the other. Arriving at the seer's village on first Fridays

is made somewhat easier by the fact that a specially chartered "pilgrim bus" is run from the capital to the pilgrimage site every time there is an apparition.

The faithful also visit other holy places. Many have been to the major international pilgrimage sites: primarily Medjugorje, but also Mariazell, Lourdes, Garabandal and Fátima, but many have also had the opportunity to visit the Holy Land. Such trips have been organized by the members of the group together, but some have gone on their own initiative, either on their own or with other organized groups. In addition to these international pilgrimage sites, many visit pilgrimage sites individually or in organized groups in areas inhabited by Hungarians, both within and outside the borders of Hungary. For example, many have been to Kadarkút or Fallóskút in Hungary, but also to Nagyfalu (Nuşfalău) and Szőkefalva (Seuca), both Hungarian-speaking villages in Romania, and many among them participate in the Csíksomlyó (Şumuleu Ciuc, Romania) pilgrimage at Whitsun from time to time. At other times, those who are regulars at the apparitions travel to various prayer meetings for atonement and to other spiritual practices organized in different parts of Hungary, and most of them play an active role in their local Catholic parish.

Jesus Christ often emphasizes in His messages that one must also visit "my Father's house", meaning that it is not enough merely to attend the apparitions – people should also regularly go to church. This exhortation also tells us something about the group's relationship with the Catholic Church. Both the seer and her followers profess themselves to be Catholics. However, the Church does not accept the apparitions as credible. Over the course of years, no genuine investigation by the church has ever taken place, but the Archbishop of the diocese, who would be entitled to carry out such an investigation, from time to time issues an edict forbidding both priests and the Catholic laity from participating in the apparitions, or from partaking in masses in the chapel maintained by the group. The followers of the seer see this as unjust. It pains them greatly, and they often mention bitterly that the Archbishop has never taken the trouble to visit and see for himself what was going on in their midst. These sentiments are partly dictated by a fervent desire to be accepted by the Church and partly by a genuine feeling of being an integral part of the Catholic Church. They may also explain why the group observes liturgical rules so strictly and follows the general prescriptions of the Church (for example, the decoration of the altar) very carefully.

Despite the injunctions of the Church, there has always been a priest, usually not under the jurisdiction of the Hungarian church, who has accepted the role of spiritual advisor. Most recently, an elderly priest who had spent his active life in Germany was the spiritual leader of the community for fourteen years, and ever since his death in September 2015 the entire congregation has been praying and hoping for a successor.

Erzsike's immediate surroundings, the village where she lives and the surrounding settlements have never accepted the apparitions as genuine. Especially at the beginning, many were extremely antagonistic towards her and her entire family. This attitude was also exacerbated by the pronounced enmity of the local priest at the time, although currently she regularly attends local church services and had her grandchildren baptized there.

The composition of the followers of the Lebanese seer is even more varied than that of the Hungarian seer. Based on both the descriptions and the film, although women clearly constitute the majority of the congregants, there are many more men present than in the Hungarian case, at least on the occasion of the Crucifixion that takes place

once a year. The large number of young people is very noticeable, and even children are present on these occasions. Aubin-Boltanski and Farra-Haddad both stress how varied the composition of Catherine's circle of followers is with regard to both socio-economic position and religious belonging (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:519; FARRA-HADDAD 2013:51). There are even occasions when, in this religiously divided country, Muslims visit the Maronite Christian Catherine.

Unlike her Hungarian counterpart, the Lebanese seer is not as unique a phenomenon as Erzsike is. Both authors writing about her frequently indicate that there are several more or less similar seers (mostly women, but also men) who have similar apparitions and constitute a kind of network in Lebanon (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:512; FARRA-HADDAD 2013:44). However, the publications I have read from the two authors only discuss Catherine in detail and only mention the others in their introductions.

According to Aubin-Boltanski and Fara-Haddad, there are those among the followers who visit several seers in the "network" while others only follow a single person. Among the seers, some receive both Christians and Muslims and are in favour of understanding and peaceful relations, while others only receive Christians and seem less open to other religions.

Catherine is a member of the Syriac Maronite Catholic Church. As mentioned above, she is among those seers who receive both the Catholic and Muslim faithful. The Maronite Church – although it views Catherine and the other seers with suspicion – has appointed a spiritual leader to each of the seers (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:514) who, at least in the case of Catherine, does not interfere with what takes place but rather acts as an observer. Despite this, Catherine and her helpers, just like the Hungarian seer and her followers, stick to the rules of the Church carefully and make sure that Catherine does not appear in the media. This is also true of the Hungarian seer. Although she was open to giving interviews to the media at the beginning, with time she has stopped doing so. Catherine is regularly visited by members of the Maronite church from all ranks, and they participate as spectators in the apparitions, though not in an official capacity. Similarly to the Hungarian seer, the pronouncements of the Lebanese seer emphasize and support the importance of the Church (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI – FARRA-HADDAD 2014:87).

THE PASSION

Both women are famous for undergoing the suffering of Jesus Christ, the Passion. In the case of the Hungarian seer, Erzsike, this happens on the first Friday of every month, and during Lent every Friday. Catherine, the Lebanese seer, only experiences the suffering of Christ once a year, on Good Friday, but every week she sees the "saints" and the "Virgin Mary", who, according to the authors, "invade" her. At times they even speak of possession.

Erzsike fasts on the day of the Apparition, receiving pilgrims until the beginning of the six o'clock mass, when she briefly addresses those gathered together. After the mass, she speaks at greater length to the faithful. This is followed by her going around the chapel to present all newcomers with a special five-colour rosary. As she does this, she may exchange a few words with some, extend a hand to others, while some of those present may reach out and touch her or stroke her gently. Not long after this, following an invocation, when she starts out from the chapel towards the marquee, singing, some

are already seated in the marquee while others remain in the chapel because this is where they want to watch the apparition broadcast live on a screen. Others will stand guard with lit candles placed inside cut-off plastic water-bottles on either side of Erzsike's route to the marquee.

From the very start, the group has recorded on video all the manifestations of the divine presence as they come through Erzsike. This includes all the masses as well as both the apparitions and teachings of Jesus Christ. These are not made public, but while the apparition lasts, what happens in the marquee is broadcast inside the chapel on a screen. Thus, even those who cannot fit into the marquee, or who simply do not want to watch the Golgotha at close hand, can see the apparitions.

The apparition has a precise structure, in which everyone knows his or her part. On the one hand, the seer always sees more or less the same events: she witnesses the last days of the life of Jesus Christ, suffering through the Stations of the Cross and the Crucifixion. On the other hand, those helpers nearest to Erzsike know the precise sequence of events. Erzsike's sister sits at the far end of the area where the Passion takes place, farthest from the altar, and makes sure that Erzsike does not step out of this area, especially towards the end of the event. During the apparition, when she is gagging from the pain, her husband wipes her mouth, or wipes away the spittle dripping from her mouth, which might fall on the carpet. It is also her husband who brings in the blanket, always the same one, in which the "bastions" carry out the "lifeless" body of Jesus Christ, first carrying it around in the chapel and then into her own house, which is in the immediate vicinity of the chapel.

In the course of the apparition, Erzsike sees and hears Jesus and His disciples. She accompanies them to Bethany and witnesses the raising of Lazarus from the dead, enters Jerusalem with them on Palm Sunday, and is present at the Last Supper and when Jesus washes the feet of the disciples as well as at the Garden of Gethsemane. She is there when Jesus is captured, sees Him being questioned and humiliated in front of Pilate. She then walks along with Him to Mount Calvary and is an eyewitness to the Crucifixion.

She speaks about Jesus Christ and what she sees in the third person singular, as a witness. Nonetheless, she visibly experiences His bodily suffering on her own body, that is to say, as Jesus. (She shudders, her body shrinks back when scourged, and at times she will scream. She is in pain when the crown of thorns is placed on Jesus's head, and when Jesus falls along the Stations of the Cross, she can barely stand up.) Despite this bodily identification with Christ, she uses the third person singular throughout her commentary. Thus, the textual and bodily manifestations of the seer are separated from each other. What she says (the text) describes the events from the outside, while her physical reactions and her body language indicate that she lives through the events bodily (internally?). This duality indicates a constant back and forth, a continuous switching of the point of view, at the same time requiring the spectator to do the same.

Following the crucifixion Erzsike speaks in the first person singular for the first time, addressing those present as "I, your Lord Jesus Christ". As Jesus, she appoints two or three people who are to give testimony in the chapel and then the four above mentioned "bastions" carry her out of the marquee in a blanket. They first take her to the chapel and then into her own house, from where – after the testimonies of the persons just appointed through her – she conveys the teachings of Jesus Christ as the congregation watches and listens in the chapel. Erzsike also speaks in the first person singular as Jesus Christ during

the teachings. These may last about twenty-thirty minutes and focus on various tropics. (These include detailed reflections on certain parables or other themes relating to faith, such as the importance of prayer or how to pray correctly. Another important strand in the messages contains advice concerning the conduct of life, as for example the importance of self-knowledge or the necessity of having goals in life.) These teachings have been recorded (with sound and vision) since the beginning, and the texts are published in a monthly pamphlet and sold very inexpensively. (It is also available free of charge on the internet, but many of Erzsike's followers do not necessarily have access to the internet or feel more comfortable with the printed text.)

Erzsike does not refer to what happens to her as seizure or being invaded. She could in fact call it that since she finds herself in the Holy Land and sees what happens there in person. Her followers hold that during the time of the enactment of the Passion she herself does not feel bodily pain; it is as if she was there "in spirit". The bodily suffering that the spectators see is the suffering of Jesus Christ and not that of the seer's person. Following the Crucifixion, however, when she starts talking in the first person singular, they consider that Jesus Christ has appeared among them in person and is speaking through Erzsike (borrowing her voice as it were).

On the one hand, the presence of the spectators helps Erzsike live through the Passion experience and helps her fulfil her mission, while on the other hand, by empathizing with her, to some degree they also take part, identifying with Erzsike and through her with Jesus, becoming like Him. As such, with their presence and identification, they too atone and participate in redeeming humanity. Becoming similar to Christ (that is to say *Imitatio Christi*) is holiness itself, the highest degree of identification with the divine, which at the same time, significantly, also renders their faith deeper. The enactment of the Passion can also be regarded as a co-production in another sense: the active interpretation of those present is needed for it to "work". The spectators are not merely spectators: through their empathy they accompany Jesus along the Stations of the Cross. Several people identify bodily with the seer, kinetically experiencing what she is experiencing. Some recount that they hear certain sounds during the apparition: for example, during the crucifixion they hear the sound of the hammer, even in the neighbouring chapel, while others claim to feel physical pain when Christ is being beaten, and others simply try to mentally follow in Jesus's footsteps along the Stations of the Cross.

As I mentioned before, the analyses concerning the Lebanese seer primarily deal with the Good Friday apparition that occurs once a year and do not go into detail on what happens on those occasions when Catherine does not experience the passion, but is "seized" by various saints, or when the Virgin Mary or Padre Pio appears to her.

According to Aubin-Boltanski and Fara-Haddad, Catherine also sees and feels not only the Crucifixion itself but also the Stations of the Cross. However, their accounts almost completely skip the latter and pay far more attention to what happens on the Cross (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014). When Catherine appears in the crowded living room, she first kneels and prays; then she falls over and lies suffering on the floor. Her stigmata begin to show: the cross on her forehead, the traces of "nails" in her palms and on both feet, as well as traces of the spear on her side. The cross that appears on her forehead is a reinterpretation of the stigmata of Christ, since if anything there should be traces of the crown of thorns there (these, however, are not considered by the Catholic Church to be part of the stigmata in any case). Even more unusual is the "Lebanon" inscription that

appears on her chest. I will return to the relationship of the seer to Lebanese national identity, but it is quite clear that the issue of Lebanese national unity forms an important aspect of the vision in a country which is divided both in religious and political terms and in which the memories of the civil war (1975–1990) are still alive.

Catherine does not lie long on the floor. As soon as she begins to suffer visibly on the cross four men lift her and place her on a sofa. For the remainder of the apparition, she remains there, covered with a decorated child's sheet – she partly suffers the pain of crucifixion, and partly conveys messages. Her undergoing of the Passion is much more static than that of Erzsike: she lies in a rigid posture for several hours on the sofa and in effect experiences death by crucifixion. The film shows how she suffers, moans in pain, sheds tears and protests, at times as Jesus Christ and at times as the Virgin Mary. (On the one hand, we can hear Jesus's words on the cross from her mouth *"Eli Eli lama sabachthani?"* (Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34, My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?), while on the other she also exclaims as the Virgin Mary: "No! My Son! My Son! No!"). That is to say, Catherine feels the pain of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary all at the same time, so much so that one of the participants raises the question of who exactly died on the cross. It is especially interesting that the question comes from the mouth of the "secretary", that is to say someone who is an important member of the core group surrounding Catherine (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:516).

While she is lying on the sofa, suffering on the cross, some of her followers queue up one by one to speak to her: they whisper into her ear and at times she also says something to them in a low voice. Finally, they kiss the cross that is in her fist. The "volunteers" oversee who will be the one to enter into direct contact with the seer. At times, Catherine herself will ask for someone. The "secretary" sits next to her and writes down everything Catherine says. Later, she makes a clean copy of everything. When a particular individual is concerned, the secretary shares this copy with the person in question; at least this is what transpires from the words of a young woman interviewed in the documentary film.

As can be seen from the above description, unlike the followers of the Hungarian seer, the Lebanese faithful can establish direct physical contact with Catherine, although Aubin-Boltanski (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2013:372) specifically refers to an incident when a woman begins to bestow kisses on the foot of Catherine while the latter is in an ecstatic state as a "disturbance", and also recounts that she is stopped by the others present. At the same time, she also mentions yet another person, this time a man, who strokes Catherine's foot while she is having the apparition, and nobody stops him (which can also be seen in the film). According to Aubin-Boltanski, this is a case of iconicity, that is to say, at such times Catherine is treated as an icon, in which case both kissing and stroking are in order.

Although the apparitions follow a schema in both cases, that of the Lebanese seer seems much more immediate than that of her Hungarian counterpart. This might in part be due to the differences between the two venues. Due to the size and layout of Catherine's apartment, her followers can get quite close to Catherine physically, whereas in the case of Erzsike there is more of a distance between the seer and her followers during the apparition. It seems from conversations I have had with Erzsike's followers that earlier they too had a more intimate connection with Erzsike during the apparitions, so it is not impossible that beyond the local circumstances in the case of the Hungarian seer we can speak of a more advanced state of the routinization process, which reduces the number of occasions when there is easy access to the seer.

Similarly to the Lebanese seer, her Hungarian counterpart also receives the faithful for consultation, especially before the apparition, but also possibly right after the atonement of the thirteenth, yet others will visit her on another day. She is also called on the phone for advice and prayer, and she incorporates these requests into the long invocation preceding the apparition.

MESSAGES

One of the characteristic features of modern apparitions is the public nature and importance of messages. The prototype of these apparitions was La Salette (1846), but the messages "transmitted" by visionaries were also of great significance in the case of Fátima and several other public apparitions and shrines (cf. TURNER – TURNER 1978; ZIMDARS-SWARTZ 1991). They mostly call for devotions for the Salvation of humankind. Due to their thematic content, discussed earlier, the messages of the Hungarian seer and the "teachings" she conveys from Jesus Christ do not really fit into this picture. However, in other contexts, she often does makes declarations that fit the stereotype, which is to say that she also calls upon people to practice atonement, to pray and recite the rosary regularly.

During Lent, the messages this time, the messages take place weekly, and after Easter they are published as a separate volume as they usually constitute an interconnected whole. In addition, there is a celebration every year to commemorate the first ever vision of the seer, called the *Anniversary*. On these occasions, Jesus Christ spends several hours among the followers of the seer and leads the group through its own history, recalling important events and calling upon the audience to speak about their memories. What is heard on these occasions is also published as a separated publication every year and recently it has become possible to download it from the internet.

The messages of Catherine, the Lebanese seer, comply much more closely with the expectations surrounding such messages: they call upon the faithful to repent and to atone. They are rather short and generic: "Pray my Children! Confess! Recite the rosary!" (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2013:380). For this reason, they have no direct connection with the Passion, but due to their content as well as the fact that they are from the lips of a holy person, they fit the general mould of messages inspired by earlier Marian apparitions. As we have seen, at the same time, Catherine also conveys private messages, even on the occasion of the Crucifixion on Good Friday.

THE SEERS AND THE WORLD

To return to William Christian's article on holy people, according to him perhaps the greatest difference between "folk" and modern apparitions and the holy people associated with them lies in their scale and whether they are public or not. These factors are important precisely because by intention the messages of modern apparitions are not meant for a local audience but rather for a universal one. The messages address all of humanity, not merely a local community. In effect, Christian is talking about a change of scale that comes with modernity. This not only means that the shrine is visited by people

from afar, as in the case of the most important international pilgrimage sites, but also that the seers, just like their followers, are thinking on a larger than local scale.

From this point of view, it is worth noting that both seers enter into contact with the (primarily Catholic) world beyond their immediate circles and through several channels. This can be seen both in their material world and in their thinking. Holy images, representations of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, are a part of universal Catholic culture. It is typical that a replica of the Lourdes grotto is to be found at both the seers' locations. In the case of Erzsike, it is found outdoors in the yard, wedged as it were between the chapel and the Stations of the Cross. In Catherine's case, there is much less space available. However, amidst the holy images and statues in the heavily decorated "salon" of her three-room apartment, a miniature copy of the Lourdes grotto can also be seen.

At the end of each mass, Erzsike distributes a rosary to those newcomers who desire to receive one. This is a five-colour (plastic) rosary, each decade being a different colour (yellow, white, blue, red, green). As Erzsike explains, she is not asking money for it, but rather that the person accepting it should become "a sibling in atonement" and pray at least one decade of the rosary daily. The colours have a dual symbolism: partly they represent various virtues and features that are significant components of faith (for example faith, fidelity, love, the sacraments), yet the other reading is just as important: the colours represent the five continents, thus the reciting of the rosary in and of itself means that one is praying for the entire world.

The Hungarian seer is also connected to the larger world through the Virgin of Fátima: the monthly prayer meetings serve as occasions for atonement and as commemoration of the apparitions of the Virgin. Another reminder is a statue of the Virgin of Fátima on the altar of the chapel that Erzsike herself chose under divine guidance when she made a pilgrimage to Fátima together with some of her followers. The series of rites that take place in connection with Fátima on the thirteenth day of every month strengthens the group's sense of community while simultaneously reinforcing their sense of belonging to the universal Catholic Church, which they steadfastly maintain despite being rejected by it.

Another important characteristic of modern (and primarily Marian) apparitions is their apocalyptic nature. Their main message is that the world is so full of evil and human sin that atonement is needed in order for humanity to escape God's rightful wrath. This can best be done through prayer, especially reciting the rosary, although the faithful also need to perform the other sacraments (partaking of confession, Holy Communion) and repent. The messages of apparitions suggest that if people pray, more and more souls will be saved and the time spent in purgatory can be shortened. Based on this, Sandra Zimdars-Swartz speaks about an apocalyptic ideology that she characterizes thus: "This ideology is a sort of popular, free-floating apocalyptic worldview, built of images and themes prominent in the messages of the more recent apparitions and can be seen as anchored in almost any one, or any combination of, these apparitions" (ZIMDARS-SWARTZ 1991:247). A fundamental part of this worldview is the idea of "intercession and intervention" (ZIMDARS-SWARTZ 1991:ibid), which in Marian apparitions is usually taken to mean that only the Virgin Mary stands between divine mercy and the wrath of God (or perhaps Jesus Christ). Through atonement, the Virgin Mary can be begged to intervene.

Although the apparitions of Erzsike are not connected to the Virgin Mary at all, her activities are related to atonement in many ways. As mentioned above, the teachings she

brings do not fit into this mould very well, but many of her other activities and statements do. The motive for undergoing the suffering of Christ already links the apparitions to atonement for the sins of the world. Jesus Christ first asked Erzsike to undertake His Passion because of the sins of priests. Later, He requested that she continue with the sacrifice for the sake of youth. Eventually, her atonement was extended to the whole of humankind, and this continues to be the case to this day. In addition, the presence of the pilgrims at the apparitions and their identification with the seer and with the suffering Christ can also be regarded as atonement. The Fátima commemoration is even more directly linked to the idea of atonement since the Virgin of Fátima explicitly asked the faithful to atone precisely in order to help avoid the apocalyptic end. Therefore, Erzsike's activities can be seen to fit into the universal worldview of modern apparitions, although with regard to their effect the messages (directly or indirectly) conveyed by her cannot be called universal. This is not due to her intentions, but rather to her circumstances. The negative attitude of the Catholic Church has most likely contributed greatly to the fact that the shrine has not become more significant.

THE PASSION AND THE NATION

Nonetheless, the seer and her group manage to rise above the local context, even if in a slightly different sense. This extends the idea that in this case we can speak of reaching the universal through the particular. Erzsike has stated on countless occasions – as an idea coming from Jesus Christ – that Hungarians have a special vocation in the salvation of humankind. They hold that Hungary will be the originator of the atonement movement that will lead to the redemption of humanity. According to one of her chroniclers, Jesus Christ spoke thus through Erzsike on Good Friday, 14th April 1995: "This little country is atoning in the spirit of My own and My Mother's request, with its prayer communities undertaking vigils and fasts so as to redeem the people, humankind, which for the most part is rushing down the slope leading them to damnation" (MOLNÁR 1995:32). Erzsike was not the first by far to formulate the idea of the special calling of Hungarians; it is rather part of a broader Hungarian "mythology". It was perhaps most prominently expressed by the Catholic nun, Sister Natália, who died in 1992, but also fits well into the goals of the Flame of Love Movement, which also originated in Hungary, and in general into a widely popular set of ideas that have been conceptualizing the country as the "Bulwark of Christendom" (or sometimes of Europe) since the Ottoman occupation in the sixteenth century, and even earlier.[7]

Erzsike returns to the idea from time to time, and not only when Jesus Christ speaks through her but also, for instance, in the course of her divinely inspired addresses to the faithful following the mass. Shifting slightly the context of the idea of a calling, she often brings up the point that although at present many are ashamed of being Hungarian, once they fulfil their calling they will be proud of being so. This chimes rather nicely with the thoughts of Margit Feischmidt on the new national consciousness: "at bottom the 'new national consciousness' appears as a response to structural problems which

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[7] These are widespread tropes in the region, not limited to Hungary, cf. SRODECKI 2016, but of course they appear to be uniquely true to those who resort to them.

builds on 'national pride' and serves fundamentally to restore collective dignity and self-respect" (FEISCHMIDT 2014:125). Feischmidt is writing about the worldview of young people in present-day Hungary, but based on the above it seems undeniable that we are dealing with a phenomenon of much broader import. Exactly how broad is also shown by the fact that in Bulgaria we find similar desires (albeit telescoped into the past) for "national grandeur" in the writings of Galia Valtchinova (VALTCHINOVA 2009), for which the "proof" also comes from the apparitions of seers.

As we have seen, Catherine's messages call for prayer and atonement and are quite reminiscent of the messages of the Virgin of Fátima. National consciousness plays an important part in her case too. The publications dealing with her stress that Catherine supports Lebanese national unity and understanding between the various religions. According to Farra-Haddad, Catherine's messages and activity "...preach for a 'living together', apart from socio-political tensions, that is favorable to the construction of a common Lebanese identity" (FARRA-HADDAD 2013:61). As both authors point out, this is a very important aspect of Catherine's activities, which can also be seen from the fact that she became active as a seer at an important juncture in the Lebanese civil war. Lebanon is a multi-confessional country and the mere fact that representatives of almost all religions turn up in Catherine's living room indicates a kind of universality in itself, at least in the Lebanese context. According to Aubin-Boltanski (2014:519), the visitors belong to the following denominations and faiths: Armenian, Greek Orthodox, Syriac, Maronite, Greek Catholic[8] and Muslim.

The complicated history of Lebanon at the end of the twentieth century has most likely had an effect on Catherine's development as a seer and also on how the faithful present at the Crucifixion interpret what they see. It is in this context that we understand the significance of the fact that the inscription "Lebanon" appears among Catherine's stigmata, which thus becomes a sort of mystically approved stance on behalf of the unity of the country. This seems to be especially important if we take into consideration that the position of the Maronite Church weakened following the civil war. In this light, the appearance of the word Lebanon on the chest of a Maronite holy woman can arguably be seen as validating Maronites in Lebanon.

Aubin-Boltanski calls attention to a different aspect of the question when, in the conclusion to her 2014 article, she analyses the kinds of associations the sight of Catherine experiencing the Passion during Good Friday 2011 may have evoked in the devotees present. According to her, the feelings provoked by the Crucifixion may be regarded as "symptomatic of the distress experienced by Lebanese society" (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:519). It should be noted that she made her comments immediately after the outbreak of the Syrian Revolution, which Lebanese had reason to believe would have an effect on their lives as well. Still, I find it even more significant when she adds, "For Catherine's followers, her suffering and stigmatized body mirror the divisions and blows endured by the Lebanese 'homeland', which the Virgin/Catherine designates in her messages as her 'second Son'" (AUBIN-BOLTANSKI 2014:ibid).

I think this is where the Hungarian and the Lebanese seer converge the most. Similarly to the Lebanese faithful, the Hungarian devotees also project Jesus' sufferings

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[8] The Armenians and Syrians can also be divided into further denominations.

onto the trials and tribulations of their country. According to a widespread view among Erzsike's followers, for example, the five parts which had been annexed away from Hungary at the end of the First World War (by the peace treaty of Versailles, which in Hungary is more commonly referred to as Trianon) correspond to the five wounds of Jesus (cf. CHRISTIAN – KRASZNAI 2009; JOBBIT 2011). It is more than likely that this idea comes from public discourses between the two world wars. After Trianon, Hungarian public opinion often identified the humiliation of the country with the suffering of Christ. There is also an analogy for the second half of the citation: one of the cornerstones of the everyday discourses of Erzsike and the surrounding group is the idea of *Regnum Marianum* (Kingdom of Mary), which is a given not only for her followers but also for numerous Hungarians (KNAPP – TÜSKÉS 2006; SRODECKI 2016).

CONCLUSION

I have primarily reviewed the activities of the two seers from the aspect of what is common to them: their undergoing the Passion of Christ. Besides their social parameters (uneducated, marginalized, married women of modest means) the organization and unfolding of the apparitions also have many similarities, although I have not discussed this question systematically (for example, the role of volunteers in the organization of the event, the supportive role of husbands, etc). Although both women live through the same central element of Christian faith, the two events are rather different in their nature. Erzsike's is more dramatic, Catherine's more immediate. Erzsike's spans a longer time period, while Catherine primarily concentrates on the Crucifixion itself. Despite the differences, their devoutness is obvious to their followers in both cases. Echoing William Christian, we can agree that the apparitions strengthen people in their belief. At the same time, however, beyond the mystic experiences, beyond religious belief, the devotees also receive reinforcement in questions that seem existential to them, in as much as members of both groups see the historical drama of their own nation. These views are not unique to the seers and their devotees. Nonetheless, it gives them special credence that they come from Jesus Christ or from the mouths of His chosen servants and in frequent repetition become palpable truth for their followers.

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Migration and Pentecostalism
in a Mendicant Roma Community
in Eastern Moldavia

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Abstract: The study analyzes the changes in the religious and social life of a Roma
Pentecostal community in an ethnically mixed village, and the relationship between migration
practices and conversion to Pentecostalism. In the first part of the study, the author presents
the Roma community and outlines the circumstances under which Pentecostalism emerged
among them. Thereafter, the two types of migration practiced by the Roma will be presented:
migration focused mainly on northern European countries, based on panhandling, and
migration aimed at longer term residence in the countries of Western Europe. The analysis
points to the importance of foreign migration-related income in the changing situation of the
Roma, as well as the role of the Pentecostal religion in the modernization changes that began
in the Roma community.

Keywords: Roma, Moldavia, Pentecostalism, migration, panhandling

In this study, I examine the migration practices of a Pentecostal Roma community in
an ethnically mixed village inhabited by Romanian and Roma populations, the related
livelihood strategies, and the role of their Pentecostal faith in migration.[1]

In the first part of the study, I present the studied community, including how the
Roma community's livelihood strategies were transformed after the most important
social-historical turning points of the recent past (socialism and post-socialism). After
that, I will present the two types of migration practiced by the Roma: one that is focused
mainly on northern European countries and based on panhandling, and one that is aimed
at long-term (but not definitive) residence in the countries of Western Europe (mainly
England, France and Germany). As part of this, I will attempt to analyze the economic

and social impacts of migration and the role that conversion to Pentecostalism played in it. The study illustrates the importance that income from foreign panhandling and other activities related to migration plays in the changing situation of the local Roma, and the role their conversion to Pentecostalism played in the economic and social processes that took place in the Roma community.

OF URSĂRENI AND THE ROMA COMMUNITY IN GENERAL

I started my fieldwork in 2013 in the Pentecostal communities of three neighboring settlements: a Roman Catholic majority (Csángó) village, a largely Orthodox Romanian village, and an ethnically mixed village with a solely Roma Pentecostal community. I consider these communities parts of a "network" because of the close relationship between them, the co-operation between their leaders, and their connected histories, etc. I visited the region a few times a year, and I usually visited all three communities. On a few occasions, however, I focused on one community more intensely. During the fieldwork, I interviewed members of different statuses, and attended ritual congregational meetings. The Csángó Pentecostal community leader, Anton, who commands a significant degree of authority within the "network," was helpful in building relationships.

Ursăreni[2] is a village inhabited by Romanians and Roma. Looking at it from the expressway cutting across the Middle-Moldavian region of Romania, the settlement seems to be the same as most of the villages here: a vast majority of the houses displays the usual forms, materials and colors of Moldavian folk architecture. A multi-level, boarding house-sized building often protrudes from among the low houses with battered tin roofs, usually painted light blue or light brown. Among the farmhouses of unbaked mud brick, with a columned porch and a summer kitchen beneath the sloping roof, villas of this size are a fairly prominent expression of the new Romanian reality built by the dreams, motivations and ideas of the post-socialist generations partaking in the large-scale migration that did not spare the eastern part of the country either.

As we leave the expressway, the villas disappear, and if one can still spot a few here and there, their singularity is conspicuous. Amidst the old houses, there will be some simple ones that preserve the old-fashioned design and are set apart from the old ones by their slightly bolder coloration, larger size, and new construction materials. Often you see boarded-up, abandoned homesteads that have long been unoccupied, while in other yards, besides the old farmhouses, there are also traces of new construction work. On the corners of smaller streets, there are glazed niches with tin roofs protecting Orthodox icons, surrounded by a low fence with a wicket gate here and there, while elsewhere there are covered draw-wheel wells decorated with icons, in some places with drinking troughs for draft animals. The main street that snakes on for kilometers ends in a fork, which is, in essence, the symbolic center of the village, with the mayor's office and one of the schools. While until the 1970s this part of the village was inhabited by Romanians only, it is now characterized by a mixed ethnic structure. Though slightly polarizing, it can be said that the livelier, busier homesteads with much of the new construction

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[2] An alias, as are the names of the informants mentioned in the study.

are inhabited mainly by Roma families, while in the summer it is conspicuous that the elderly people chatting on small benches near gardens and gates are mostly Romanian.

One of the streets passing through the central square leads to a remote, predominantly Roma-populated smaller village, while the other street snakes on for kilometers toward the forests on the remote hillsides. As we move away from the center, the street image changes. While earlier a more neglected, fence-less, rougher-looking homestead was the exception, on this segment of the road the poverty becomes more noticeable. From the narrow, asphalted street, a few narrow, neglected dirt roads branch off, only to turn into a dead end, or lead out into the meadows. Typical for this segment of the street, the dirt roads are lined with narrow, dilapidated houses often suggestive of unconcealed destitution. This is the Roma colony; during socialism (around the early/mid-1970s), the Roma lived exclusively on this colony, far from the village. Often the poorest Roma families live in these parts. With some 50 houses, the Roma colony remained the most destitute part of the village, despite major infrastructural improvements having been made over the past decade with EU funding. The local government paved the road leading to the colony, and provided public lighting along the bigger, car-driven street. Nonetheless, the conditions on the colony are destitute, and many Roma households do not even have electricity.

The profound poverty of the overwhelming majority of the local Roma is also supported by the data of ethnic demographic breakdown of social benefits. Of the 203 families receiving social benefits in the village, 175 families are Roma.[3] Of the 190 families receiving family benefits and other social support, 80 families are Roma. Of the 250 families receiving heating subsidy, 110 are Roma families.[4]

In addition to high poverty, the natural population growth of the local Roma is very rapid. Official national censuses indicate a significant increase in the number of Roma (376 persons) and a significant decrease of the Romanian community (286 persons) in less than ten years.

Table 1. The ethnic distribution of the village based on the two most recent official national census data

Census[5]	Romanian	Roma	Other + Unknown ethnicity	Total
2002	1923	854	4	2781
2011	1637	1230	257	3124

According to one of the councilors of the Roma party, the Roma number 1700. This estimate may be closer to the number of persons the local community considers to be

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[3] Data from a survey conducted within the project called SocioRoMap. ISPMN, 2015.10.08. Among other things, the project called SocioRoMap included nationwide data collection at major Roma settlements via questionnaires coming from the mayor's offices. (Sociographic mapping of the Roma Communities in Romania for a community-level monitoring of changes with regard to Roma integration (SocioRoMap) – A project financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 in the framework of "Poverty Alleviation in Romania" (RO25).

[4] Data from a survey conducted within the project called SocioRoMap. ISPMN, 2015.10.08.

[5] 2002 and 2011 official national census data.

Roma, despite the fact that fewer people declared themselves Roma in the census. Since the 2011 census was unable to determine the ethnic affiliation of the people residing abroad, and the statistics were supplemented by other existing sources (Kiss 2012), the majority of people in the "other + unknown" categories of the statistics are presumably Roma. Taking into account the phenomenon well-known to Romanian researchers of Roma, i.e., that the Roma often conceal their ethnicity in a census, I consider the Roma party councilor's estimation of 1700 a realistic lower limit for the Roma.

Of the 36 children born in Ursăreni in 2013, 30 were Roma, while 44 of the 50 children born in 2014 were born in a Roma family.[6]

During the socialist era, many families of the rapidly expanding village moved to Moldavia and Dobrudja in hopes of a better living. These extensive, still active kinship systems play an important role in shaping the destiny of the Roma community of Ursăreni. According to reports, migration was the foremost strategy of emerging from the destitute local conditions during the socialist era, when several Roma settled in towns near and far, such as Oneşti, Adjud and Bacău. Some have succeeded in embedding themselves into the working class of the socialist industry.

The socialist urbanization wave affected the Romanians more intensively than the Roma. During this period, the Romanian community saw intensive migration, the target cities being Bucharest, Braşov, Sibiu and Bacău. This is when local Roma families began buying houses that were for sale outside the Pălămidă colony, "in" the Romanian-inhabited, actual village. A further decline in the number of Romanians was brought on after the regime change with the younger generation becoming migrant workers, which did not bode well for the possibility of their return. While even the Roma believe there will be an ethnic population exchange within the foreseeable future in the village, the possibility of returning to the village is not an attractive alternative for the Romanians (unlike the Roma).

LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES IN THE PAST AND TODAY

Prior to the regime change, the local Roma worked on state farms, plantations and other farms in Dobrudja and Bărăgan. They usually departed for agricultural wage labor in the middle of spring, in April, and often returned to the village in the middle of winter, in December. In the local collective economy, the Roma have only found a small number of jobs, and those were mostly for men. State farms in the southern regions of Romania used canteens that fed the whole family to lure the Roma populations of the more remote regions into internal labor migration, thereby remedying the labor shortages of large farms.

The labor demands of the peasant farming that resurged after the regime change became a major employment opportunity for a significant part of the Roma. In the 2000s, the failure of Romanian small-scale farming became apparent, after which the aging Romanian population gradually abandoned peasant farming and transferred their lands to collective farms. Because of the mechanized work stages of the cultivation of large areas by these collectives, the demand for day-to-day work has drastically decreased, thereby causing a livelihood crisis in most Roma families on an already very fragile equilibrium level.

Some of the local Roma living in Ursăreni who do not travel abroad, or stay on the remaining peasant farms between trips, work as wage workers on the lands and vineyards. The most important work includes pruning, cluster thinning, tying grapevines, hoeing corn and grapes, harvesting corn and beans, etc. There are two forms of wage work: contract work and day labor. Work opportunities depending on the cycles of agricultural production generally affect the whole family during the season: teenagers are doing the same job as adults and are paid accordingly. All the family members get involved in the work – especially when doing a certain work phase – for a pre-negotiated amount. However, the income from agricultural wage labor is rather fluctuating, and it is not able to ensure the survival of a family for a longer term and at all times.

The patron-client system is still present in the case of still-operating peasant farms, and each Roma family is a long-standing and trusted workforce for Romanian families. The trust capital produced within this system also enables the exchange of work between the Roma and the Romanians. A 48-year-old Roma man, for example, had the same Romanian craftsman build two of his houses (which he paid for with money he raised by panhandling abroad), whom he previously helped plant 1000 vine stocks.

The other general strategy of income-generation, aside from social assistance, child support, and migration, is the collection of firewood, which is then sold to the Romanian villagers. As the village is not connected to the gas supply system, wood is the main fuel in the settlement. The money thus generated buys mostly grains of corn, as the staple of the family is the *puliszka* made from it.

Trading with walnuts is considered a seasonal income: the fruit of walnut trees growing in the fields and along roadsides is collected and cleaned, and the kernels are sold to traders who come to the village. In the autumn, whole families are engaged in walnut collection for weeks. The enormous amount of walnut shells scattered in the courtyards and filled into potholes like gravel offers a distinctive sight.

The majority of the Roma try to solve at least some of the family's food requirements at home, many of them raising poultry, a couple of piglets, hogs, even a couple of goats can be seen in some yards. Furthermore, the Roma living in the "village" cultivate vegetable gardens, some of them even planted garden vineyards. Two or three Roma families in the settlement operate a shop combined with a pub.

In addition to international labor migration, there is also an internal (domestic) labor migration that has adapted to the work phase needs of the agricultural year. This migration is focused mainly on the south-eastern regions of the country (Focşani), the main labor absorbers being the vineyards here that provide many months of work for many Roma people from Ursăreni.

In the local elections, the Roma party was able to add two representatives to the local council. One of them acts as a school mediator *(mediator şcolar)* on behalf of the Mayor's Office. A Swedish charitable organization operates an *after-school* program in the municipal building offered by the local government. The foundation has two employees and works closely with the Roma councilor and the regional Pentecostal pastor, a member of the "senior leadership" of the older of the two Pentecostal churches. The employees of the foundation commute to the settlement from the nearby city. According to the Roma councilor, the foundation is operated with the support of Swedish Pentecostal churches, and it has worksites in several countries (4–5 just in Romania), and their Romanian center is in Iaşi. The foundation undertook the feeding, clothing and remedial education

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[6] Data from a survey conducted within the project called SocioRoMap. ISPMN, 2015.10.08.

of up to 50 Roma children in need. One of their projects aims to renovate the homes of those children in need. At the time of my research, they were working on three houses, aiming to modernize 30 houses. According to the Roma councilor, the aim of the non-profit organization in Ursăreni is to curb the panhandling-focused migration abroad by trying to improve the local living conditions of the Roma.

In addition to the non-profit organization with foreign support, a foundation in Bacău also operates a project focusing on the integration of Roma children (Valoare plus), which provides supplementary education for Roma children in grades 6–8. Children participating in the project are given a donation package.

THE ROLE OF FOREIGN PANHANDLING IN ROMA LIVELIHOOD

In the livelihood of the Roma, the most important role is played by the income related to foreign migration. Following the country's accession to the EU, villagers begun to leave in large numbers to go panhandling primarily in northern European states, mainly in Norway and Sweden, but also in France and Finland. They stayed a few weeks at a time, two months at the most, several times during the year. The majority of the Roma families of Ursăreni is habitually engaged in panhandling abroad. Several family members would travel abroad, but not necessarily at the same time. This is necessary so that the elderly and the children of extended families would not be left on their own, as well as to ensure that the households keep running. Since the goal of panhandling is to buy a plot and build a house in the village, the head of the family sometimes skips his foreign trip to continue the construction.

In an interview, one of the non-Roma leaders in the Pentecostal network stressed the organized nature of panhandling: community leaders have a say in who travels and who stays at home. In his opinion, they may even pay each other for the better panhandling spots. Regarding the organized aspect of panhandling and whether they are paying for better spots, a survey conducted in capital cities of Scandinavian states has concluded that the implication of criminal organizations in panhandling is a myth, and although there were some instances of paid panhandling spots, it was by no means the typical pattern (DJUVE et al. 2015:80). Community leaders are actually church leaders, or those close to them, involved in church life through their various functions. The Csángó community leader, however, emphasized that its organization, according to his own wording, takes place at the "caste level," in this sense independent of the Roma Pentecostal organization.

> "They left, and one said to the other: 'Come here, come here!' But to be honest, they sorted out the spots between themselves. So that they could sell them to another that wants a spot. 'This one will go to the village, you stay there, if you want his spot, give me I don't know how many crowns!'" (April 25, 2016)[7]

The Ursăreni Roma themselves never indicated in their interviews that the Pentecostal community leaders had a say in their panhandling trips. In organizing the trips, family-

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[7] Translated from Romanian, as are all quotes from informants of the study.

level decisions and information within the kinship and acquaintance networks play a significant role.[8]

The most common way to travel is to use a local travel company specializing in seasonal travel aimed at panhandling. This business was founded by a local Roma who transports the mendicants on minibuses mainly to Sweden, Norway, and Lille in France. There are minibuses leaving for Norway and Sweden twice a week. Generally, about 10 to 13 people can travel per trip, for a predetermined price.

As other studies analyzing the labor migration patterns of Roma living in extreme poverty have also pointed out, an important component of migration is borrowing for the usury (KISS – PETI 2015; KISS 2014). It is not uncommon that the Ursăreni Roma living from day to day turn to a usurer for the money needed to travel. Those involved in the research mentioned a non-Pentecostal Roma person as being a loan shark. The usurious interest rate of the loan increases with the time elapsed since it was borrowed.

Many of the traveling Roma do not have the money they need to travel, and according to a sort of loan system, the transporter lets them travel even without payment, collecting their dues on the return trip from the money they made panhandling. A one-way trip to Lille costs 100 euros, to Sweden slightly more than 100 euros. This Roma entrepreneur owns a fancy villa.

Some of the Roma traveling on their own resources travel in their own cars. In that case, they pool their money to pay for gasoline. There are also some who travel by regular Romanian buses.

The Ursăreni Roma making a living by panhandling say they are able to earn 400–500 crowns (a little more than 50 euros) per day, which is more than four times the day-labor wage at home. According to Daniel,[9] one of the non-Roma community leaders of the Pentecostal network mentioned earlier, the average daily earnings of mendicant Roma abroad are around 30–40 euros, less often up to 50 euros per day. Their daily nutrition costs less than 10 euros. The survey[10] conducted in Scandinavian capitals on Romanian Roma has shown significantly lower income: for example, in Stockholm, daily earnings from combined income averaged just 14.5 euro (DJUVE et al. 2015:68).

> "(...) So it pays off. They put it in their purse ... come and buy all the houses of the Romanians there" (April 25, 2016).

A young couple I talked to right before they headed out said that it is not uncommon to establish a relationship with local residents who provide them with food, and there are even some who let them use their bathrooms occasionally.

A 52-year-old Roma man estimates that in order to travel to Sweden for a few months, one needs a minimum of 200 euros, which, as I have already mentioned, some of the Roma in Ursăreni can only get by taking out a loan. The man, formerly a member of the

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[8] The research team that conducted a survey in the capitals of Scandinavian countries reported consistent results (DJUVE et al. 2015:76).
[9] Presbytery leader of the Pentecostal community of the "network" functioning in an Orthodox community.
[10] The authors use the term 'street worker' for those Romanian Roma whose main incomes include begging, pile-bottle collecting and other 'informal street work' (DJUVE et al. 2015:7).

leadership committee of the Pentecostal Church, has ten children and no job. His main income is from panhandling in Sweden. He says he goes to Luleå, a Swedish town on the northern coast of the country, where some 35 people travel from his village alone. The Roma of Ursăreni panhandle at different spots in the city, mostly as singing beggars. His spot is at the city market. He reports that the mendicant Roma often sleep in their cars; most recently, the Red Cross provided them with a shelter (a huge room where everyone has their own mattress), where they also get free meals, but local churches support them, too. He says that since he has been going to Sweden, he was able to start building a house.

Panhandling-focused migration is essential for the livelihood of the majority of local Ursăreni families.[11] In addition to the everyday cost of living, the ritual costs of these Roma families are also covered by the money obtained through panhandling. According to a lengthy video of a Pentecostal wedding uploaded to a community video sharing portal (recorded by one of the participants and in which I recognized some of my informants), the public gifting of the young couple by shouting out the sum was made with a variable amount of Swedish crowns.

Some of the extended families spend part of the money they have panhandled on purchasing land and building a house in the village. The Roma family that used their panhandled savings to start a business by opening a convenience store on the Roma colony is considered an exception.

However, the long-term viability of this strategy is questionable. The head of a Roma family regularly panhandling in Norway reported in the summer of 2016 that, due to the "migrant situation" in Europe, the profitability of foreign panhandling has greatly declined.

LONG-TERM MIGRATION

In addition to the panhandling migration that focuses mainly on Sweden and Norway, there is a migration practice that is aimed at long-term residence. Families that mostly migrate to England, Spain, France, and recently to Germany, strive to establish a long-term lifestyle in a Western European country, unlike the Roma living from panhandling and regularly commuting between their home village and the major cities of northern Europe. The councilor of the Roma party estimates that there are approx. 700[12] Ursăreni Roma families which a few years ago settled down in Western European countries for an indefinite period. The most important guarantee of maintaining their lifestyle abroad is to get into – and stay in – the social security system of these foreign states. Some members of these families even earn an income outside the social care system. As a matter of fact, long-term migration consists of a combination of different livelihood strategies. The combination of strategies aims to solidify the chances of their survival. I talked to Roma whose relatives collected scrap metal in London, others were doing low-key jobs,

working as school traffic wardens or doormen, etc., and some even made a living by panhandling. These strategies may alternate even in the case of one person, depending on their current options. According to the Roma councilor, this pattern works primarily for the Roma who have moved to Germany, England and France.

According to the Roma party councilor, the Ursăreni Roma with many children have a higher chance of accessing the foreign social care system. It could take several months, up to half a year, for a migrant family to take care of the necessary bureaucracy. The family must have adequate reserves to cover this period without income. This amount is estimated by the representative of the Roma party to be around 2-3,000 euros. A common pattern of acquiring the necessary funds is panhandling in Sweden and Norway. The main guarantee for obtaining the missing amount is provided by the intra-kinship loan system. The best chance for this comes from a member of the kinship network that has been living abroad for some time, for he is the main source of information needed for surviving abroad and provides the most important help in managing affairs abroad. According to my informant, in Germany, which is the latest migration destination for the Ursăreni Roma, the family allowance is 420 euros per child, while in Romania the same is slightly less than 10 euros. A condition of the child benefit is for the children to attend school. Families with multiple children have higher chances when applying for foreign child benefits, and when successful, they can achieve a more stable income level. Child benefits allow them to rent accommodations with a comfort level that is far above the destitute circumstances at home.

Compared to the panhandling families commuting from Ursăreni, this strategy entails a greater risk and more personal and family energy expenditure (e.g., language learning, administration, remedial job training, etc.), but if successful, the volume of material gain is also higher, and the increase in the standard of living is also significant when compared to that of the village.

It was primarily the Roma families with better financial resources that engaged in long-term migration.[13] They are aware of the precarious chances of a long-term stay or of ultimate settlement, so even in their case, as preparation for a crisis situation and as a backup security strategy, the attempt to build an existence in their home village is still present.

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF MIGRATION

As I mentioned, the main goals of both types of migration are to buy land and build houses in the village. With their savings, they buy abandoned Romanian homesteads. The price of a plot in need of demolishing or renovating is 20-23,000 euros in the areas closer to the main road (that is, not on the colony), while a plot with a better location and a "neat" house could reach the market value of 45,000 euros.

The frequent seasonal migration of the Roma has a negative impact on the chances of schooling their children. Roma families living temporarily in Western countries for some time have been schooling their children. Schooling seems to be an important component of integrating into the social security system of their host countries. As opposed to the

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[11] Based on a survey conducted on the Romanian Roma who sought their livelihood in the capitals of the Scandinavian countries in 2014 involving 1269 people, and by building on the results of additional fieldwork and interviews, the research team found that in addition to begging, the Romanian Roma are involved in a diverse range of activities related to the informal economy (DJUVE et al. 2015:55).

[12] However, I find this number to be exaggerated.

[13] I also heard scattered stories about people migrating to Ireland and Finland.

majority of Ursăreni Roma families engaged in a temporary, one- or two-month-long panhandling migration, Roma families residing abroad for a period of 3-4 years and temporarily returning to the village cannot get their children integrated in the local school system. Besides the many pedagogical and social reasons for this, the biggest obstacle is bureaucratic: parents cannot register their children in local schools for lack of documents, which once again produces a high level of illiteracy among the Roma, even exceeding that of their parents.[14]

According to the Roma councilor, the views of the Romanian community regarding the relative economic successes of the Roma are mixed. In some cases, it activates prejudices, while others rejoice in the fact that the Roma are investing in an economically and socially "depressed" village in the region and lessening the extent of social exclusion through migration. The councilor believes that migration has an emancipatory effect on the Roma:

> "Look, the Gypsy got to go abroad, he came home, bought a house. Some people (...) there are some who think like racists. Others praise them: 'Bravo, look, they pulled out of it, they are no longer who they were (...) poor. They pulled out of it, they deserve all due respect, they bought a house, fixed up their house, became good farmers...' They often (...), now they (...), this migration was good for them. That is, the emancipation. They also saw how (...) what it was like abroad, how to dress, how to talk..." (Ursăreni, July 19, 2016.)

THE ROLE OF PENTECOSTALISM
IN THE LIFE OF THE ROMA OF URSĂRENI

In Ursăreni, there are two Pentecostal communities. There are different narratives about the history of the Ursăreni Roma's conversion to Pentecostalism. Although I have tried to find out about this issue in several interviews with various members of the community, as well as in conversations with "external" Pentecostal leaders well acquainted with the situation of the Roma, I could not clarify all the details of the story in a completely reassuring way. Reticence, exaggerated expression in the interest of confirming one's opinion instead of facts, and mistrust stemming from the sensitivity of the issue could have all contributed to this. Despite all this, the next scenario seems to be the closest to the truth.

The formation of the first Pentecostal Roma community dates to the early 1990s.[15] Like most Roma, a man who had a good reputation in the Roma community and his family had been involved in seasonal, months-long labor migration in the early 1990s. The family converted to the Pentecostal religion on a farm in southern Romania. Returning to the village, the head of the family commenced his proselytizing missionary work, which resulted in several families converting to the Pentecostal religion.

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[14] The survey conducted among Roma migrants in the capitals of Scandinavian countries has measured very low educational achievement: 11% of Romanian Roma working in Stockholm completed some kind of school education, in Oslo the rate of completed education was around 40%, while in Copenhagen 45% (Djuve et al. 2015: 41). At the same time, the same survey has shown a high level of illiteracy, the rate of which was always higher in the case of women (see Djuve et al. 2015: 41).

[15] I briefly described the history of the community in a previous article (PETI 2016).

The first assemblies of the small Pentecostal community were held in family homes. The gradually growing community was embraced by the leaders of the oldest congregation of the microregion, who supported the construction of the first Pentecostal church in Ursăreni in 1998. The growth of the community was accompanied by constant conflicts among the local Pentecostal Roma elite. The non-Roma leaders were able to establish a relative equilibrium in the congregation split into two parties by assigning a deacon from each camp a function. The division of the hierarchy of the congregation in this way was accepted by the regional Pentecostal organization as it is, in the interest of maintaining a stronger influence over spontaneously organizing congregations. Such reconciliation of the congregation's interest groups has ensured the relative equilibrium of the congregation for several years. Meanwhile, the ownership of the church was "turned over" by one of the leadership consortia to the Regional Pentecostal Organization in Suceava,[16] thereby gaining control over it. Although this Roma leadership has had its powers consolidated for some time through the influence of the regional organization, it has led to the deepening of conflicts within the congregation.

Using this discontent, a member of the Roma elite who had previously lost out and been marginalized in the battle for Pentecostal Church leadership positions, started the construction of a new Pentecostal church, bringing the opposition leaders of the old congregation and a significant part of the discontented membership with him. The second church, operating since 2014, was built from donations from Roma Pentecostal communities abroad, members of which hailed from Ursăreni. According to the reports, the son of a person who was one of the wealthiest people in the Roma community played a decisive role in collecting donations to build the church from Pentecostal churches in Norway, Netherlands and Sweden. According to Daniel, who is familiar with the local conditions,[17] he claimed that they were discriminated against and expelled from their church. I also heard it from Daniel that the son of the current presbyter participated in labor migration to Sweden about 15 years ago, and his knowledge of the local conditions led to the first wave of panhandling migration to Sweden (Sweden later became a transit country for the mendicant Roma of Ursăreni). This person played a leading role in organizing the initial travels of the Roma, but Csángó community leader Anton emphasized that the travels took place mainly within the intra-kinship system of mutual assistance. I also heard an opinion (from a middle-aged woman in the congregation in question) that the son of the presbyter was in contact with the local Pentecostals at the time of his stay abroad, and a major private donation of one of them greatly contributed to the building of the church. Although I cannot verify the truth of these statements, it is clear that the Roma family that successfully contributed to the construction of the second church, to the acquisition of an official operating license, and to organizing the new community made significant efforts to acquire one of the most important leadership positions of the Roma community in Ursăreni.

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[16] Although ownership of the church is in the hands of the communities, the other two communities of the "network" that I have been studying (the Csángó, and the one in the village with the Orthodox majority) also obtained the legitimization of leadership status from the Suceava regional organization, thus belonging to that organization.

[17] Leader of the Pentecostal Community functioning in the village inhabited by mostly Orthodox Romanians.

The new church began its operation in the Pentecostal movement with the approval of the Roma Pentecostal Movement, an organization with legal autonomy within the Suceava area, headquartered in Braşov (Uniunea Adunărilor lui Dumnezeu Penticostale Apostolice Romilor din România). According to the Statute of the National Pentecostal Organization, the Roma Pentecostal Movement is part of the Pentecostal movement, equal with the regional organizations. Based on my information so far, it is not clear what in fact is the relationship of this legally autonomous body to the national Pentecostal organization. This institutional structure seems to be quite independent in Romanian Pentecostalism, seeking to consolidate the various Roma movements with varying degrees of autonomy, providing them with a legal framework.[18] To formally function as a religious community is, in principle, allowed by Romanian law, but its implementation would encounter many obstacles in practice. The regional and local officials connected to the national Pentecostal organization mainly through the regional organizations see the new institution – organized primarily along the lines of the Roma elite's interests and system of relations – as competition. This is indicated by the fact that non-Roma Pentecostal leaders within the "network" (like Anton, the local Csángó community leader, Daniel, the presbyter and leader of the Pentecostal congregation in the Orthodox majority village, and the district pastor) spoke of it as a separate structure organized along ethnic lines (discussing it in connection with the Roma discrimination discourse). The independence of the Roma congregation is also indicated by the fact that the above-mentioned leaders referred to it as the *Liga Romilor* (Roma League).

The following functions can be found in the studied congregations: *community leader* (elected by the congregation, primarily responsible for secular matters, but also for observing the ritual order of religious gatherings and establishing the order of speakers), *presbyter* (not subject to religious knowledge, assigned by the regional organization,[19] responsible for the most important rituals – wedding, funeral, baptism, etc.), *deacon* (also a function approved by the regional organization, primarily ministering to the ritual order of church events, preaching, administering the sacrament, attending to religious matters upon the instruction of the presbyter, etc.). Less significant and primarily secular functions are treasurer and censor (economic supervisor) elected by the community.

In addition to the "official" positions based on the legitimacy of organizational and community elections, the function of the *proroc* (seer, prophet) is based on a particular religious/magical legitimacy. This role also functions as an official role within the national Pentecostal Church (there are *prorocs* officially recognized by the Church, their activity governed by a statute of the national organization), but in most Pentecostal communities, *prorocs* operate in an independent, informal way and with varying degrees of legitimacy depending on the community. In the Roma community I studied, the locally, or at most regionally, significant function of *proroc* was held by four persons: two men and their wives.

The current leadership of the local Pentecostal churches reflects the political/power relations within the community. These are not independent of extended family/kinship coalitions either. The leadership of the two Roma churches is in open conflict with

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[18] For example, the *Rugul Aprins* (Ponoara) and the Toflean Pentecostal Roma community. The latter may have been legally transferred to the Bucharest branch.

[19] Local leaders refer most often to the national organization as *cult* (in this context: organization).

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each other. The membership of the former church that became inactive as a result of resentment and disregard was successfully attracted by the religious entrepreneur who built the temple, as well as the two new church officials, the community leader, and the deacon who had served in this function in the former church. Extended family and kinship coalitions also played a role in which church the Pentecostal Roma would be joining. The new church has approx. 50-60 members.[20] The founder of the new Pentecostal church has become a presbyter, administering the sacrament, performing weddings, baptizing, and so on.[21]

The two rival Pentecostal churches in the studied settlement are connected to the Pentecostal movement through two different relation systems and organizational structures. One through the regional (but not specifically Roma) organization of the national organization of Pentecostalism, while the other through a fairly autonomous (but not regional) structure that consolidates Roma movements.

MIGRATION AND DIASPORA COMMUNITIES

Ada I. Engebrigtsen describes the role of extended family networks in the case of Romanian Roma "street workers" [22] panhandling in Oslo (ENGEBRIGTSEN 2005:3). Maintaining kinship-based relations is also very important to the Roma of Ursăreni. This also played a role in the evolution of the migration patterns of the Ursăreni people after the regime change. The development of expatriate communities was determined by information gathering along the lines of kinship, mutual assistance, and emigration to the same places.

The importance of family networks has been highlighted by the research conducted with combined methods in the capitals of Scandinavian countries (DJUVE et al. 2015:74). However, this research has shown that, in spite of close cooperation in the practical organization of travel and living abroad, "these groups should not be understood as economic units. While group members might eat or drive together, we were consistently told that if income is shared, it is mainly between spouses" (DJUVE et al. 2015:76).

Migration along kinship networks resulted in new and relatively stable communities of Ursăreni people in London and Lille. The Roma migrating to the big cities of Western Europe initially lived in illegal caravan camps. They bought used caravans for a few hundred euros, setting them up near stations, bridges, motorways, etc., joining other smaller or larger camps, or forming new ones. During this time, they were mainly trying to make a living by panhandling or collecting scrap metal. By now, several families have been able to enter the local social care system.

The non-Roma leader of the Pentecostal group in the Orthodox majority village has in this period visited the Ursăreni Pentecostal Roma living in camps abroad on several occasions. In the initial phase of international migration, during the "caravan period,"

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[20] Based on information provided by the leader of this congregation. At the church events I attended in the spring/summer, usually 30-35 people were present.

[21] Most of this information comes from an April 25, 2016 interview with Daniel, the presbyter of the Pentecostal community in the Orthodox village.

[22] Concept of the author, Ada I. Engebrigtsen.

community leaders have not yet emerged, thus the Romanian leaders feared that, in the absence of leaders, they would lose the close to 50 Pentecostal believers living abroad for extended periods. The community was held together by organized missionary visits. During his missionary visits, the man who led the central congregation of the Moldavian Pentecostal network provided essential ritual services (baptisms, blessing of newborns, weddings, healing rituals, administration of sacraments), and he occasionally administered new baptisms, too. Some of the people being baptized were not from Ursăreni but were among the Romanian Roma living in caravan camps. According to the said presbyter, on one occasion he baptized 15 persons, of whom seven were from Ursăreni. The rite of baptism took place in the Atlantic Ocean. In this initial phase, the gatherings were said to be held in a larger caravan. Some of the Roma working as singing beggars formed an improvised band, thus the songs were performed to the accompaniment of an accordion.

> "They had their spots, their caravans. On corners, by railways, motorways or roads. They spread out all the way from here to the inn. Caravans were lined up side by side. That is, they bought them for 350 euros, a caravan that they had (…) You know what a caravan is. A small, two-person, six-person caravan placed on two of these planks. I also lived in a caravan, that's how I served" (April 25, 2016).

The only organized institutional framework for Roma communities living abroad is the Pentecostal Church. They rented buildings in London and Lille, where regular Romanian *adunare* (gatherings) are taking place. The expatriate congregations also produced their own religious leaders. These congregations formally belong to one of the Roma branches of the Romanian Pentecostal Movement, their religious leaders approved by one of these organizations. These communities number around 200-300 people. Their membership consists exclusively of Romanian Roma. A large number of members come from Ursăreni or are members of families that belong to the kinship systems of Ursăreni or have come into the relation systems through the Pentecostal religion. In the selection of leaders, the size of their kinship group is as important as their aptitude (due to contact capital, political support).

Examples of the establishment of a Pentecostal diaspora community are not limited to Ursăreni. From the Orthodox majority village, which was one of the communities I have been studying, several families moved to Palma de Montechiaro in Sicily, where they founded an independent Pentecostal congregation. For their ritual community events, they rented a church, which is alternately used by an Italian and the Romanian-speaking community. The leaders of this community come from the village with the Orthodox majority and were given authority to fulfill ecclesiastical functions by the Suceava regional organization.

Migration and the non-institutional forms of Pentecostalism

Besides the *prorocs* functioning outside the official institutional framework of the Ursăreni Pentecostal Roma and exhibiting signs of religious specialization, there are also persons who are unusually well-versed in the interpretation of dreams and visions

or have a better-than-average understanding of possession. Unlike the *prorocs*, they do not practice their skills in a systematic and institutionalized way, but rather they are employed in neighborly and kinship circles and for occasional situations.

Prayer for solving each other's problems is a matter of daily practice, and even so, some people's prayers are attributed greater power. The magical use of the power of prayer can thus explain the event I witnessed after one of the assemblies. Following the assembly, a young Gypsy woman intensely gesticulating and raising her voice pulled aside the wife of Anton, the Pentecostal community leader. The event took place in Ursăreni, in the newer Pentecostal church.[23] When we later traveled back to the Csángó village together and I asked her what that was about, she told me that the young woman had asked her to pray for her, as her panhandling signs in Italy contained lies. The admission of this "sin" to the community leader's wife was similar to the "mărturisire" (witnessing, confession) that was used with the *proroc* and which sought to obtain God's forgiveness and help, and thus avoid misfortune. The young woman believed the prayers of the Pentecostal community leader's wife were "more powerful" than the "simple" prayers of those in her own kinship system.

Although on the level of designation exorcism and the ability to have visions are often referred to as a special gift of the Holy Spirit, there are overlaps in exercising these "abilities". The two male *prorocs* in Ursăreni, whose activities are well known to the whole community, also told a number of exorcism stories in which they themselves participated in the role of the exorcist. It is an important coincidence that the emergence of the second *proroc* couple as *prorocs* is connected to the opening of the second Pentecostal church in 2015, when they became the *prorocs* of this congregation.

The basis of the distinction between prorocing/divination *(prorocire)*[24] and visions is the way in which the Holy Spirit communicates with the believers. In the case of divination, the communication is a direct message, even if it is in the form of glossolalia (speaking in tongues). The person who receives the divination in a glossolalia form understands exactly what the message is. In the case of the gift of a vision (as in the case of dream interpretations), the form of communication is metaphorical: the person receiving it is not a direct mediator but a specialist in the process of interpretation. The "gift of vision" can also play a role in exorcisms: those who receive it may either confirm or question the success of exorcism. As the *proroc* of the newer church who also does exorcisms said, a person with the gift of vision can see (or else feel) whether all the demons had left the possessed or not:

> – Can you see when the demon leaves the person? Or how can one know that God's work has been accomplished?
> – It depends on whether someone has a vision or has the gift of vision. He could see the moment he closed his eyes, the moment he felt it leave during prayer. He either sees or feels what is leaving. Whether all the demons left, all the demons exited, or there was still something

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[23] Anton and his wife had participated on other occasions in events at the church in Ursăreni, but this time they were there to support my research.

[24] In this writing, I use the Csángó's etic terminology to name this rite containing divinatory and possession elements (that is what the Csángó Pentecostal group belonging to the network calls this ritual) (PETI 2016).

in there. And then there must be one who has the gift of vision. I cannot just go there with my gift of divination, or another who has a different gift (...) of demons. This is also a gift, very (?), some possess all the gifts (perhaps), or just one gift (...) The gift of the Holy Spirit is manifested in visions and in all kinds of ways. It must be there. There must be a seer, so as not to (...) miss a demon that has not been released, and you say that you are free and the visions (...) but his visions suggest that there is still something in that person. This is how (the Holy Spirit) showed me, he shows me! – so says the person who has this gift (...) (Ursăreni, July 17, 2016).

The Pentecostal religiousness engaged in divination and exorcism and founded on the interpretation of subjective religious experiences (dream, vision) is also relevant for the groups functioning abroad. The religious/magical notions and exercises that have less legitimacy in the institutional hierarchy of Pentecostal religiousness are also reproduced in diaspora communities. Since these communities also require these forms of Pentecostalism, they had Florin, a man who has been a *proroc* in the Ursăreni community for a while[25] travel to them on several occasions. Florin's magical activities include revealing the causes of illness, praying for the healing of the patient, discovering the outcome of future events, etc. One time, for example, a Roma woman sought him out about the fate of her son imprisoned abroad. According to Florin, the Lord revealed through the gift of divination that the woman's son would be released in that year. Florin said that this has really happened, and the grateful woman phoned him to thank him for the fulfilled prophecy.

One time when I visited him in April 2016, it was two weeks after he returned from Duisburg, Germany, where he was providing various ritual services. He said that he went to Duisburg upon the invitation of a community of Romanian Roma (mainly from Timişoara, Arad, Bucharest), his ticket and other expenses paid by this community. Florin's "magical service package" (healing, illness interpretation, and prophecy – in Ursăreni, they call this practice "*prorocire,*" divination – and performing exorcisms) had no problem fitting into the non-doctrinal ritual system of the Pentecostal community in Germany.

According to Florin, during his recent trip to Germany two weeks before I talked to him, a Roma family living in Germany for a long time and owning their own home asked for his help. One of the family's children was in the hospital with a brain tumor, where they prayed for it under Florin's guidance. According to Florin, the child was miraculously cured by the prayers, and the doctors who were present found the tumor gone.

THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH'S STANCE ON PANHANDLING

According to the official Pentecostal discourse, panhandling is a sin: the leaders of the network urge its punishment, and there is even a symbolic punishment for it. However, talking to non-Roma functionaries in the network, it turned out that they were perfectly aware of how much the livelihood of the Roma depended on this practice, and regarded it as a "pardonable," "venial sin." The punishment is being *set aside* (suspension), which is brought into effect by the community leader. Daniel, who served them for

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[25] An alias, as are all the names of other people in the study.

three months, insisted on using suspension for "panhandling and singing". In addition to the discriminatory and shaming function of being set aside or seated in the back, the punished person cannot take on any ritual role in the assembly *(adunare)* during this period (speaking, witnessing, loudly praying in front of the community, and in the case of women, performing one's "own song" in front of the community, etc.). The punished person's membership in the Pentecostal community is, in fact, symbolically placed in a temporary, suspended status, the length of which may range from three to six months, depending on the severity of the sin. One of the 40-year-old women participating in the study said that the person so punished "loses his rights before God". (April 26, 2016)

Daniel also said that one time when he went on a missionary visit of a caravan camp in Lille during the "caravan period," several of the recently baptized Roma there believed that he who panhandled was with Satan, and the waves of the Danube would take him as punishment, and he had no right to participate in assemblies. Daniel dispelled these "false teachings", baptized them, and told them that when they returned to Romania, their punishment would be three months of being *set aside* (April 25, 2016).

Livelihood strategies of a Roma family
and their relationship with Pentecostalism: a case study

Most of the strategies typical of the majority of the Ursăreni Roma can be found in the Dionisie family, and I will try to briefly present these in the following.

I met Dionisie and his wife Mirela in 2014, and I have visited their home many times since. On those occasions, I spent a whole day with them, getting to know several members of the extended family, many of whom I interviewed. My first encounter with Dionisie turned out to be quite memorable. I was walking with Anton, the leader of the Csángó Pentecostal community, in a remote corner of Ursăreni, when we came upon a wagon pulled by a donkey carrying dried corn stalks and a weathered man on a scooter clinging to it. The owner of the scooter, a middle-aged, brown-skinned man with bright blue eyes who laughed often (exposing a couple of his gold teeth) was Dionisie. Dionisie and his wife lived at this time on the Roma colony. They have six adult children and 27 grandchildren. Their seventh child died at the age of seven because of a severe cold.

In the family, the woman was the first to convert. According to her, she was religious already. Her closer relationship with orthodoxy came after the death of her seven-year-old child. That is when she started going to church and seeking solace in religion. She told me that her child died in the hospital, without a candle. An Orthodox woman advised her to light a candle at Easter, to provide her dead son light in the afterlife.

"(...) my son died (...) my seven-year-old son died and (...) I started going (...) to (...) the church, to (...) the Orthodox church. And what the world did, I did it too. I paid for a mass, I stood there (...) I filled the candle holder with candles, kissed the icons, the Virgin Mary. Aaa..., my child died in the hospital, without a candle. And (...) somebody, the women said that at Easter I should light, every Easter light a funeral candle, and that I should fill the candle holder with candles. So that the child might have light there (...) and I went to P, the temple in P, and bought a large funeral candle, a prepared cake, and donated it to the church for them to burn it (...) at the time of the resurrection. I do not even understand it myself. (...) While the resurrection is taking

place, let the funeral candle burn, to provide light for the child. After I converted, I realized that it was (...) unnecessary. That there was no point in what I did (...) I was in the dark, I was (...) I think I was blind, I was not myself (...)" (Ursăreni, April 25, 2016).

As she explained, she often observed people returning from the assemblies seeming happy. On such occasions, Mirela was seized by a longing mixed with curiosity, wanting to be a part of it. Around that time, a Pentecostal Roma told Mirela about one of his dreams. According to that person's story, he saw a dry well in Mirela's house, from which he heard the voice of a child crying for help. Then he dropped a rope and pulled out the child, after which the well filled with water. The person who dreamed this claimed that the child in the dream was Mirela. Also around this time, another Pentecostal believer visited her to tell her of a dream about her. In this dream, Mirela was dressed in white as she was singing in the middle of the congregation. According to Mirela, these emotionally significant dream stories, the symbolism of which she had identified with her vacant life, the need for change, had prompted her to start visiting the Pentecostal assemblies and to convert. When faced with a dilemma of lifestyle change, Pentecostal Roma women often turn to dream interpretation.

Mirela's conversion resulted in a conflict in her family. Her husband did not appreciate the woman's ever stronger connection to the Pentecostal Church, which, on the one hand, brought on a change in the woman's behavior, but also resulted in her having spent a lot of time at assemblies held several times a week, as well as informal religious gatherings organized by families or neighborhoods that often lasted well into the night. Because she had a nice voice, the woman became one of those who publicly performed religious songs at church meetings.[26] Despite her husband's continuous squabbling (which she tried to ignore, even though she'd never budged before), she persisted in her faith. On one occasion, when she was coming home from a church meeting, her husband who was working at home threw a cob at her in his anger. The woman interpreted her husband's angrier than usual behavior as Satan's ire for having taken the sacrament at the assembly. Seeing the woman's perseverance and fasting, after a while, the husband also converted.

> "One day I took the sacrament, and he was working on a Sunday. Found some work for a Sunday. He dismantled the cart, he was oily up to his neck, and he was repairing it, hammering it and ... and I came from the church where I took the sacrament. When I walked through the gate, he picked up this big cob, and when he threw that cob at me, I defended myself. Because if I did not defend myself, it would have hit my head. (...) And I stood there because what ... 'what does Satan do?' I say. Because I took the sacrament, that's why he does this. I went behind the house, knelt and cried ... and ... prayed. He came after me, caressed me, 'forgive me', he said. Because he saw that ... before I was a believer, I kept mouthing off to him. He'd say a (bad) word, I'd say two. He swore, I swore back. He'd insult my mother, I'd insult his. I did not shut up. But after seeing that I did not retort, that I cried, that I prayed, that I fasted ... He saw the change, and he went and gave himself (to God)" (Ursăreni, April 25, 2016).

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[26] Singing is the only rite that women can perform individually in public.

Dionisie and Mirela's fixed monthly income consists of social benefits of 200 leu (less than 50 euros). Dionisie has been permanently employed once in his life, which lasted three years, with one of the sanitation companies in the nearby city. For a significant part of the year, the couple works on the fields of local Romanian farmers, mainly in vineyards, within the framework of patron-client relations. Dionisie also chops wood and owns some land, where he, too, has planted a vineyard. Being converted Pentecostals, they do not drink wine, so they sell the crops instead. They keep some chickens, some goats, a couple of piglets. Like many other local Roma, they also do "walnutting." In addition to their own collecting, they buy large batches of walnuts in shell, which are then broken, cleaned and sold as nutmeat, mainly to traders who come to the village. The main income of the family comes from panhandling in Sweden and Norway. They travel abroad from their own resources.

One of their six children has lived in France for a long time with his own large family. He works as a part-time doorman, as well as collects scrap metal with his own car. In the meantime, the father of six managed to get social benefits amounting to 2,500 euros a month. Their other children live in the village, like most, mainly panhandling abroad, or taking on seasonal work in the wider region (mainly in Moldavia). Many of their close relatives also live abroad. One of Mirela's sisters lives in Spain, another in England, and two of her brothers live in Germany.

In 2015, they purchased a mud brick house on its own plot and with a large garden around the house in the "best" part of the village, close to the main road. In the same year, they started construction on two new houses on the plot – one for themselves, the other for their son living in France.

The family's sound economic state and prosperity as compared to their previous situation are attributed to the effect of Pentecostalism. According to the woman, after her conversion, they managed to build their house on the Roma colony. They bought a car for one of their sons, helped him get his driver's license, and even bought two cows.

> "But God worked! During these two years we built this house, from August to autumn the house was raised and covered. We finished the house in the second year. But where the money came from, I do not know, I do not know where the moneys came from. After that, we bought the car for the boy, paid for the driver's license, bought two cows. It came, you know, I give my children bread like a dream, I did not know where it (the money) came from, I asked the question, 'Who is helping us, who is providing for us?' Because before we were believers, the money was never enough. We had a million or two, but where did it go, what did we do, because we did not buy anything" (Ursăreni, April 7, 2014).

For Mirela, it is not only the dreams full of religious significance and guidance so important to the Pentecostal Roma, but also the advice mediated by the *prorocs* that play a major role in making a big decision. Mirela's narrative reveals that in difficult times, she often turned to the *prorocs*. She asked for their help even when, caring for her invalid mother, she felt discouraged about her desperate situation. The *proroc* predicted her mother's miraculous recovery, which according to Mirela was fulfilled.

According to another story, their son and his family decided to stay in France during the extremely difficult period following their emigration (the caravan period, memorialized by several family photos) after the Holy Spirit messaged him through a

proroc that his prosperity would come in a foreign country. With the current prosperity of her son, Mirela considered the "prophesy" confirmed, just as she herself sought out Martin, the most prominent *proroc* of the network, who lived in the Orthodox community. At that time, Mirela had doubts about going to panhandle in Sweden. Her doubts came from the ambivalent community perception of panhandling. The *proroc* affirmed her intent to travel abroad, saying God would help her on her journey. After that, Mirela traveled with her husband to Sweden, where they did indeed get lucky. According to her, in two months, she and her husband earned so much money that they could buy a plot in the village and get started on the new construction. This story of Mirela points to her ambivalent attitude to panhandling within Pentecostalism.

> "... I wanted to go to Sweden, too, but I could not. It was like something was holding me back like that ... no ... I was thinking I was going to that country to commit a sin; I cried and I went to Brother Martin (the *proroc*). To the old man. (...) And ... 'Brother, I have something (to confess) before God, brother.' I had this trouble, wanted to see if God would let me go ... to that country. But I did not tell that to the brother. 'I have a request before God, brother.' And he said, 'You have your mind on making a trip,' he said. 'Go ... go, for God's blessing will be on the journey which you will undertake.' And God allowed me to go. And there I earned money, brother ... We bought these two houses, these houses here, we made nearly a billion" (Ursăreni, April 7, 2014).

The couple travels abroad to make money 2–3 times a year, each time spending 1–2 months. One year, when his son lived in a caravan camp in France, Dionisie collected scrap metal with his son.

During their longest stay in Sweden (before which Mirela visited a *proroc*), they panhandled on weekdays, and on Sunday they went to the local church. Dionisie has occasionally taken on minor temporary jobs, such as repainting the exterior wooden cover of houses.

The city's charitable church organizations provided temporary accommodations and care for the Romanian and Bulgarian Roma panhandling at various points of the city. The system that emerged was that the 10-bed accommodation was occupied by the Romanians for a week, and the following week they switched places with the Bulgarian beggars. Dionisie and his wife slept at the station during those times, while they said that the Bulgarians, when it was not their turn, slept in their own cars. It was the charitable church organizations that initiated contact with the Roma beggars, their representatives seeking them out at their begging places and inviting them to their temples. On such occasions, they were able to clean up and were fed, too. Through the family, one of the churches organized a fundraising event for the Roma of Ursăreni, after which their representatives traveled to Ursăreni, and with the consent of Dionisie's family, they produced for the fundraising campaign an artfully executed photo and video composition set to music of grandchildren living in poverty.

Although Pentecostal ethics suggests that begging, as I have just mentioned, is at best an ambivalent action, they do comply with some of the rules of Pentecostal ethics while exercising it. Mirela said she panhandled with Romanian songs. With the Romanian and Romani-language religious songs that she used to perform in the church; in her telling, she never begged. As she said, she regards it as a serious sin; she would only sing the religious songs to herself, when nobody passed before her, and merely for religious purposes.

In the preceding, I presented the livelihood strategies of a Roma family in Ursăreni. The strategies followed by the family essentially illustrate the most important changes of the recent past in the Roma community in Ursăreni: turning to Pentecostalism and the pursuit of migration-related incomes following EU accession, resulting in the emergence of two main types of migration – a temporary migration focused on panhandling, and a longer term migration involving emigration. I presented the importance of Pentecostalism in the maintenance of migration (family relationships, the community organizing role of the Pentecostal Church abroad, contact with other churches), and I presented the mentality-forming role of religion in conducting economic activities (e.g. turning to religious specialists when making relevant decisions) and organizing consumption in their pursuit of acting in accordance with their religious worldview.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, I attempted to analyze the migration patterns of a Roma community in Moldavia, the related livelihood strategies, and the relationship between Pentecostalism and migration.

Although panhandling in Sweden and Norway is certainly one of the most important sources of income for the Roma of Ursăreni, the situation of some of the Roma improved because, for various reasons, the Romanian population represents an ever-decreasing competition for them, and in the symbolic sense, they are increasingly giving up on the village. The situation of some of the Roma has therefore improved not necessarily because they made a lot of money through panhandling, but because due to the aging Romanian community that has been steadily emigrating since the socialist era, the decrease of their previous positions enabled the Roma to buy their lands and houses in the village. Their participation in migration, however, was a prerequisite of the Roma population's moving from the colony to the actual village.

In parallel with migration and moving into the village, a community-organizing project that profoundly changed the mentality and attitudes of the Roma community was taking place: their conversion to the Pentecostal religion. Both Roma and non-Roma consider the most powerful achievement of the Pentecostal religion to be the endorsing of a wholesome lifestyle, a normalized relationship with the family, the community and the outside world, moderation, and a mentality that encourages the overcoming of the "uncivilized" image of the pre-conversion Roma.

In addition to encouraging a more rational economic behavior and lifestyle, Pentecostalism has created an institutional community framework for the Roma both at home and abroad. The mobility of individuals and families depend on these institutions. In parallel with the Pentecostal religious project, there was a fierce competition between the local elites, from which the diaspora communities abroad were not exempted. The Pentecostal religion has consolidated leadership positions within the community and has created new statuses.

Pentecostalism plays an important role in the establishment and maintenance of relations within the transnational framework between the Roma of Ursăreni and the Roma who emigrated from Ursăreni. For the Roma that were integrated through Pentecostalism, the "ritual revitalization" (Fosztó 2009) inherent in Pentecostalism (in

addition to rites of passage, participation in rituals connected with conversion, illness, and various crisis situations) created new occasions for extending and strengthening family and kinship networks. The "official rituals" of Pentecostalism were initially ministered during the missionary visits of the network's Pentecostal leading elite. The needs of expatriate communities with an independent leadership have brought to life the phenomenon of the religious specialists functioning in the gray zone of Pentecostal religiosity: the "traveling *prorocs*" engaged in divination, faith healing, and exorcism. However, through their support, expatriate Pentecostal communities also influence the power relations of the local Roma elite, as was the case with the second Pentecostal church in Ursăreni.

As well as being a stimulant of modernization, Pentecostalism has been dedicated to demonstrating the Roma's willingness to civilize and modernize.[27] In terms of a wholesome lifestyle (e.g. alcohol, spousal infidelity, ban on gambling, the ethos of a converted person vis-á-vis the extreme consumption of pleasures, etc.), the Pentecostal religion contributed to the changing of the patterns in which the Roma community thought of itself. In this way, through a favorable macro-economic condition (free migration available through the country's 2007 EU accession and the related new resources: panhandling-focused migration and long-term, but not necessarily permanent foreign residence), Pentecostalism also fulfills the role of an unprecedented explanation system that unlocks/displays the economic successes affecting part of the Roma community on an ideological level.

Although the Pentecostal churches in which the Roma of Ursăreni are assembled (the two local churches, as well as the ones in Lille and London) do not consider a part of the Roma community to be Pentecostal as per religious criteria, there is still a non-formal and fundamentally non-religiously motivated loose attachment to the Pentecostal Church on the part of these Roma.

The effect of the Pentecostal mentality thus affects the entire Roma community.

Pentecostal religiosity exists in syncretic unity with pre-conversion Roma religious notions and practices (for example, regarding divination notions and practices, as well as notions of possession), thus passing down or renewing traditional notions.

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[27] In a previous article, I touched upon the presentation of Roma conversion as a "civilizing project" (PETI 2017), comparing it to the role of Pentecostalism in a Transylvanian Hungarian-speaking Roma community as observed by Dénes Kiss, which he synthesized in the context of the "thematization of Pentecostal Ethics" (KISS 2009). Its essence is that the converted Roma emphasize their community's willingness to civilize/modernize (and its results) through their conversion.

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Exorcism and Sexuality:
The "Thick Description" of an 18th-century Transylvanian Catholic Priest's Transgression[1]

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Abstract: Using contemporary documents, the study presents the story of a scandalous exorcism that took place in 1726-27. At the heart of the Csíkszentgyörgy (Ciucsângeorgiu) case is the local parson and a non-local "possessed" woman. The supreme church authority sought to figure out the details of the months-long case retroactively through testimonies and the correspondence of the priests involved. The demonically possessed woman upset the entire village community. In many respects, the priest became "obsessed" with the case and the woman. For his exorcism, he used methods found in alternative European manuals that were by then banned in the Church. The woman's prophecies and reports of the afterlife were taken seriously not only by the priest, but also by the wider village community. The sexual fervor of the woman did not leave the young men guarding her at night – as well as the parson himself – unaffected. The Church authorities ultimately sought to clarify the circumstances of the woman's pregnancy, and especially the priest's role in it. Although there is no judgment to be found in church sources, all traces of the Padre later disappear.

In keeping with the trends of narrative history, beyond the "thick description" of the case, the author undertakes less contextualization than usual. The case is undoubtedly edifying in terms of the history of Roman Catholic exorcism in Hungary; it presents significant documentation of contemporary religious and folk demonology, contains the early traces of subsequent folk beliefs, and raises a number of cultural-historical issues (in regard to sexuality and love).

Keywords: demonology, exorcism, eroticism, transgression, lower clergy, narrative historiography

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents the emic interpretation of a "stumbled upon" 18th-century source text, and one of the potential research interpretations of the story it contains. I have

been interested in the issues of early modern Church exorcism in terms of historical folkloristics, cultural history and Church history for years[2] when in the summer of 2004 I embarked on a general source exploration in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Gyulafehérvár. Wading through the documents of the former Bishop's Office chronologically, the two dossiers of the above-mentioned case from Csíkszentgyörgy emerged unexpectedly. There was, in fact, logic in including the documents of the case that is interpreted as a priestly transgression among the documents of the same subject. For contemporary Church leadership, the fact of an unlicensed exorcism was only secondary to the alleged sexual aspect. To me, however, it was exactly this chronicle of a Roman Catholic exorcism conducted in Ciuc during 1726-1727 that was an exciting research find. While processing the source, it became clear that the "erotic thread" of the story was also not merely an obscure case among dozens of priestly "transgressions". What seemed to be most expedient, then, was to temporarily combine the two – otherwise usually different – research threads and treat them as equal aspects of this case.[3]

The first, onger part of my study – almost exclusively based on the central source text – strives to reconstruct the scenario of the original story. This is achieved through a research process that uses as few external aspects in the description as possible, as few secondary frames of reference based on ex-post scientific paradigms as possible. In writing the "event history", this type of narrative history does not use the source data to illustrate its own ex-post concept, but follows the sources and their characters in the explication itself, striving to create a possible interpretation of the story *from within*. Another important circumstance is that the researcher does not go so far as to claim exclusivity: he does not claim that the events of the past, in this case nearly 300 years ago, are depicted exactly as they took place in reality. A multiplicity of readings must necessarily exist in all interpretations of sources that – due to the unilateral development of circumstances – understandably distort reality. This research process also results in a number of acknowledged and accepted question marks in such event histories, which the historian deliberately avoids answering with the help of his imagination or the "analogies" at hand.[4]

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[2] The incredibly extensive and versatile scientific literature of the devil in Christian culture, as well as the associated yet independent phenomenon of exorcism as the ecclesiastical cure of demonic possession, leaves no doubt that it is a truly interdisciplinary research area. If we only focus on the historical issues of the subject and do not take into account its current and recurring aspects, we can still document an interest in said subject in a wide range of disciplines (theology, religious sciences, history of church and liturgy, art history, history of culture, historical psychology, etc.). For example: ALMOND 2004; ERNST 1972; LEVACK (ed.) 1992; LEVACK 2013; ZUTT (Hrsg.) 1972. Of course, ethnographic/folkloristic research of the devil and exorcism occupies a prime position in both Hungarian and international literature. For example: DAXELMÜLLER 1984; KATONA 1902; PETZOLDT 1990; PÓCS 2001; SZACSVAY 2002. Recently, these have cropped up in conjunction with some of the more refreshing historiographical trends (historical anthropology, history of mentalities, micro-history), utilizing their methodologies and results on the basis of historical folkloristic aspects (to mention but a few specifically: CLARK 1997; DINZELBACHER 1996; FERBER 2004; LEVI 2001) (cf. Bárth 2016). As one of the stages of my research carried out in this spirit, this paper presents the early modern practice of eliminating demonic possession in Hungary in light of a specific story of exorcism.
[3] This idea is by no means unique in European literature. Cf. ROMEO 2003; RUGGIERO 2007.
[4] On the renaissance of a new form of event history and the historic-philosophical background of the "linguistic turn" in historiography, see: BURKE 2001.

I linked the controvertible epilogue of the story with the presentation of the indirect analytical frameworks and possible interpretations. The "conciseness" and complexity of the case under consideration allows for a variety of contextualizations, some of which I have tried to present, if only tangentially.

The following essay is, above all, an experiment as to what a historian can do with a document reflecting a perceptibly unique event if he merely examines the surviving texts on their own and – for lack of substantial control sources – must forego background information on the biographical data and motivations of the actors, as well as the specific social and cultural relations of the scene in which the story took place. In such a case, is it even worth drawing a necessarily blurry picture at all? Can such a case description lead to the mandatory generalizations?

THE DOCUMENTS OF A SCANDALOUS EXORCISM

In the examined 18th-century story from Transylvania, it was presumably not the fact of the exorcism itself, but the unusual, suspicious circumstances – from the point of view of Church leadership – that led to the scandal. Based on the surviving documents that have been created in conjunction with the case,[5] it is not exactly clear when and based on whose observations did the dignitaries of the diocese of Gyulafehérvár take notice of the activities of the parson in Csíkszentgyörgy. On the other hand, we know that the latter – namely, György Ferenczi – started the exorcism of a woman named Kata during the Advent of 1726.[6] From a later testimony, it is clear that the exorcism ritual was already ongoing on the 8th of December of that year.[7] As one of the phases of the months-long procedure, the allegedly possessed woman was transferred to Csíksomlyó on March 23, 1727.[8] It is possible that this incident was related to the church investigation launched in the spring, during which two appointed priests first came on the scene to verify the fact of the woman's possession. After Márton Szépvízi, the parson of Kisasszony, and Tamás Bertalan, at the time the parson of Kászon, not only found the demonic possession to be false, but their report[9] also unveiled the sexual transgressions committed in connection with the exorcism, the case reached the highest forum, the bishop of Gyulafehérvár. Bishop János Antalfi first interrogated the local priests involved in the case to a greater or lesser extent based on a questionnaire (deutrum) assembled in April,[10] then, on June 28, through three appointed priests, the interrogation of commoner witnesses in

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[5] The presentation of the events is based on the data of two concurrently filed archival records located in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Gyulafehérvár (heretofore GYÉL): GYÉL I. (Episcopal Archives) I. (Records of the Episcopal Office) 8/1727, 9/1727.
[6] The parson in his 1726 letter to the bishop. He mentions St. Andrew's Day (Nov. 30) as the day when he achieved his first success in exorcism.
[7] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of József Ferenczi.
[8] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Andrásné Dobondi.
[9] The report did not survive, but we can learn of the mission of the two priests from their subsequent testimony: GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.
[10] The bishop received five independent letters of testimonies from priests in the spring of 1727 (April to May). – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727.

Csíkszentgyörgy commenced.[11] A Latin-language fair copy of the protocols summarizing these testimonies was presented to the bishop on October 13.[12]

For us, the most important source materials for the year-long procedure, in addition to the clerical letters and certifications, are understandably the documents of witness interrogations. It is a fortunate circumstance that the above-mentioned fair copy preserved the preliminary questions, all of which already incorporate a pre-existing accusation concept.[13] The interrogation of the two protagonists of the case, parson György Ferenczi and the possessed woman – if it even came to their interrogation at all – did not survive, only one of the priest's letters was preserved in the archival dossier.[14] So far, I failed to track down the judgment reporting on the – otherwise predictable – outcome of the story. For lack of this, we can only indirectly deduce the subsequent fate of the protagonists.

Of the 19 testimonies recorded in the case, eight can be associated with local priests (from Csík and Háromszék).[15] All of them visited Csíkszentgyörgy at different times in the winter of 1726-27 and have become witnesses, and in some cases even participants, of the exorcism ritual taking place there. Another large group of testimonies came from eleven residents of Csíkszentgyörgy, only one of them being a woman.[16] Most of the four *primipilus* (centurion), six *colonus* (tenant) and one *libertinus* (freedman) witnesses[17] were young men in their twenties and thirties who took part in guarding the possessed woman day and night. Thus, they saw the events close up. In answering obviously tendentious questions and at times perceptibly coordinating their answers, the witnesses' testimonies were almost without exception incriminating for the priest.

THE MAIN PROTAGONISTS

Who was this 18th-century Transylvanian parson who became the protagonist of the story we are examining? The little information we know of his life is revealed in the files

[11] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Hungarian-language proceedings of witness interrogation recorded in Csíkszentmárton on 28 June 1727, signed by Mihály Cseh, parson of Torja, István Andrássi, subdeacon of Csik, and Márton Szépvízi, parson of Kisasszony.

[12] GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Latin-language proceedings in two copies (draft and final version), dated 13 October 1727 in Csíkkozmás, signed by Mihály Cseh, archdeacon of Háromszék, and János Bíró, notary of the Holy Office of Háromszék.

[13] The preliminary questions, divided into three main groups, inquired about the circumstances of the "possessed" woman's coming to Csíkszentgyörgy, the beginning and particular procedure of the exorcism, the woman's visions, the administration of the Eucharist and its possible desecration. – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

[14] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.

[15] List of testimonies by priests: Ferenc Bodó (Csíkszentmiklós), Ferenc Csató (Csíkszentimre), Zsigmond Antal (Kászonújfalu), József Ferenczi (Csíkszentlélek), Mihály Barto (Csíkszentsimon), Márton Szépvízi (Kisasszony), János Zachariás (Csíkkozmás), Tamás Bertalan (Kászon, later Kézdiszentlélek). – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

[16] Andrásné Dobondi, Judit (45, colona). – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

[17] List of male witnesses: József Keresztes (34, primipilus), György Ferencz (37, primipilus), András Kovács (24, colonus), György István (50, primipilus), Ferenc Oláhfalvi (29, colonus), Pál János (25, primipilus), János Dobondi (27, colonus), István Dobondi (30, colonus), Mihály Kádár (30, colonus). – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727. For the current-day interpretation of the above-mentioned Székely social categories, see IMREH – PATAKI 1992:41–91.

of the visitation by vicar Márton Demeter in 1721.[18] Ferenczi was already a parson in Csíkszentgyörgy, and according to the visitator's notes, he was in the 31st year of his life and the third year of his priesthood. Like the majority of his fellow priests pioneering the revival of the Transylvanian Catholic Church, he, too, studied theology in Nagyszombat (Trnava). Aside from this taciturn entry, we have almost no other information on the parson: his birthplace, education, history, and the dates of his work in Szentgyörgy remain obscure.[19] From his letter and his utterances cited by witnesses, a confident, proud priest emerges who had less than usual respect for Church hierarchy. These characteristics might have eventually caused him to collide with the higher authorities, even if fate had not brought him in contact with the "possessed" woman. Of the "devilish" Kata, the other protagonist of the story, we know even less than of Ferenczi. Despite questions about where the allegedly possessed woman came from and the circumstances of her ending up in Szentgyörgy at the top of the questionnaire,[20] no witnesses could (or wanted to) respond to these.[21] It is clear from the wording that the woman was not a local resident. We also know that she was at a sexually fertile age. She was characterized by a certain degree of coquetry and an increased appetite for all kinds of bodily pleasures. At times she had convulsions that led to the accusation of demonic possession.

EVIDENCE OF THE "POSSESSION"

The sources do not say how György Ferenczi ascertained the demonic possession of the woman, but later he tried all the more determinedly to prove this fact to his skeptical fellow priests and the villagers.[22] Several people have heard from Ferenczi's mouth that "he who does not believe that Kata is possessed by the devil will be condemned".[23] The extraordinary determination of the parson is clear not only from the testimonies,[24] but also from his own letter, in which he describes to his superiors that the allegedly possessed woman herself testified by "holding onto the Eucharist and swearing" that demons had possessed her.[25] Furthermore, in the parson's opinion, it was not even she that spoke but the evil spirit inside her.

Ferenczi, in order to provide his fellow priests with conclusive evidence of the woman's possession, asked her Latin questions on various theological issues. Ferenc Bodó, the parson from Szentmiklós, described in detail how one such interrogation took

[18] GYÉL I. 6. Visitatio Canonica 1720–21. 4 March 1721.

[19] In this aspect, the entry in the clerical directory is not too informative either: FERENCZI 2009:242.

[20] "An sciat, viderit, aut audiverit pro testimonio convocatus, quo modo, et qualiter quaedam energumena sit profecta, aut ducta in Csik Szent György ad exorcizandum? Quis primus eam incepit exorcizare? Cujus ex mandato? Qua obedientia?" – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

[21] Reverend Ferenc Bodó is an exception, as he made a vague reference to the fact that the possessed woman wanted to come to Csíkszentgyörgy. – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727.

[22] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimonies of András Kovács, György Ferencz, Ferenc Oláhfalvi and Mihály Kádár.

[23] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.

[24] In his Latin-language testimony, Ferenczi also stated: since the beginning of the world, such a miracle has not yet occurred, and even our Lord Christ himself has not done so. – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

[25] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.

place publicly in the church. The priest asked the woman in Latin whether the Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin. The woman replied in Hungarian, "absolutely, for she is as virgin as Christ". The next question asked whether the *unio hypostatica* was realized in Christ.[26] The answer to this was also positive: "absolutely". Finally, the priest inquired as to who was teaching the latter. "The Jesuits", came the correct answer. Ferenczi argued to those standing around him that even some of his fellow priests are not in possession of such information. A similarly serious theological knowledge was required by the question relating to the various forms of worship of God, the Virgin Mary, and the saints (*cultus latriae, hyperduliae, duliae*).[27] The parson of Csíkszentimre, Ferenc Csató, heard with his own ears when his colleague asked Kata, among other things, about angels, purgatory, the devil's past, and his archnemesis.[28] It was a cunning response to a question about predestination – which he nonetheless did not quote – that finally convinced Csató of the woman's devilishness. He figured only the devil is capable of such a thing.[29]

THE "BENEFITS" OF POSSESSION: PROPHECY AND SEEING

In addition to her responses to the theological questions, it was the woman's prophecies, visions, divinations, and utterances about dead people that convinced her surroundings of her possession. "Kata also said that she was talking to God, and what she said had great credibility."[30] "I have heard enough of her prophecies, the Padre and many others have even written down what she said", testified a Szekér from Szentgyörgy.[31] Ferenc Bodó, the parson from Szentmiklós, said that the woman spoke of both the living and the dead. Of the late Mihály Mikes and his wife,[32] for example, she claimed that they were in purgatory and will only be "liberated" after 12 years and "100 masses", and they will be released through great signs because they will appear in white, but no one should be

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[26] That is, a personal union of divine and human nature.

[27] The questions were beginning to be leading. It is curious that the interrogator and respondent associated the *"duliae"* cult otherwise reserved for the saints with the Virgin Mother, and the *"hyperduliae"* cult otherwise reserved for the latter with the saints. The mistake was recorded in the minutes without comment. – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

[28] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.

[29] GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Later, as per his own confession, Csató became suspicious of the frequent secret encounters between the priest and the possessed woman, and had a foreboding that it was fraudulent. (At least that is how he interpreted what had occurred, in retrospect and in his defense.) After he took leave of the parson of Csíkszentgyörgy, the latter first sent him pleading letters, later showered him with choice curses. Allegedly, even the possessed woman herself cursed him, *"Damnatus es in aeternum.Quia me deseruisti, cum ordinatus fueris a Deo penes me"*. (Be cursed forever! Why did you leave me when God ordered you to be by my side?) – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

[30] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató. They tried to convince the doubting Csató with the example of his own ancestors. The possessed woman claimed that his grandmother has been freed of purgatory, but his grandfather was still there. – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.

[31] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of József Keresztes.

[32] We know from an earlier visitation that Count Mihály Mikes was buried in Kisasszony County on 11 February 1721. – GYÉL I 6.Visitatio Canonica 1720–21.

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frightened.[33] In retrospect, the "possessed" woman, presumably in a trance state, seemed to have acted as a quasi-seer. Ferenczi often inquired after other *dead people*, and followed the woman's instructions in celebrating masses for them.[34] In relation to the living, the woman primarily revealed their sins.[35] At other times, she dealt with financial matters.[36]

Responses to religious questions, as well as prophesies and psychic visions, were only accepted as evidence for a short time, and even then, not everyone was convinced of the woman's possession. Indeed, over time, it was exactly these manifestations that made Ferenczi's fellow priests become suspicious of Kata along with Ferenczi.[37] They could not interpret their whispers, their secret conversations in any other way than the priest having had taught her the responses and texts.[38] The latter hypothesis was already included in the *deutrum's* accusation concept.[39] Furthermore, by having had forced and repeatedly justified the credibility of the prophesies, the priest of Csíkszentgyörgy committed a fundamental impropriety. The exorcism rituals based on the Roman Ritual explicitly forbid priests to pay any attention to the deceptive and diverse chatter of the devil, even if they are about the future or secret things.[40]

WEEKS OF AGONY

The possession of Kata was already assumed by many based on her physical seizures.[41] In such cases, she has manifested unusual physical strength. According to the letter of the parson, "the demons are always torturing her, day and night, as if they were trying to tear the poor Kató apart."[42] At the same time, he writes that because of this agony, "at all times, there must be four men by her side."[43] We also learn that besides the guards, Ferenczi, as well as another priest, had to remain continuously by the woman's side. The latter instruction came straight from the evil spirit. The bishop was issued a similarly threatening message as the parson: "If he does not appoint a priest to be by your side, he

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[33] The woman added that their appearance in white is expected at their grave (*"loco ubi sepulti sunt erunt magna signa"*). – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

[34] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimonies of Ferenc Bodó and Ferenc Csató. It is to be noted that celebrating a mass for someone did, of course, bring Ferenczi a very tangible, financial gain.

[35] Some she called out as adulterers, others as drunkards, etc. (*"alios fornicarios, alios ebriosos etc., vocitando"*). – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

[36] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of György István.

[37] GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimonies of Ferenc Csató, Mihály Barto and János Zachariás.

[38] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Zsigmond Antal.

[39] *"Quales quaestiones et interrogationes tum de vivis, tum vero de mortuis ab exorcistis eidem propositae etc. etc. (...) Quam et qualem conversationem cum illa, die ac nocte habuerunt? (...) Occulte instruxerunt ne obsessam, quae et qualiter ad interrogata respondeat?"* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

[40] STR 1625:265.

[41] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of József Keresztes.

[42] The plastic description of *demonic possession (possessio)* is strongly reminiscent of the way in which the phenomenon appears in 20th-century belief narratives. Cf. Pócs 2001, 2003:230.

[43] The relevant provision in the official ritual of Esztergom states that, when exorcising women, there should always be some honorable persons, preferably relatives of the possessed, assisting the priest. The same provision also warns priests to be vigilant, so that they would not say or do anything that might give rise to inappropriate thoughts.– STR 1625:266.

will be eternally damned if this obsessa is lost because of him."[44] The demon speaking from within the woman – strangely enough issuing instructions for his own expulsion – even named the priest to be called upon for assistance.[45] The parson of Szentsimon, Mihály Barto, like half a dozen other priests, actually gave in to the request and for some time participated in the protracted exorcism ritual. It is unknown to what degree the rest of the local clergy followed Ferenczi's instructions in other areas. Even through absentees, the parson of Csíkszentgyörgy wanted to increase the efficacy and power of the exorcism he was conducting. To this end, he asked his colleagues to celebrate masses for the purposes of exorcism.[46]

Part of the unusual circumstances of the exorcism in Csíkszentgyörgy was that the liturgical procedure lasted for a very long time. One of the witnesses interrogated claimed to have guarded the possessed woman for a total of seven weeks.[47] Ferenczi justified the extended duration with the number of demons possessing the woman and the incomprehension of the higher Church authorities. He allegedly managed to reduce the number of evil spirits from an originally approximately 17 million (!) to sixty,[48] but the complete success of the exorcist was impeded by the bishop summoning the congregation of priests. At least this is what the possessing spirit itself claimed in response to a question about the protracted exorcism.[49]

THE EXORCIST'S ARSENAL

The procedure that was protracted for weeks and months provided an opportunity for the utter exploitation of the centuries-old toolkit of exorcism. When the repeated recitation of texts found in the ritual books[50] did not result in liberation, the exorcist parson turned to various types of sacramentals, objects, and practices. Only a fragment of these was included in the formal exorcism rituals.[51] The overwhelming majority of the special

[44] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.
[45] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.
[46] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.
[47] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of József Keresztes.
[48] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.
[49] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.
[50] The case files and the data of the visitations do not provide sufficient points of reference in terms of the exact rituals that were used in the parish. The visitation of 1731 only mentions that there were four of them in use in Csíkszentgyörgy ("Ritualia 4") (KOVÁCS – KOVÁCS 2002:141). Based on comparative data, they might have been various 17th-century, respectively 1715 editions of the *Ritual of Esztergom (Rituale Strigoniense)*. For their bibliography, see BÁRTH 1999. The rite of exorcism in the *Rituale* Strigoniense first published by Péter Pázmány (STR 1625:263–292) follows verbatim the text of the Roman ritual *(Rituale Romanum, 1614)* renewed in the spirit of the Council of Trent.
[51] The Roman and consequently domestic rituals of exorcism do not mention any other objects and procedures besides the use of holy water, the crucifix, and the stole. According to these manuals, the most important weapon of exorcism is the spoken word. It is no coincidence that most of the prayers quote the words of the Scripture. Cf. STR 1625:263–292.

procedures represent solutions that were not officially accepted, considered to be an alternative heritage of most likely medieval origins, or – presumably – the parson's "own" methods.[52]

It is almost natural that during the exorcism the priest frequently used holy water and holy oil.[53] In his testimony, Ferenc Csató ironically noted that Ferenczi had so thoroughly aspersed the parsonage that they were lucky if they remained dry.[54] He rubbed the olive oil he consecrated on the patient's temples, eyes, breasts, navel, feet, and, according to some testimonies, even her *"pudendum"*, so as to expel the devil manifesting in the form of protrusions, limb by limb.[55] The parson of Csíkszentgyörgy used an exorcism procedure generally known but not officially recommended when he added to the incense burner not only frankincense, but also sulfur[56] and various strongly scented plants.[57] In regards to smoking, however, it was a rather unique exorcism tool[58] when Ferenczi had the woman draw the image of the demons and placed it on the embers, so that as the smoke slowly

[52] In the absence of contemporary parochial catalogues, it is difficult to determine what other "alternative" manual, in addition to the official diocesan ritual, Ferenczi may have used in his exorcism. Based on some of the methods and procedures mentioned below, we can conclude that the priest of Szentgyörgy might have known Hieronymus Mengus' two-volume Exorcist Manual or its extracted version (MENGUS 1697a, 1697b). The Franciscan Mengus' handbook was considered to be the most important exorcism manual of the entire early modern era. Cf. FRANZ 1909:II. 585. Note 3. On the origin and impact of the work, see: PETROCCHI 1957; PROBST 2008.
[53] In addition to the generally known and officially sanctioned use of holy water, fewer parallels can be found for the use of chrism (holy oil). The *Flagellum daemonum* offers a variety of chrismations for the purposes of exorcism. – MENGUS 1697a:180–182, 188–189. The *Fustis daemonum* prescribed the same for removing hexes from married couples, firstly by anointing the body, and secondly by ingesting the oil: MENGUS 1697b:215–216. On the background of the blessing of the oil in general, see: FRANZ 1909:I. 335–361.
[54] GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.
[55] "With the holy oil, the Padre anointed the parts of her naked body that she indicated the devil possessed, even her pudendum" (the latter was later redacted and refined to say in Latin: *"etiam in locis secretis"*) – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Oláhfalvi. The official ritual proposes to sprinkle the protrusions caused by the devil moving within the body with holy water and to mark them by drawing the symbol of the cross. – STR 1625:265. According to the ordinance of the *Flagellum daemonum*, the patient *should be anointed with the holy oil* on the eyes, the forehead, the ears, the chest around the heart, the pulse point on the forearm, the hands, and the pulse points on the foot, while reciting the following words: *"Ego ungo te N. hoc oleo benedicto, et per istam unctionem absolvo † te ab omnibus maleficiis, incantationibus, ligaturis, signaturis et facturis tibi arte diabolica factis. In nomine Pa†tris, et Fi†lii, et Spiritus†Sancti.Amen."* – MENGUS 1697a:188.
[56] One parallel, among others, can be found in the I. exorcism of *Fustis daemonum: "Si autem exire noluerit, suppone ignem cum sulphure ardentem, prius benedictis ante patientem; et fac illum profumigari..."*– MENGUS 1697b:64. In the same place in the III. exorcism: *"...si noluerint dicere veritatem, fac suffumigationem ex rebus foetentibus, puta sulphure, camphora, asa foetida, et similibus."* – MENGUS 1697b:116.
[57] For the use of frankincense (most often along with gold and myrrh), as well as certain herbs and plants (ruta, lavender, rose, etc.) in exorcism, see MENGUS 1697a:189–191, 211, 232–236. On the modern-day aspects of all these benedictions: BÁRTH 2010.
[58] Parallels of the procedure can be found in the VI. exorcism of Flagellum daemonum: *"Hic exorcista habeat imaginem pictam illius daemonis, qui opprimit obsessum, cum ejus nomine scripto super caput ipsius imaginis praeparatam, et conjurando ignem similiter praeparatum, dicat sequentem conjurationem."* – MENGUS 1697a:134.

consumed the drawing, the devil's power would be consumed as well.[59] As a tool based on an elementary idea of the removal of evil, the priest also consecrated some twigs for "casting the devil out of the house, sweeping him out."[60] On Ferenczi's instructions, the house, the window, the stove, and all the rooms were swept with the consecrated twigs.[61] In addition, the priest also blessed several curved rods with which they hit the woman's back and head.[62] It is remarkable that this method was also suggested by the possessed herself.[63] The success of the exorcism was ensured with not merely such external means: the exorcist parson also blessed the woman's food and drink.[64] Most commoner witnesses noticed that Kata did not eat just anything.[65] "She was very picky with her food, so Kata was in charge in that, too."[66] "Kata was very fond of meat, she did not even eat anything, mostly honey scones, mead, or honey water."[67] In addition to gastronomic indulgences, her body was also pampered. After blessing various herbs and grasses, they were used to make a bath,[68] which, according to the manuals, could have demonstrable exorcistic effects.[69] Several witnesses from Szentgyörgy asserted that "Kata was bathed in wine."[70]

THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS?

In higher ecclesiastical circles, it was mostly the incorrect use of church objects, and especially of the Eucharist, that provoked outrage. At the time of the exorcism in Szentgyörgy, many pieces of clerical clothing ended up on the "possessed" woman. Although the use of the *stole* – during exorcism – is allowed by the ritual book,[71] it seemed excessive that several (2-3) stoles were ruined during the protracted procedure, and even a liturgical alb and *superpelliceum* (surplice) were damaged.[72] Indeed, none of the official ceremonials included instructions to dress the possessed in an alb and have them

sleep or bathe in it.[73] The use of the Eucharist in the exorcism was a particularly serious circumstance.[74] The priest committed a transgression in keeping the sacrament in his house and not in the church.[75] Moreover, Ferenczi let the woman hold the monstrance, using it to "force" the woman and her demons to tell the truth.[76] Although this procedure does have medieval parallels, the regulations stipulate that the Host is to be placed on the head of the possessed.[77] In Szentgyörgy, they went even further when, according to the concordant testimonies of the witnesses, a piece of the Host was "sewn into a piece of cloth and kept around Kata's neck at all times."[78] The priest also used the *pyx* (small monstrance) for the exorcism,[79] as well as the *ciborium* (communion vessel) and the monstrance. At times he even placed the crucifix on the woman's chest and abdomen.[80] With regard to the latter – because they were in physical contact with the woman and indirectly or directly with her sexual organ[81] – an accusation of desecration has obviously also arisen.

FROM WHISPERS TO A SEXUAL ACT: THE STEPS OF EROTICISM

Our story thus reached the most important motive of the scandal: the erotic aspect of the exorcism of Csíkszentgyörgy. In this regard, the overwhelming majority of the witnesses

[59] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Zsigmond Antal. In his Latin testimony, as an explanation of the smoking of the image, Antal adds: *"...donec quasi spiritus in ipso deficeret"*. – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727

[60] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.

[61] Testimony of Ferenc Csató. Here, the exorcist used the *eliminatory* (removing) rite of "sweep-out", which in Heiler's religio-phenomenological categorization is a common form of sacred actions known in many religions. – HEILER 1961.

[62] GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

[63] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.

[64] Among the *benedictions of* the *Flagellum daemonum*, the blessing of bread and wine and all sorts of (not specifically clarified) drinks are indeed included. – MENGUS 1697a:182–188, 191–194, 207–211.

[65] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of András Szekeres.

[66] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Andrásné Dobondi.

[67] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of György Ferencz.

[68] Reverend Ferenc Csató noticed that even the ingredients of the bath were according to the woman's instructions. GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.

[69] See, for example, the blessing of the bath in one of the popular collections of benedictions: MB 1685:417–419.

[70] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of György Ferenczi.

[71] In the instructions of the Esztergom ritual, there is no mention of binding with respect to the stole. The prescription is for the priest to wrap one end of the stole around the neck of the possessed (probably as carefully as it is done during the binding of the hands of the parties in a wedding ceremony), put his other hand on their head and thus say the prayer. – STR 1625:270.

[72] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of József Keresztes.

[73] This element was also included in the preliminary questionnaires of the interrogation: *"Alba pro sanctissimo missae sacrificio celebrando adhiberi solita die aut nocte illam induerunt ne?"* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Most of the witnesses unanimously admitted to their use. – GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Bodó. He also testified that Ferenczi covered the head of the woman with *velum* – a shroud or cover used in church for a variety of purposes. According to medieval examples in Western Europe, the possessed were during the exorcism sometimes seated in a tub filled with holy water, stripped naked, their neck, groin, and thighs wrapped with a stole. – FRANZ 1909:II. 571–572.

[74] The third group of preliminary questions concerned only this topic: *"Quomodo et qualiter venerabile sacramentum tractarunt, dederunt ne ad manus obsessae in templo, domo, aut in balneo? etc. Ita, ut hoc cessisset in prostitutionem venerabilis sacramenti? Illud venerabile sacramentum servarunt ne in domo? Si ita, ubi? Qualiter et cur? Quis modus orandi obsessae ante venerabile sacramentum praescriptus? Ut post absolutam orationem, et post quaesita, et interrogata a venerabili sacramento, prophetaret obsessa, quis voluit aut mandavit?"* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. The relevant passage of the Esztergom ritual admonishes extreme caution, in general, when using holy things *(res sacrae)* in exorcism, while it completely rejects the use of the Eucharist: *"Sanctissima vero Eucharistia super caput obsessi, aut aliter ejus corpori non admoveatur ob irreverentiae periculum."* – STR 1625:265.

[75] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.

[76] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Bodó. József Ferenczi saw the *paten* in the hands of the priest of Szentgyörgy wrapped with the *purificatorium*.

[77] The Eucharist was occasionally replaced with relics. – FRANZ 1909:II.570.

[78] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of József Keresztes.

[79] GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató.

[80] *"...saepius etiam pectori, ventri applicabat crucifixum et pyxidem venerabile sacramentum continentem..."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. According to the Esztergom ritual, the crucifix could be placed within arm's reach or in sight of the possessed: *"Habeat prae manibus, vel in conspectu crucifixum."* – STR 1625:265.

[81] *"Non semel, sed pluries intra pedes obsessae exiguo infra genitalia pressit ciborium sacratissimum continens sacramentum, et quidem publice; supra tamen vestes muliebres."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató. The same case was confirmed by Reverend Zsigmond Antal as well. According to his report, the woman was not naked when the priest "lowered the Eucharist between her legs." – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727.

interrogated provided a testimony, sometimes detailed, incriminating the parson and others that could be suspected of such acts. These minute remarks, mostly directed at gestures and attitudes, are exciting to us not because they testify to the desires and weaknesses of a Roman Catholic priest of nearly three centuries ago, but because to the community, they probably signaled the various signs and stages of a love/sexual relationship.

The basis of the suspicion that the priest was facing was the undeniable fact of sleeping in close proximity of the allegedly possessed woman.[82] Many have overheard them "whispering".[83] "I saw the Padre under a blanket with the obsessa", said parson Ferenc Bodó, for example.[84] He also described a specific case in which he overheard a nighttime event. When he was in Csíkszentgyörgy, Ferenczi wanted him to sleep next to the woman. Having refused, he laid down on the ground on some straw, further away but still in the same room. He heard as the woman whispered the following into the ears of one of the guards lying next to her: "Touch my breasts, look how the demons are rubbing inside!" When the man touched her, the earwitness priest began to snore to feign sleep. The woman then further pleaded with the man next to her to touch her navel, where the evil spirits are flowing out of. Then she begged him to touch her even lower. The witness – in his own admission – fell asleep at this point. But he stated with certainty that all the while the priest was lying on the other side of the woman.[85]

For eyewitnesses, it clearly seemed like fondling, an "indecency", when the Padre rubbed oil into the protrusions on Kata's body that suggested the devil's presence.[86] It was utterly unmistakable when they found the woman seated in the priest's lap, laughing.[87] József Ferenczi, a parson from Szentlélek, was stunned to see at the Szentgyörgy parsonage that the priest was sitting at the table when the woman came over, slung herself over the table, and touched her naked foot directly to the priest's.

All the while the priest remained motionless.[88] The public embraces[89] and kisses were difficult for Ferenczi to explain as necessary consolation.[90] Witnesses interpreted it as a sign of a high degree of intimacy that the woman put her head on the priest's lap and "rummaged through his head and beard".[91] The baths also had an erotic overtone. The wet liturgical vestment clinging to the woman's body was not a sight for priestly eyes.[92] Someone also noticed that after the woman was finished, "Padre Ferenczi washed up in her bath water."[93] Reverend Csató saw repeatedly with his own eyes that the priest followed Kata into the chamber, where she went "to relieve herself".[94] If possible, the protagonists of our story went even further when they kissed while they were eating, and they broke a piece of bread with their teeth so that one half was held by the woman in her mouth, the other by the priest.[95] Aside from the manifestations of sexual foreplay, several people also referred to the concrete act of intercourse. It would be difficult to interpret the flutters under the blanket in any other way.[96] Someone heard directly from Kata that it was not only the parson, but also a Franciscan monk (who was also seen on several occasions sleeping with her[97] that she had established a sexual relationship with.[98] Due to the large number of potential candidates (let us not forget about the young men guarding

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[82]It is no coincidence that among the preliminary questions of the interrogation, the woman's night-time conditions were also included: *"Qualiter et ubi jacere illam jusserunt?"* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

[83]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of András Kovács. The "whispering" was clearly interpreted as a subtle clue of intimacy. – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of György István

[84]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. The same was confirmed by János Zachariás' testimony

[85] *"Ardente adhuc lucerna audio semel mulierem insusurrare auribus cujusdam viri jacentis ex una parte ad latus mulieris ... haec formalia: Tange inquit pectus meum, qualiter contriverint daemones; ubi vir tetigisset, ego incepi roncos trahere fingens interim me dormire, mulier ulterius obsecrat, ut etiam umbilicum tangeret, ubi evagantur maligni spiritus; imo cogit precibus etiam inferius tangere. Haec ubi inaudivi verecundia perfusus operante Deo optimo mox obdormivi. Quid ex post factum est, ignoro. Verum tamen certum est, reverendum patrem Ferenczi alia ex parte ad latus mulieris jacuisse, sub eodemque centone illa nocte cum obsessa dormivisse."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

[86]According to the testimonies of Ferenc Bodó and Zsigmond Antal, the priest kept groping the woman's chest, abdomen, legs and *"above her knees",* naked, even "near her pubic region" (*"in proximis partibus nude..."*). – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. In his Latin testimony, Ferenc Csató, quoting the dialogues, painted the scene quite realistically: *"Ad partes foemorum etiam pudendis proximiores sub vestibus mulieris manum attollebat pater frequentius currentes sub cute (ut ajebat obsessa) capere nitens, et palam hisce ex illa quaerebat, est ne hic, est ne hic daemon? Illa respondente: ibi, ibi, tunc extraxit manum, et denuo sciscitabatur his formalibus: Extraxi ne? cui mulier, omnino extraxit..."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Some testimonies claimed that this procedure took place in the chamber, away from others' eyes. – GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Pál János.

[87] *"...she often sat in the Padre's lap."* – GYÉL. I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of András Kovács. "I saw the woman sitting on the knees of the Padre, kissing the Padre ..." – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of István Dobondi.

[88]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727., 9/1727. Testimony of József Ferenczi.

[89]"She often indicated that the devils were torturing her inside, went to the Padre to be hugged, and the Padre held her tightly." – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of Andrásné Dobondi.

[90] *"Amplexabantur etiam subinde se invicem, et oscula dabat pater mulieri saepius."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Bodó. *"...she sat on the knees of the Padre, they kissed each other."* – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Oláhfalvi

[91] *"Ipse pater caput suum in sinum Catharinae reclinavit, et sic (fors pediculos) uti et in barba quaeri curavit publice quidem frequenter."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató. Delousing as a striking expression of a love affair has been seen in other contemporary sources as well.

[92]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Reverend Zsigmond Antal.

[93]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Zsigmond Antal. In the Latin version, he added: *"quod turpe est"*. – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

[94]She said she could not go in there "to empty her stomach" without a priest: *"In cameram cum Catharina patrem ingredi saepius vidi ad exonerationem (salva venia) stomachi, dixit enim mulier, se solam sine sacerdote ingredi minime posse."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Csató. The strange circumstance that they had retreated to the chamber had been seen by others, but their testimonies left the purpose of the thing obscure. – GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Mihály Kádár. The exorcising Padre might have been able to excuse himself with the explanation that he was seeking tangible evidence of demonic possession in the stool of the woman, which the Esztergom ritual encourages (but not at all costs): *"Iubeatque daemonem dicere, an detineatur in illo corpore ob aliquam operam magicam, aut malefica signa, vel instrumenta: quae si obsessus ore sumserit, evomat..."* – STR 1625.266. Cf. the experiences of a 20th-century exorcist with the examination of the stool of the possessed: Amorth 2005.140.

[95] *"Semel etiam vidi ad mensam unius offae panem in duas partes ab iisdem dividi, ita ut unum extremum Reverendus Pater dentibus, aliud vero mulier tenuerit, sic dentibus divisum panem manducaverunt."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Bodó.

[96]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Mihály Kádár. In the Latin version: *"sed vidi tamen infra tapetem patrem cum Catharina, satis se movisse"* – GYÉL. I. 1.9/1727.

[97]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.

[98]GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of János Dobondi.

Kata!⁹⁹), she herself did not know for sure when and from whom she got pregnant. Most of all, it was the trip to Csíksomlyó, mentioned above, that was suspicious in this respect. The only witness who denied the alleged events took place on the way to Somlyó was Andrásné Dobondi, an assistant at the parsonage of Csíkszentgyörgy. She did not think Kata could have gotten pregnant on the road, because "she had the monthly flow, I washed the foulness out of her shirt."¹⁰⁰ The woman's pregnancy was also explicitly referred to and asked about in the questionnaire of the bishop's investigation.¹⁰¹ The father's identity probably remained uncertain.

EPILOGUE AND CONTEXTUALIZATION

I have already mentioned that I have not found reliable data on the outcome of the case and the subsequent fate of György Ferenczi.¹⁰² Ferenczi's name is not included among the priests mentioned in the available visitations. We know that in 1729, he was certainly no longer the parson in Csíkszentgyörgy.¹⁰³ From the point of view of Church leadership, it is quite telling how the contents of the dossier of the case are summed up on the cover: "Reports on György Ferenczi, parson of Szentgyörgy, who in a despicable and ungodly manner mistreated a woman who feigned demonic possession."¹⁰⁴ The serious accusations were confirmed rather than contradicted by the testimonies. Calling the woman's possession into question clearly reinforced the fact of underlying sexual motivation. The latter was not necessarily the primary one, it could have been a mere "ancillary element" in the momentum of the events. There is no doubt that the parson – at least for a while – really believed in the woman's devilishness. In a typical instance, he attributed even his own eye disease to the devil's curse.¹⁰⁵ Kata did, indeed, exhibit "symptoms" that were evidence of her "possession" to not only the priest, but also the other priests and villagers. Presumably, Ferenczi had gotten involved in the sexual relationship only as a result of certain instances of the protracted exorcism and the erotic fervor of the woman. In his defense, he constantly claimed that the events have been *misconstrued*. The potential for at least two interpretations of the events does indeed exist to a certain degree. It is even possible that the woman was looking for demons

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⁹⁹"I often saw that the guards were kissing Kata", said József Keresztes, a guard of the woman for seven weeks. GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. András Kovács specifically named a man named Ferenc Falu, "who was guarding Kata, kissing Kata. As we took Kata from Szentgyörgy to Somlyó, I saw in Somlyó one night their fornication with Kata". – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727.

¹⁰⁰GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Andrásné Dobondi.

¹⁰¹ *"Fuit ne obsessa impregnata, aut est ne? Si est, a quo, etc. etc."* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727.

¹⁰²For the insufficiency, cf. FERENCZI 2009:242.

¹⁰³That year, in another case in Csíkszentgyörgy, the name of Gergely Kiss appears as a local pastor: GYÉL I. 1.1/1729. At the same time, in the visitation of 1731, a 34-year-old priest called János Kiss was listed in this function: KOVÁCS – KOVÁCS 2002:140.

¹⁰⁴*"Relatoriae contra Georgium Ferenczi, parochum Szgyörgyiensem, muliere ficta obsessa, foede ac sacrilege abutentem."* – GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727.

¹⁰⁵To expel the devil, he asked for help from his fellow priest. – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of Zsigmond Antal. In the Latin version of the testimony of the parson of Kászonújfalu (Cașinu Nou), he concluded that the procedure had been conducted with consecrated fingers (probably dipped into holy water) (*"consecratos applicabam digitos"*). – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

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hiding in the priest's hair, and the latter was compelled to follow her into the "chamber" with the intention of discovering the objects of the curse. But his gentle feelings for the woman could hardly be denied by Ferenczi, since they are obvious from the sentences of his letter and from his countless gestures.

We do not know what the woman's punishment was, whom in one instance the documents called a "liar and bad cheater".¹⁰⁶ Her proven lechery presumably earned her the usual judgment of the era.¹⁰⁷ At the same time, the acceptance of the fact of her fraud exempted her from an even more serious accusation: communication with the devil, and the associated possible suspicion of *witchcraft*. Although this harsher version did not seriously occur to the authorities, it can be inferred from sporadic, insinuated data that such an explanation has also taken root in the local society. To illustrate this kind of attitude of the people of Szentgyörgy, we quote one of the witnesses: "The people that guarded Kata were quite often kissed by Kata; they said, get out of here, witch."¹⁰⁸ The testimony of a young bondsman serving at the parsonage of Szentgyörgy, András Kovács, preserved a particular and instructive narrative in this respect: "Once the sister of the Padre, Elizabeth, came to the house of the Padre and said to Kata: Ay, Kata, on the woodpile by the fence, I saw the incubus in the image of a large red rooster, its light completely suffusing the woodpile! The Padre then got angry with her and cussed his sister out of the house (...)"¹⁰⁹ The early modern terminology of the word *"incubus"* has various shades of meaning.¹¹⁰ In this text, it refers to an *incubus* demon (an aggressive love partner), which happens to be in the form of a rooster.¹¹¹ The unusual furor of the priest may be understood in light of the contemporary notion of the incubus as the helper spirit of a witch.¹¹²

Like the interconnection between demonic possession and witchcraft, the relationship between possession and *visions* was just as "well-known" in contemporary ecclesiastical

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¹⁰⁶ *"(...) mendacissima et iniquissima deceptrix"* – GYÉL I. 1. 9/1727. Testimony of Márton Szépvízi.

¹⁰⁷Cf. KISS 1998.

¹⁰⁸GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of Andrásné Dobondi. The interconnectedness of demonic possession and notions of witchcraft in the era can be documented in a great and varied way. Cf.: CLARK 1997; PÓCS 2001:166–174; TÓTH G. 2008.

¹⁰⁹GYÉL I. 1. 8/1727. Testimony of András Kovács. In the Latin version of the testimony, the scene is the woodpile near the cemetery (*"penes caemeterium"*), and the terminology used for the incubus is *"spiritum incubum"*. – GYÉL I. 1.9/1727.

¹¹⁰The various functions of this mythological figure are highlighted by the fact that two years after the exorcism, also in Csíkszentgyörgy, it was not the erotic function of the "incubus" that was emphasized but its role of continually "generating" money for his owner as a helper spirit. – GYÉL I. 1.1/1729.

¹¹¹The "helper spirit" in the form of a rooster (hen, snake, frog, etc.) as a demonic creature possessing its master and committing erotic aggression is well-known in Central European folk belief. – PÓCS 2001:154–155, 173. The figure of an incubus lover appears in 1737 in connection with the servant of the priest of Csíkszentsimon, a village neighboring Szentgyörgy. – GYÉL I. 1.7/1737. From the brief, two-page report of the case, it can be inferred that Reverend Mihály Barto, who was a witness to the exorcism in Szentgyörgy and whom the possessed woman specially recommended to Ferenczi from among the priests nearby, was himself suspected of fornication a few years later. For his biography, cf. FERENCZI 2009:178.

¹¹²For a concise, to the point summary of the early modern manifestations of the incubus, see: PÓCS 2007. For the 20th-century proliferation of the figure of the Transylvanian "lüdérc" as an *incubus* demon, see: KESZEG 2003.

culture and local society.[113] Regardless of the question – too difficult to determine in retrospect – whether the visions of the devilish woman were suggested by the priest of Csíkszentgyörgy, or indeed the devil himself, it is nonetheless obvious that no one doubted the *possibility that the* woman thrashing in a trance state could have visited the otherworld. The remark, "many others have written down what she said" is particularly telling of the social and cultural embeddedness of the event. When Kata spoke of the deceased souls well-known to the community suffering in purgatory, with a slight exaggeration, she foreshadowed the figure of the mediator seer of the modern peasantry.[114]

It is known from the testimonies that at the time of the investigation, that is, in the spring and summer of 1727, Kata enjoyed the hospitality of Franciscan monks in Csíksomlyó. It is an attestation of the parson's attachment that even during this time he sent food to the woman.[115] Obviously, it is not a coincidence that the woman presumed to be possessed was transported to the famous Somlyó shrine. In this respect, it is enough to refer to the widespread phenomenon of the exorcism activities of the priests of late medieval and early modern shrines (Pócs 2001:188–190). An even more important factor, however, is that after the priest failed, they requested the assistance of the monks in a matter that required a specialist. For the time being, we do not know how the *Franciscans* related to the alleged possession of the woman, but it is a telling instance that Kata remained in the monastery of Somlyó for months. Properly versed in the field of exorcism, the competence of the Franciscans, who had a penchant for meeting "popular" demands, was not (yet) questioned by the religious leadership. In the second half of the 18th century, especially as a result of the so-called *Catholic enlightenment*, efforts to reduce Franciscan pastoral practice increased in Hungary, too, a spectacular "battle" between a charismatic Franciscan exorcist in Sombor and the archbishop of Kalocsa setting the precedent in the late 1760s (BÁRTH 2016). The latter event can accurately be embedded in the process of European ecclesiastical (and secular) shift in attitude towards demonic possession and exorcism, often accompanied by scandals (Cf. MIDELFORT 2005).

It seems that at the time of our story, in 1727, it was not the exorcism conducted by the parson of Csík that the Transylvanian Diocese's leadership was concerned about, although such things did require the authorization of the bishop. This "transgression" in itself would not have resulted in the liquidation of the priest at the time. It is clear from the European literature on the history of ecclesiastical exorcism that the use of exorcism for various (mostly curative) purposes was prevalent in the 16-17th centuries (FRANZ 1909: II.514–585; MIDELFORT 1992:136; Pócs 2001:140–143, 187; THOMAS 1971:477–493). The great waves of exorcism, which were often associated with the activity of a charismatic priest or monk, largely subsided by the 18th century. In Germany, there

[113] The interpretation of fortune-telling as a possession (divine or demonic) has been abundantly documented in European cultural history since the Middle Ages. Cf. Pócs 2001:143, 166–167. In her comprehensive study of the phenomena of trance and visions, Éva Pócs also points to the issue of possession: Pócs 1998. For the background of the topic, see the other studies in the volume also edited by Pócs: Pócs (ed.) 1998.

[114] The data is also particularly valuable as the research does not abound in early modern data regarding rural seers (cf. CzövEK 1987). In her latest survey, Éva Pócs concluded that in the era there were only three witch trials in which specific persons inquiring about or from the dead were involved: Pócs 2005. On the European connections of Hungarian seers in general, see: Pócs 2002.

[115] *"Even now the Padre sends foodstuff to Somlyó."* – GYÉL I. 1.8/1727. Testimony of Ferenc Oláhfalvi.

are still examples of large-scale exorcisms in the 1770s, but the popular ecclesiastical personality they centered around already had to face attacks, doubts and disputes inspired by the secular and clerical enlightenment.[116] Due to the extraordinary scarcity of medieval and early modern data, an overview of the historical issues of exorcism in Hungary has yet to be compiled. To create a sufficiently nuanced picture, we can mostly contribute case studies, which, because of the nature of the subject, may usually be organized around a "scandalous" event that was worth documenting.[117] The documents of such scandals are extremely important sources as snapshots that provide an insight into the deep structure of the examined cultural phenomena, and, paradoxically – despite their inherent uniqueness, or in fact through it – they are capable of formulating some general lessons. Among the latter, issues of "norm and transgression" are not a negligible factor.

It is only the emergence of further relevant sources and the analysis of newer "cases" that can properly illuminate the cultural-historical shift that took place in terms of exorcism at the time, which for the time being has only emerged in outlines. Such an examination – whether in the context of the local (Transylvanian) framework, or in the context of the vertical levels of ecclesiastical society, from the bishop to the lower clergy and monks – would certainly be edifying. Of course, such research cannot concentrate on just the assessment of demonic possession and its ecclesiastical remedy, but must take into account its wider context, such as the extensive phenomenon of church blessing/curse (benediction and exorcism), the issue of miracles and healings taking place at shrines, or the complicated topic of the shifts in demon beliefs.

The question may arise as to what happened after the above-mentioned shift in mentality in elite culture. Relevant ethnographic research – even out of Transylvania, among others – provide a multifaceted answer to this. As this exorcist "service" of the Roman Catholic clergy ceased, people sought new solutions to possession cases. On the one hand, the role of rural healers increased, who through their incantations – strongly influenced by ecclesiastical exorcism texts – preserved a significant part of exorcism processes. More recent ethnographic collections (not limited to rural specialists) document the vernacular use of liturgical supplies, special equipment and sacramentals (incense, stinkstone, consecrated catkins, holy water) whose purpose was to expel demons, and which were part of the special toolkit of late medieval (before the Council of Trent) and subsequent alternative, early modern ecclesiastical exorcism rituals (Pócs 2001:192). On the other hand, in addition to amateur attempts, ecclesiastical exorcism considered to be more powerful than all others necessarily still survived, just not among Catholic (or Protestant) priests. In the 20th century, these kinds of exorcism services by *Romanian priests* and monks, and the flourishing practice of Hungarian parishioners who used them, were documented as a self-evident phenomenon by scholars of folk belief conducting research on the borders of Western Christianity and Romanian Orthodoxy.[118]

[116] There is an excellent monograph on the life and exorcism activity of Johann Joseph Gassner in this light: MIDELFORT 2005.

[117] A long line of case studies on exorcism can be cited from international literature, examples of which are: ALMOND 2004; ERNST 1972; LEVI 2001; MIDELFORT 1992, 2005. Our recent study: BÁRTH 2016.

[118] Beside those mentioned above (e.g., Pócs 2001), see another case study by KOMÁROMI: 2007.

Finally, I have to revisit the general considerations posited at the beginning of my essay. Now that I have outlined the erstwhile story based on the documents available to me – not so rich in narrative turns, but in its "thick" form reflecting the reality – and lined up some possible interpretations in the form of "lessons", we can circle back to the question: did this procedure yield a generalizable result or benefit?

There is no doubt that the examined source contains a number of historical ethnographic data. From folk belief (demon belief, visions, seers, incubus beliefs, sacramentals, etc.) to some areas of material culture (from nutrition to sleep culture), we could have selected a few ancillary, sporadic "tidbits" and compared them with similar data found in other sources in some thematic studies. It is equally obvious that the present case provides an extremely plastic picture of the toolkit and practices of exorcism from the period of the history of exorcism in Hungary that is otherwise poor in sources. It is undeniable that our source also contributes quite a lot of tiny details to the history of sexuality. Furthermore, the document described in detail above also contributes significantly to our knowledge of the worldview and everyday life of the early modern lower clergy, and thereby to a neglected area of ecclesiastical history.

According to the usual method (which I also utilize sometimes), I could have highlighted these (and other) themes that, examined independently, could have been the center of a different kind of analysis. Here, however, I was focused on not (or just minimally) organizing the source data along ex-post scientific concepts – and adopting its odium – so as to let the disciplinary results of the essay become much less tangible. The determination of whether or not I made the right choice in describing the story of the scandalous exorcism in Csíkszentgyörgy based on source materials is left up to the reader.

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    1697a Flagellum daemonum, exorcismos terribiles, potentissimos et efficaces,
          remediaque probatissima, ac doctrinam singularem in malignos spiritus
          expellendos, facturasque et maleficia fuganda de obsessis corporibus
          complectens, cum suis benedictionibus, et omnibus requisitis ad eorum
          expulsionem. Accessit postremo pars secunda, quae Fustis daemonum
          inscribitur... Venetiis.
    1697b Fustis daemonum, adjurationes formidabiles, potentissimas et efficaces
          in malignos spiritus fugandos de oppressis corporibus humanis. Ex sacrae
          apocalypsis fonte, variisque sanctorum patrum auctoritatibus haustus
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Ioan Halmaghi and the "Wondrous Craft" of the Păscălie. Bibliomancy and the Calculation Systems of Eastern Chronology at the End of the Eighteenth Century[1]

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Abstract: Along with 19th-century folklore material, church documents from the 18th and 19th centuries emphasize the *Păscălia* as a book used in bibliomancy. In this study, I aim to explore the originally allowed and designated functions of this writing, and to provide an explanation for why this book was associated with the world of bibliomancy in both folklore and in the officially sanctioned culture of the Uniate clergy from Transylvania. Furthermore, by focusing on the specific case of the Uniate vicar Ioan Halmaghi, who was educated in Roman-Catholic institutions, I set out to explore the attitude of the elite clergy toward this text, and to highlight how a corpus of pre-modern and un-Western knowledge was simply ejected into the sphere of magic and superstition.

Keywords: Paschalia, bibliomancy, 18th century, priest, superstition, Enlightenment

The practice of divination using church books has been mentioned by scholars of folklore and popular culture ever since the 19th century, but it has not enjoyed much attention from Romanian researchers until the last two decades. Alexandru Ofrim (2000, 2001), Cristina Gavriluță (2008), or Mircea Păduraru (2014) have produced a series of remarkable works with respect to this practice, highlighting its continuity on all levels of society and the religious fervour created around bibliomancer priests, despite the advance of modernity. The same studies have underlined the role of bibliomancy in diagnosing the charm or malediction that was alleged to have caused someone's illness, or any other type of trouble that could befall an individual, a family, or a community, as well as how this practice connects to the idea of divine justice (GAVRILUȚĂ 2008:217–218; OFRIM 2000:285). Likewise, the aforementioned contributions (OFRIM 2000:299–303; PĂDURARU 2014:249–250) have outlined that bibliomancy was placed in the category of practices tolerated by the church hierarchy, despite some periodic condemnations that invoke church canons concerning witchcraft, astrology, and divination.

Another category of substantial contributions comes from Hungarian researchers in Romania as well as Hungary, who have particularly studied the way Hungarians and Szeklers resorted to the services of Romanian priests in Transylvania and also how the rituals they conducted fit into the folk magical-religious system. A series of practices such as divinations, exorcisms, maledictions, and miraculous healings performed by Romanian priests have been analysed and discussed, based on ample folkloric material, in works published by Vilmos Keszeg (1996; 2007), Éva Pócs (2004), Tünde Komáromi (2010) and Dóra Czégényi (2014). These works have shed light on the main features attributed to the figure of the Romanian priest in Hungarian folk mythology (CZÉGÉNYI 2014) and aspects of resorting to his services as a healer (KOMÁROMI 2010). In addition, they show that the history of bibliomancy in the modern and contemporary era is not necessarily one of decline, but rather one of continuity and adaptation.

If, nowadays, expressions such as "opening the book", or "opening the *Pravila*" are used with respect to bibliomancy all over Romania, the first documented uses of this practice in Romanian communities comes from 18th century Transylvania and 19th century folklore collections, indicating a specific terminology. We can better understand bibliomancy and how it relates to the sphere of clergical activity by examining this terminology, and especially by thoroughly studying the *Păscălie*, a writing from which most of the terms describing this practice derive. For this purpose, in the following pages I set out to succinctly present this terminology, then focusing on the *Păscălie*, exploring how it relates to divination and the sphere of institutionalized religion as it ensues from church discourse comprised in several documents and ecclesiastic writings from 18th century Transylvania. I will particularly focus on several documents from the final decades of the 18th century, belonging to Ioan Halmaghi, the Uniate vicar of Făgăraş. By shedding light on his attitude toward the *Păscălie*, I aim to illustrate that for the generation formed in the spirit of the Enlightenment and Catholic reformism essential aspects of the knowledge tradition specific to the Eastern Christianity were reduced to magic and superstitions.

PĂSCĂLIE, PĂSCĂLIER, PĂSCĂLIT

The first document that attests to this form of divination discusses "looking in the *Păscălie*", as it comes across from a patent[2] emitted on the 9th of October 1787 by count Kristofor Nicky, president of the Magyar Lieutenancy Council:

> "For those who look in the *păscălie* or go about in the country with similar books (...) His Imperial Majesty have noticed how numerous Greek-Uniate priests and readers, thus go around the country and among the people, and in various ways, as though they would sell holy things and books, extort money (...) so that these wicked deeds should be sternly punished. To Your Holiness with a Most High Name it is commanded that vigorously and studiously you should

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[2] Throughout the 18th century, imperial authorities emitted a series of royal patents, which aimed to restrict the peddling of religious and liturgical books published in Moldavia and Wallachia, in order to protect the newly-founded Uniate Church. The series is opened by the imperial orders emitted by the Empress Maria Theresa in November 1746 and June 1747, respectively (BUNEA, 1902:357).

survey those priests so that such deeds, the extortion and unlawful circulation of money should in no way be allowed" (DUDAŞ 1974-1975:156).

The reference to the *Păscălie* and the formulae derived from the title of this writing are also encountered in other source documents, such as church documents and writings, folk tales[3], folklore materials in the press or in folklore collections[4] as well as literature.[5] For instance, in a collection of homilies from 1811, the Uniate clergyman Petru Maior berates a series of customs, practices and folk beliefs in a style specific to the discourse of Catholic reformism with Enlightenment undertones.

> "All those who believe in *păscălii*, chants, spells, all lose their souls; but how could you believe, you, an old hag, hardened in evil doings, wrinkled, thin, powerless, hunched, crippled, a corpse, that with two or three words, with three or four yawns, you could lengthen the years of your life? God alone ends life or adds years to it, (...) and how can you believe a scholar and cunning Pharisee who reads lies in the *păscălie* and tells your fortune like gypsies (...)?" (BOGDAN-DUICĂ 1893:23)

The fragment places the *păscălies* in the category of illicit magical practices and literature, leading to the loss of one's soul, and the ones who engage in this type of divination are described as liars and Pharisees. The clergyman's discourse describes the *Păscălia* as a mendacious book, or one liable to mendacious readings/interpretations.

We learn more on the terminology used by Transylvanian Romanians with respect to divination by means of church books from the dictionaries, lexicons, and encyclopaedias

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[3] The *Păscălier*, as an example of charlatanry or just good fortune, is a character often encountered in folk tales, such as "The Păscălier Gipsy" or "The Blândoc," comprised in the tome *Folk Tales*, published by Ioan Pop Reteganul in Sibiu, in 1895. The priest as "Păscălier" is encountered in the folk tale "Preotul cu Păscălia" – "The Priest with the Păscălia," published under the Anecdotes section in three consecutive issues (2-4) of the *Rândunica* (*The Swallow*) magazine in the year 1894.

[4] In issue No. 6 of the *Familia* magazine, published in Oradea in 1883, we encounter a memoirist text entitled "Negrea Păscălitorul" – "Negrea the Păscălitor," by Grigore Sima a lui Ion (61–64): "C-am cătat în păscălie/ Şi mi-o dă maică-sa mie!" – "For I looked up in the păscăli/ And 'mum gives it to me!" is a verse in witty a folkloric witty chant comprised in the tome *Doine şi strigături din Ardeal – Doinas and Witty Chants from Transylvania*, published in Braşov in 1895 by Ion Urban Janik and Andreiu Bârseanu (79); Visiting astrologers and *păscălitors* are mentioned in a writing with the title *Superstiţiuni păgubitoare ale poporului nostru. Descântecul şi leacurile băbeşti, duhurile necurate, vrăji şi farmece, sărbători fără de rost – Our People's Damaging Superstitions. Chants and Old Wives' Remedies, Unclean Spirits, Spells and Charms, Pointless Holidays*, which was meant to combat superstitions and was published by the writer George Coşbuc in 1909 in Bucharest (89); In the volume *Comorile – The Treasures* from the opus *Mitologie Românească – Romanian Mythology*, published in Bucharest in 1915, the folklorist Tudor Pamfile mentions the practice of looking in the *Păscălie* performed by those searching for hidden treasures (PAMFILE 1915:53).

[5] The păscălier as charlatan appears in the folklore-inspired parodic poem "Pipăruş-Viteaz", published by the writer George Coşbuc in the *Tribuna – The Tribune* magazine in 1889; In issue no. 18 of the *Luceafărul – The Morning Star* magazine from 1909, Ion Agârbiceanu, Uniate Archbishop and significant prose writer for Romanian literature in the first decades of the 20th century, publishes the short story "Părintele Vartolomei Bogdan" – "Father Vartolomei Bogdan", about a priest who had a reputation for divining in the Păscălie (409–413). The same subject is also approached in a far more extended novella entitled "Păscălierul" – "The Păscălier", the first version of which appeared in the tome Short Stories, published in Sibiu in 1920.

published in the 19th century, which index terms such as "a păscăli", "păscălit", "păscălire", or "păscălitură". For example, in *Lesicon românescu-latinescu-ungurescu-nemțescu – Romanian-Latin-Hungarian-German Lexicon*, the first Romanian dictionary, published in Buda in 1825, we find *Păscălire* as "subst. praedictio, divinatio; jövendölés, jövendö mondás; Weissagung, Wahrsagung," and *Păscălitură* as "subst. vaticinium, oraculum, divinatio; jövendölés; die Weissagung, Wahrsagung" (II, 486). *Dictionariulu Limbei Romane – The Dictionary of the Romanian Language*, published in Bucharest by August Treboniu Laurian and J.C. Massimu in 1876, contains the same entries that describe *Pascalire* as "divinări, vaticinari; a spune pascalia cuiva, a divina, a predice" [divinations, vaticinations; to tell someone their *pascalia*, to divine, to foretell], and *Pascalitura* as "vaticinium, divinatio, oraculum; actione si effectu de pascalire" [vaticinium, divinatio, oraculum; the action and the effect of *pascalire*] (595–596). Later on, in *Dicționarul Enciclopedic Ilustrat "Cartea Românească" – The Encyclopaedic Illustrated Dictionary "The Romanian Book,"* published by the folklorist I.A. Candrea in 1931, we find the verb *a păscăli*, which means "to tell one's fortune with the *păscălie*" (907).

Those who engage in such practices are called *păscălier, păscălitor, păscălău*, or *păscălar* (BĂLTEANU 2001:116–117). For instance, the 1825 Lexicon records the term *Păscălitoriu*, "subst. Vates, divinus, fatidicus, vaticinator, vaticinus; jövendölö, jövendö, mondó; der Waisssager" (486), and the *Illustrated Dictionary* published by I.A. Candrea glosses the term *Păscălitor*, "cel ce păscălește, cel ce știe să caute în zodiac, ghicitor" [he who reads the *păscălie*, he who knows how to read a Zodiac, soothsayer] (1931:907).

The same dictionaries and other works published in the same period also provide us with information on *Păscălie* or *paschalia*, "liber vaticinus: jövendölö könyv; ein weissagerisches Buch" (LESICON 1825:486), or "1. calendariu perpetuu, calendariu in care se indica epoca pasceloru si celloru alte serbatori pre mai multi ani; 2. Carte de divinatione, de predictione; in genere, veri-ce mediu de divinatione; *a cauta in pascalia, a spune cuiva sortea dupo pascalia*; – prov.[erbul] *a si perde pascalia* = a i se incurca liciele, a face errori de calculu, a se insella." [1. Perpetual calendar, a calendar which indicates the time for Pascha and all the other holidays for several years at a time; 2. Divination, predictions book; in general, whichever means of divination; to look in the *pascalia*, to tell someone's fate according to the *pascalia*; – the proverb to lose one's *pascalia* = to mix one's threads, to make calculation errors, to be deceived] (LAURIAN, MASSIMU 1876:595).[6] What ensues from these definitions is that the *Păscălie* has two accepted meanings. On the one hand, its main one, as divinatory text, and on the other hand, as a calendar. In his book on the imaginary dimension of books in traditional

Romanian culture, Alexandru Ofrim writes that the *Păscălie* was originally a table used to calculate the date for Easter [Pascha], as well as an instrument for measuring time, incorporated into calendars (OFRIM 2001: 283) or other religious and liturgical books[7] – especially the Psaltirion and the *Ceaslovs* [Books of Hours] (DOCAN 1910:356) – printed by the church throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

Next, I set out to explore the uses and functions of the *Păscălie* in depth by analysing some documents from the end of the 18th century, which belong to a Transylvanian Uniate Vicar. As we can notice from the previously referenced 18th and 19th century documentary sources, and as we can also observe from their content, when discussing the *Păscălie* and its many uses and meanings, we should be mindful of two fundamental aspects:

1. On the one hand, we should keep in mind that the Uniate Church's hierarchy[8] took upon itself a mission to reform popular piety and to enlighten the minds of the faithful, especially during the second half of the 18th century (MIRON 2004; DUMITRAN 2007). The fact that the Uniate Church entered a trajectory of religious reformism, confessionalization[9], and social disciplining[10] profoundly influenced its attitude, not only toward the magical-religious beliefs and practices of the Eastern population that had recently been integrated into the sphere of Catholicism, but also toward science/knowledge in its pre-modern understanding.

2. On the other hand, we should be mindful of the category of calendars and various divinatory and astrological writings, all of which comprised the *Păscălie* and circulated as corpuses that encompassed a mixture of information on Zodiac signs, meteorological prediction methods, prayers, psalms, magical chants, and techniques for interpreting signs. These types of printed texts expanded continuously throughout

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[6] We also find similar definitions in ȘĂINEANU 1896:467: "1. Calendar perpetuu cu indicațiuni astrologice (după cari se poate hotărî data sărbătorii Paștilor pentru orice an); 2. Carte de ghicit norocul fiecăruia; 3. *fig.* A-și pierde pascaliile, a face erori de calcul (cf. *a-și pierde călindarul*). [Gr. mod. Pashalia, Paști]" – "1. Perpetual calendar with astrological indications (according to which the date for celebrating *Pascha* can be decided for every year); 2. A book for divining every person's fortune; 3. *fig.* To lose one's *pascalii*, to make calculation errors (cf. *to lose one's calendar*)," or DIACONOVICH 1904:536: "carte ce cuprinde indicațiuni astrologice, după cari se poate hotări data serbătorilor Pascilor pentru ori ce an. Se mai numesce P.[ăscălie] cartea din care se poate predice viitorul" – "a book which comprises astrological indications, according to which one can decide the date for the Pascha holiday for every year. Also called P.[ăscălie] is the book from which the future may be foretold."

[7] The tomes entitled *Bibliografia Românească Veche – Old Romanian Bibliography*, published by Ioan Bianu and Iosif Hodoș at the beginning of the 20th century, index numerous religious and liturgical book titles, which also comprise the *Păscălie*. Along the same lines, I would also like to mention editions of the *Catavasier*, Bucharest 1724, Râmnic 1747, Blaj 1793; *Psaltirion*, Bucharest 1756; *Orologhion*, Blaj 1766; *Acathist*, Sibiu 1801; *Polustav*, Buda 1807, *Small Octoih*, Sibiu 1808, *Psaltirion*, Sibiu 1912, *Calendar*, Sibiu 1816 etc. (BIANU, HODOȘ III 1910:22, 97, 136, 429, 503; BIANU, HODOȘ IV 1944:135, 146, 267, 283).

[8] This mission to reform popular piety, and to socially discipline clergymen and faithful lay people would also become central in the activity of Orthodox hierarchs, especially throughout the 19th century. Numerous works on church history highlight this aspect, and I will especially mention here the monographic writings dedicted to the activity of hierarchs such as Bishop Vasile Moga (STANCA 1938) or Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna (POPEA 1879; LUPAȘ 1921), but also general church history works, such as the classical History of the Romanian Church and of the Romanians' Religious Life, in 2 volumes, by Nicolae Iorga (1908), or *Istoria bisericească a românilor ardeleni – The Church History of Transylvanian Romanians*, by Ioan Lupaș (1918).

[9] The concept of confessionalization has been developed by Heinz Schilling in articles such as "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620", in *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988):1–45, and Wolfgang Reinhardt, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionallen Zeitalterst", in *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 13, (1983): 257–277. For a detailed discussion of this topic, including critical remarks on this concept, see *Central European History*, Volume 33, No. 1 (200): "Priests and Pastors in Central Europe 1500-1700".

[10] For the concept of social discipline see Gerhard Oestreich, "The Structure of the Absolutist State" in *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State* (1982) and Amy Nelson Burnett, "Basel's Rural Pastors as Mediators of Confessional and Social Discipline" in *Central European History*, Volume 33, No. 1 (200):67–85.

the 18th and 19th centuries, as they were usually published under the patronage of churches and mainly distributed among church servants (GASTER 1883; CARTOJAN 1980), who were the main category of alphabetized people up until the second half of the 19th century (MARICA I 1977:90). At the same time, we should also be aware of this aspect because of their role in influencing and perpetuating a pre-modern vision of the world and the functioning of the Cosmos (OFRIM 2004), in tight connection with theological literature (JIGA-ILIESCU 2005).

IOAN HALMAGHI AND THE *PĂSCĂLIE*

Ioan Halmaghi belongs to the first generations of Uniate hierarchs and clergymen from the second half of the 18th century, who studied theology in Blaj and Vienna. In the imperial capital, he studied at Santa Barbara College together with Samuil Vulcan, future bishop for Oradea, Ioan Para, future vicar of Năsăud, and for a period of Făgăraş, Iosif Meheşi, clerk at the Aulic Chancellery of Transylvania, and Ioan Cornelli, future vicar for the Diocese of Oradia (DUICU 1986:112–113). In 1783, Ioan Halmaghi taught German at the Blaj Gymnasium, then served as parish priest and dean, and starting with 1786, vicar of Făgăraş. Between 1796 and 1803, he was also the vicar of Rodna, after which he was removed under the accusation of being "corrupted in the mind." He spent several years at the Monastery in Blaj, and after the accusation proved unfounded, he was reinstalled as vicar of Făgăraş from 1807 to 1815 (DUMITRAN 2007:302, METEŞ 1929:458). The historian Nicolae Iorga mentions Halmaghi as author of a work called *Învăţătură pentru proşti – A Teaching for Fools* (IORGA 2012:215).

Halmaghi's involvement in the campaign to illuminate the faithful flock and combat superstitions, which was conducted by the Uniate Church in tandem with imperial authorities, also comes across from a letter written in February 1789 and addressed to an imperial commissary. It was composed in Latin and recently published in a Hungarian translation in the tome *Felvilágosodás* és *babonaság. Erdélyi néphiedelem-gyűjtés 1789-90-ben,* published by Ambrus Miskolczy. The letter comprises a report that had been elaborated based on an order to "observe and recount the superstitions and preconceptions dominant among the common folk, which harm the purity of doctrines and religious practices" (HALMAGHI 2016:188). After he notes "with sadness that the majority of these superstitions still flourish, although some of them have waned, while others have begun to spread", the vicar records all manifestation of superstitions that he was aware of, grouping them in three basic categories:

1. Divination/soothsaying – *quidem Classem ea omnia quae sub generali Nomine divinationis venire possunt, in*
2. Magical Chants – *quae quoquo modo artificiosam incantationem exprimere videntur, in*
3. Witchcraft, Magic, Satanism – *demum, quae spectant ad magicas, sive satanicas artes, ut in specie etiam maleficium referenda censui* (188).

Among the most widespread practices is divination based on a Romanian manuscript called the *Păscălie – sic dicta Paskalia –* which "contains an illustration, a circle divided in 99 segments numbered continuously (1-99), each segment corresponds to a life event described by a chant in the text". Regarding the divinatory technique, he mentions that

"one lets a grain of wheat fall on the middle of the circle and marks the number of the slice on which it has stopped, and the chant with the respective number from the text then indicates the future events in the life of the respective person" (188). The text authored by the vicar also highlights that the *Păscălie* is a divinatory text, which is also underlined in the homily fragment later published by his colleague, Petru Maior, and presented in the previous pages.

After he emphasizes that this practice requires the capacity to read, an aspect which indicates that these soothsayers were literate, he also mentions that "many times, the village priest himself practices this sinful craft", and as a conclusion with respect to the situation of the church in the area, he says that he has never encountered "even a single priest who has not engaged in such practices, and consequently, cleansing the parishes would be very difficult, and this phenomenon can only be countered by creating a state-run education system in the area, which would impede upon the transmitting of such superstitions and occult practices to new generations" (188, 197).

The report also describes other forms of divination, such as fortune telling by using beans or peas, also practised by some women who were looking to earn money, or fortune telling using birds. He mentions the use of certain church or hallowed objects in various magical practices as well as other details concerning the forms of magic widespread throughout the peasant world. In the case of bibliomancy, along divination by means of the *Păscălie*, Halmaghi also speaks of a version that requires use of the Bible. On this type of divination, he mentions that it is practiced by priests, particularly on the occasion of performing the last rites for sick people. It functions by randomly opening the book and telling the ensuing fortune of the sick person based on the chapter where the Bible had been opened.[11] Also in this category, he mentions divination based on a manuscript similar to the *Păscălie*, in which prediction relies on the careful observation of the changes in certain areas of the respective person's body (189–200). Halmaghi was probably referring to the *Trepetnic*. About the *Trepetnic* (from the Slavonic word designating a tremor), whose dissemination in the Transylvanian space is widely attested beginning in the 17th century by researchers who studied popular literature and the circulation of the book, Nicolae Cartojan says that it is a book "that foretells a person's future according to the various movements of the body, such as: the beating of the eyes, the batting of the lashes, the beating of the palms, the smacking of the lips etc" (CARTOJAN II 1974:227).

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[11] The habit of using the Bible in divination practiced at a person's dying bed is also mentioned in the work *Funeral for Romanians. An Ethnographic Study* by the priest-folklorist Simion Florea Marian, first published in 1892. He describes it as taking place after the Holy Unction, when the priest opens the Bible in order to read from the Gospel, and if "it happens that the beginning of the Gospel, which was read to them at the end, should only be printed with black letters. On the contrary, the person who stays awake throughout the Unction will not not suddenly get well upon its completion, but rather slowly, and also those for whom the beginning of the Gospel that was read to them at the end is printed with red letters will get well and rise as soon as possible from their bed of sorrow" (MARIAN 2008:20).

THE HAND OF DAMASKIN AND THE CALCULATION OF CALENDAR IN THE EASTERN TRADITION

In the tomes that comprise The Catalogue of Romanian Manuscripts, Gabriel Ştrempel inventories a series of miscellanea that also includes the *Păscălie*, along with liturgical texts and astrological or divinatory writings, most of which were printed by the church (I-IV 1978-1992). By studying these fragments, we notice that the *Păscălie* is a table that establishes the date for celebrating Easter (Pascha) and other correlated holidays for a longer period of time. This list represents the fundament for the Eastern Church calendar, and relies on very specific calculation methods. One of the most widely used such methods, which lies at the basis of the various *Păscălii,* is depicted in a writing called *Mâna lui Damaskin – The Hand of Damaskin*. An edition of this writing was published in Sibiu in 1793 by the same Ioan Halmaghi, four years after the report presented above.[12] The fact that the vicar was interested in the question of the *Păscălie* and studied it in depth ensues from the very foreword of this edition, written by Halmaghi himself.

> "Since I understood how much use the hand of Damaschin comprises for the workings of our Church of the East, I yearned to seize its teaching and meaning, as a stag yearns to reach a spring. Therefore, in time, after I had deliberately sought to learn about it, some writings fell into my hand, which very briefly uncovered this craft; I, therefore, committed my strain, I released myself toward its meaning with the help of God, I also searched in the books of the Holy Church, and after some wear, I finally grasped the meaning of the hand of Damaschin, with its teaching and meaning, and I was thus more thoroughly assured of its priceless use.
>
> By learning this craft, either at home, or on the road, or wherever you might be, you can set yourself right and be sure to know about the ordinances of our Church by heart and without a book, rather than some other one using a book; that all *pashaliia*, which is found in the books of hours, in psalteries, or in other Church books, is composed according to the hand of Damaschin, for which cause the teachers of *pashalia* and the typographers, if they not be inured to this craft, may delude their minds, and some have already deluded themselves with respect to the setting of the Church ordinances over the years, as they are also, just as other people, surrounded with the weakness of human mettle...
>
> This skillful craft is called the hand of Damaschin, because its entire craft is shown on the hand, and the entire key of the *pashalia* is calculated on the hand by heart, and it is, as I have seized it, invented with great craft by the most holy Kir Damaschin, Bishop of Râmnic, and its understanding is easy for the studious ones" (BIANU, HODOŞ II 1910:355).

The foreword written by the vicar argues that the manuscript called *Păscălie* and used by priests in certain divinatory practices originally served a different function than that of an instrument for divination, and that it was fundamental for the Eastern liturgical life and the church calendar. By comparing how he had dismissively defined

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[12] The Library of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest holds a copy of this edition, as we learn from the work on old Romanian bibliography signed by Bianu and Hodoş (1910), which renders a fragment from the foreword written by Vicar Ioan Halmaghi.

the *Păscălie* as a divinatory manuscript in the report he had previously presented, with the fragment in which he justifies his interest for the craft comprised in this writing, it becomes evident that at the time he became vicar, the cleric, with his education in Roman-Catholic learning institutions, did not have a profound knowledge of these fundamental issues from the tradition of the Eastern Church. This illustrates both the fault between the two churches, as well as the fault between his generation of church hierarchs and their subordinate clergy, on the one hand, and the communities that they shepherded, on the other hand.

Besides the authorship of this calculation system, attributed to Damaschin, bishop of Râmnic, Buzău, and Severinul Nou (1703-1726),[13] Ioan Halmaghi underlines the use of this craft and mentions that the prefaced edition comprises "for the first time in a self-standing work, the rules for the computation system generally known as «The Hand of Damaschin»." Thereafter, he succinctly explains the role of the hand in this calculation method and the surprising effect that its practice generates on people. "According to this system, the chronology elements, namely the orbit of the Sun and the Moon, the hand of the year, the foundation and the others, such as also the letter of the *Pascalie*, etc. are calculated on the finger joints, and older people could not be amazed enough at the wonderful craft that had concocted a relation between the calendar and the finger joints, and which allowed for the calculation of each year's holidays on the hand of every mortal" (DOCAN 1910:358).

The Uniate hierarch explores the Eastern tradition, and underneath the layer of divinatory practices widespread among his subordinate clergy, he discovers a different type and corpus of knowledge, which he strives to understand and bring to the surface. We are talking about an effort to organize knowledge, by publishing in a distinct text, without adding or combining other types of texts, the compute rule called "The Hand of Damaschin", which lies as the foundation for elaborating the *Păscălii*. Usually, as Nicolae Docan attests, the different calculation systems and their rules were comprised in writings that accompanied the *Păscălii* included in Church books. Such an example is *Rojdialniţa ce afli naştirea lunii în toate lunile, pre 19 ani* or *Selinodromion*, written by Mitrofan, the hieromonk from the Bisericani Monastery, and comprised in the Slavonic-Romanian Psaltery printed by Metropolitan Dosoftei in 1680 in Iaşi. The Psaltery printed in Sibiu in 1805 also comprises, as an annex to the catalogue of years, rules for calculating the various elements specific to the Eastern chronology, and also a table with the phases of the moon (DOCAN 1910:359). On the importance of this type of craft for the lay and ecclesiastic Orthodox world, we learn more information from the study already cited by the historian Nicolae Docan, which contains an ample discussion about the calculation systems specific to the Eastern chronology and used by the learned scribes of lordly

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[13] In the cited study, N. Docan shows that the preface signed by the vicar Ioan Halmaghi wrongly attributed the authorship of the calculation method known as The Hand of Damaschin to the bishop of Râmnic, Buzău, and Noul Severin (1703-1726), Kir Damaskin. According to the author, the fact that Dosoftei's Psaltery, printed in Iaşi in 1680, already contains a Pascalie based on the same rules for calculation, is enough of an argument to hypothesize on a Russian origin for this practice, which may have made its way into Romanian Orthodoxy through Moldavia.

chancelleries from Romanian principalities up to at least the middle of the 16th century.[14] The same study highlights that the Romanian Orthodox world constantly printed writings that expounded on these calculation methods and contained directions for their use.

Another self-standing edition was published in the form of a brochure in Iași in 1842, entitled *Pascalion prințipal, cu titlul Mâna lui Damaschin, composit de Vasile Gavrielovici Lupea, Transilvano-Chiciudian.* This one "is structured on questions and answers and written in a popular style, [and is accompanied by] a board that depicts the hand of Damaschin and the relation between the various cycles" (DOCAN 1910:359–360). The fact that this edition is written in a popular, more widely accessible style, and according to the model of catechisms, emphasizes the opening to a wider reading audience. As one may notice in Figure 1, the board contains a circle similar to the one described by Halmaghi in his presentation of the divinatory technique from the document presented above. As in other types of bibliomancy,[15] which require using church books in a manner different from the one prescribed by liturgical literature and church canons, the divination in the *Păscălie* as described by vicar Halmaghi seems to involve using the illustration required in the calculation system as support for drawing or casting lots.

Returning to the calculation technique called *The Hand of Damaschin*, the preface from a copy[16] printed in Iași in 1830 attributes its authorship to Saint Damaschin

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[14] In Eastern chronology, the starting year is calculated from the creation of the world and not from the birth of Christ, as is the case in the West. There are also significant differences in the methods of calculation, or the starting points for calculation. For instance, "the orbit of the Sun and the orbit of the Moon are also in Western chronology two cycles of 28 days and 19 years, respectively, but with different starting points, namely starting from a different year (…) according to some Western computators, the cycle of the Moon and the golden number were two identical notions, whereas in Wallachian chronology they are two distinct elements." (DOCAN 1910:355). The underlined differences refer to the calculation rules used in the Western chronology before the introduction of the 'new style' in 1582. These calculations have an essentially religious function, as they were necessary to determine Easter (*Pascha*) and other holidays that did not have a fixed date.

[15] To this end, I would also like to mention the practice of divination with a judicial character, by using a key and the Psaltery, as described in *Învățătură firească spre surparea superstiției norodului* [A Natural Teaching Onto the Errosion of the Superstition of the Common Folk], printed in Buda between 1804-1808: "Besides throwing a sieve, there is also another form of fortune telling that (…) seeks the truth by a key, once again, inherited from the parents. (…) the crazed fortune teller sticks the inherited key into the Bible, at the same place where the Gospel of Saint John begins and in such a way that the main bundle of keys should be left outside of the Bible. Then, he takes a small strap or string, which, according to his fancy, must also be inherited, and with this strap, he ties up the Bible such that the key cannot fall off from it. So, just as with the throwing of the sieve, two persons place their middle fingers under the key's bundle, and lift the Bible into the air. Afterwards, the magister says some uncouth and unintelligible words, and names several persons. When he names innocent persons, the key is not supposed to move, and when he names guilty persons, the key is supposed to spin as hard as possible. Superstitious folk, when they work like this, say that by this manner of fortune telling, the easier one may find out evil doers, the truer it is that the word of God is not deceitful." (ȘINCAI 1964:89). The same practice is later described in the memorialist writing "Negrea Păscălitorul" – "Negrea the Păscălitor" (1883), by Grigore Sima a lui Ion, and in the article "Credinți populare *în* cărți bisericești" – "Folk Beliefs in Church Books", published in 1904 in the journal *Șezătoarea* by the folklorist Grigore Teodorescu-Kirileanu. As one may notice from the fragment at hand, this is the case of a method similar to the one described by Keith Thomas with respect to pre-modern England (1973:255).

[16] That copy is preserved at the Central Universitary Library in Cluj, http://dspace.bcucluj.ro/handle/123456789/67716.
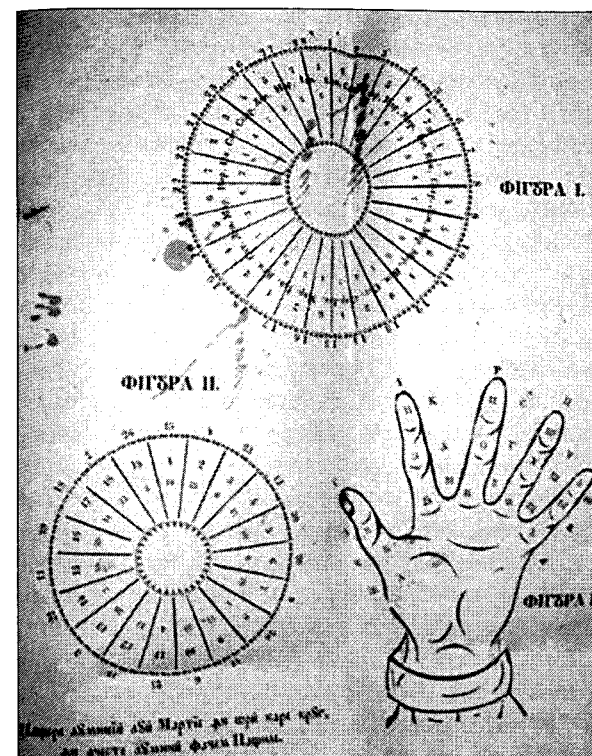
Figure 1. Detail of the Pascalion titled *Mâna lui Damaschin* ('The Hand of Damaschin'). (Iași, 1842; written by Vasile Gavrielovici Lupea)

(John of Damascus), to whom God, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, had uncovered the calculation and the setting of the *Pascalia* on the hand, and for that reason the calendar is called on the Hand of Saint John of Damascus. That respective copy begins with the rules about the *Hand of Damaschin* and continues with their calculations and explanations for the fingers of each hand. In order to discover what time Easter (Pascha) would be celebrated on a given year, we must know the *temelion* and the hand corresponding to that respective year. The *temelion* runs on the front of the left hand, on the tips and joints of the fingers, while the hand of the year goes on the front and the back of the four fingers on the left hand, beginning with the front of the little finger. The preface also explains what calculations are conducted for the discovery of the *temelion* and the hand of the year, and the copy ends with a table that helps calculate the future date of Easter *(Pascha)*. All these techniques are set and calculated only on the left hand, which is why this is called the calculation of the calendar according to the *Hand of Saint Damaschin* (1830).

The follies mentioned by the vicar and the elders' amazement toward the "wondrous craft" that made a connection between the hands and the calendar reflects the different way in which this calculation technique was perceived outside the restricted circle of those accustomed to the craft. It also suggests an explanation for why the *Păscălie* was integrated in the wider category of divinatory and astrological literature that circulated in the rural world, especially with the help of priests, ever since the first prints came out of Transylvanian typographies around the middle of the 17th century.[17] First of all, the very

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[17] In the first volume of his work on folk literature, widespread among Romanians, Nicolae Cartojan states that "the first book issued from the typography installed in Alba Iulia in 1639 [by the Calvin Prince of Transylvania, Gh. Rákóczi] comprises, along with other texts, a *Gromovnic*", on which he mentions that "it is an astrology book that expounds on the transformations that will be accomplished on Earth and in the ensuing fate of mankind, according to the zodiac in which doth fall the thunder (…) *Gromovnic* (from the Slavonic thunder)" (II, 1974:224–225).

act of using this method may be regarded as being part of the same category as the magic or divinatory actions. The Eastern Church discourse on the *Păscălie* places it under the category of a sacred science, inspired by God, and it explicitly references the future – the calculation for the dates of holidays and for the phases of the moon for a longer period of time – which constitutes the basis for the church calendar that would set the rhythm and structure for the life of communities. Considering that the *Păscălie* served the main purpose of structuring the calendar in the longer term, in firm connection with the cosmic order, and for the use of the church's ordinance, but also for the use of various quasi-illicit forms of prospecting the future, it becomes easy to understand how terms such as "a păscăli", or "păscălitură" developed as synonyms for "fortune telling". Likewise, the term "păscălier", (and its derivatives) grew to be used as generic titles for bibliomancers. As Faith Wigzell showed in her work on divination in Russia during the same historic period, for the pre-modern peasant world, "divination, various in character and function, played an all-encompassing role in daily life as a means of grasping the significance of events and phenomena and offering glimpses into future. At the same time it performed important social functions" (WIGZELL 1998:46). For a peasant society that devotes such attention to calendar and cosmic order, all those methods and writings were sophisticated means of understanding and deciphering how the world works, accesibile to a literate minority.

The fragments presented, correlated with the information on the precarious instruction level of Romanian clergymen from the 18th century, as was emphasized in numerous historical studies,[18] advance the idea that, for the greatest number of priests, one cannot speak about a very clear delineation between the scientific function – calculation technique – and this writing's function as an instrument of divination, despite numerous church canons that condemned divination as it was considered devilish magic (POP-CURŞEU). The probable reason for this is that these canons do not specifically refer to bibliomancy (PĂDURARU 2014:250), and in the Eastern Christianity the tradition of Old-Testament prophecy, enriched with the Patristic figures of certain clairvoyants from the monastic world, was preserved very well, in tight conjunction with the healer and divine justice mediator roles ascribed to priests.

Throughout this article, I have mentioned several times the connection between the *Păscălie* and the astrological and divinatory literature comprised in popular calendars, or in other types of writings. The first book printed in the church typography from Alba Iulia in 1639 reveals how the Eastern tradition integrated and perpetuated divinatory and astrological literature up until the late 19th century. Known as *Paraclisul Precistei – Precista's Oratory*, from Govora (1639), and because the first text it comprised is that respective oratory, this book also contains the following texts:

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[18] I would particularly like to mention the fundamental work by historian Nicolae Iorga, *Sate și preoți din Ardeal – Villages and Priests from Transylvania*, published in its first edition in 1902. Likewise, the work *Preoțimea românească în secolul al XVIII-lea – Romanian Prieshood in the 18th century* (1915) by Dumitru Furtună offers numerous details in this respect. The historian Toader Nicoară also brings a contribution to the domain with his work *Transilvania la începuturile timpurilor moderne (1680–1800). Societate rurală și mentalități colective [Transylvania at the Beginning of Modern Times (1680–1800). Rural Society and Collective Mentalities]* (1997).

"*Molitvas* when you awaken from sleep in the morning; *Molitvas* when you want to go to bed at night; Ten commandments of the Old Law; Two commandments of the Law upon which all the law and the Prophets rely. There are three things that are worthy of blessing, with which God is magnified among men; Four things good for the Annunciation; Seven Sacraments there are of the New Law; Seven gifts there are of the Holy Spirit; Nine fruit of the spirit of the generous person within which the Holy Spirit is begotten; Seven sins are heavier; Seven works there are of mercy; Three things are good about doing good; Three forms of holiness there are that belong to God; Justice according to nature; Justice according to the law; Five natures there are of the body; Four are the final things; *Gromovnic*; Here you should know over the year how many weeks there are from one big holiday to the next; We see this thing that great temptations and banes befell the Holy Prophet and King David; *Sinaxar* fragment; *Păscălie* fragment; The *Trepetnic* of human signs" (BIANU, SIMIONESCU 1944:20–21).

Alongside *molitvas* (prayers), psalms, catechetic and canonical texts, the book further comprises the *Păscălie*, the *Gromovnic*, and the *Trepetnic*, in a juxtaposition that seems to suggest how, despite the repeated condemnations of divination, astrology, and magic, these writings can rather be categorized as scientific, in the pre-modern sense, in that science was accepted/tolerated and perpetuated by the Orthodox Church, especially by way of monks and learned priests. This aspect has been discussed in an article on the presence of zodiacs and of zodiac signs in traditional Romanian culture, written by Laura Jiga-Iliescu, who underlined the fact that

"(...) the Church did not reject the Zodiac per se, but (only) using it as an instrument for divinatory and mantic purposes. The integration of the Zodiac in the official ecclesiastical discourse abided by different reasons than those of predicting and foretelling the future (...) This explains the presence of zodiac signs, of the Moon and the Sun in the structure of the *Mineu* painted on the inner walls of churches and monasteries, signs learned by the listeners of hagiographies, who were also the onlookers of their illustrations" (2005:25–26).

This knowledge mixes fundamental Christian references with vulgar versions of ancient knowledge on the Cosmos and its working. At least in the case of the clergymen familiarized with this type of literature and accustomed to handling the *Păscălie*, both for a divinatory purpose and also in order to draw up the calendar, it seems appropriate to set them in the descent of a Byzantine tradition of certain scholars, such as Michael Psellos (1018–1070), who integrated in their cultural horizon both theological knowledge and fundamental doctrines as well as pre-Christian knowledge. From the perspective of scholars such as Psellos, this type of knowledge, drawing its roots in ancient philosophy and occult sciences, "was fundamentally separate from the popular magic peddled by crazy old women and shifty charlatans (...) The occult sciences represented an erudite and exclusive body of wisdom that carried the authority of an ancient textual tradition inherited from the Greco-Roman and Near Eastern worlds" (WALKER 2015:223).

If use of the printing press led to bibliomancy becoming an ever more popular and accessible practice for Transylvanian Romanians due to the widespread Church and astrological literature in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Church documents discussed in this study shed light on the new attitude, marked by the ideas of post-Tridentine Catholic reformism and Enlightenment, which begins to spread among the new generations of

Uniate hierarchs and scholars, educated in the Roman-Catholic learning institutions in the second half of the 18th century. Following the shifts that occurred in Europe in terms of how the highly educated strata of society understood the functioning of the cosmos, with profound consequences in redefining reason, superstitions, and the idea of science, the Enlightenment's "crusade" against superstitions (CAMERON 2010:6, 310–315; PORTER 1999:197–236) – even in its milder form, specific to Central-European Enlightenment – even enters into the Romanian clerical environment. Certain types of knowledge and corpuses of information that had been established and perpetuated in time, which had the status of science in the pre-modern understanding of the concept, were now discredited and placed in the category of the irrational and superstition, according to the new order of knowledge (DARNTON 2000:191–195). The *Păscălie* also ends up belonging to this category, by juxtaposing to it the body of information and techniques comprised in divinatory and astrologic writings such as the *Rojadnic*, the *Gromovnic*, or the *Trepetnic*, although they remain popular and relevant mainly in the environment of common folk. The preface signed by Ioan Halmaghi tries to extricate the *Păscălie* from this category, as well as the calculation technique upon which it relies, pointing out its ecclesiastical origin and its function as disconnected from divination as well as its fundamental role in "the ordinances of the Eastern Church". Furthermore, considering that the work was especially dedicated to clergymen, the preface also seeks to draw attention to the wrong usage of the *Păscălie* as an instrument for divination. Nevertheless, as the various sources mentioned in this article indicate, throughout the 19th century, the *Păscălie* not only continues to be associated with divination, but also asserts itself in popular culture as a generic[19] term for any book used in such practices, whether we are talking about the Bible, the *Moliftelnic*, the Psaltery, or astrological literature. For instance, with respect to Negrea the Păscălitor, we learn from Grigore Sima a lui Ion's memorialist text, published in the *Familia* magazine, that

> "(...) in ten churches one did not celebrate Mass as much as in his house. In the morning, at noon, in the evening, and at midnight, just when the roosters are singing, prayers upon prayers. Healthy people and sick ones alike stand with their wax candles lit in their hands, some on their feet, while others on their knees, around the table, until he would read to them, full of piety: the Pillars, the chosen Psalms, and especially the Oratory of Saint Haralambios. Sometimes, he would even grapple with the Gospels from Great Lent. Most of the times, however, he would settle for the Păscălie, in which, besides planets and zodiac signs, there were also prayers specifically composed by the reader Samoilă, who had also heard them from another, who had lived for a longer time among the bedevilled" (1883:63–64).

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[19] A simillar fate befell the *Pravila*, another term that in folk narratives about bibliomancy ends up designating any Church book used for such rituals. Originally, the *Pravila* was the code of laws developed over time by the church and used alongside the curse books also emitted by the church for the solving of various judiciary problems (MAZILU 2006:96). Probably because of the roles that clergymen served in the field of justice, maintained at least for matters of marriage and divorce up until the first few decades of the 19th century (MIHOC 2012:10), the *Pravila*, which summed up the laws designated by God and which were constantly referred to, ended up being used to reference the books used, especially in the case of judicial-driven divination.

Beyond the ironic tone of the narrative, which was specific to press articles and literary productions from the second half of the 19th century – meant to ridicule the folk beliefs and practices that were considered superstitions by the increasing numbers of layman intellectuals – the fragment rendered above describes the *Păscălie* used by Negrea the Păscălitor as a Zodiac book, which also contains prayers. Its content reflects the mixture described in the case of *Precista's Oratory – Paraclisul Precistii* from Govora, which was characteristic of popular calendars or other printed materials. In the novella "Păscălierul" – "The Păscălier", inspired by a folk song and published in 1920 by Ion Agârbiceanu, the divinatory priest uses an old *Moliftelnic* (300). The short stories and lyrics meant to sanction the deviations of Romanian clerics that were published in the satirical and humorous magazine *Calicul* also mention the *Păscălie* when satirising priests that conduct bibliomancy. For this purpose, in issue no. 5 from May 1886, under the rubric *Sus Marcule!*, in which priests that had become famous for misconduct or other wrongdoings were ironically berated, the priest Popescu from Feisa is mentioned as one who "knew how to guess in the păscălie" (104). In issue no. 2 from February 1890, in the satirical tale "Coana Gurădulce", a "new păscălie" is mentioned, given by a "warlock who had come from Rome" (43).

The fact that the *Păscălie* became one of the major references used with respect to the practice of bibliomancy in both church and popular discourse as well as among layman intellectuals throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, reflects several aspects regarding bibliomancy and its evolution. First of all, it can be stated that we are dealing with the use of a church book for divinatory purposes, an aspect underlined at length by researchers who have dealt with this phenomenon. Secondly, besides the fact that it generates an entire terminology used for circumscribing bibliomancy, the *Păscălie* itself, with its original function as a foundation for the Eastern calendar, is also comprised in divinatory writings and not only in church writings. The *Păscălie* and the method for calculating that it relies upon is one of the major elements that connect the Eastern tradition and an entire panoply of astrological and divinatory texts. The evolution of the *Păscălie*, at least the way it comes across from the texts belonging to Vicar Ioan Halmaghi, reflects its expulsion into the category of magic, divination, and superstition, and of writings and forms of knowledge specific to the Eastern tradition, by an ecclesiastical elite connected to the Western Christian tradition and to a world vision that was profoundly influenced by the ideas of Enlightenment and Catholic reformism. Naturally, the case of the Vicar also makes it evident how fascinating such writings and the forms of knowledge behind them could prove for Enlightenment-educated scholars. His case deserves more in depth study, especially since he does not enjoy any monographic study, unlike other hierarchs and scholars from his generation.

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The Hungarian Táltos and the Shamanism of Pagan Hungarians. Questions and Hypotheses

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Abstract: One of the purposes of this study is to outline the research problem related to the wizard called táltos and a hypothesized shamanism in the pagan, pre-Christian religion of the Hungarians. Another purpose is to present the results of new research on this issue. The first part of the study is the analysis of the activities of a weather wizard called táltos from the 16th to the 21st century, as well as its related beliefs and narrative motifs. Then I present the process in the course of which researchers of the pre-Christian pagan "ancient religion" – Gyula Sebestyén, Géza Róheim, Sándor Solymossy, Vilmos Diószegi and others – created the fictitious construct of the táltos and reconstructed the Conquest-era shaman in line with the model compiled from the attributes of shamanism of various periods and various peoples. The criticism of Vilmos Diószegi's construct of the táltos is followed by the introduction of new research results. Their main points: modern táltos beliefs and narratives show many correlations with Balkan – especially Bulgarian – folk beliefs and folk epics. The táltos and táltos-epics show the closest correlation with the beliefs of Bulgarian dragon-men who were fathered by a dragon or eagle and born with wings or other animal traits, as well as with the adventures of heroes of epic songs who slay the dragons of the underworld and are protected by the spirit of the eagle, dragon, rooster, crane, etc. We also need to consider the influences of Slavic storm wizard practices and the werewolf beliefs and narratives of the Balkans. The influences of Balkan peoples on Hungarian culture are indubitable, partly the result of the Bulgaro-Turkic relations between the 5th and 9th centuries and partly the consequences of Slavic relations after the Conquest. It is likely that at the time of the Hungarian Conquest, there was a weather magic practice similar to those of the Balkan dragon-men, as well as a weather wizard called táltos. However, the construct of the research tradition represented by Diószegi must be refuted: there is no evidence of a shaman-táltos similar to the "classic" Eurasian shaman who was initiated in the world tree and established contact with the spirit world through a ritual performance, in a drum-induced ecstasy.
Keywords: táltos, weather wizard, dragon man, folk beliefs, pre-Christian religion, shamanism, heroic epic, Balkans, Turkic shamanism

My primary goal in this paper[1] is to outline the research problem surrounding the figure of the wizard called táltos and the hypothesized shamanism of the "ancient Hungarian religion". In Hungarian research – as well as in this paper – the term "ancient religion" refers to the pre-Christian, "pagan" religion of Hungarians. Based on archaeological and linguistic data, researchers think – or would like to think – that some remnants of this religion still existed at the time of the "Conquest", that is, at the time when more than a thousand years ago Hungarian tribes coming from the East settled in the Carpathian Basin.[2] My secondary goal is to outline my new research results about the *Bulgaro-Turkic relations* concerning this research problem.

I first started researching táltos beliefs in the 1980s, when I wrote several studies on the European correlations of the táltos; later I wrote a book about the specialists of supernatural communication found in witch trial documents, including the táltos (Pócs 1988, 1989a, 1989b, 1995, 1996, 1997), in the spirit of a hypothesized "European" shamanism.[3] In recent years, my work on the systems of supernatural communication in Central Southeastern Europe has once again turned my attention to the issue of the *Hungarian táltos* and *Conquest-era shamanism.* An overview of the enormous database of modern Hungarian folk beliefs and the exploration of the new documents of early modern source materials led to the emergence of new issues.

THE NOTION OF THE TÁLTOS IN HUNGARIAN SCHOLARSHIP

Shamanism had had an important role in the lives of both Uralic and Altaic peoples,[4] thus the gradual exploration of the linguistic and historical past of the Hungarians led to the search for its traces in the "pagan" religion of the Hungarians. These ambitions were related to European Romantic ideology, done in the spirit of the search for a national identity, and thus research was also somewhat symbolically and ideologically charged, serving to

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[1] The research resulting in these findings was funded by The European Research Council as part of the seventh term of the European Community (2007-2013) based on Research Agreement ERC 324214. For the sake of uniformity, every name and title in Cyrillic has been transcribed according to the Croatian Latin spelling, except for the names of Russian, Ukrainian or Bulgarian authors of English publications in the list of references, the names and works of whom are transcribed according to English spelling.

[2] See for example: PAIS 1975a-d; FODOR 2003, 2004.

[3] In his first book on the *benandanti* of Friuli (Ginzburg 1966) and later in his 1989 book (GINZBURG 2003 [1989]), Carlo Ginzburg hypothesized about a pre-Christian European "shamanistic substratum" based on the "shamanistic" wizards and their European parallels he found in 18th-century wizard trials. I myself accepted Ginzburg's findings and supported it with additional Hungarian and Balkan data (see, e.g., Pócs 1994, 1995, 1996). As for what I, too, assumed, was an "ancient European shamanism," and regarding some of its aspects, I accept both Vilmos Voigt's verbal and István Pál Demény's written criticism (DEMÉNY 2000). I can refute most of Demény's critical comments regarding specific táltos data, but this is not the place for it.

[4] In this study, following the Hungarian scholars of shamanism, I use the concept of shamanism in the narrower interpretation of László Vajda, in which he suggests that only the "shamanism" complex of Siberian/North-Central Asian peoples should be tentatively considered shamanism. The characteristic features of this are: an otherworldly journey in ecstasy; the drum's important role in inducing ecstasy; battling in many shapes, with specific motivations; illness and symbolic death as initiation (Vajda 1959). Vajda's definition does not mention it, but in my opinion, it is important to take into consideration the public, ritual performance character of shamanism, and, more broadly, its role in the community.

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fulfill a sense of identity. The pursuit of proving that the religion of the Hungarians had a distinctive character which set it apart from European religions was implicit in such research. This is also one of the reasons why numerous scholars argue to this day that the pre-Christian religion of the Hungarians was shamanism, or that shamanism was at least in some form part of their religion;[5] thus, a somewhat nostalgic, illusory construct of shamanism and the táltos was created from more than just actual elements, and even preeminent scholars participated in its creation, knowingly or unknowingly.

The táltos was chosen for the role of the pagan Hungarian shaman, who initially appeared in the works of researchers of the ancient religion as a *priest* presenting sacrifices.[6] Arnold Ipolyi invested the figure of the hypothesized sacrificial priest with contemporary beliefs about the táltos: born with teeth, táltos children dying at the age of seven, notions of battle, the practice of seeing buried treasure, and even the folktale motif of the táltos horse. Nonetheless, he did not yet associate the figure and activity of the táltos with the concept of shamanism.[7] Ferenc Kállay in 1861 and Antal Csengery in 1884 already mentioned the *shamanic drum* of Turkic peoples, *relating it* to the pagan Hungarian táltos;[8] the drum, however, gained a key role in Gyula Sebestyén's magic drum article of 1900, thereby opening a new era in research.[9] This study was the starting point of a deluge of conceptualizations continuing to this day, according to which the wizard called *táltos* was a key figure in Hungarian folk beliefs and non-Christian religious practice, similar to that of the Eurasian shaman among Finno-Ugric and Altaic peoples: a preserver of the oriental vestiges of the ancient religion.[10] Sebestyén already considered the *táltos–shaman* correlation as evidence, as did the 1917 article by Lajos Kálmány, which presented data of táltos duels on the Southern Great Plain (KÁLMÁNY 1917). In his 1925 book, in a chapter summarizing the hypothesized characteristics of the táltos, Róheim laid the foundation for the construction of the ideal image of the Eurasian shaman, compiled from the characteristic features of the shamanism of various Ural-Altaic linguistic relatives.[11] He outlined the *figure of the táltos of the ancient religion* in light of this ideological model of the shaman, basing it on the features of the contemporary táltos and data from two 18th-century táltos trials, while also using Sebestyén's "táltos drum" data and Eurasian parallels. Róheim considered the Hungarian táltos the remnant of a Finno-Ugric-based Turkic shamanism, and he believed that this was closest to the shamanism of the Yakuts. He determined that the battle of animal spirits in the shape of bulls or stallions was the most important common motif. The most important táltos features, in his view, are *trance, battle, being born with teeth, táltos and*

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[5] See István Fodor's overview and the indexes he references: FODOR 2003:343–344.

[6] See IPOLYI 1854:447–452; for the details on János Horváth's 1817, Ferenc Kállay's 1861, and Antal Csengery's 1884 publications, see: DIÓSZEGI 1971b:54–57, 87–96, 265–294.

[7] IPOLYI 1854:234–237, 447–452.

[8] DIÓSZEGI 1971b:87–96; 291.

[9] SEBESTYÉN 1900.

[10] See for example: SEBESTYÉN 1900; RÓHEIM 1925:7–40, 1984 [1961]; SOLYMOSSY 1929, 1937; DIÓSZEGI 1952, 1953, 1958 a, 1958b, 1960, 1967, 1969, 1973; HOPPÁL 1975, 1981, 1984, 1988, 1996, 1998; DÖMÖTÖR T. 1982, 1983; PÓCS 1994 and those mentioned in Note 1; DEMÉNY 1994, 1999a, 1999b, 2000. For a comprehensive evaluation of the ancient religion, see VOIGT 1997-1998.

[11] Such elements include: Buryat shaman's drum, Chukchi initiation, Yakut and Sami battles, Teleutian shaman's cap, Khanty diviners, and so on (RÓHEIM 1925:8–20).

horse relationship, healing by conjuring spirits, and the *táltos–witch antagonism*, and possibly the *owl as a helping spirit*. Róheim continued to use elements – non-real and foreign to the táltos, presented in Sebestyén's magic drum article – as evidence, and even supplemented Sebestyén's drum data with a nursery rhyme mentioning sieve and drum together and the linguistic forms of the sieve=horse identification; these data are still present in the study of the ancient religion as relics referring to the drum of the ethnic Hungarian shaman (RÓHEIM 1925:7–40).

Among the scholars of folk nrrratives, Sándor Solymossy was the first to contribute to the further development of the research fiction of the táltos, though he initially only sought the oriental parallels or elements in our folktales (SOLYMOSSY 1922, 1929, 1930, 1931). In the spirit of the reconstruction of the táltos, a sub-chapter presenting the "Ural-Altaic belief systems" and centered around the description of the shamanism of several related peoples found its way into his chapter on Ancient Mythology of the Hungarians in *Ethnography of the Hungarian People*, in which he incorporated the features of the táltos already known from Róheim (SOLYMOSSY 1937:352–367).

VILMOS DIÓSZEGI'S CONSTRUCT OF THE HUNGARIAN SHAMAN

Vilmos Diószegi adopted the idea of the táltos as an ancient Hungarian shaman from his predecessors and lined up a massive amount of evidence[12] to confirm and elaborate the image of the táltos formulated by Róheim, even building a "shamanistic worldview" around the figure of the táltos. In his two books summarizing the reconstruction of Conquest-era Hungarian shamanism (DIÓSZEGI 1958a, 1967), and using "genetic ethnic characteristics" as the guiding principle of his methodology,[13] he supplemented Róheim's series of data with further motifs relating to cosmogony and shamanic initiation. As a conclusion of his overview of the attributes and activities of the táltos published in two books and several studies,[14] he, in line with Róheim's view, thought that the Hungarian táltos retained the characteristics of a Finno-Ugric-based Turkic shamanism and was its westernmost representative and regarded the 20th-century narrative motifs of the táltos as relics of a shamanism that still existed in the Conquest era. He also reconstructed the ancient as well as the Conquest-era táltos in light of the model, as an ideal image, compiled from the well-known attributes of the shamanism of several Eurasian peoples, adopted from Róheim. After declaring in his 1967 book that "as a result of a multifaceted inquiry, a whole series of our religious beliefs can be traced back to the time of the Conquest," he set out the Conquest-era worldview of the Hungarians and the elements of its backbone, shamanism, and the attributes of the táltos as he reconstructed them,

in four main points: *1. "shamanic worldview" and soul concepts; 2. birth, calling, initiation; 3. drum; 4. trance, "conjuring spirits", and battle* (DIÓSZEGI 1967:134–135).

Through his comprehensive work and explicit desire to create a canon, Diószegi gained enormous prestige among scholars, and the vast majority of his contemporaries and later researchers accepted his conclusions. Thus, Diószegi's main theses served as the basis for Tekla Dömötör's and Mihály Hoppál's writings about the táltos and the ancient religion.[15] Mihály Hoppál, later Pál István Demény, and most recently Ferenc Pozsony supplemented the reconstruction with some further data.[16]

In terms of oral narratives, János Berze Nagy, following in the footsteps of Solymossy, sought the vestiges of the ancient religion primarily in the body of folktales, but he muddled the picture by over-dimensioning Solymossy's views and drawing illogical parallels (BERZE NAGY 1958). Ágnes Kovács, also working along the Solymossy-Diószegi line, compiled a body of "shamanistic" folktales about the *Tree that Reached up to the Sky* in line with the notion of the world tree of the Hungarian shaman (KOVÁCS 1984). Of the archeologists that focused on the Conquest era and based their research on Diószegi's results, Károly Mesterházy, István Dienes, and István Fodor's comprehensive work contributed to the mapping of Conquest-era shamanism by deciphering newly-found archaeological relics, and by raising new questions about the social background of Conquest-era shamanism, the communal role of the táltos, and the worldview that is reflected in artefacts.[17]

Gyula László was the first to hit a critical tone regarding Diószegi's work (with regard to false generalizations, the chronological problems of transmission, and the interpretation of archaeological finds) (LÁSZLÓ 1959). In a later paper, he offered a more exhaustive critique of Diószegi's hypotheses: he questioned the etymology of the word *táltos*, the motif of "dismemberment" during the initiation of the táltos, and he averred that the táltos had no connection to the *Tree that Reached up to the Sky* and he had no drum or "shamanic attire". He only considered the battle, being born with teeth, and the predestination of a táltos as true attributes of a táltos. His sharpest criticism was directed at Diószegi's construct of the Conquest-era táltos from heterogeneous "memory nuggets" of different origins: he declared that "the Siberian shaman cannot be used" to conceptualize the former Hungarian táltos (LÁSZLÓ 1990). (My ideas explicated below are in line with László's criticism on several points.) While accepting the basic principles, a short while later István Pál Demény also voiced his doubts regarding the motifs of the *shamanic drum* or *the world tree*, for example (DEMÉNY 2000).

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[12] He used the data of folk collections that proliferated in the meantime, the answers to Question 190 in the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas ("child born with teeth") and his own collections specifically focused on the táltos.

[13] This principle is repeatedly voiced in his 1958 book; for a detailed explanation of his methodology, see DIÓSZEGI 1954.

[14] Works partially or fully summarizing his research results: DIÓSZEGI 1952, 1953, 1958, 1960, 1967. Brief overviews for the rest of the world: DIÓSZEGI 1958b, 1971a. Overviews of two of his books: 1958a:435–436, 1967:134–135.

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[15] See their work mentioned in Note 10.

[16] Hoppál supplemented the reconstruction of the shamanic drum with Manchu data: the shaman uses a drum to cross the water, by which he was trying to prove the *sieve–shamanic drum* connection based on the Hungarian motif of the wizard floating in a sieve. He also tried to explain the textual motif of a milk-drinking táltos with the antitoxic effects of milk, assuming that the Hungarian shaman used the milk to counteract the effects of the fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*) used in North Eurasia as a vision-inducing narcotic (HOPPÁL 1992:159–164). Demény investigated the eastern parallels of the táltos battle, following it all the way to China (DEMÉNY 1999a); Pozsony assumed "shamanistic" traces in the masked, musical rites of the Moldavian *hejgetés* and *urálás* taking place on New Year's Eve (POZSONY 2005).

[17] MESTERHÁZY 1978, 1994; DIENES 1975 (he associated the trepanned skulls of Conquest-era tombs with mental illnesses); FODOR 2003, 2004.

Some of our scholars of oral narratives and folk music have studied the "shamanistic" motifs found in Hungarian folktales through other, not exactly shaman-centric approaches. Lajos Vargyas should be mentioned foremost: he did not connect the phenomena of the *Tree that Reached up to the Sky*, the *táltos horse*, or a *táltos battle* and *underworld dragon battle* with hypothesized Conquest-era shamanic rituals, but considered them rather as narrative motifs of various epic genres (folktale, heroic epic); he predominantly found the parallels between the phenomena not in shamanistic practice but in epics with "shamanistic" motifs (VARGYAS 1977, 1978, 1985, 1988). Pál István Demény had similar observations regarding the issues of Conquest-era epic poetry (DEMÉNY 1996:162–163, 1997, 2000:156–157, 2002:209–210). Vilmos Voigt, in his studies providing a synoptic view of the research of the ancient religion (VOIGT 1997–1998, 1998), expressed some criticism of Diószegi's basic concept, and he also considered the motifs of the *dragon battle*, the *Tree that Reached up to the Sky*, and the *táltos battle* as components of Conquest-era epics of Turkic origins. By 2012, he no longer considered a significant part of Diószegi's hypotheses substantiated (VOIGT 2012).

Before continuing to the more detailed discussion of the research problems related to the táltos and to presenting my own new results, I will briefly introduce the táltos in light of directly relevant data in my database that has significantly expanded since Diószegi's work.

THE TÁLTOS IN HUNGARIAN FOLK BELIEFS

Folklore collections from the 19th through the 21st century have furnished us with a very rich material of táltos narratives, which allow us to draw some conclusions about certain elements of the practice that may have been around even at the end of the 20th century. A great majority of 20th- and 21st-century narratives are about weather wizards and, to a lesser extent, about treasure-seeing táltos. In the 20th and 21st centuries, remembrances of specialists called táltos who performed community tasks were only prevalent in the easternmost groups of Hungarians living in Romania, in Szekler Land, Gyimes (Ghimeş) and Moldavia; however, those few táltos who are remembered in these regions were diviners and none of the motifs of the weather wizard narratives were associated with them. In Szekler Land, Gyimes and Moldavia, there is a vivid memory of practicing weather wizards, but neither their terminology ("weather-adjuster", "guardian of fields", "guardian of ice", "ice-bearer", etc.) nor their divergent practices are related to the táltos. There were some táltos on the Great Plain that were still practicing now and then as treasure-seers in the middle of the last century. (A well-known example is Pista Pénzásó of Tiszafüred, who, with a somewhat disturbed mind, was obsessively looking for buried money; in the villages of the region, he was considered a táltos, but he was not known to possess any other táltos attributes.)

A different picture is painted by the táltos documents of 17th- and 18th-century witch trials, which have now expanded to 35 as a result of discoveries of new sources.[18] In these sources, the táltos emerge as specialists who are versatile, capable of performing "occult" tasks appropriate for the given historical and social situation: they cure, divine, see treasure, are sometimes accused of bewitchment and witchcraft, and often identify other witches and cure bewitchment. All these roles could be played simultaneously by a single person. Weather magic was less commonly among their tasks, and it never seemed to be their exclusive function; of the thirty-five *táltos* references in the trial documents, only three or four may indicate a person classified as a weather wizard. In any case, this is an interesting contradiction with the high volume of data about táltos battling for the weather found in 20th-century legends.[19]

Hence, there is a contradiction between the practical function of the táltos of the trials and 20th-century tradition. We cannot know for sure whether there were generally few weather wizards practicing in Hungarian peasant communities, or if they were just less often accused of witchcraft; after all, weather wizards in the service of the entire local community were less likely to be in the cross-hairs of witchcraft accusations induced by personal conflicts within the community. Another important difference is that every táltos in the witch trial documents that stood accused of weather magic or communication with the otherworld through a trance was a woman, in contrast to the "dueling" táltos men of 20th-century táltos legends. I believe that, in this respect, this is primarily about the duality of *narrative tradition* vs. *actual practice*. I suspect that 20th-century táltos narratives are primarily representatives of an old epic tradition and not direct reflections of actual táltos rituals. This epic tradition, as I shall later discuss in more detail, is fundamentally rooted in the (Conquest-era?) epics whose táltos heroes are naturally male.

If we go back in time even further, the data essentially disappear, at least as far as the role and activity of the táltos are concerned. Thanks to documentation by Dezső Pais, we have records of 13th- through 18th-century personal names of *Táltos*, as well as some references in 15th- and 16th-century codices that refer to various specialists of magic, and a táltos duel is mentioned in a 17th-century source related to a boundary lawsuit.[20] As for the Conquest era, however, we have no sources that refer to the *existence* of táltos *practicing* as magico-religious specialists; aside from the incidental indirect evidence of archaeological and linguistic relics, all conclusions relating to this era had to be deduced from later documents, especially from 20th-century narratives.

Due to the aforementioned differences regarding temporal dimensions, in the following I shall summarize the characteristics of the modern táltos emerging from our documents in two steps, going backward in time. Starting with 19th- through 21st-century folklore data, I group the data around a distinctive set of motifs. These narrative motifs may only incidentally describe certain types of táltos; certain sets of motifs are only loosely associated, and essentially every motif could be related to any other. Thus, we can only tentatively speak of táltos types like the *windy/tempestuous táltos*, the *werewolf táltos* that transforms into animals, or the *"dragon" táltos* who was born with wings.

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[18] In a recent study, I presented these thirty-five táltos in detail (Pócs 2017).

[19] For a synthesis: DIÓSZEGI 1958:342–395, 1973:189–204; Pócs 2012a:442–452. In this paper, I cannot present the abundant illustrative material for each characteristic motif, only examples of a very small number of the most typical features.

[20] Doctors, diviners, dream readers: PAIS 1975c:85; references to the 17th-century data: RÓHEIM 1925:16–17.

These categories, which are distinct merely on the narrative level, hardly reflect the reality that is only vaguely perceptible behind the narrative tradition.[21]

"Windy" and "tempestuous" táltos: tempestuous and windy attributes, double being characteristics

A very large proportion of narratives portray the táltos as a weather wizard, a half-human, half-spirit *double being* with the attributes of tempest and wind.[22] Along with being human, there is a permanent presence of a demonic nature in him which during communication becomes one with the otherworldly storm demons. Sometimes he resides on earth as a human, other times as a spirit in the world of storm clouds, and the diffuse boundary between the world of humans and demons is easily permeable to him.

A particular form of supernatural communication typical of double beings emerges most markedly in accounts of the activities of weather wizards: when the táltos become spirit beings, their human form "disappears" in the descending fog or thunderstorm, which can even be noticed by outside observers. Through their spirit attributes, cloud or fog make them invisible, "carry them off", "lift" them up, making them disappear, they themselves becoming fog or clouds: "The tátos was in the cloud-wind. I heard he took someone up there";[23] or: "The tátos went into the clouds. A great big cloud came and had taken him".[24] "... He barely took two steps, a fog descended behind him. Such that we could no longer see him. And he disappeared".[25] The storm táltos turns into a storm demon to battle hostile demons that bring gale and hail, and he returns from the storm clouds wet or marked by lightning. On the southern Great Plain, the táltos was called *tátorjános* ("tempestuous", "windy"), which also refers to his turbulent nature.

The intensive folklore collecting of forty to fifty years ago revealed that narratives of storm táltos, usually associated with weather magic, were prevalent mostly in the central regions of the Hungarian language area. In the western, southern and northern regions of Hungary, the figure of the *garabonciás* has often been associated with similar beliefs. Nevertheless, the "stormy" attributes appeared in all types of táltos, forming a basic layer of táltos beliefs across the Hungarian language area.

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[21] The most complete collection of published and unpublished Hungarian data which provided the basis for this study: *Táltos, Garabonciás, Birth* groups of the Hungarian Folk Belief Archive. Collection of texts and typologies selected from the archive material, covering all important motifs: Pócs 2012a. Due to space limitations, I had to forego specific references to all the data used – I only name the primary sources for the data cited.

[22] A vast array of this kind of dual beings are known in European belief systems, including the *werewolf (wolf-man),* the *mora/Mahr/mara/nightmare* creatures, *fairies* and *witches*, or the Romanian *strigoi*. They usually have human and demonic/animal, "living" and "dead" variants. Data on the South Slavic, Eastern Slavic and Hungarian dual beings, for example: HERTZ 1862:123, KLAPPER 1910; TOLSTOJ-TOLSTAJA 1981; BURKHART 1989:71–94; Pócs 2002, 2014.

[23] Padé/Padej, Serbia (formerly Torontál County), FERENCZI 1974:263.

[24] Mohol/Mol, Serbia (formerly Bács-Bodrog County), FERENCZI 1974:263.

[25] Blackwater/Crna Bara, Serbia (formerly Torontál County), FERENCZI 1974:269.

The "werewolf" táltos: peculiarities of birth, origins, birthmarks, calling, initiation

A large number of data from 20th-century collections, mostly from the central part of the language area, is related to the *extraordinary birth* of the táltos (being born with *teeth* or some other mark, *two rows of teeth, six fingers, with a caul,* or *with a bristle or hair on his back*). These marks are usually guarantees of supernatural abilities, indicating that the táltos is not a common man but a double being belonging to both the human and supernatural world. As they said in Mezőtúr of a táltos who was born with a caul: "Because he always said that he was not of this world. He was partly from here, partly from the otherworld".[26]

Some of the peculiarities of birth are related to certain animal (werewolf) characteristics:[27] some táltos traditions indicate that they are *double beings* capable of transforming into animals, who are at home in both the cultured world and in nature, and whose destiny is predetermined at birth, or even *in utero*, a cyclical alternation of stages of life and death awaiting them (at the age of seven, and every seven years afterward, the "werewolf" táltos child must disappear; he is gone, disappears forever, dies, then returns; he must periodically do battle to determine the next cycle, etc.).[28] The metaphors of the táltos being "carried off", "taken", "forced to leave" can in some cases be interpreted as spirit táltos or animal spirits summoning or carrying off the táltos into their world, where he is initiated: "If these tátos were able to carry off the one born with teeth, then it also became like them, a tátos. (...) the child born with teeth would be raised for seven years; I do not know where these are raised...."[29]

According to some of our data it is a horse, according to other data it is an eagle, a "big black bird" or a dragon that carries off the táltos "forever"; or it takes him as a helping/calling spirit "to do battle". For example, according to a data from Gyula (Tolna County), a child born with teeth "would be taken by a dragon at the age of seven. They would ascend to the clouds in the shape of a dragon serpent (...) and tear up the [storm cloud]."[30]

All these attributes can be classified as general Central Eastern European werewolf characteristics that go far beyond the data of the táltos. Being born with teeth, animal transformation, and battling in the shape of an animal against hostile wizards could also be the attributes of rural specialists called *cunning folk* or *wise folk* (healers), but beliefs about being born with teeth may also relate to ordinary children with werewolf characteristics. *Being born with two rows of teeth* is usually an attribute of Eastern European *double beings* whose living and dead forms – i.e., their living human shape and demonic counterpart – exist simultaneously (*werewolf, vampire, strigoi, mora, witch*). These shapeshifter traits, intertwined with tempestuous/windy properties and storm magic, are one of the dominant layers of táltos beliefs.

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[26] Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, collection of Éva Pócs, 1962.

[27] The narrower meaning of the word *werewolf* is 'man-wolf'; in a broader sense, it is also used to denote 'animal-man', i.e., *shapeshifter* (the *werewolf* is the most common version of European shapeshifters, but there is also *bear-man, serpent-man, dog-man*, etc.).

[28] See these werewolf features in detail: Pócs 2002.

[29] Kistelek, Csongrád County, collection of Vilmos Diószegi, 1954.

[30] Collection of Bertalan Andrásfalvy, 1961.

Those born with wings and dragon features

Intertwined with the "tempestuous" and shapeshifter motifs but also separate from them due to certain distinctive features that are only characteristic of them is the tradition of men possessing bird, serpent, or dragon features who were born with small wings or feathers (sometimes specifically eagle or crane) in their armpit, so that they could fly away from their mother even as infants. If their wings are not cut, they may wear them hidden under their clothing when they are older, or they may at a certain age grow wings, become eagles or dragons, and fly away: "They are born in the morning, and with wings. They walk as well as fly. Only they are invisible, they fly so that they cannot be seen. (…) When the táltos child grew up and grew wings, around age twelve to fourteen, he left to do battle."[31]

Included in this category are some mentions of táltos that transform into fish, serpent, or rooster, or appear in the shape of a chicken or beings that can transform into winged creatures capable of flight: dragons, eagles, cranes. Perhaps the motifs relating to the animal father, progenitor, ancestor or parent of the táltos (eagle, crane, bull, wolf, dog, etc.) found in southern Great Plain and southern Transylvanian data could be included here, as well as the motifs of extraordinary abilities manifesting in childhood (an infant that talks or develops rapidly, a very strong little boy).

Often coinciding with data of those born with wings or feathers but geographically much more widespread are the scant and scattered data about serpent, dragon, or, less commonly, bird spirits (owl, eagle, rooster, crane, horse) used for helping with divination. The same goes for traditions of animal ancestors: they may coincide with the data of those born with wings and feathers, but they are often independent of them. Besides the táltos and other similar wizards, birthmarks and their associated traditions of animal fathers and helping spirits are usually part of the childhood of heroes and powerful people and may appear in heroic epics and historical legends as well. We would like to point out that these data will become more readily understandable when placed in the framework of Bulgarian and Serbian wizard beliefs and epics.

The battles

The richest material in táltos motifs is about the *battles*; these narratives can roughly be divided into three large groups corresponding to the previously mentioned three groups.

There is a wide variety of stories about the *battles of the storm táltos*; if they include information about the manner of the battle, they usually portray the táltos as battling in a human form, alone or more often as part of a team, against storm demons, hostile táltos, or "bad" dragons that bring hail: "In the cloud – because táltos go into the clouds – they say the táltos are kicking, that's why it's lightning. In the cloud, when those big thunderstorms happen, it's those tátos going at each other, to see who is stronger. They are tearing the clouds apart. The strongest power is with the tátos…"[32]

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[31] Both quotes: Sárrétudvari, Hajdú-Bihar County, collection of Ilona P. Madar, 1963.
[32] Nagybátony, Heves County, collection of Vilmos Diószegi, 1956.

The notions of these battles include several stereotypical mythical motifs, the most common being the motif of a wandering táltos asking for milk, being rejected, and causing a thunderstorm. Storm táltos appear as masters of storm clouds and storm demons, but they are not necessarily engaged with the demonic world just through direct communication. They have other means of controlling thunderstorms, such as "cutting" the cords of the "tied up" clouds with an axe, or banishing the demons with sticks, or prayers, or incantations, etc.

The most common narratives, predominant on the Great Plain, are about werewolf táltos that transform into animals, who must do battle in the shape of an animal with the hostile táltos of another settlement or region. The battle usually takes place between animals (bull, less often horse, dragon, still less often boar, wolf, dog) of a contrasting color, *white* and *black* or *white* and *red*, or possibly in the form of *red and blue flames*. The goal is usually to avert a thunderstorm or hail, and (re)turn it to the enemy, and less often to bring about rainfall. Battles for the weather are often accompanied by meteorological events, wind storms, thunderstorms, the same as with other weather wizards and battle types.

Part of the battle motifs have a certain learning/initiation nature: the táltos must fight a hostile táltos to become a practicing weather wizard. Numerous data, mainly from southern Transdanubia, refer to a duel- or bout-like battle with an "ordinary" animal in a naked, human form. For example:

> "The bull was just roaming the streets, it was bound to attack men. (…) When the Gypsies came, they tried scaring the bull, but it charged them, and this strong Gypsy, (…) he dropped his bass, lunged at the bull. With one hand he grabbed hold of one of its horns, with the other its nostril, and spun the bull so that it bellowed in pain. He spun the bull until he just slammed it against the ground, and the people just watched in amazement. Then the news spread that Old Bogdán was a táltos and had battled with a bull. Bogdán Pali was his name. His descendants were also that strong."[33]

This kind of battle, along with other werewolf traits, signals a kind of "werewolf wizard" and the narrative types associated with it, but this tradition seems to be unrelated to practicing táltos. It is primarily an epic tradition with many stereotypical mythical motifs (for example, the táltos announcing in advance that he needs to do battle, calling for a helper, etc.), and highly interwoven with werewolf beliefs (animal alter ego, born with teeth or animal traits, the cyclical nature of battles, etc.).

Narratives of the *battles of dragon/winged táltos* include further characteristic motifs in addition to the werewolf and storm magic features. The táltos heading out to battle is taken by a dragon, serpent or eagle into the cloud, or he travels on the back of a dragon or serpent. He himself may take the shape of a similar flying creature, or he may battle in the storm cloud in his human form but has a dragon or eagle helper or guide in this spirit battle. Similar roles can be fulfilled by rooster, chicken, serpent or horse helpers. Each of these may grow a wing and turn into a dragon or eagle in the otherworldly dimension.

The data relating to the birthmarks and battle methods of a "winged táltos" do not denote a coherent weather wizard táltos, although they are apparently clustered around

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[33] Gúta, formerly Komárom County, collection of Edit Fél, 1943.

such a being. Data about a táltos battling in the shape of a dragon are more widespread than about a táltos born as an eagle/dragon: it is only the dragon's shape that battle narratives associate with the dragon as a helping "spirit animal". A common component of dragon táltos narratives is the mythical motif of a *táltos requesting milk for his serpent helper/himself in order to grow wings/turn into a dragon/gain the ability to fly.*

We do not know to what degree these data can be "originally" linked to the rather evanescent figure of a táltos born with wings; for the time being, we can only deduce a practicing wizard in light of the Balkan parallels discussed below. This much can be stated, however: data of winged/dragon táltos are clustered in a geographically distinct south–southeast region, in Csongrád, Bihar and Békés counties, but they can be found in Borsod county and Southern Transylvania as well. Based on the 17th-18th-century witch trials, there were at least two people – one táltos woman in Jászberény and one in Debrecen – that were *dragon táltos.*

All in all, we are dealing with various types of battles, which may be indicative of different táltos roles in the past; however, we cannot infer this from the modern narratives. What may have been the significance of battle in the hypothesized ritual activity of the táltos in the past? Was it really a "soul journey" during trance, as the majority of researchers of Hungarian ancient religion assumed? There are no data from the modern age about táltos battles in trance, apart from one or two texts that may be interpreted in this way and one narrative of a dream battle. (In Moldavia and Szekler Land, a couple of data of weather wizards that are not called *táltos* refer to communication with storm demons during a trance, but not to *a battle.*[34]) When we evaluate the battle motifs, we must think of their almost universal nature: the "otherworldly" spirit battle, in very different contexts and in various animal forms, is a general phenomenon; wizards, seers, demonic "night witches" carry on such battles all across Europe![35] (Part of the battles mentioned in the táltos trials are actually the night battles of táltos in the role of witches or anti-witches carried on at home, in a family environment, in dreams and visions.) We can only distinguish the táltos battle through a combination of other features (animal forms, the nature of otherworlds). But these features are merely a part of *textual* traditions. The narratives usually portray the battle as taking place in the earthly environment or in a storm cloud but as being a real, physical adventure (with certain miraculous transformation motifs from folk epics). What we can know for sure, in light of current data about such battles, is the presence of these *epic motifs* in the past in the intellectual culture of Hungarians.

Returning to the animal helpers in battles, we have to say a few words about the *táltos horse.* Apart from the widespread folktale motif of the helping horse, the horse does not appear as a helper in the 20th-century data of "real" táltos battles. The táltos horse as advisor to renowned historical figures (primarily St. László) with whom the heroes leap from mountain peak to mountain peak and cover long distances at lightning-fast speeds has also nothing to do with a táltos practicing weather magic.[36] Still, the details of two táltos trials, as we will see below, link the helping táltos horse with the battling táltos,

and there are some mythical references to a táltos "looking for his horse". Nonetheless, I believe that in the case of the táltos horse and any animal helpers or animal alter egos of the táltos communicating with the otherworld, we are dealing with traditions that are unrelated and running on separate tracks.

The extent to which the above-presented attributes were components of the beliefs and legends surrounding *practicing táltos* and the extent to which this narrative tradition was part of their táltos identity can, of course, not be established today. The whole táltos battle tradition is *textual* in nature and lacks the subjective dream or vision experience. If we seek signs of true supernatural communication, credible witness accounts of trance states, or first-person narratives of táltos about their otherworldly experiences, only the 17th-18th-century witch trials provide some details.[37]

The táltos in witch trials

In our 17th- and 18th-century trial records, several táltos are presented as important community functionaries of rural and small-town communities, in some cases even providing a detailed picture of their various activities. Of the above-mentioned traits considered to be táltos attributes, these sources make several mentions of the táltos being born with teeth and being divinely predestined *in utero* for the táltos life, but there are also two data concerning dragon helpers, one of which is found in the testimony of a táltos woman from Jászberény who confesses to practicing weather magic. Then there is data on "turning into an eagle", but this turns out to be only a verbal charm that was recorded in a 1741 witch trial in Paks and is almost certainly merely a narrative motif.[38]

The táltos battle is discussed in the trial records in four cases. The trial of the táltos *Zsuzsanna Kőműves, Judit Szőcs* and *György Tapodi* took place in 1740 in front of the Council of Miskolc (BODGÁL 1960:308–311).[39] György Tapodi confirms during his interrogation that when the time comes, the táltos must go into a heavenly battle, and on a regular basis, namely, at Pentecost and on St. John's Day. This trial record documents the entering of a trance state by Judit Szőcs: she practices the ritual trance-inducing method of hydromancy, through which she changes into a fish (the same record reports on the transformation of the táltos into pidgeons and foxes, too): "At dawn on the third day of Pentecost, she went to the courtyard and took a bowl in her hand and gazed into it; her neighbor saw this and asked her: 'What are you looking at?' To which the girl replied: 'Nothing at all.' After a short while, she shook herself, turned into a fish, and disappeared for three days" (BODGÁL 1960:196).

Transforming into a fish is theoretically a motif of "winged" táltos, but this does not fit with another statement by the same girl: "the girls fight separately, and the men also fight separately" (BODGÁL 1960:309). This coincides with 20th-century data of group battles of weather wizards. In another case, in the record of a trial taking place between 1730 and

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[34] See in detail: PÓCS 2019: *Weather Wizards* chapter.

[35] See, for example, the night battles of witches: PÓCS 2010.

[36] See, for example, the táltos horse of Gyimes: Zoltán MAGYAR 1998. (Cf. "One jump to the Calvary, and nine to Királyhágó...", János Arany: Szent László.)

[37] In my book on the táltos in witch trials, I wrote in detail about some of these táltos (PÓCS 1999, Chapter 7); in a recent study, I presented all these táltos in detail: 2016.

[38] The trial of Ilona Vörös in 1741: SCHRAM 1970:485.

[39] For more detail on the trial: PÓCS 2016:254–255.

1736,[40] Ilona Borsi, a healer practicing in Bihar, Szatmár, and Bereg counties, confesses that troops of táltos gather on Őrhegy three times a year (at Pentecost, and in the months of St. Michael and St. James – September and July, respectively). Three other táltos confess about battles in the "sky". One of them is battling "evil" to avert hail, and the other two "for the realm" or against the "German táltos". The latter two are especially unlikely to be reporting on their own trance experience but rather incorporating commonly known narrative motifs into their confessions. Although the true ritual practice of some of the táltos may have been still in place, it seems that even in the 18th century, the táltos battle was a narrative stereotype rather than an actual community task of the táltos. According to our data, at least on the Great Plain (as it was in the 21st century), narratives of táltos battles were widely known at the time, but the actual community activity of the weather táltos was already waning. Ilona Borsi, mentioned above, refers to a battle between two beings when talking about a childhood (perhaps "initiatory") vision in which a male and female táltos battle in the "sky" as bulls but who are at the same time wrestling in human form, naked (LEHOCZKY 1887:305). The little girl had to watch this in order to learn. At the very least, this information demonstrates knowledge of the narrative motifs of two táltos wrestling while naked and doing battle in the shape of a bull.

In both trials quoted here, the notion of the horse as an animal helper appears, which may be related to táltos who actually practiced their vocation. As a little girl, Ilona Borsi is being transported by the táltos "training" her to the scene of her vision on flying horses, and they even try to give her a horse, "trying to see whether she herself could ride a táltos horse", but this was an unsuccessful attempt. The little girl is encouraged by the horses of the táltos not to be afraid of the sight of the battling táltos.[41] In this unique scene, the possibility of interpreting the táltos horse both as the horse alter ego and the helping spirit of its master is simultaneously present. The trial record of the above-mentioned hydromancer Judit Szőcs of Miskolc also notes that she is "looking for a horse to ride" (BODGÁL 1960:311). In the case of Judit Szőcs and her companions, there is also talk of some sort of rivalry, a test of strength taking place among the táltos, which the táltos involved in the case describes as follows: "... now that he has fallen off a beam, he will not be as strong, and I have fallen off two beams, and I will fall off a third one, too, if I go out again" (BODGÁL 1960:310). So some kind of táltos initiation motifs were known in the early modern era, which may indicate the táltos' role as a mediator in the past. Thanks to this trial record, we have two of the scarce documents regarding the helping spirit nature of the táltos horse.

In summing up the multifaceted activities and diverse belief attributes of the táltos, we can conclude that the views regarding their applied mediator techniques, ancestors, calling spirits and helping spirits, otherworlds, as well as spirit battles do not form a coherent system, and they do not help us define the distinct types of táltos; reality is less typified and stereotyped than narrative. In each region or community, a variety of traditions of wizard attributes could have coexisted, which the wizards used in their mediator practice in varied compilations as ideological backgrounds and tools, and these attributes became part of the beliefs and narrative tradition surrounding the táltos, in line with current needs and tasks. The same diversity and incoherence are

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[40] The 1735 interrogation of Ilona Borsi in Munkács: LEHOCZKY 1887:304–305; PÓCS 2016:256–257.
[41] For details, see PÓCS 2016:255.

characteristic of the early modern data regarding the performance, ritual activity, trance and transformation techniques of the táltos – although they are more lifelike, more revealing of the practicing táltos.

TÁLTOS – THE SHAMAN OF THE ANCIENT RELIGION?

Returning to the táltos construct of the pagan religion of the Hungarians, even considering the criticisms, we can state that the scholarship has been and is, in general, treating Vilmos Diószegi's theories as unquestionable axioms. In view of this, I found it expedient to present my findings on the problematic of the táltos as "the shaman of the ancient religion" in this paper, reflecting primarily on his research, presenting my research results partly building on his achievements and partly critiquing his reasoning. Thus, tentatively, I follow Diószegi's model of shamanism, seeking the criteria of shamanism in Hungarian data according to the Eurasian ideal he built based on Róheim.

The above series compiled from the táltos database does not quite fit this "shamanistic" construct; neither the modern data, nor the earlier, 13th-16th-century mentions point to the typical, "classic" shaman role. At most, the survival of some of the relics of shamanism can be attributed to certain motifs, for example, regarding animal helpers, initiation, or battles, but this in itself does not prove the existence of shamanism in the religion of pagan Hungarians, at least not when we are looking for the figure and activity of the "classic" shaman in the data. Important requisites, such as the drum, the shamanic attire, and the public performance character of the shamanic séance are missing.

In my opinion, the reconstruction of the táltos of the ancient religion formed by Diószegi is rather incoherent, clearly consisting of many motifs that are not, or not exclusively, the original, distinct attributes of the táltos, but rather parts of other beliefs or ritual complexes, data taken out of context from other systems and forced upon the research construct of the "Conquest-era shaman". Furthermore, some of the phenomena that serve to prove the existence of shamanism, such as the *dual soul*, *trance*, certain *cosmogonic notions* – although they may have a legitimate place in a shamanism construct – are not conclusive in terms of ancient Hungarian shamanism because of their universality.

A fundamental problem with Diószegi's shamanism-reconstruction is that he did not take into consideration issues of the age, genre and social environment of the data when attempting to reconstruct millennia-old religious rituals and their functions and related worldviews from 20th-century narratives. Particularly important in this regard is his lack of distinction between belief, actual ritual practice, and the epic tradition that reflects it only tangentially and with many transpositions.

Below, following the points of Diószegi's above-quoted summary, I look at the motifs formed around the táltos as a shaman of the ancient religion, and comment on the results in light of my methodological considerations and new data, while dismissing certain non-relevant details.

Worldview and soul concepts

According to Diószegi's summary: "The Hungarians' worldview was characterized by the Tree that Reached up to the Sky bearing the Sun and the Moon, a world of serpents-lizards-frogs, souls around the world tree, the life soul and the free soul, i.e., multiple souls" (Diószegi 1967:134).

Data of the *world tree* and the stratified structure of the universe, as well as some of the features of the *underworld*, came to Diószegi's attention as parts of the shamanistic worldview, motivated by the world tree concepts of related peoples and the role of the "shamanic tree" imitating the world tree in shamanic initiation (Diószegi 1958a:278–292). As we have seen, modern-day táltos data cannot be used to produce data of cosmogonic concepts of a practicing táltos or of the world tree/shamanic tree; the scarcity of Diószegi's data is due to this lack. The motifs from which he attempted to build a shamanistic cosmogony appear to be highly selective, and in many cases untrustworthy. (For example, his only data of a "shamanistic" journey to the underworld of "serpents and frogs" comes from the hell-vision of a Christian seer.) (Diószegi 1958a:270–275, 1967:86–87). The parallels of underworld journeys cited by him from Altaic peoples can at most be found in tales in the Hungarian material, like in the tale of *Fehérlófia/ Son of the White Mare* (AaTh 301B), so they do not conclusively prove the hypothetical shamanistic activity of the táltos. The universality of these concepts also calls for caution regarding conclusions drawn about the ancient religion: the notions of *seven layers of heaven* vs. *the underworld* cannot be associated with only the shamans of Eurasia, as they are present in Europe's alternative cultures both preceding and alongside Christianity (such as the cult of Mithras, or gnosticism).

Likewise, the *world tree* is also part of a widespread cosmogonic concept; it is just as present in Ob-Ugrian and Central Asian myths as it is in Europe's pre-Christian religions (Tolley 2008:I.108). Diószegi considered the type of world tree in whose crown sit the sun and moon and a bird perches on its top – which is only deduced, not supported by data from Hungarian folk beliefs[42] – to be a concept that was a remnant from the Uralic era (Diószegi 1969). This perspective must also be viewed critically in light of the *Tree that Reached up to the Sky* with the sun and moon between its branches being a recurrent cosmic concept in Christian ritual songs of midwinter festivities – *koleda, kolinda* – in Eastern European folk poetry, also linked to the motifs of stealing celestial bodies or the solar eclipse. The world tree that is destroyed by underworld monsters every year and renewed during the feast of the birth of Christ is a folklore motif widespread among many peoples of the Balkans.[43] This, of course, does not preclude that it was "an ancient notion of the Hungarians" and that it can be assumed to have existed in the worldview of ancient Hungarians (Diószegi 1958a:292). This assumption is supported by the life tree motifs of Conquest-era *tarsoly* (sabretache) plates and other archaeological finds,[44] although decorative elements of everyday objects can never be hard evidence of a given worldview. Despite this ornamentation and the táltos motifs of the *Tree that Reached up to the Sky* tale mentioned below, the Hungarian táltos as a practicing mediator does not seem to be connected with this supposed shamanistic cosmogony, and there is no direct evidence of such a connection in the past either.

In terms of *conceptions of the soul* and *shamanic ecstasy*, belief in a dual soul was highly prominent in Diószegi's views, which he based on north Eurasian data, according to which the free soul, capable of detaching from the body and existing alongside one or more *self-souls/body-souls,* played a role in the ecstatic practices of the shaman (trance-induced "soul flights") (Paasonen 1909–1910; Pais 1975d). The concept of *dual soul* is, in some respects, a research construct,[45] and it seems particularly so in Hungarian research which works with highly shamanistic assumptions.[46] However, based on both linguistic evidence and the later written representations and folklore of Hungarian culture, it is likely that phenomena perceived as the manifestations of the free soul may have been present in the worldview and religion of Conquest-era Hungarians. But these are general characteristics of the human psyche – and of all cultures[47] – therefore they cannot be criteria for the existence of ancient Hungarian shamanism.

As for the hypothetical *ecstasy* of the Conquest-era shaman, as I have mentioned, the táltos battle is usually referred to in the relevant narratives as an "actual" earthly adventure. For the battle taking place in the "soul", in a trance, Diószegi has only three data (Diószegi 1958a:77, 295–327, 340), none of them direct, subjective supernatural experiences, but rather narrative motifs associated with stories of other (werewolf-type) mediators: diviners, seers, "those born with teeth" (not just Hungarian). Diószegi supplemented his lack of data on trance from 20th-century practices of seers and diviners, as well as from the narratives of *Witches' Sabbath* visions found in witch trials; he also tried to prove the presence of shamanic ecstasy in Hungarian history with examples from colloquialisms ("his soul only comes to sleep inside of him" and the like) (Diószegi 1958a:302, 324, 339). These data do not substantiate the ecstasy of the shaman, only the universal nature of trance-induced visions, because seers, witches, healers, and even saints entered trance states: in the literature of Christian mystics, we can find abundant motifs of "the travels" of the free soul to heaven or hell.[48] Diószegi's reasoning that the modern-era seer of the dead "preserved" the trance technique of the ancient Hungarian táltos is unacceptable: the seer entered into a trance in his own right; the data of his soul flight can be interpreted only in their own context, not within an artificial, "shamanistic" framework. The extremely sparse number of data of the táltos trance is explained above with the narrative tradition of the battles, and I will return to this problem below.

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[42] The credibility of the three known Hungarian modern-day depictions of the world tree – recreated from the horn jars of Nagysárrét – is highly dubious.

[43] Kalojanov 1995: Chapters 2 and 6.

[44] István Fodor on the world tree with the sun and the moon, as well as the eagle, on the Iranian, Sasanid origins of the Sun-Moon motifs: Fodor 1973:32–34, 2005.

[45] See, for example, Paulson's (1958) soul concepts, or Dezső Pais' (1975d) word analyses. As Ulla Johansen correctly points out: the duality of the body soul + free soul is a "western" category (Johansen 2006).

[46] See Ákos Szendrey's synopsis of soul concepts: Szendrey 1946.

[47] See for example, Boyer 1986; Peuckert 1960a.

[48] See Pócs 1998; Holm 1982; as well as the great overviews of European visions in the Hungarian context: Katona 1907; in the context of late Antiquity and early Christianity: MacDermot 1971. If we include the aforementioned data of mythical creatures in the Balkans that grow wings by drinking milk, we must refute Mihály Hoppál's view on the milk-drinking táltos mentioned in Note 16.

Birth, selection, initiation

According to Diószegi: "The táltos candidate's selection by illness, his acquisition of knowledge through continuous sleep and the dismemberment of his body, through the details of his initiation by climbing the Tree that Reached up to the Sky, and even as a whole, sets before us the notions of the conquering Hungarians of the táltos candidate." (This includes being born with extra bones – with teeth or six fingers – which is not mentioned in the synopsis but receives great emphasis in his book.) (DIÓSZEGI 1967:134).

We witness here the erroneous identification of birthmarks by Diószegi, which many of his critics have noticed; he blends the notions of being born with an "excess bone" and being born with teeth, and the Finno-Ugric, Turkic, and Samoyed parallels associated with them are extremely scant and very heterogeneous, thus proving nothing (DIÓSZEGI 1958a:25–55, 122–138).[49] Nonetheless, *being born with teeth* is indeed one of the most characteristic features of the Hungarian táltos, and our already mentioned 18th-century data testify to this fact. However, Diószegi's data must be supplemented with other birthmarks and the wider context of birthmarks. Being born with teeth (sometimes specifically with canines), even being born with a caul, seems to be an Eastern and Southeastern European *werewolf*-type characteristic (along with some of the Transdanubian data of being born with bristles or fur) which also extends beyond the scope of táltos beliefs. Being born with a double set of teeth, as I have mentioned, is an attribute of *double beings* known throughout Eastern Europe that exist simultaneously in a living and dead form. The táltos became associated with these beings through their animal alter ego, at least at the level of narratives, but a double set of teeth can in no way be classified as an ancient Hungarian feature. Thus, being born with teeth cannot be regarded as an exclusive ethnic characteristic of Hungarian táltos, and the related data do not substantiate the táltos' being the "shaman of the ancient religion."

Diószegi distinguished the active and passive modes of *selection* ("forced calling, reluctance, the illness and torture of the reluctant candidate") as South Slavic or Hungarian features (DIÓSZEGI 1958a:21–39): he classified the data referring to the "passive" calling as táltos features. However, these can be just as characteristic of the South Slavic peoples whom Diószegi associated with the "active" selection process, because, in general, he relied on widespread Central Eastern European narrative motifs of the chosen ones (heroes, saints, and Christian seers). Motifs like "he has to go", "he disappears/dies at the age of seven" and similar motifs are particularly characteristic of Balkanic beliefs about werewolves and weather wizards, as well as of the Hungarian-Croatian-Slovenian figure of the *garabonciás*, so this is not the exclusive specialty of the Hungarian táltos. Data regarding the calling of the spirits only apply to the táltos in two cases (horse and bull) (DIÓSZEGI 1958a:25–46, 59–70), but these motifs also belong to the werewolf-type narrative tradition. In this sense, Diószegi's heterogeneous group of data is not probative as it does not refer to the táltos as a shaman of the ancient religion.

[49] On this: DEMÉNY 2000:156–157; even Gyula László did not think it was proven: LÁSZLÓ 1959:447.

Diószegi's arguments regarding the dismemberment, deboning, and cooking of the candidate as being remnants of *shamanic initiation* are also problematic. There is only a single táltos data in our tales and legends, which, however, does not actually refer to "dismemberment;" this lack was remedied by Diószegi with some tale motifs that are not quite related (The Magician and His Apprentice, AaTh 325, *The Tree that Grows in the Sky,* AaTh 317) (DIÓSZEGI 1958a:86–94, 140–145; DÖMÖTÖR 1988:123–125). The motifs of the shamanic candidate's dismemberment and deboning are fabulous, mythical expressions of the archaic (but not shamanistic) concept of master/mistress of animals well-known in the extended region of East-Central Europe (from the Caucasus through Asia Minor and the Balkans to the Alps) (SCHMIDT 1952).

The motif of initiation and rejuvenation by *cooking* is another very old remnant of several Indo-European mythologies;[50] the mythical formulations known in the Balkans are mostly related to beliefs of fairies and Fates or witches. Diószegi's Hungarian data (not even applicable to the táltos) also belong in this group. They are also present in the stories of Slovenian-Croatian weather wizards of the Balkans (*kresnik, vukodlak, vedomec*), as well as in Balkan epics (which exhibit Altaic relations) (STOJANOVIČ-LAFAZANOVSKA 1996). However, even considering Diószegi's Altaic parallels, it does not follow that this motif could be directly related to the existence of an ancient Hungarian shaman.

Diószegi even associated the "shamanic initiation" motif of the tale of the *Sky-High* or *"Crownless" tree* (SOLYMOSSY 1929, 1937; KOVÁCS 1984; BENEDEK 2003) with the táltos: according to the sujet of the tale, this is where the táltos acquires his horse (i.e., receives a helping spirit), or, according to some variants, is dismembered and resurrected. Several scholars have expressed reservations about Diószegi's arguments: in addition to the Ugric, Turkic, and Samoyed parallels, the relevant tale motifs also have Eastern and Western European relations and are mostly of literary origins.[51] I think Linda Dégh's reasoning points in the right direction: in her view, despite its "shamanistic" motifs, the tale has no connection to the rites of the táltos, and its relations should be sought not in Hungarian but in Turkic shamanism (DÉGH 1965:22, 77–79, 1978). As Mihály Hoppál writes, the shamanic tree that reflects the world tree is "one of the main organizing principles of the worldview of the Siberian shaman" (HOPPÁL 2001:75), but Diószegi was not able to prove the historical existence of the *shamanic* or *táltos tree* in the practice of the táltos. Some of his dubious data of táltos trials are mythical "trial/initiation" motifs related to a number of magical specialists and are therefore not considered relics of the ritual initiation of the táltos as a practicing mediator.[52] However, the question arises whether the data from the witch trial proceedings of Judit Szőcs et al. in Miskolc, which Diószegi also cites, may be referring to some kind of initiation trial related to the "shamanic tree". This and some other "initiation-like" data from the witch trials cited above establish the likelihood of the existence of certain actual "táltos initiation" data behind the many narrative traditions, as well as the actual mediator role of the táltos in the past. The small number of data and their context-poor heterogeneity do not allow us

[50] See OOSTEN 1985: *The Magic Cauldron* chapter.

[51] BLÉCOURT 2012: *Jouneys to the Otherworld* chapter.

[52] Falling out of a birch tree or a chicory bush and the like: DIÓSZEGI 1958:51–52, 90–112, 140–167.

to agree with Diószegi's conclusion that the Hungarian "táltos initiation ceremony is the equivalent of the initiation rituals of related peoples" (DIÓSZEGI 1958a:166).[53]

The shaman's drum and headwear, the táltos tree

According to Diószegi: "The single-headed rattling drum in the hands of the táltos, his beast of burden, the owl-feathered and horned headgear, the notched or ladder-shaped 'táltos tree,' this is the equipment of the pagan Hungarian táltos..." (DIÓSZEGI 1967:135).

The *táltos tree* was referred to above in connection with some "initiation-like" data, but it should be emphasized that these objects found in the "initiation-like" data cannot be classified as the tools of the pagan Hungarian táltos. The inclusion of the *shamanic drum* in the reconstruction of the shaman of the ancient religion, as mentioned above, intensified after Gyula Sebestyén's study. Diószegi's shamanic drum reconstruction, following in the steps of Sebestyén, Róheim, and Solymosy,[54] must be deemed fictitious in its entirety. Diószegi has no data specifically related to the figure of the táltos, nor is there the slightest trace of a drumming táltos or a táltos drum in either the newly discovered historical data or the great contemporary táltos database. The secondary folklore data of the ecstasy-inducing drum, like the drum of Moldavian mummers called *urálók* or the phrase "iron pot is our drum" in the ritual songs called *regölés*, point to various Balkan (Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian) folk customs (i.e., the Balkan cognates of *regölés,*[55] or to *rusalia* and other collective possession cults and healing rituals in the Balkans).[56] The *sieve–shamanic drum* link is also highly dubious in light of beliefs about Western European witches and *mora/Mahr/mara* creatures traveling to the otherworld in a sieve.[57] *Bobolás* – beans or corn spread over a sieve or a board – is a divination method that dates back to the Byzantium of the late Antiquity and is known throughout Eastern and Southeastern Europe.[58] Sebestyén's first Vas county data on a divination using the town crier's drum, which gave rise to the táltos drum reconstruction, can be classified in this latter category. Once we remove all this background, the children's songs cited by Sebestyén, Róheim, Solymossy, Diószegi and their followers, and the metaphors

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[53] See these motifs in the textual context of various scholars, seers, etc.: Pócs 2012a.

[54] See SEBESTYÉN 1900; RÓHEIM 1925:11; SOLYMOSSY 1937:356; DIÓSZEGI 1958a:171–220.

[55] See the Balkan rituals in more detail: PUCHNER 1997, 2007; Pócs 2004.

[56] The trance-inducing music of *rusalia* and other Balkan healing possession cults is created with whistle, drum, and violin: in this, as in other Balkan ritual music, the flute, the violin and the drum are fundamental necessities. The drum of the *rusalia* rites is surrounded by ritualistic regulations, as it is also the instrument that initiates one into the fairy cult (see, for example, ANTONIEVIĆ 1990:147–187). In Croatian and Serbian witch beliefs, a drum is used for recruiting witches, or as a requisite in "otherworldly" witch battles or during the marching order of the enemy wizard troops—this seems to be a belief borrowed from the fairy cult (see Pócs 1989a:245).

[57] According to general European beliefs, these beings float in water, just as the European witch does (cf., for example, the trial by water of witches, PEUCKERT 1960b, Pócs 2016, TÓTH G. 2001); we also have data on European witches floating in sieves, e.g., Shakespeare: Macbeth. Thus, Mihály Hoppál's Manchu parallel mentioned in Note 16 is irrelevant in terms of the táltos.

[58] See, for example, the South Slavic data of LILEK (1900:65–69) and BELOVIĆ (1927:132–133), or MOSZYŃSKI's (1939:403–404) overview of East and Southeast Europe.

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of colloquialisms relating horse–sieve–drum cannot be considered as evidence of a Hungarian shamanic drum. Skepticism about this has been voiced by many,[59] yet the motif launched by Sebestyén is still present in all reconstructions today.

The evidence Diószegi brings for the survival of the erstwhile Hungarian shaman's *horned* or *feathered headgear* – witches that might be spotted from St. Lucy's stool (DIÓSZEGI 1958a:44, 227–265, 1967:82–83) – belongs to a group of divination techniques known in much of Central Europe that is related to the dead and to witches who appear at the winter solstice, as well as to the feathered masks of the Austrian-Hungarian-Slovak St. Lucy and Perchta mummeries,[60] in some cases perhaps to the belief of a winged, dragon táltos. However, these data taken out of the context of their own systems do not say anything about the outfit of the erstwhile, hypothesized shaman.[61] Thus, there is no credible evidence of the drum and costume of the Conquest-era shaman.

Trance, spirit conjuring, battle (and helping spirits)

Diószegi writes: "… the battle carried out in the shape of an animal while in a trance state and the exclamatory spirit conjuring (…) reveal the ancient practice of the táltos." (DIÓSZEGI 1967:135).

As far as the terms *reg/regös* ('minstrel') and *rejt/rejtezik* ('hide/hiding') go, linguists, folklorists and ethnomusicologists alike consider the *regös* song a remnant of a rite associated with the shamanism of the ancient religion, based on the Finno-Ugric "shamanistic" terminology and the magical refrain formula of *regös* songs containing these words (SEBESTYÉN 1902; ERDŐDI 1937; PAIS 1975b; VARGYAS 1979; DEMÉNY 1994; PAKSA 1999). In my own study of *regölés* and its parallels in Central and Southeastern Europe, I theorized that the *reg/regös* word family was part of regölés, and as such, are "only" evidence of the ecstasy of the *regös*, rather than the existence of the shaman of the ancient religion (Pócs 2004). Furthermore, the term *rejt/rejtezik* ('hide') refers to someone who enters a trance state or is sleeping/dreaming alone or in a remote location away from other people, so it is quite unlikely to have ever been a term of a public shamanic performance. In the same context, the *haj/hej/huj* expressions have been assumed to be trance-inducing words or "spirit conjuring words" (ERDŐDI 1937; GOMBOCZ 1960; PAIS 1975a, 1970b; BALÁZS 1954; DIÓSZEGI 1958:400–426; DEMÉNY 1994). These, like all such expressions found in the festive ritual songs of Central and Southeastern European peoples, must be excluded from the body of possible evidence of shamanism.

The battle in the shape of an animal while in a trance state – using Diószegi's expression – is a key question regarding the possible "shamanic" activity of the táltos; this is the motif of Róheim/Diószegi's reconstructed táltos notion that even the most

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[59] See, for example, the opposing views cited by Szendrey (SZENDREY 1956); or Karjalainen's reservations (KARJALAINEN 1927:III, 263–71), or much later Demény's doubts (DEMÉNY 2000:160).

[60] See RÓHEIM 1920 (he associated the data of ox horns, feathers, etc. seen on witches with Perchta mummering); Pócs 1999: 144–147; 2019: *The Ritual Techniques of Seeing* chapter.

[61] The supposed shamanic headdress data was considered unproven even by Gyula László (1959, 1990).

critical commentators recognize to be one of the most important and truly characteristic features of the táltos, even if they do not consider it an unconditionally "shamanistic" motif. Researchers began paying attention to the battle after Lajos Kálmány's 1917 publication (KÁLMÁNY 1917). Diószegi, utilizing Kodolányi's synopsis (KODOLÁNYI 1945), compiled its types and elements (DIÓSZEGI 1958:344–352) and created a picture that is essentially consistent with what I was able to outline based on my extensive database; the only thing I had to add was the winged (dragon, eagle) type of táltos. What I find lacking in Diószegi's argument is the distinction between narrative level and real-life practice, which would be especially important in the evaluation of the narratives and narrative stereotypes of the battles.

In fact, Diószegi touched upon this issue on several occasions when he asked how we should interpret the animal shape assumed by the táltos during his battle. Based on Siberian, especially Yakut examples, he determined that it was the shaman's animal spirit, i.e., the free soul leaving the body of the táltos during trance that took on an animal form (DIÓSZEGI 1958:385–394). This may often be true for shamans of various Turkic peoples, but it is difficult to draw such conclusions from our Hungarian táltos narratives. The only (18th-century) táltos that went into a trance did so through the ritual technique of hydromancy and thereby "changed into a fish;" for lack of further data, we cannot even suggest any other possible options.

Although helping spirits played an important role in Eurasian shamanism, it is no coincidence that Diószegi did not delve into this subject: there are very few and very uncertain helping spirit traditions associated with the táltos. In fact, it was not he but his folktale-researching predecessors and folklorist followers that associated the táltos horse of fairy tales with the táltos. It is regretful, however, that he did not include in his investigations the táltos/garabonciás of the Southern Plain who turned into a dragon or had a dragon helping spirit; with the dragon, he would have found a more direct "shamanistic" connection than the táltos horse.

WHAT THE BALKAN PARALLELS TELL US

Diószegi is mistaken when he thinks that the táltos was the sole possessor of trance techniques or of a "shamanistic" practice that was erroneously and exclusively identified with these in the region. It is refuted not only by the existence of other types of European – and even Conquest-era Hungarian – non-shamanic mediators, wizards and seers communicating with the spirit world in a trance and through dreams, but also by the European parallels of the táltos Diószegi failed to notice. Since Róheim (RÓHEIM 1925:23–25, 33–35, 1984 [1961]), we know that there are significant South Slavic parallels of the Hungarian táltos battle motifs. Unlike Róheim, however, who hypothesized a slight South Slavic influence, Diószegi did not take these into serious consideration and identified the narratives of the battles of Slovenian and Croatian wizards as another type, often Hungarian in origin. Based on my survey of the Balkan data at my disposal, it is my opinion that it is exactly these parallels that can be connected to some of the aforementioned battle- or táltos-types or rather táltos narratives, and this relationship changes the position of the Conquest-era táltos, calling into question some of its hypothesized ancient religious features or directing our attention to other possible

approaches to the legacy of the ancient religion. Below, I will briefly describe the data of Balkan wizards relevant to our topic.[62]

Of the *European parallels of the táltos,* the most important ones are the weather wizards with trance capabilities known in most parts of the Balkans and partly in Ukraine and Poland. Much of the known data is an implied mythical formulation of a possible wizard practice, but unlike the Hungarian "shortage", there are data of "battling" wizards with trance capabilities still practicing in the 20th century. Based on these narratives, roughly two types of wizards can be differentiated: storm wizards who battle in human form, and a group of werewolf-type wizards who turn into animals; but the reality, much like in the Hungarian situation, is much more diffuse: the storm wizard features marked all táltos types existing on the narrative level, even in the Balkans.

Storm wizards

According to storm wizard beliefs, all types of storms are distinctly "windy" and "tempestuous" in nature, and this allows the wizards to communicate with the storm demons. Through their spiritual relationship with the storm demons, storm wizards were able to control storm clouds even in their human form, from the ground, but a significant portion of narratives describe their mediator activity as a spirit battle against hostile storm demons. The data about these wizards come from Western Serbia and Southern Croatia, where they were known as *stuha, zduva, zduhač,*[63] *vetrovnjak* ('windy'), and so on. Their close parallels were known in Southern Poland and Western Ukraine, too, as *planetnyk, chmurnik* ('cloudy'), etc. Some of their features are also borne by the mythical figures of the Croatian *grabancijaš* and the Romanian *şolomonar,* and the latter terms were also sometimes used for practicing wizards. In their case, this is a tradition that is well-established in many parts of Southern and Eastern Europe and goes beyond Slavic peoples; we have data from ecclesiastical sources from the 6th-7th centuries that mention *nephodioktai* ('cloud guides'), *tempestatum ductores, tempestarii* ('storm-controllers,' 'storm senders');[64] their distant parallels were also documented in Spain and Corsica.[65]

The storm demons themselves are often the souls of sinners or those who died without having been baptized or buried and could thus not enter the afterlife, taking up residence in the clouds instead. They may also have been given a role as helping spirits that protected, called or assisted the wizards in battle. Moreover, there is a great deal of data about battles between "familiar" and "alien" storm demons, or a clash of clouds led by demons, without the involvement of wizards.[66]

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[62] For details, see Pócs 1996, 1999, Chapter 7. In my book (Pócs 2019, forthcoming, *Weather Wizards* chapter), there will be a more detailed picture of them. The first overview of these wizards, which was unknown to Hungarian researchers, came from Kazimierz Moszyński (MOSZYŃSKI 1967 [1929]:651–655). Hungarian research became aware of it thanks to Carlo Ginzburg's book on the *benandanti* of Friuli battling for fertility (GINZBURG 1966) and Gábor Klaniczay's study (KLANICZAY 1983).

[63] Their meanings are disputed.

[64] For a more detailed description of these, see Pócs 2019 (forthcoming), *Weather Wizards* chapter.

[65] See, for example, the Spanish *nubeiro* or *tempestario*: PEDROSA 2000; the Corsican *lagramant* and *mazzeri*: MULTEDO 1982.

[66] See in greater detail: Pócs 2012b.

Stuhas were often seers and healers in one person, but their main task was to provide favorable weather for their communities.[67] Although the reports are mostly about men, some data suggest that women and children may have been *stuhas*, too (MOSZYŃSKI 1967[1929]:653). The existence of a large number of data from the last century suggests an actual practice. When the storm approached, the wizards, hiding in a secluded place, fell into a deep sleep or trance, and their so-called "translucent", "light" "shadow" similar to mist or fog left their bodies and rose to the clouds; they reached the cloud-world by becoming one with the wind, with the descending fog or mist. According to other interpretations, when a thunderstorm was approaching, the *stuha* physically vanished from the sight of eyewitnesses in a descending cloud or in a fog: the storm cloud "snatched him up". The notion of disappearing in the cloud also appears in the narratives as a metaphor for the final death of the wizard.

The souls of wizards who became like them joined the storm demons in the spirit battles, usually en masse. The battle was against the wizards and/or demons of other lands, other peoples, foreign countries. According to some Serbian and Bosnian data, the battle-bound wizard called upon his helping spirits, while according to other data, he prayed to his guardian angels. The goal of the battle: to redirect the advancing ice clouds to the enemy's land, or to send ice clouds to damage the crops and vineyards of an internal enemy out of revenge. The enemy combatants battled with trunks of uprooted trees, logs of wood, or sharpened pine branches. The battle was accompanied by a gale-force wind storm, its path marked by uprooted trees and demolished houses. Meanwhile, the wizard lying unconsciously or in a deep sleep could not be awakened. The *stuhas* of Montenegro, as they participated in the aerial battle, cried out in their sleep, made fighting gestures,[68] and awoke exhausted, worn out by the battle.

The Serbian-Croatian connections of the windy, stormy táltos, their group storm battles, and the ways they were snatched up by the storm cloud are obvious—the similar motifs of many storm táltos narratives are a testament to this. Presumably, these types of the Hungarian táltos were shaped by influences from our South Slavic or even Ukrainian or Polish neighbors, perhaps from the Slavic people living here at the time of the Conquest. Besides the treasure-seeing practice that probably only dates to the early modern era, the most active features of the Hungarian táltos seem to be "storm táltos" and "windy táltos" attributes; some of the data of practicing storm táltos in the táltos trials seem to suggest this as well. Another related feature is that practicing wizards can be women and children. All this requires a lot more research, but we can confidently state that the beliefs and narratives of storm táltos with clear European parallels can hardly be projected back to the supposed ancient Hungarian shaman.

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[67] Main sources of data on storm wizards: MOSZYŃSKI 1967 [1929]:653; ÐORÐEVIĆ 1953:237–250; BOŠKOVIĆ-STULLI 1960:284–286; ZEČEVIĆ 1981:149–151; TOLSTOJ – TOLSTAJA 1981; BURKHART 1989:83–84. For a more detailed description and literature, see PÓCS 2019 (forthcoming), *Weather Wizards* chapter, with additional literature.

[68] ZEČEVIĆ 1981:152.

Duels to ensure fertility: werewolf wizards

Kresnik/krsnik, vedomec, vukodlak and similar names[69] designate primarily Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian wizards[70] (including a type of the *stuha/zduha/zduhač* wizard). Their purpose was to ensure the grain, fruit or grape crops of their communities, which they had to reclaim from the harvest-stealing dead or hostile wizard souls in "spirit battles". In addition to their storm wizard attributes, they also have specific werewolf traits, which have already been mentioned in connection with the táltos: *birthmarks of teeth, wolf tooth, wild boar tooth, caul, fur, bristle, tail, the ability to turn into animals, animal alter ego,* and *calling animal spirits.* Furthermore, there are certain motifs exclusively related to these "werewolf wizards": battling in animal form in an earthly otherworld under the protection of animal spirit guides partly identical to their own animal form, as well as a certain initiation motif, which, being familiar with it from the context of Eurasian shamanic initiation, Diószegi sought to find for the táltos as well: *dismemberment–bone removal–re-assembly/resurrection,* and the *cooking, ingesting* and *vomiting up* of the candidate. This mythical tradition, which exists in the Balkans and around the Alps regarding various mythical creatures, also appears as the initiation of the Slovenian *vedomec* wizard by his animal ancestors.[71]

The goal of battles in animal form is most often to fend off the attack of crop robbers; sometimes it is the actual acquisition of grains, grapes and fruit. The animal alter egos of the wizards are varied: *dog, bull, ox, horse, boar, goat, lion, bear, horseshoed pig,* etc. Their opponents are the "dead" forms of shapeshifters with the same name, or the enemy wizards of neighboring territories or foreign peoples who also turned into animals. Their activities are aligned with the agricultural or death cycles of the Christian calendar (winter solstice, St. George's Day/Pentecost, summer solstice, etc.) and can be linked with the archaic myths of the abduction and restoration of the grain harvest (Proserpina myth).

The community tasks of *kresniks* included healing and divination, as well as treasure seeing, treasure hunting, or unwitching. A majority of the narratives is about battles taking place in the earthly environment, but even the most recent collections attest to the actual community practice of wizards alongside the narrative tradition: during the aforementioned agricultural holidays, wizards would enter a trance or "fall asleep" in a secluded spot and their souls would leave their bodies for the otherworldly battle.[72] In addition, there is no shortage of narratives of duel-like earthly/physical battles familiar from the Hungarian táltos narratives.[73]

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[69] The meaning of the word *kresnik* is disputed—it may mean "border guard"; the other names refer to a werewolf ('man-wolf') (see in more detail: Pócs 2002).

[70] The most important publications: BOŠKOVIĆ-STULLI 1960:278–290; KRAUSS 1908:11–12; KELEMINA 1930:35–40, 89–93, 245, 273, 339–344; MIKAC 1934:195–197; ÐORÐEVIĆ 1953:237–250; ZEČEVIĆ 1981:149–151.

[71] KELEMINA 1930:12; STOJANOVIĆ-LAFAZANOVSKA 1996:79–90. These motifs are unequivocally considered initiation motifs—even if not necessarily a shamanic initiation. See, for example, Ginzburg's analysis: GINZBURG 2003:227.

[72] The healing and simultaneously weather practices of *kresniks* were also remembered by Luka Šešo's Croatian informants 10-15 years ago (ŠEŠO 2000/2003).

[73] Verbal communication by Uršula Lipoveć-Čebron from her Croatian dissertation manuscript written in 2000.

Perhaps it is clear from this brief overview that Róheim was right to see a connection between the táltos and the *kresnik* and others.[74] The Hungarian beliefs and narratives of a dueling táltos fit well into this Central Southeastern European werewolf tradition, which is presumably due to Conquest-era Slavic influences. However, there is no way of knowing whether it was a narrative tradition or an actual practice of wizards that the Hungarians adopted from their Southern Slav neighbors, or from the Slavic populations that were in Hungary at the time of the Conquest. The difference between the otherwise very similar Hungarian, Slovenian and Croatian beliefs and narratives is that the werewolf motifs are more coherent in the Slavic material, which corroborates the theory of Slavic transmission. It is conspicuous that the Hungarian táltos has no attributes of fertility magic; the goal of the duel of bulls or stallions, according to the narratives, is still the elimination of thunderstorms. The storm magic features characterized all types of táltos. Nevertheless, the dominance of bull and horse figures in the Hungarian material is striking in comparison with the various animal breeds of the South Slavic narratives. Is this a kind of "retained", specific ancient Hungarian (practicing wizard or epic) tradition? Was there such a substratum which was later absorbed into the Slavic European "werewolf" milieu? This would partially corroborate Róheim's and Diószegi's view regarding the battle, which they supported with Yakut and Buryat parallels.

Dragon people

A particular type of werewolf-like wizard is the wizard called *dragon, serpent, dragon-man, winged one,* or *dragon's son,*[75] who, like the Hungarian winged, dragon táltos, is also a storm wizard. The data for this come from eastern Serbia and western Bulgaria, as well as Macedonia. Some Romanian data suggest that such wizards might have practiced there as well (or that their stories were known to them), but their significance must have been much smaller than in the southern Slavic territories. In Albania, the dragon-man who fends off a hailstorm is an epic hero.[76]

It is a general view in Bulgaria and Serbia that this wizard's father is a *dragon* or a *winged serpent*, perhaps an *eagle, hawk, crane, rooster,* or *gander*, and that he is born with *tiny wings, tufts of fur, feathers*, or *in a snake skin*, perhaps *with a caul*. Pregnancy is often abnormally long, or perhaps the infant is nursed by an animal. Following his birth, the wizard child immediately begins to speak and begins his mediator activity; he may even come out of the cradle to go right into the storm battle (Albanian epics talk about infants fighting in their cradle and urinating on their dragon opponents). He grows

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[74] This connection has been raised by Zmago Šmitek (ŠMITEK 2003), without addressing the question of "priority".

[75] Bulgarian *zmej*; Serbian *zmaj, zmija, hala, ažder, zmajevit/halovit man*, etc.; Macedonian *zmej, zmev, zmiv*.

[76] Overview of the *zmej* wizard and its kinship circle: MOSZYŃSKI 1967 [1929]:578–580, 654–655. Bulgarian data: MARINOV 1914:207–209; VAKARELSKI 1969:233–234; DUKOVA 1970:235–238; GEORGIEVA 1983:79–85; BENOVSKA-SĂBKOVA 1992; Serbian data: ÐORÐEVIC 1953:248; SCHNEEWEISS 1961:13; ZEČEVIĆ 1969; 1981:63–85, 149–151; TOLSTOJ – TOLSTAJA 1981; Macedonian data: VRAŽINOVSKI 1995:37–46, 46–50; Romanian data: PAMFILE 1916:314; SCHOTT – SCHOTT 1971:309; MUȘLEA – BÎRLEA 1970:182–189; KARLINGER – TURCZYNSKI 1982:63–65.

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up fast, has enormous strength and superhuman speed, may even fly, and defeats the strongest athletes in wrestling.

The cloud-world of dragon-men and eagle-men is populated mostly by the guardian spirits of dragons, eagles, and other birds bearing the same name as the wizard, who, as "good" storm demons, ensure favorable weather, protect their people from hailstorms, and are also the personal helping spirits of the wizards. Some Serbian and Bulgarian versions sit in oak trees and consider the oak tree their property, or another version is the eagle or dragon-serpent that lives on top of the mountain. In Bulgarian beliefs, the eagle, dragon and crane also appear as clan ancestors.

In some Bulgarian and Serbian villages, dragon-men were practicing wizards up until the early 20th century: some narratives claimed that they protected their communities in the shape of a dragon or bird from the dragon-shaped storm demons that brought hailstorms. When an ice cloud approached, they retreated to a secluded spot and spontaneously fell into a trance, their acquaintances sometimes guarding their lifeless body. According to some Serbian data, their souls left their body in the shape of a serpent, while other sources claim that a dragon, eagle, or other bird snatched them up, or perhaps even the storm cloud itself as a calling spirit, or that they "vanished" for a while in the cloud the way storm wizards did. The spirit battles were fought between the dragon guardian spirits of two neighboring areas, or with the "water" dragons that came out of ponds, marshes or caves and brought hail. Good dragons were often led by St. Elijah, or sometimes by St. George. In the battles between familiar and alien dragons, the dragons were defending their village, their "sons", from the neighboring, hostile dragon: they chased away the ice clouds brought there by the alien dragon. They shot at each other with lightning arrows or used uprooted tree trunks as weapons. Their aerial battles were accompanied by wind storms, lightning, thunder, and hail.

The wizard's soul joined the aerial battle of the guardian spirits in the shape of a serpent, lizard, dragon, winged serpent, eagle, gander, or rooster. It was usually a group battle involving several wizards; the souls of the hostile wizards of alien communities could also join the ranks of the enemy.[77] According to some of the data on Bulgarian spirit battles, the young versions of avian guardian spirits (including the serpent-turned-dragon variant) played the role of individual helping spirits to the battling wizard spirits as specific *animal* or *avian zmei*. These *eaglets, baby serpents, chicks* and other baby animals, similarly to human-like *zmei*, were born with excess animal body parts, such as double wings. All these motifs partly appear in the traditions of the Croatian/Hungarian *grabancijaš/garabonciás* and the Romanian *şolomonar* weather wizards with certain epic transpositions, but this issue cannot be detailed here.[78]

The Turkic origins of the Bulgarian dragon wizard, especially in light of the epic traditions to be discussed below, are unquestionable, although we can only talk about a certain independent, clearly defined wizard type and its Bulgaro-Turkic origins with a certain degree of hesitancy. Many layers of traditions have been blended in the Balkans in many ways, and, as I have said, certain general South and Southeast European storm wizard features are present in the beliefs and narratives of all types of weather wizards. However, like certain storm wizard attributes, werewolf traits also appear in the beliefs

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[77] This is a general feature of the battles of wizards with werewolf characteristics.

[78] PÓCS 2019: *Weather Wizards as Mythical Heroes: Grabancijaš, Garabonciás, Şolomonar* chapter.

of all sorts of wizards in the Balkans (as they do in táltos beliefs). Reciprocal influences and the exchange of cultural goods were a continuous practice here, even after the Bulgarians' appearance in the 7th century. Yet, it can be said that among the werewolf-like weather wizards extant from Albania to Romania, the dragon wizards definitely seem to cluster in Bulgaria. If we assume, perhaps justifiably, the existence of a past Bulgaro-Turkic weather wizard as the "ancestor", it would have fit into the Slavic traditions of the Balkans in parallel with linguistic integration, even if its features differed somewhat from the practices of the Slavs of the area at the time.

A meticulous analysis of the Turkic parallels and determining whether this weather magic practice can be considered a remnant of an erstwhile shamanism is yet to be done.[79] (Bulgarian researchers consider this tradition shamanism, or rather as a relic of Thracian and Slavic shamanism, if they consider it at all, as possession cults like *rusalia* and *nestinarstvo* command much more scientific interest.[80])

As for the táltos, the sporadic data of *winged, dragon-like táltos* found in the 18th-century witch trials from Bihar and Békés counties fit into the tradition of the much more coherent Bulgarian-Serbian dragon-man traditions. Presumably, the beliefs of being fathered by a dragon or another animal, birthmarks of feather or wing, extraordinary abilities in infancy, the sporadic appearance of the crane, rooster or fish as spirit animals or animal alter egos besides the eagle and the dragon, the battles between dragon guardian spirits or storm clouds (and perhaps the Conquest-era owl-headed staff,[81] as well as the belief of the owl as a "táltos bird") belong in this same group, although the latter are not part of the winged táltos motif. The beliefs surrounding the táltos are, however, much less rich; they do not form a coherent system, and they can be correlated with each other only in light of the Bulgarian parallels. Besides the 20th-century narrative tradition, we are only aware of a few practicing táltos in this group (from the 18th-century táltos trials: the above-mentioned girl from Miskolc who turned into a fish while in a trance,[82] and a couple of táltos women from Debrecen and Jászberény who mentioned a dragon helping spirit[83]).

A wide range of *lidérc* (nightmare) beliefs also contribute to the Hungarian táltos' possible Bulgarian connections. Their similarity with the Bulgarian complex suggests that some of the features of the *lidérc* may have retained traces of the helping spirits of wizards battling for the weather, but this is a subject for a separate study and cannot be detailed here.

The common motifs of Bulgarian and Hungarian dragon-like weather wizards point to their commonly shared Bulgaro-Turkic past. It is conceivable that this kind of weather magic practice, or just the beliefs of wizards, was adopted by the Hungarians (or only a part of the Hungarians) from the Bulgarians, or during the close Hungarian–Bulgaro-Turkic contacts from the 5th century onwards, or, more likely, at the time of the Conquest from the Bulgarian population stranded in the southern Maros Valley.[84] (The newer, Bulgarian-Slavic relationship was probably built upon Bulgaro-Turkic influences arriving in several stages.) Of course, other Slavic influences can be assumed in this case as well. It is unclear whether the assumed Bulgarian influence extended to all Hungarians, or just to the said, geographically confined space, and we also do not know what its role was in Hungarian public life. The Hungarian táltos may have been similar to Bulgaro-Turkic weather wizards, or he may just have been one type of táltos.

In order to clarify the Bulgarian-Hungarian relations, it is worth examining the part of the epic tradition of the Balkans where the roots of wizard-related beliefs lead. These include the epic songs that describe the wizards' activities, as well as the mythical songs of battles against dragons who capture girls, and the heroic epics about battles against the Ottomans, all of which were full of archaic motifs and symbols of dragon-men and dragon battles.[85] This epic (also partly known among the Serbs) existed in Bulgaria for a long time alongside and closely related to the weather magic practice, corroborating the common roots of the mythical and belief contexts of wizards and epic heroes.

Each of these types of epic songs has a dragon-like hero that wins the battle against a hostile, inferior dragon that is often a "water" dragon. In terms of their origins and birthmarks, these heroes are just like dragon wizards: they are fathered by a dragon, eagle or falcon, such as the Bulgarian *Zmejče Mihailče,* the Serbian *Janko Sibinjanin* (János Hunyadi) and *Zmaj Despot Vuk*, also known as *Zmaj Oganj/Ogneni Vuk* ('dragon and fiery wolf'), the Serbian-Bulgarian *Miloš Obilić, Marko Krali/Kraljević, Banović Sekula* (János Székely) and others.[86] There are also heroes among them who were born as twins, nursed by a mare, or raised by fairies, and their birthmarks are some of the same animal traits as those of wizards: born with *eagle wings, wolf paws,* or *wolf fur on their arms, fire coming out of their teeth,* or with a *saber-shaped mark on their groin* signaling the birth of a military hero, or with an "extra body part", such as having more than one heart. Animal traits and the capability of transforming into animals are characteristic of each; for example, *despot Vuk* could change into a falcon, eagle or wolf

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[79] For lack of space, we cannot address the abundant Altaic parallels of all motifs (for example, world tree with eagle, battles in the shape of animals, animal spirit guides, animal ancestors, etc.). Just one Bulgaro-Turkic data: according to a 10th-century report by Ibn Fadlán on the Bashkirs, some worship a serpent, another group a fish, and a third a crane; in the battle, the serpent or crane protected them; according to another account of Ibn Fadlán, travelers saw cloud battles in the sky at dusk, etc. (TOGAN 1939:36–37, 51–54).

[80] See, for example, the only overview of Bulgarian shamanism, where (along with epics and archaeological relics, as well as *rusalia* and other non-relevant rituals) this wizarding practice is only secondary: KALOJANOV 1995.

[81] See FODOR 2005:15–16.

[82] There are two current-day data from Eastern Hungary of a baby transforming into a fish.

[83] See in greater detail: PÓCS 2016.

[84] See GYÖRFFY 1977:131.

[85] The most complete overview of Balkan heroic epics linguistically accessible to me was Dagmar Burkhart's book (BURKHART 1968), in which the author devotes a large chapter to two important groups relevant to us: the *Heldenkindlieder* and the *aus dem Zmej entwickelten Drachentöter* groups, and also addresses the relationship between wizard traditions and heroic epics.

[86] Hungarian heroes have also made their way into the circle of Bulgarian-Serbian heroic epics of dragon wizards. Several scholars have dealt with these Hungarian-Serbian-Bulgarian relations and the possible ways of transmission; see, for example, JUNG 1990; CSÍKHELYI 1984 (he addresses the motifs of Bulgarian epics related to the Toldi and Kinizsi legend traditions, as well as the mediating role of the Bulgarian population of the Szerémség/Srem in one-time Southern Hungary; cf. with our hypotheses on dragon wizards).

during battle. A typical motif of the epic songs about battles against the Ottomans is the fight in the shape of a fiery eagle/dragon/falcon with the enemy appearing in the shape of a water dragon or serpent of the underworld, but the *bird–serpent, eagle/falcon/ dragon–serpent,* or any *superior animal (i.e., familiar fighter)–inferior animal (i.e., alien fighter)* appears in both types of epics. Before the battle, epic heroes also go into a deep sleep (the so-called magical sleep motif). Helping spirits give them strength for the battle: in Bulgarian epics, it is mostly a dragon (as in the practice of wizards) or a winged horse; in Serbian epics, a fairy, or a 'fairy horse' (*vilovit*) sent by the fairies (the former transforms from a lizard, serpent, chicken or fish into a winged, flying creature, the latter from an old nag into a five- or six-legged magical horse). The magical horses of the epics appear sometimes as the heroes in animal shape, or as the heroes' helpers in the fight against the Ottomans, and other times as the four-winged or eight-winged mythical stallions carrying the heroes, flying across the universe, "counting" the stars (BURKHART 1967; 1968:451–455; ZEČEVIĆ 1969:364–365; LORD 1971; ČAJKANOVIĆ 1973; LORD 1986; BENOVSKA-SĂBKOVA 1992:190–196; KALOJANOV 1995, Chapters 2 and 6; PETROVIĆ 1999:597–663).

In epics about the spirit battles of wizards, the heroes – with the support of St. Elijah – fight the enemy dragon by transforming themselves into an eagle or fiery dragon. In the Bulgarian parallels of the *Fehérlófia/Son of the White Mare* tale, and in an epic with a similar sujet, the world tree (with an eagle or dragon perching on its top) also appears: the serpent attacking the eaglets in the nest on the top of the tree is killed by *Miloš Obilić* or another hero. As Katalin Benedek, among others, points out: there are Western European parallels for the motifs of both animal fathers and women rescued from a dragon or the underworld (BENEDEK 2007); the decisive factor here is the combination of motifs that links the adventures taking place at the top of the world tree and at its roots, which does not occur in Hungarian tales.[87] Let us add: the pictorial representation of the eagle–serpent battle is widespread among Bulgarians. It can almost be considered an iconographic cliché: in some representations, the eagle is at the top of the (world) tree, the serpent at the root of the (world) tree.[88]

Albert Lord calls attention to the series of motifs of Bulgarian epic songs with a sujet similar to that of *Fehérlófia*, about *Marko Krali* and *Huntsman Ilija:* the hero receives extraordinary strength from his fairy mother and later, out of gratitude for saving the fairy's children, a magical horse; a winged horse or a falcon are his helpers during his trip to the underworld, he falls into a deep sleep before the dragon battle, kills the three-headed dragon that swallowed the deer stag, which then comes out of the dragon's stomach alive; in other versions, the dragon swallows the hero, and then he coughs up the deer stag or hero he swallowed alive. Lord considers these motifs (*world tree with eagle, acquisition of animal helpers, ingestion and regurgitation of the hero, i.e., his initiation in the world tree, dragon battles*) shamanistic and speaks explicitly of Proto-Bulgarian traditions (LORD 1986). The closest parallels of this series of motifs are found

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[87] As pointed out by Vilmos Voigt in his article "Life and the Tree of Life", published in the trial issue of *Világfa* (n.d.)

[88] See the relevant images of GEORGIEVA (1983) or KALOJANOV (1995).

in the same place where Hungarian researchers also found the parallels of the *Fehérlófia* tale:[89] in the Altaic epic, more specifically in the Kyrgyz *Er Töštük* epic.[90]

Even if the motif of the dragon battle naturally differs in the case of the practicing wizard and the epic hero, the commonalities of epics and the wizard practices of dragon-men are obvious: the "shamanistic" role of animal ancestors, animal attributes, animal helpers, and the world tree. In the context of the Bulgarian winged wizard, these are all connected: in Bulgarian epics, the flying horse that carries the hero fathered by a dragon or eagle across mountains and valleys, even up to the top of the world tree and into the stars, appears as a variant of the dragon or eagle spirit animal. Hence, in ancient Bulgarian culture, there was a correlation between "shamanistic" practices and "shamanistic" epics. These correlations do not indicate a unidirectional influence: the epic elements of the dragon battle are also likely to have had a bearing on the mythology surrounding the figure of the weather wizard. This trend can be observed particularly in the motifs of miraculous births and birthmarks, and it also includes the transposition of the weather magic practice onto the Turkish enemy, or onto any kind of earthly or military action (as we have seen, the Hungarian táltos were no strangers to this either when they were fighting for the "empire" against the German táltos).

As we know, many of these Bulgarian "shamanistic" motifs are also present in Hungarian folktales (*Son of the White Mare, Dragon Family, The Tree that Reached up to the Sky*), and since Solymossy, they have been presumed to have "Turkic" origins. But the Hungarian folktale motifs are independent of the supposed practice of the táltos, and even of the beliefs associated with it; it is an independent epic tradition which the Hungarians may have learned about along with the practices of dragon wizards or independently of them. The fact that a large part of the "shamanistic" motifs of Bulgarian epics are known here only as fragmented narrative elements embedded not in the narratives of dragon wizards but rather elsewhere suggest an epic tradition that is different from the táltos-mediator and one that came to us in another way. Such elements include: a *relationship with the world tree,* the *initiation in the shamanic tree,* or *underworld journeys* (elements of the "shamanistic cosmogony" outlined by Diószegi), the wizard's *animal ancestor,* or the "*initiation*" motif of *dismemberment/ingestion* and *resurrection,* as well as the motifs of the *táltos horse.* In addition to the Bulgarian and Serbian textual parallels, the textual motifs of táltos horses flying from mountain to mountain from the eastern part of the Hungarian language area (especially those related to Saint László) reinforce the hypothesis of a separate textual tradition. Yet, in addition to this Turkic tradition, there was probably a stratum where the practicing táltos and the táltos horse as a helping spirit were more closely related, such as in the two aforementioned 18th-century táltos trials where the horse appears specifically as the helping spirit of the mediator-táltos.

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[89] See: DÖMÖTÖR 1988:65–69 (AaTh 301B; 250/MNK 476Aˣ János Szekfűhajú); SOLYMOSSY 1931:123, 1937:372–374.

[90] On Turkic and Mongolian parallels: BENEDEK 2007; its close links with the Kyrgyz and Kazakh epics of the hero Töštük: SOMFAI KARA 2007. The motifs of the Er Töštük epic quoted by Lord: *the hero goes into the underworld in search of a giant black eagle that has abducted a newborn foal. He chases the eagle all the way to the bottom of the giant world tree, on top of which sit the giant eagle's eaglets; these are threatened by the dragon-serpent at the foot of the tree. Töštük cuts the dragon into pieces, ties the pieces to himself, climbs the tree and feeds the eaglets with the dragon pieces* (LORD 1986).

The dilemma of whether this was an actual wizard practice or an epic expression, as well as the question of the origin of this duality, has been raised on several occasions in Hungarian scholarship (I mentioned above Lajos Vargyas' and Vilmos Voigt's concerns regarding the motifs of the *táltos duel, táltos horse, dragon battle,* and the *Tree that Reached up to the Sky*) (VARGYAS 1985:41–42, 1988:407–413; VOIGT 1998:153–154). Aladár Bán, János Kodolányi, and Mihály Hoppál considered the struggle motifs of the Toldi legend as evidence of Toldi being a táltos, but they did not pose the question whether it was a *practicing táltos* or *an epic motif* (BÁN 1917; KODOLÁNYI 1945; HOPPÁL 1981). In this regard, I agree with Vargyas and Voigt, based on the countless data of táltos who fought earthly, duel-like battles and not otherworldly spirit battles: it may very well be that the táltos battle was, at least partly, merely a textual folklore tradition or a heroic epic motif in Conquest-era or earlier Hungarian culture.[91] Many things suggest correlations with heroic epics, not in the least the above-mentioned male–female distribution among the táltos of the epics and the wizard-táltos. I cannot, however, support the idea of Pál István Demény that extrapolates from the motifs of táltos duel, táltos horse, etc. a Hungarian Conquest-era heroic epic in which heroes mounted on a táltos horse wrestle with demons in an archaic world, in the center of which stands a world tree through which the upper world, and at its roots, through an opening, the lower world can be reached (DEMÉNY 1997:162–163). According to our present knowledge, this is not an erstwhile Hungarian heroic epic but a Bulgarian epic that is in existence to this day! There is no telling whether there was a similar Hungarian heroic epic, just as the past activity of the winged dragon wizard cannot be deduced from the sparse data. What can be established is that epic motifs, just like wizard practices, have first and foremost parallels in the Balkans, Balkan parallels that strongly support the possibility of direct Bulgaro-Turkic or even Bulgarian-Slavic influences, even in the case of epic genres and motifs.

Another question, which would be difficult to answer, is whether it was the Bulgarian "shamanistic" practice, or the Bulgarian heroic epic, or the Bulgarian folktales, or all of them simultaneously that the Hungarians adopted in the era of Bulgaro-Turkic interactions. The epic tradition, as well as the tradition of dragon wizards, could have reached Hungarian culture in several stages, through various fusions with Slavic weather magic practices. It is certain that these multiple layers of tradition were important determinants of medieval (and partly perhaps even Conquest-era) Hungarian religious life.

I must refer here briefly to the origin myths of the Árpád clan: the motif of conception by an eagle *(turul)*, which is generally interpreted as a remnant of totemism.[92] This motif has undeniably something to do with the tradition of Bulgarian heroes and wizards, as well as eagles, cranes, falcons, etc. as guardian spirits and/or ancestors of clans. We know that Béla Gunda attempted to reconstruct an ancient Hungarian totemism based on scattered data of Hungarian táltos fathered by animals (GUNDA 1963). Despite Gábor Vargyas' justified refutation (VARGYAS 1997), in a roundabout way and supported by the Bulgarian parallels, we may still arrive at totemism, even if not a Hungarian totemism

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[91] Data of the shamanism of various Turkic peoples suggest that the ritual activities of the shaman and the associated battles while in a trance and their epic representation as an earthly battle can coexist within the same community. Epic representation does not mean it is secondary! (See, for example, KSENOFONTOV 2003:269–281; KENIN-LOPSAN 2003.)

[92] Cf. for example FODOR 2012.

at the time of the Conquest, but at an erstwhile totemism of the Bulgaro-Turkic peoples, the reinterpreted fragments of which, intertwined with the remnants of shamanism, were preserved among both peoples, even in the Christian milieu.[93]

WAS THERE A HUNGARIAN SHAMAN AT THE TIME OF THE CONQUEST?

In summary, it can be said that if the above-mentioned weather wizards are considered shamans, the existence of a hypothesized Conquest-era Hungarian shamanism seems more likely in light of the Bulgarian data than through the examination of the Hungarian traces on their own, or even on the basis of the distant Altaic or Finno-Ugric similarities. The beliefs and narratives of the modern era show a number of correlations with the Balkan data; the táltos is much closer to the wizards of the Balkans than to the far-flung parallels assigned to it in the Róheim/Diószegi construct. The influences on Hungarian culture coming from here are certain, and at least in part can be dated after the Conquest. Hence, there may have been a mediator who practiced weather magic around the time of the Conquest and whose figure and activity might have somewhat resembled the Hungarian táltos and the Bulgarian weather wizard. We can also count on a Slavic storm wizard practice and the great influence of Balkanic werewolf beliefs, possibly "werewolf wizard" practices and/or narratives. Obviously, whatever the Conquest-era or medieval Hungarian táltos was, it had Turkic traditions that had been incorporated into this Slavic/European milieu, as a result of which we can still encounter traces of diverse, multi-rooted táltos activities (or at least multi-rooted epic traditions).

The question is whether the inferred weather wizard can be classified as a shaman, and his supposed activities as shamanism; would this have been "the" Hungarian *shaman?* There is no trace of a non-weather wizard in Hungarian culture, and hard evidence only points to the mediator activities of a weather wizard (beside the treasure-seeking táltos that we have data for from the 18th century onwards). The regulation of precipitation could have been one of the shaman's tasks, but it also could have existed in addition to the shamanic role, as an independent function.[94] In fact, it is up to the researcher to decide whether such a wizard – one who communicates with the supernatural in a trance and makes spirit journeys, if not into the heaven and the underworld, at least to an earthly cloud-world, fights hostile demons, and perhaps even has helping spirits – can be considered a shaman. If the answer is yes, we forsake several of the criteria that are defining features of European shamanism, including the characteristically public ritual performance and various other symbolic requisites of the "classic" shaman. However, if the Conquest-era Hungarian shaman was like the modern-day South Slavic wizard who retreated into solitude and was in contact with the storm demons of the cloud-world,

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[93] Among the Bulgarians, perhaps even traces of a totemistically based social organization may be found.

[94] In terms of Altaic and North Siberian shamanism, see the various magical/religious specialists, various diviners and possessed, including the weather wizard, and the "cumulation" of shamanic tasks, which also included weather magic. There were Turkic and Mongolian shamans who performed weather tasks, just not in a trance, but rather through analogical magic with rain stones; there is no evidence that they had the capability of falling into a trance: JOHANSEN 2006:149–151; VERBICKIJ 2003; BOYLE 1972.

then his activities strongly diverged from the public ritual of drum-induced ecstasy hypothesized by researchers. If this was the kind of shaman we had, we should not think of him as playing a central role in Conquest-era society, or even fulfilling a priestly function, and least of all as "shamanistic aristocracy".[95]

Thus, the nostalgic search for the attributes of the Eurasian "classic" shaman constructed by Róheim and Diószegi must be abandoned, it seems. Rather, we should further investigate what other kinds of non-shamanistic magical/religious specialists might have existed in the Conquest era in addition to the weather wizard – diviners, seers, clairvoyants, regös – who might have employed trance techniques without being shamans. Behind the terminology referencing trance techniques lies primarily regös/regölés: in my already mentioned study on regölés, I demonstrated that it is not impossible – although it cannot be proven with hard data – that at the time of the Conquest, perhaps due to Byzantine Christian influences, the "predecessors" of the regös were some kind of possession-cult practitioners, independent of the hypothesized ancient Hungarian shamanism. The regös cannot be considered a shaman in the "classic", Eurasian sense of the word, but as a different type of mediator, a "possessed" healer, he may have been a significant factor in Conquest-era Hungarian religious life.[96]

If, however, we still wish to seek the representatives of "classic" shamanism – á la Róheim and Diószegi – at the time of the Conquest, we should recognize the fact that, besides the absence of any trace of the shamanic ritual they have reconstructed, regölés, which preserved the terminology of ritual trance and many early medieval textual and ritual elements, survived well into the early 20th century. In view of this, some remnants of the public rites of drum-induced ecstasy – if they existed in the Conquest-era – should have been preserved as well.

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[95] On the supposed social role of the Conquest-era shaman and calling into question his central role: VARGYAS 1978; DIENES 1981; LÁSZLÓ 1990; FODOR 2003, 2005.

[96] See all of this in detail: PÓCS 2004.

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Delphi – Shamanism under Control?

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Abstract: The assessment of the talent of the Delphic Pythia was ambiguous among Greeks. On the one hand, they emphasized the role of Apollo in the process, saying that becoming a Pythia requires no special ability or education. On the other hand, they admitted that the Pythia influences the poetic quality of the oracle. Despite the modern popular view, the Delphic oracles did not require a secondary phrasing by male priests. Pythias presented the oracles in their final form, but in verse or in prose, depending on the poetic talent of the seer. In my paper, I present arguments that the Greeks deliberately underestimated the Pythia's own efforts in order to hinder the formation of a spiritual (shamanistic) power which could have been able to overcome secular political power. The enigmatic character of the oracles served the same goal: to maintain the political independence of the Greek states. However, there are traces showing that divination originally had a close connection to poetic inspiration and that both had a slight shamanistic character. I highlight two motives: the existence of poetic as well as divinatory initiation and the role of honey, a food allegedly inducing trance.

Keywords: Greek religion, Delphic oracle, Pythia, shamanism, honey, poetic trance, Apollo, Hermes

The question about the most respectable oracle of ancient Greece, whether it had anything to do with shamanism or not, may be as old as the use of the word 'shaman' among scholars. The response, however, even now, is as far from us as it was hundred years ago. The first challenge we must face is the problem stemming from the limitations of our sources. A relatively great amount of text is available, but the questions posed by ancient authors are simply not the same as the ones we would ask. We must rely on the reports of the Greeks, more precisely the reports of many generations of a particular group in Greek society, namely male, upper-middle class intellectuals – the men who wrote; a fact that cannot be disregarded in the case of a cult where the most essential sacerdotal function was fulfilled exclusively by women. Another factor that can distort our sources is the context. It is self-evident that the Greeks could not understand Delphi independently from other aspects of their theology, their presuppositions about what can

and what cannot be done by the gods. Delphi, as one of the most important cult centres of Greece, had the facility to affect Greek thinking as a whole, but in the meantime it could not remain unaffected by the general trends in the development of Greek religion.

If we want to respond to the question about shamanism, we can choose between three starting points, 1.) the character of Apollo as the god of this oracle, 2.) whether this particular method of divination, namely possession by a god, can be categorized as a form of shamanism, and 3.) whether the Pythia of Delphi can be called a shaman or not. This latter point, though it is crucial to the assessment of Delphi, is almost impossible to answer. We can read a famous passage on the person of the Pythia by Plutarch:

> "She who serves the god here at Delphi was born of a lawful and honourable marriage (...) and her life has been well ordered in all respects. But, because she grew up in the home of poor farmers, she carries with her nothing in the way of skill or expertise or ability when she goes down into the oracular shrine. On the contrary, just as Xenophon says that the bride should have seen and heard as little as possible before she goes to her husband's household, so also the Pythia goes to the god being inexperienced, unlearned about almost everything and truly virginal with respect to her soul."[1]

This is the most frequently cited text about the requirements of being a Pythia; she needed no *techne*: art, no *empeiria*: expertness and no *dynamis*: power. But is this really true? For Plutarch, the Pythia was unlearned, which means she had no skill or natural talent he was able to appreciate or recognize – this is a point where we can question Plutarch's statements. He wrote down his opinions and experiences, which were profound and comprehensive as regards Delphi, but this fact does not exclude that the women of ancient Delphi had their own special Apollonic rites or divinatory practice, invisible to men. I do not suppose that such a female tradition existed at all, but we cannot exclude it.[2]

The second objection we can raise derives from the context of the passage. Pythias were not simply frenzied women shouting gibberish under the influence of the ethylene evaporating from cracks in the floor.[3] They spoke in a controlled manner, but some of them spoke in verse while others in prose.[4] The cited text refers to this situation: even when she was possessed by Apollo, a Pythia was not a medium in a spiritist séance. Her abilities influenced the manner of the divination – Plutarch compares it to birds, which can transmit divinatory signs, but do not speak in human tongue against their nature. In some sense, Apollo is *in* the Pythia, speaking from her mouth, but the god cannot force the body to do things it is unable to do. Moreover, considering that a Greek author

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[1] Plutarch, *De Pythiae oraculis* 405 c-d, English translation from JOHNSTON 2008:39.
[2] Jenny Stuart Clay investigated a similar problem, namely the reason why the figure of the Pythia was missing in the Homeric hymn to Apollo, while it seems to be demonstrable that in the time when the hymn was written it had been already the Pythia who gave the oracles (CLAY 2009:11) Clay explains her absence with ideological motivations. The person of the Pythia did not match to the program of the poem "which is male, patriarchal, and Olympian in opposition to the female, the Titanic, and the chthonic." (cf. CLAY 1989:76–79)
[3] Modern evidence for the existence of a chasm under the sanctuary and the probability of ethylene evaporation: PICCARDI 2000:651–653; BOER – HALE – CHANTON 2001:707–710. On the ancient testimonies see GRAF 2009:599–600.
[4] On the behavior of the Pythia: JOHNSTON 2008:44–50; GRAF 2009:588–600., cf. note 6.

would have deemed poetic talent more than the result of a purely physical process, we can conclude that neither the personality of the Pythia, nor her psychological character, briefly her soul, did dissolve completely during the trance, but influenced the quality of the oracle. Plutarch explained the trance of the Pythia as divine possession, and the lack of training or special abilities on her part was proof of this. However, he could not claim that Apollo's poetic talent was decreasing, so he had to admit that the seer's aptness affects the oracle.

The same twofold approach can be observed by other authors of the Antiquity too: they emphasized the active role of the god during the process of divination; consequently, they had to suppose that the special abilities and the training of the seer are irrelevant – because she is a passive antenna, an aerial.[5] However, we must not forget that the quality of the picture on our TV is not independent from the quality of the aerial and the TV. The dominant tradition emphasizes this, as Plutarch formulates: "Neither the sound nor the inflection nor the vocabulary, nor the metrics are the god's, but the woman's; he grants only the inspiration (*phantasia*) and kindles a light in her soul towards the future; such is her *enthusiasmos*." An opposite view also existed. Plutarch rejects opinions that overemphasized the god's role, but this refutation is strong evidence for the existence of such opinions (GRAF 2009:593–594), as Graf cites the same author: "it is utterly simplistic and childish to believe that the god himself would slip into the bodies of the prophets (as in the case of the belly-talkers who were formerly called Eyrykleis and are now called Pythones) and that he would speak using their mouths and vocal chords as his instruments." If these attitudes were not wide-spread, why were the belly-talkers called *Pythones*, a word so closely associated with Delphi and its god?[6]

Despite of all the differences between Plutarch's complex approach and the simplistic views interpreting the Pythia's trance as simple possession, both opinions lead to the conviction that to be a Pythia does not require special abilities, and this attitude limits what they can tell us about Delphi. They did not write a word on their training, since the inspiration came from the god. We do not know the names of famous and especially successful Pythias because it was always Apollo who spoke through their mouths. Maybe their real training lasted for years, maybe only two days, but no ancient author would spoil the official narrative by declaring that a prophetess had to exercise prophesying. In spite of the popular view, the oracles did not arrive from the mouth of the Pythia in a half-finished form, needing to be worded by male priests;[7] it is hard to believe that a Pythia was able to do this without a longer period of learning and exercising.

It is worth comparing the blurred silhouette of the Pythia with an obviously shamanistic figure, the famous Aristeas of Proconnesus. According to ancient accounts, he was able to leave his body, reappeared after seven years and then revealed that he had travelled in the shape of a raven with Apollo. He was a real historical personality, but his stories have an anecdotic character and their origin can be connected to the region of the Black Sea, so they can be borrowings from shamanistic peoples, shamanistic in the real

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[5] Plutarch, *De Pythiae oraculis* 7. 397c–d.
[6] Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum* 9. 414d–e.
[7] CLAY 2009:8. and MAURIZIO 1995:69. The priests did not "reformulate her utterances and convert them into comprehensible prose or verse... Not one ancient source suggests that anyone other than the Pythia issued oracular responses."

and strict sense of the word.[8] The god of Aristeas is Apollo, which can be a sign of the god's shamanistic nature, but Aristeas' person was not involved in any rite of the Greeks. The same can be said about Abaris the Hyperborean, an even more mythical character who had travelled the world with or on an arrow without eating any food.[9]

While Aristeas travelled in soul with Apollo in the tale, the Pythia was possessed by her god. Nevertheless, I am not convinced that the differences between the shamanism of the neighbouring peoples and the Greek image of the oracles are based on the differences between the actual rites. They can be the result of other factors, some of them independent from religion, for example the sociological and even the political background, which affected the Greek expectations towards their shamans. Not being an expert, I would not dare to create a general definition of shaman and cannot choose between the many broader or stricter definitions used in modern scholarship, but I think it is true of most of them that they are religious specialists who have a high reputation within their community; they have special knowledge, unachievable for ordinary persons, they were born with special abilities or signs, they received some form of initiation, they have a training in order to gain the ability to communicate with the supernatural, etc. They are able to help and protect the community they belong to – at the same time the community becomes defenseless against its own shaman. Maybe the latter point does not matter much in an authentic shamanist culture, but it did matter to the Greeks.

In archaic and classical Greek civilization, religious specialists were not specialists at all – this is true not only for the Pythias but for any sacerdotal function. There is no "caste" of priests, either on a hereditary or an educational basis. To be a priest was not a profession. They had no exclusive role in performing sacrifices. Frequently, they were chosen only for one year. No person or committee had a monopoly on interpreting signs. All the famous seers (e.g. Tiresias) are purely mythological characters. What Plutarch said about the education of the Pythia was true for virtually every Greek priest.[10] If we do not want to disregard any piece of the puzzle, we must admit that there were real religious specialists in Greek society e.g. wandering necromancers (*goetes*) or *telestai*, who performed initiatory and cathartic rites for private individuals, but they existed on the periphery of society, their activity was not acknowledged by the state, and intellectuals (like Plato) usually disdained them (OGDEN 2004:105–107). This attitude guaranteed that political power did not depend on spiritual power, which was a fundamental interest of both the aristocracy and the *"demos"*, the people, and can explain some characteristics of Delphi. If Greeks had not tolerated real shamans, a shaman with his or her own reputation, the trance of the Pythia must have been explained by divine possession, diminishing the Pythia's own efforts in the process. It is typical that the word *tripous,* the three-legged seat of the prophetess could be used as a metonymy for the Pythia herself, the object

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[8] Aristeas of Proconnesus: Herodot, *Histories* IV. 13–16. On the shamanic traces in his and other similar figure's legends: OGDEN 2004:116–127; GRAF 2008:37–40.

[9] Abaris the Hyperborean: Herodot, *Histories* IV.36., Plato, *Charmides* 158c.

[10] On Greek priesthood: BURKERT 1985:95–98; MIKALSON 2010:101–102; PIRENNE-DELFORGE 2010:121–14: "So the stranger in Plato's *Politicus* (290c8-d3) captures the essence of the Greek priesthood and its position in the hierarchy of the state as it is expressed in the philosophical tradition of this period. Priests sacrifice, pray, and do both not as 'rulers' but as 'servants'. They possess the 'priestly craft' but not the 'ruling craft'. For Aristotle, this priestly service is an 'overseer role', clearly distinct from a ruling service."

instead of the person.[11] From the first centuries of the documented history of the oracle, we have hardly any report on the person of the prophetess.[12] On the famous cup of the Codrus painter, which is perhaps the first representations of the Delphic Pythia, it is actually not a human prophetess but the goddess Themis who sit on the sacred *tripous* answering to the question of the mythical king Aegeus.[13]

However, to overshadow the Pythia's figure would not have been alone a sufficient method to hinder the emergence of a theocratic power. It withheld personal charisma from the prophetess, but at the same time gave a practically unquestionable authority to her words, and therefore other strategies were needed to achieve the goal, which is perhaps a common goal of all political powers in history: to rely on a divine approval, but without political intervention by the earthly representatives of the transcendence. Delphi was only one among the dozens of oracles in Greece; any of these cult places had a chance to reach the rank of a Panhellenic sanctuary, but it was Delphi that proved to be capable of fulfilling the role expected by the Greek city states, and the cause of this success can be the perfect combination of credible spirituality and authority as well as the relative tactfulness with which the oracle intervened in the internal affairs of the cities. For a historian, associating the term 'non-invention policy' could sound doubtful in this context, considering that the Greek cities fought three so-called Sacred Wars to obtain custody over Delphi. It was so vital for the major states to control this unavoidable source of divine prophecies, to control and influence them; this influence, however, was indirect, for the oracles always arrived in an enigmatic form, and the receiver could interpret the riddle according his own needs. For our sceptical age, the first explanation for the Delphic riddles is the suspicion that the oracle wanted to avoid the possibility of an obviously false prophecy, but another motivation could also have played a role. Greek politicians did not needed precise and detailed guidelines for their what-to-dos. In the famous (and probably not authentic) oracle, the god of Delphi informed Athens that it had to build wooden walls to defend the city against the Persians, and Themistocles explained this as a call for fighting the war on the sea, with ships, while a few bigots began to build wooden bastions on the Acropolis (EVANS 1982:24–29). However, the explanation of the story is imperfect without the knowledge that Delphi expressed open sympathies for the Persians during the war. What gave the city a chance to oppose a malevolent oracle was its enigmatic form and the possibility of metaphoric interpretations.

Greek society had an interest in restricting the activity of genuine shamans, but this fact alone is not evidence for the existence of a previous and manifestly shamanistic phase of Delphi or any other oracles. The age and nature of our sources do not give us opportunity to provide a full description of the earliest phase of trance-divination in Greece, but there are signs in Greek literature suggesting that its shamanistic nature was originally more apparent, and it was connected with poetry and poetic initiation.

Generally, the effect of Apollo on the human soul is the same as in the case of other gods of the Greek religion: he is able to induce possession. A frequent term for it is

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[11] CLAY 2009:10; e.g. Plutarch, *De Pythiae oraculis* 406d and *De defectu oraculorum* 413b., 435a.

[12] See note 1. CLAY 2009: 6–9: the first evidence for a Delphic priestess comes from Theognis 807–8., dated back from the seventh century (WEST 1971:172).

[13] Berlin F 2538, ARV[2] 1269.5, LIMC 1 s.v. Aegeus 1. Aeschylus in his *Eumenides* names Themis as a previous owner of Delphi.

enthusiasmos, which is a combination of 'in' and 'god', so it denotes a mental state when the divinity is somehow *in* the person. Altered states of consciousness played an important role in Greek religion, so it is surprising to see that this word was not a part of the traditional Greek religious vocabulary. It appeared rather late, in the works of the philosophers, first of all Plato – Greek religion practiced *enthusiasmos* but did not conceptualize it.[14] Consequently, what we have in our sources is mostly a reflection of philosophy, or rather an abstraction created by philosophers, not an inner 'theological' interpretation of the phenomenon.

Apollo is not the only god who is able to provoke *enthusiasmos*, Plato mentions it together with the Dionysian and Corybantic trance.[15] The Corybantic dancers were the offspring of the god Apollo and one of the Muses, Thalia, but they worshipped Cybele, the Phrygian mother of the gods with their dance. As Plato says: "For all the good epic poets utter all those fine poems not from art, but as inspired and possessed, and the good lyric poets likewise; just as the Corybantian worshippers do not dance when in their senses, so the lyric poets do not indite those fine songs in their senses, but when they have started on the melody and rhythm they begin to be frantic, and it is under possession – as the bacchants are possessed, and not in their senses, when they draw honey and milk from the rivers – that the soul of the lyric poets does the same thing, by their own report"[16] (Ion 533e–534a).

Ecstatic rituals were wide-spread in all of the mentioned cults, but the effects of the trance were radically different – the Pythia told the future, some followers of Cybele castrated themselves without feeling pain. However, ancient authors did not distinguish the different forms of religious trance terminologically. A more traditional word for divination, *'mantike'*, derives from the verb *'mainomai'* 'to be mad', as the Greek recognized it, and their etymology was probably correct.[17] In spite of all association with madness, possession by Apollo was radically different from the *enthusiasmos* caused by other gods, e.g. Dionysus or Cybele. Apollonic ecstasy did not lead to the extinction of normal consciousness or the loss of the moral sense; it presented men and women with the ability to surpass normal human standards. This is even more obvious if we examine the talent of divination together with its pair: poetry.

When Plato wrote on *enthusiasmos*, he primarily used the term to explain some characteristics of poetry – and he saw a strong connection between poetry and divination as well as the divine possession behind them:

> "And what they tell is true. For a poet is a light and winged and sacred thing, and is unable ever
> to indite until he has been inspired and put out of his senses, and his mind is no longer in him:
> every man, whilst he retains possession of that, is powerless to indite a verse or chant an oracle.

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[14] The first occurrence of the noun *enthusiasmos* is in a fragment of Democritus: CLAY 1997:40. The adjective *entheos* may be older. The other word frequently used to describe the Pythia's state of consciousness is *katochos*, a term to denote a person who is controlled by a divinity. To these terms: GRAF 2009:592, JOHNSTON 2008:44.

[15] Plato, *Ion* 533e–534a

[16] Translation from LAMB 1925.

[17] The etymology is controversial: while the majority of the scholarship accepts it – CHANTRAINE 2009:641; FRISK 1954–1972:2.173; DILLERY 2005:19 – there are objections against it both on linguistic and factual grounds (CASEVITZ 1992:14–15; MASLOV 2015:194).

> Seeing then that it is not by art that they compose and utter so many fine things about the deeds
> of men – as you do about Homer – but by a divine dispensation, each is able only to compose
> that to which the Muse has stirred him, this man dithyrambs, another laudatory odes, another
> dance-songs, another epic or else iambic verse; but each is at fault in any other kind. For not
> by art do they utter these things, but by divine influence; since, if they had fully learnt by art
> to speak on one kind of theme, they would know how to speak on all. And for this reason God
> takes away the mind of these men and uses them as his ministers, just as he does soothsayers
> and godly seers, (...)" (*Ion* 534b-c)

The presupposition of his theory is that Greek poetry was more or less oral, even in his age. The analogy between poetic talent and soothsaying is not Plato's invention. It can be found in earlier Greek literature, and comparative linguistics suggest that their connection had already existed in the age of the Indo-European language.[18] In Greece, the state of mind of the poet is practically the same as in the case of the Pythia: the Muse speaks through his tongue. The 'Sing me, Goddess' formula of Homer was not intended to be a mere metaphor: the inspiration comes directly from the Muses, but their leader is Apollo. However, while he reveals truth for the mortals in the oracles, he sings only to the gods.

The Greek society that did not want to see famous prophets, at least within the framework of the institutional cults, wanted to adore great poets. Maybe it is not a coincidence that it is easier to find shamanistic motives in the case of poets, first of all clear and unambiguous traces of the initiation. Hesiod lived in the first part of the seventh century, the following text is from the proem of his Theogony. Traditionally, all poets had to invoke the Muses, in this case the Muses of Mount Helicon, near to the village where Hesiod lived:

> "One time, they taught Hesiod beautiful song while he was pasturing lambs under holy Helicon.
> And this speech the goddesses spoke first of all to me, the Olympian Muses, the daughters of
> aegis-holding Zeus: 'Field-dwelling shepherds, ignoble of disgraces, mere bellies: we know
> how to say many false things similar to genuine ones, but we know, when we wish, how to
> proclaim true things.' So spoke great Zeus' ready-speaking daughters, and they plucked a staff,
> a branch of luxuriant laurel, a marvel, and gave it to me; and they breathed a divine voice into
> me, so that I might glorify what will be and what was before, and they commanded me to sing
> of the race of the blessed ones who always are, but always to sing of themselves first and last."[19]

We have no cause to deny the psychological reality of this encounter between Hesiod and the Muses on the slopes of Helicon. He, a shepherd, met the Muses, who gave him the traditional staff of the Greek bard, *aoidos*, made of laurel, the sacred tree of Apollo, the poetic talent, and an arspoetica. The text is authentic, so here we have a first-hand account of an initiation. In the biographies of Greek poets, we can find parallel stories

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[18] On the common vocabulary of poetry and divination: WEST 2007:28–29.

[19] Hesiod, *Theogonia* 22–34, from Most's edition and with his translation (MOST 2006).

with mysterious signs or divine encounters,[20] but this text is unique because of his age, his authenticity, and because it sounds traditional: seemingly, the audience found it quite normal that Hesiod saw the Muses. Maybe it is more than a mere guess to suppose that in earlier times seers may have experienced similar encounters. The mythical diviners: Tiresias, Melampus and Cassandra either received their prophetic talent as a gift from a god (Cassandra from Apollo, Tiresias from Athena or Hera) or it was somehow connected with snakes. Tiresias killed a pair of mating snakes, and he turned into a woman.[21] Melampus did not hurt a similar pair of snakes, and they taught him the language of the animals. Iamus, the son of Apollo and Euadne, was fed on honey by two snakes and became a seer.[22] All these motifs can be interpreted as initiatory symbols.

Another common element between divination and poetry is the symbolism of honey and the bee. Though their symbolic value is polyvalent, both were central symbols of poetry. The motifs of honey and bee appear to be linked to Apollonic divination as well. According to the myth, the first Delphic temple was built of honeycombs and bee wings. In some variations of the myth, the place of the oracle was revealed by bees, and the Pythia was called the Delphic bee.[23] Here, I must omit the more unclear issue of the toxic honey *(melimainomenon)* which was a known hallucinogenic material for the Greeks.[24]

We have another important text related to bees and divination. In the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, the one-day-old Hermes steals the cattle of his half-brother and later tries to get a portion from the most important functions of Apollo: music/poetry and divination. Apollo responds in a riddle and gives him a very peculiar form of divination:

> "There are certain holy ones, sisters born – three virgins gifted with wings: their heads are besprinkled with white meal, and they dwell under a ridge of Parnassus. These are teachers of divination apart from me, the art which I practiced while yet a boy following herds, though my father paid no heed to it. From their home they fly now here, now there, feeding on honey-comb and bringing all things to pass. And when they are inspired through eating yellow honey, they are willing to speak truth; but if they be deprived of the gods' sweet food, then they speak falsely, as they swarm in and out together. These, then, I give you."[25]

These bee-maidens had belonged to Apollo, and now he gives them to Hermes. There is no really plausible hypothesis to solve the riddle of these bee-maidens' identity, but

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[20] On Hesiod: TSALAGALIS 2009:132–135. Archilochus' similar encounter with the Muses: BREITENSTEIN 1971:9–28. Considering that we know nothing about the person of Homer, Archilochus and Hesiod are the two earliest Greek authors with known biographical details, and both of them received poetic initiation from the Muses.

[21] Hyginus, *Fabulae*75. Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 3.6.7., Phlegon, *Mirabilia* 4. It is remarkable that the god and the receiver of the divinatory talent always belong to the opposite sex. About views on the Pythia as the bride of Apollo see: Johnston, *"Ancient,"* 40.

[22] Pindar: *Olympian odes* 6. 46–53.

[23] On the connection between bees, prophecy and Delphi: SCHEINBERG 1979:16–21., the oracle of Trophonius was found with the help of bees (Pausanias 9. 40. 1.). The second Delphic temple was built of wax (Pausanias 10. 5. 9., Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum* 17, 420d.). Certain Delphic coins were stamped with bees (SCHEINBERG 1979:20), Pythia was mentioned as the Delphic bee (Pindar: *Pyth.* 4.60.). On temple-builder bees: RUMPF: 1964:5–8. Further sources in COOK 1895:1–24.

[24] On toxic honey: OTT 1998:260–266.

[25] Homeric *Hymn to Hermes* 550–564. Translation from: EVELYN-WHITE 1914.

something is clear: their prophetic talent seems to be associated with ecstasy – when they eat the honey, their prophecies are true, and the verb *thyio* in the texts usually indicates divinatory trance.

We know far too little about divination in the earliest Greek society. It is clear that the rational methods, divination through sacrifice or observation of birds, played a greater role initially. Divination in trance must have been coexisting, but we have no direct evidence about the process that made this Delphic method the most prestigious form of mediating the gods' will. What we know is that this development did happen sometime in the Archaic Age and we can suppose that one prerequisite of this change was imposing regulation on this form of divination, eliminating the elements we can define as shamanistic.

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The Theoretical, Methodological and Technical Issues of Digital Folklore Databases and Computational Folkloristics[1]

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Abstract: The study examines the problems and possibilities presented by the digitization of national folklore archives and collections in the wider context of folklore archiving and digital humanities. The primary goal of the study is to present a problem-oriented and critical overview of the available digital databases containing folklore texts (WossiDiA, Sagragrunnur, ETKSpace, Danish Folklore Nexus, Nederlandse VolksverhalenBank, The Schools' Collection, etc.), and of the analyses conducted on these using computational methods. The paper first presents a historical overview of the conceptualization that went into the creation of folklore databases (genre-centered, collector, and collection-centered approaches), followed by a discussion of the practical, technical, and theoretical aspects of digital content creation (crowdsourcing, markup languages, TEI, digital critical editions, etc.). The study then takes a look at the new digital tools and methods applied in the analysis of digitized folklore texts (text-mining, network theory methods, data visualization), and finally places databases and computational folkloristics within a larger theoretical framework.

Keywords: computational folkloristics, digital databases, digital editing, folklore archives, folklore texts, folklore genres, history of European folklore archives, textualization, theory and methods of digitization

DIGITAL HUMANITIES, DIGITAL TEXTOLOGY AND FOLKLORISTICS[2]

Over the past twenty years, digital technology has almost inconspicuously reshaped our everyday lives which, according to historians of science and philosophers, is a more significant turning point in human culture than the invention of printing during the Renaissance (Dávidházi 2014; McGann 2014). This medium has radically altered the limits and possibilities of scientific research. Although the possibilities for practical application are self-evident – that is, today it is practically unimaginable to conduct research that does not in some manner make use of computers or of other opportunities offered by the digital world – it is still debatable whether it will result in a new methodology, a paradigm shift, or perhaps a new, independent discipline within the humanities.[3] The processes taking place before our eyes occur in the way of previous scientific revolutions, characterized by competing methods, theories and terminological turmoil,[4] the end result for now uncertain and unknown.[5] At the same time, compared to the past, all of this is happening at the speed of light. While digital technology has fundamentally displaced most human science disciplines from their well-established positions (which may be why many in the humanities look at it with suspicion and reluctance), the newly emerged discipline, referred to as *Digital Humanities* in the Anglo-Saxon language area, has built up its own institutional system (through international societies, annual congresses, etc.),[6] and its international historiographers are already discussing a third wave within the discipline.[7]

At this point, the digital revolution(s) has primarily affected the philological-textological work in the humanities. This includes the basic activities of text production and text edition, which becomes evident through a quick survey of publications and conferences related to the digital humanities, a majority of which deal with the issues of digital textology (McGann 2014; Dávidházi 2014; Debreczeni 2014; Schreibman et

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[2] The lecture outlines of the current study have previously been presented at the Folklore Fellows' 2015 Summer School called "Doing Folkloristics in the Digital Age" in Turku, at the 2015 Congress of the SIEF Working Group on Archives in Zagreb, and at the international conference of the Kriza János Ethnographic Society ("The Changing Contexts of Archive Use") on October 14–15, 2016 in Otomani, Romania. I wish to express my gratitude for the many contributions and constructive criticisms I received at the events mentioned above. I am also grateful to all the members of the "East–West" Research Group at the Institute of Ethnology of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, who have commented on the earlier versions of the text.

[3] Kokas 2016: 405; Thomas 2016. Recent handbooks and overviews of digital humanities: Schreibman – Siemens – Unsworth (eds.) 2016; Berry (ed.) 2012.

[4] When it comes to folkloristics, the two terms used are *digital* and *computational folkloristics*. Cf. Vargha 2016.

[5] From the perspective of the history of science, Claire Warwick compared the institutionalization of digital humanities to the 19th-century struggle of English Studies Warwick 2016.

[6] For the institutional system of digital humanities, see Thomas 2016.

[7] The first wave of the late 1990s and early 2000s was characterized by a qualitative approach, i.e., the goal was to digitize more material and develop an appropriate infrastructures for analyzing these large text corpora. Researchers considered digital technology as a supplementary, accelerator tool. With regard to the use of this term, this period was characterized by *computing in the humanities* and *humanities computing*. In the second wave, however, with the name change – *digital humanities* – came autonomous disciplinary needs, namely the use of specific and hybrid methods and tools, publishing models that are no longer based on book culture, and the focus was on the problem of inherently digital materials. Berry 2011:2–4, 2012.

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al. (eds.) 2016). The digital revolution has already benefited the way in which textology's position has been perceived as merely an auxiliary, "handmaiden" science of the humanities (McGann 2014:19–20; Szilágyi 2014).[8] As the static, analog critical editions could not fit the various postmodern textual theories, the digital medium, with its dynamic and flexible possibilities, is proving to be a more suitable tool (Debreczeni 2014:27–28).[9]

The aforementioned transformations also compel folkloristics to refocus on essential issues and fundamental questions of the discipline. Methodological and theoretical dilemmas stemming from data collection, archiving, textological procedures and techniques have been present since the beginning of folklore studies (Cf. Gulyás 2015; Landgraf 2016) resulting in a lively discourse that has in the course of the 150-year history of the discipline led to several paradigm shifts.[10] That is why, in the evolving paradigm of digital humanities, it is necessary to debate the following: 1. How should the vast amount of textual material accumulated by folklore research be stored and published? 2. What tools and procedures are needed for this? 3. What new methods do we need for analysis? 4. What kinds of analyses are digital folklore text corpora suitable or not suitable for?[11]

In my study, I survey the issues and opportunities of the digitization of certain national folklore archives and collections that were created during the institutionalization of European ethnography and folkloristics in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[12] The primary purpose is to provide an issue-oriented and critical overview of the available digital databases containing and processing folklore texts and their analyses.[13] I discuss the question in the broader context of folklore archiving and digital humanities. First I present a historical overview of the conceptualization going into the creation of folklore databases, and then the practical, technical and methodological-theoretical aspects of digital content creation. Following this, I examine the current digital tools and techniques used to analyze digitized folklore texts, and finally I summarize the theoretical principles of databases and computational folkloristics. Prior to that, a brief look at European folklore archives and the relationship between folkloristics and archiving is given, since

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[8] The tension between theoretical and practical approaches is also found in the digital humanities: Warwick 2016.

[9] The great critics of digital textology and humanities (such as Stanley Fish) disagree with this, objecting to the tighter text limits that computer analysis necessitates and the inflexibility of the sectioning of texts and the mechanization of the concept of the text. Cf. McGann 2014, 2016.

[10] For the textualization paradigms of folkloristics, see Fine 1984; Foley 1997; Voigt 2004; Honko 2000a; Landgraf 2006; Seitel 2012; Niles 2013a, 2013b; Katajamäki – Lukin 2013. For a guide to Hungarian folklore textology: Voigt – Balogh 1974; Barna (ed.) 2003.

[11] For the tasks of computational folkloristics, see Timothy R. Tangherlini's programmatic study: Tangherlini 2013.

[12] In the present text, I refer to the archives and repositories containing folklore materials as *folklore archives*, the denomination of which varies by country (ethnographic, folkloric, ethnological, traditional). With this term I also emphasize that my approach in this study is essentially folkloristic, it comments on the digitization of manuscripts and typewritten texts of formerly oral texts.

[13] Therefore, I will not cover the theoretical, technical and ethical issues of the storage of other file formats (audio, video, photographs, etc.) and the issue of the preservation and patrimonization of minor, endangered cultures, where data gathering takes place roughly simultaneously with its archiving. Moreover, I will only include scientific databases that are machine-readable and follow interpretable and analyzable textualization procedures and are thus suitable tools for scientific research.

most digital folklore databases undertake the joint digitization of a previously created folklore archive, or part of an archive's material, or the material of several archives.

ARCHIVES AND ARCHIVING IN FOLKLORISTICS

Among the various historical repositories, manuscript libraries and archives, European folklore archives are a distinctive phenomenon.[14] I would like to refer briefly to just a few important factors to illustrate their heterogeneity.[15] The first is the diverse motivation and habitus of collecting folklore, as well as the variety of ideologies behind it (enlightenment, public education, nation building, nationalism, preservation, heritagization, traditionality, scientific research) (ANTTONEN 2005; WOLF-KNUTS 2001, 2010; VALK 2005; BAYCROFT – HOPKIN 2012; KUUTMA 2015). Even if we were to unbundle from these various motivations the folklore collections created by scientific interest in the narrower sense, which themselves are constantly changing,[16] we still get a wide variety and diversity of material due to the plurality of folklore definitions and folklore collecting techniques that

exist side by side.[17] In the case of scientifically verified institutions with a long history, the transforming and generally expanding, definitions of folklore and the various methods used to preserve folkloric material have significantly transformed the nature of material identified as folklore and intended for folklore archives.[18] Folklore archives are therefore special phenomena in that many of them are a by-product of a specific research project, and hence their main influencing factor is how the research person or group determined the purpose and objective of the research and what method(s) were chosen to achieve this (WOLF-KNUTS 2001:9–14). It then follows that the types of source documents are not homogenous. The collections of collectors or research programs are made up of a variety of material, such as memos, questionnaires, notes, memoirs, field logs, other ancillary elements of fieldwork, private or official correspondence, and various drafts. It is also worth pointing out that European folklore archives operate in a rather varied institutional background and system, and this has had a significant influence on the archiving structure of the collections, and, more relevantly, also on the options and frameworks of their digitization.[19] Folklore archives may be a part of university departments, or they may belong to different cultural, literary, ethnographic or folklore societies, organizations, or manuscript libraries, while elsewhere they may operate in the framework of a museum (literary, cultural or explicitly ethnographic), but they may also be a completely independent institution (ROGAN 2012:610). Finally, it is important to mention the current political situation of the institutions maintaining the archives, that is, the relation of the collection to the current national government, as this has also greatly shaped and transformed their fate. The notion of a completely independent science is an illusion.[20]

Despite the differences outlined above, European folklore archives are nonetheless linked to each other in many ways, particularly because of the comparative perspectives

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[14] Various modern-day state, governmental, historical, and institutional public archives dating back to the French Revolution also differ widely in international comparison: MARKOFF 2015.

[15] There is no overview of the history of European folklore archives so far, so I only refer to a few of the issues that are most relevant to digitization. These cannot be generalized for all folklore archives, as the problem does not appear to the same extent, weight, and in the same time period in specific national cases. Regina Bendix and Galit Hasan-Rokem's handbook, *A Companion to Folklore*, somewhat compensates for this deficit with Bjarne Rogan's chapter on the institutions of European folkloristics (mentioning Northern, Irish, Dutch, French, German archives) (ROGAN 2012:610–614). Andy Kolovos' dissertation on American folklore archives briefly refers to their European background and the main differences between European and American folklore archives. Cf. KOLOVOS 2010:1–87. An important catalog-like overview of Northern European folklore archives (Denmark, Faroe Islands, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland) was published in 1978: HERRANEN – SARESSALO (eds.) 1978.

[16] Although in terms of the material of folklore archives, the separation of *amateur* and *professional* collectors is in fact in most cases not very redeeming or even possible, from the 19th century onward, the vast majority of their material is a result of the enthusiastic work of avid volunteers or paid amateur collectors. According to Ibolya Forrai (1998), the Ethnological Archives of the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest for example, is made up of mostly material that has been submitted through the volunteer collecting network (more than 12,000 items). Cf. FORRAI 2000:33. Networks of volunteer collectors, however, were not necessarily always guided by a stringent top management and a uniform collection concept, or if so, they were very different in practice when they were actually implemented. For this reason, professional practitioners were rightly afraid of dilettantization and tried to guide collections in the direction of professionalism. Lajos Katona, who played a significant role in Hungarian folkloristics becoming a science, drew attention to this at the very end of the 19th century. Cf. LANDGRAF 2016:509–510. For the control of Irish full-time and part-time collectors, cf. BRIODY 2007:415–429. Or for the same, cf. Kati Mikkola's study of the conflicts between volunteer collectors of the Finnish folklore archive and professional folklorists. The latter, however, provides an opportunity to explore the motivations and folklore concepts of self-taught volunteer collectors: MIKKOLA 2013. For the 19th-century interpretation of the activities of amateur, volunteer Estonian folklore collectors as vernacular literacy, cf. KIKAS 2014.

[17] There are numerous examples of coexisting plurality. During the transformation of the paradigm of textology in the late 19th, early 20th century, Hungarian folklorists, for example, expressed their many different opinions on the various advantages and disadvantages of collecting by memory, dictation, shorthand, or phonograph transcription, each considering one or the other as more reliable (GULYÁS 2015; LANDGRAF 2016:511–513). Mariann Domokos points out that even the concept of collector has changed in turn-of-the-century Hungarian folkloristics, when collectors became mere documenters instead of authors (DOMOKOS 2015). For the same, see Fredrik Skott's research on the Swedish history of the discipline. Skott pointed out that in 1930s Sweden, during the preliminary work on the Swedish ethnographic atlas, the heated debate between the Västsvenska Folkminnesarkivet in Gothenburg (then lead by Carl-Martin Bergstrand) and the folklore archives in Uppsala, Lund, and Stockholm resulted in the emergence of two completely opposite collecting and archiving methods and concepts (SKOTT 2001, 2008).

[18] Since the 1960s, the Finnish folklore archive has focused on collecting life stories through their oral history campaigns, mainly from different occupations (e.g., hospital workers, road builders, etc.): Harvilahti 2012:402–404. In the context of Hungarians in Romania, cf. the collections of life histories of peasants, and later of teachers and engineers, starting from the second half of the 20th century: KESZEG 2011:165–194.

[19] From the perspective of sustainability, it is very important that databases also be part of an institutional structure (DEBRECZENI 2014:29), which requires continuous financial resources (JÄRV – SARV 2014:59). At the same time, the nature and potential of database building are determined by the digitization objectives and priorities of the given institution.

[20] For example, the establishment of the Irish Folklore Commission's archives at the time of the birth of independent Ireland (BRIODY 2007:33–39). Fortunately, more researchers are studying the relationship between the Soviet era and folklore archives (VÄSTRIK 2007; KULASALU 2013).

of folkloristics. Ethnographic collections have imagined themselves from the beginning as requiring international cooperation. The national archives are an important base of these comparative endeavors, complemented by the possiblity of a European folklore archive; this, however, never materialized (NIC CRAITH 2008; ROGAN 2012:604–606, 2014:174). The largest intersection of international folkloristics have been the historic-geographic trends and methods that have long defined the discipline, with which large joint European ethnographical projects can be associated, such as the *Enziklopädie des Märchens*, international catalogs, or national and international ethnographic and dialectological and linguistic atlases (SCHMITT (ed.) 2005; ROGAN 2014:176–177). Due to the nature of volunteer collecting networks which were developed specifically for accomplishing such repositories, and the collection questionnaires, guides, and catalog systems developed after the North European model, the character and structure of the core collections of European archives are highly similar, which, despite the differences, allows the collective discussion of the theoretical, methodological and technical issues of their digitization.[21]

Archives were key to the institutionalizaton of folkloristics and played a vital role in the discipline until the mid-20th century (GULYÁS 2015:18). However, the epistemological revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s significantly altered the role and value of folklore archives, especially in northern and western European and American folkloristics, which resulted in generations of scholars refusing to use such collections (WOLF-KNUTS 2001:12; KOLOVOS 2010:23; GUNNELL 2013:173; ROGAN 2012:613–614; ANTTONEN 2013; HARVILAHTI 2012:402–403).[22] As the analog book did not fit postmodern textual theories, so the anthropological and pragmatic revolution in folkloristics resulted in the archive and its rigid structure not meeting the transformed needs of the discipline.[23] The attention in folkloristics shifted from the past to the present, from text to performance and use, from structure and format to context and interaction, from the community to the individual, from rural to urban, from oral to written, and consequently from the *archive* to the *field*.[24] From this perspective, the examination of the material collected by the predecessors and given to the archive could be ignored (BEYER 2011:3).

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[21] In the 1930s, the founders of the Ethnological Archives of the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest, for example, followed the Scandinavian model (FORRAI 2000:614).The Irish Folklore Commission's archive, which was founded in 1935, explicitly adopted the Uppsala system (BRIODY 2007:325–331).

[22] Once again these processes have manifested in the folkloristics of different countries with different force and at a different pace, but according to Terry Gunnell, the themes of international congresses and publications clearly show such a trend. Cf. GUNNELL 2013:172–173. That is exactly why he felt the need to revisit the anti-archive sentiments in an international forum. At the ISFRN congress in Vilnius, a round-table discussion was organized in 2013, which also appeared in print: GUNNELL et al. 2013.

[23] According to Fredrik Skott, the archive structure was not able to follow the changed folklore concepts. See, for example, his contribution to the Vilnius Roundtable on Swedish archives: GUNNELL et al. 2013:199–200.

[24] Two other factors contributed to these processes. One is that the subject matter of the scholarship, European folk culture, has completely transformed almost everywhere. The other is that the paradigmatic shifts were supported by the technical innovations of the early 20th century. 20th-century recording techniques (video recording, tape recordings) becoming commonplace in folkloristics has played a major role in the rise to prominence of a narrator-centered approach and the boom of the performance school and contextual trends. VOIGT 1997; KOLOVOS 2004:24.

It was seen that the texts contained in the archive could only be used to research what folkloristics considered folklore in a given period of time.[25]

Although the rejection of the historic-geographic trend and of positivist, context-free data accumulation resulted in a productive rejuvenation of the discipline; the total disregard of its methods and theories was accompanied by the demonizing of the earlier material and collection methodology of predecessors. This, in many ways, brought the archives into a crisis situation. Folklore archivists needed to design new archival systems and structures, as the earlier guises did not meet the new requirements. Due to traditional folk culture transforming at this same time as well, folklore archivists also needed to think about the scope of their collection activites and the social role of their archives. While the latter two tasks were relatively easy to implement in many places, the institutional system could not be transformed as quickly, and the archives could not be easily adapted to the constantly changing questions of researcher(s) and research. What would become of the previous systems also became an issue. Should they be terminated and new ones initiated? Could numerous systems be used simultaneously?[26] The answer to these questions has also been made more difficult by the fact that in many archives, especially in countries where the collections were created in the first thirty years of the 20th century, researchers were faced with the immensity of the systematization and cataloging of collections accumulated in the previous paradigms.[27] Still, it is understandable that for studying folklore and, in particular, orality, interpreted through social context, use, and performance, folklorists required a new documentation process that was more detailed and able to preserve the qualitative features of fieldwork. In Northern European and American folkloristics, researchers who were the most critical of their predecessors were the ones most concerned with these issues.[28] In his writings, Lauri Honko labeled the earlier material of folklore archives as "dead artifacts" that lost their context,[29] while at the same time he and fellow researchers of the University of Turku undertook the

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[25] Starting in the 1970s, folkloristics has declared folklore archives and folklore text editions useless because, in the words of Terry Gunnell, "The legends and wonder tales found in the archives and published folk tale collections had all been collected wrongly and for the wrong purpose, as part of an elite-controlled national-romantic agenda, and could only really be looked at from that viewpoint". GUNNELL 2013:171.

[26] For the issues that emerged, see the *NIF Newsletter* 1978. 6(1); 1982. 10(4); 1989. 17(4).

[27] In fact, in the Ethnological Archives of the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest, the systematic arrangement of the accumulated material could only commence in the third decade of its operation, in the 1960s. The finalized professional regulation that was necessary for this was only published in 1967 (FORRAI 2000:618–619). Sean Ó Súilleabháin, the head of the archives of the Irish Folklore Society, is somewhat skeptical in his 1970 report on the status of cataloging work. In it, he reports that while indices by collector, location of collection and informant are up to date, to prepare the thematic indices of the manuscripts would take roughly six full-time employees doing nothing but cataloging about 20 years of work. In the case of the Irish, cataloging was made more difficult by the fact that only a few people were fluent enough in Irish to be able to process Irish manuscripts. For details on the process and struggles of cataloging, see BRIODY 2007:325–331.

[28] Cf. the newsletters of NIF (Nordic Institute of Folklore). From 1974 until the 1990s, NIF organized conferences on folklore archiving. Cf. HONKO 2001. At the same time, elsewhere the criticisms and disciplines restructured along collection methodology have not led to completely new archiving techniques but rather to a complete distancing from the idea. For the different archival attitudes of anthropologists, folklorists and ethnologists of religion see MAHLAMÄKI 2001:2–3.

[29] Lauri Honko's expression (*dead artifacts*). Cf. ANTTONEN 2013:159–161; GUNNELL et al. 2013:173.

development of a fieldwork methodology in which the data is recorded in accordance with the later archiving system and the recording method contains all the information about the folklore material that is indispensable for its interpretation.[30]

The history of data recording in folkloristics is often embedded in an evolutionary developmental narrative, according to which technology makes collections better, the data more accurate, and consequently, scientific results more credible (GULYÁS 2015:24). However, new techniques introduced to capture orality such as audio recordings and video footage, or meticulous, detail-oriented documentation do not actually solve all the issues of the media shift, and the academic study of orality, in turn, continues to require that researchers produce readable texts (HONKO 2000a:30). Although there have been many innovative experiments, such as Charles Briggs' book on Mexican verbal arts, where the texts have been recorded in two languages, almost like a musical score, with the various paralinguistic diacritical elements including gestures, intonation, volume, mimics and context (BRIGGS 1988), they have not been able to substantially transform publication practices. Thus, the performative revolution only confirmed the researchers in two important factors. On the one hand, that a media shift without distortion is impossible, no matter how perfect the technology and how deep the detail in recording the oral presentation; and on the other, that in archival and textological practice, there is no general principle to be laid down and it cannot be fully standardized because it is always the method best suited to the research goal or issue that should be applied (HONKO 2000a:29–36; FINE 1984; FINNEGAN 1992:174–199).[31]

The postmodern critiques of archives and folkloristics, however, brought on a fortunate upswing in the research of the materials of folklore archives. By critically examining the predecessors' work, the rejuvenated studies of the history of the discipline explored the metadiscursive practices of different folkloristic periods.[32] In Hungarian folkloristics, studying the materials of the folklore archive in recent decades – apart from a few comparative studies – focused on understanding the scientific and social-historical contexts of 19th-century folkloristics.[33] Despite the fact that in certain countries folkloristics has productively used a variety of materials from repositories and (non-folklore) archives (witch trials, ecclesiastical visitation protocols, documents

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[30] The procedure was named CollCard (collection card) and they started applying it at the University of Turku in the late 1980s. It was already in use when the monumental Siri epic was recorded in India, which later became a three-volume publication. Cf. HONKO 1998, 2001; MAHLAMAKI 2001.
CollCard techniques were used to capture, for example, the emic classification of informants during fieldwork and the context of the fieldwork (with/without audience, group, authentic performance, induced context, hidden documentation, active audience, passive audience), etc.: RAJAMÄKI 1989. As a new ideal of documenting, they called for the production of *thick corpora* (HONKO 2000b:21–22); elsewhere, the meticulous documentation they used was also called *textual ethnography*.

[31] Therefore, many recommend that a researcher make a simple, legible text that is accompanied by a thick description of the performance/event. E.g., HONKO 2000a:36.

[32] E.g., BRIGGS 1993.

[33] The publication of mainly 19th-century and turn-of-the-century collection manuscripts and related ancillary material (such as correspondence) thanks to the work of Mariann Domokos, Judit Gulyás, Katalin Olosz, Anna Szakál, Imola Küllős and István Rumen Csörsz. For an overview of relevant Hungarian research, see BÁRTH 2012.

of the Holy See, etc.),[34] folklorists who are receptive to historical topics also rejected folklore archives.[35]

In order for the folklore collections of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to be relevant again, digital technology was required.[36] The database as a special expression of computer culture (MANOVICH 2009) gave a new impetus to the often neglected folklore archive research and folkloristic textology. In fact, the database once again brought the archives into the focal point of research. This process can be detected in the pursuits of leading folklore societies, where the issue of the legacy of folklore archives and collections is becoming more and more evident.[37] Within both of the most prestigious international ethnographic organizations (ISFNR: International Society for Folk Narrative Research, SIEF: Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore), separate working groups and committees address the issue.[38] The theme of the 2009 Summer School organized by the Finnish Folklore Fellows was the relationship between fieldwork and archiving.[39] In June 2015, the Summer School focused on digital folklore, where two separate sections were organized to discuss the issue of digital folklore databases and the editing of digital folklore texts.[40]

In addition to conferences and congresses, a number of periodicals and essay collections have been published on the subject.[41] In the early 2010s, Timothy R. Tangherlini outlined the tasks and challenges of a new research paradigm he named "computational folkloristics" (ABELLO et al. 2012; TANGHERLINI 2014). In the last number of years, there are more and more computer analyses of folklore databases available, replacing the earlier studies that were mainly illustrative and merely described the technical details of digitization projects (TANGHERLINI 2016; KENNA et al. (eds.) 2017).

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[34] For historical folkloristics in Hungary, see most recently: BÁRTH 2012.

[35] Of course there are always exceptions, such as Lauri Honko's early work, or Anna-Lena Siikala's research, etc. See HARVILAHTI 2012:405.

[36] Although computer methods for the analysis of folklore texts have been used since the 1960s (see VOIGT 1981) and the digitization of archive catalogs have been done in many countries since the 1970s (cf. *NIF Newsletter* 1982.10(4)), the paradigm-shifting role and significance of computer technology evolution has only become evident in the past 10 to 15 years with the emergence of the World Wide Web and the widespread adoption of online databases.

[37] ISFNR Vilnius 2013, SIEF Zagreb 2015, SIEF Working Group on Archives and the Latvian Folklore Archive, as well as the conference "Towards Digital Folkloristics" in Riga in 2016 organized by the Network of Nordic and Baltic Tradition Archives, and SIEF Göttingen 2017.

[38] The idea of setting up a new subcommittee for examining the digital database-based processing of folktales and the spread of tale traditions on the internet first came up at the ISFNR congress held in Tartu in 2005, which was eventually realized in 2009 at the congress in Athens and called Committee for "Folktales and the Internet". See more on this: http://www.isfnr.org/index2.html. At the 2013 SIEF congress also held in Tartu, the SIEF Working Group on Archives was set up, which specializes in the digitization of folklore archives. See http://www.siefhome.org/wg/arch/index.shtml. (accessed June 6, 2017)

[39] http://www.folklorefellows.fi/principles-of-fieldwork-and-archiving/. (accessed June 6, 2017)

[40] See: http://www.folklorefellows.com/?page_id=2648. (accessed June 6, 2017)

[41] For this, cf., for example, the special issue of the journal *Oral Tradition, Archives, Databases and Special Collections* (2013), http://journal.oraltradition.org/. (accessed January 10, 2017); also HOLGER et al. (eds.) 2014.

DIGITAL FOLKLORE DATABASES – INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the international endeavors of the past 15-20 years in the spirit of the above-mentioned new trend, with a particular focus on how digital folklore databases deal with the folklore archives of the early 20th century and the related theoretical and methodological issues in the new media space; that is, how the material is published in the digital sphere, and along what concepts and methods they intend to give voice to the dead artifacts of earlier collections. It is not an exhaustive overview, but rather an attempt to capture the dominant trends through some of the most important projects, and to highlight the opportunities and challenges inherent in digitization.

Looking at folklore databases, two distinctly different approaches emerge that can be traced back to historical precedents and to the original structures of archives and collections. One is the practice of digital databases based on folklore genres, and the other is the digitization of the entire material of a collector or collection network.

Focus on genre

Genre databases are the continuation of the earliest folkloristic textological practices. The publishing of folktales, ballads, folk songs, and folk legends began with the text editions modeled after the genre hierarchy of 19th-century literature, and peaked in the first half of the 20th century with the catalogs of historic-geographic methods, making genre one of the most important organizing principles of archived folklore materials.[42] Despite the multidirectional criticisms of folklore genres and genre in general, this still remains a characteristic procedure of folklore textology.[43] The popularity of databases focusing on folklore genres is evident in the fact that, while browsing the Internet, one can find, without much effort, for example, databases of Finnish and Estonian runes (SAARINEN 2001; HARVILAHTI 2013)[44], Estonian limericks, folk legends, riddles (JÄRV 2013:295–296)[45], Icelandic folk legends (GUNNELL 2010)[46], Pan-Hispanic ballads,[47] Sephardic Jewish folk poetry (ROSENSTOCK – BISTUÉ 2013)[48], Israeli proverbs (BELINKO – KATS 2014)[49],

English broadside ballads (FUMERTON – NEBEKER 2013)[50], or Romanian love charms (GOLOPENŢIA 1997).[51] In this genre-specific approach, the folktale is clearly in the lead, as there are Dutch, Flemish, Portuguese, Catalan, Armenian, Danish, Icelandic, German and French online folktale databases.[52]

As they are based in folklore genres, these genre-focused databases have also inherited the objectives of historic-geographic method(s) and comparative approaches. One of the primary purposes of their analyses is to re-consider a number of the issues of comparative folkloristics and to answer them in an innovative way using digital technology.[53] What does digital media make possible now that had no solution before? The undisputed advantage of databases is that they are capable of publishing a much larger number of texts than any previous printed collections. While many question the emphasis on quantity (such as what do we gain by analyzing 1 million tales instead of 1,000?), large-scale data analyses or computational literary studies claim that large volumes of digitized content will result in a significant transformation of what consitutes the canon (MORETTI 2000; JOCKERS 2013).[54] In folkloristics, this also means that databases make it possible for less representative, truncated texts, fragments and variants to be included in the research. Thus, one can use not only the pre-selected texts produced by previous generations along textualization processes corresponding to their own era and research objectives, but also a more complete and perhaps less pre-determined corpus (JOCKERS 2013; TANGHERLINI – LEONARD 2013).

Another great advantage of a digital database is that it allows texts to be ordered in multiple ways, even by combining previous editing practices. One does not have to decide whether to publish the material according to region, settlement, ethnicity, collector or informant. The database allows for switching between the basic data of the folklore material that has been recorded in the database easy and quick. For example, one can search the databases of Icelandic folk legends, Dutch folktales, or Finnish and Estonian runes by collector, informant, or location. For folkloristics, the most liberating novelty of databases is that texts do not need to be assigned to a single category or type. The texts can be assigned to several categories simultaneously, which makes capturing the multidimensional link between them finally possible (MEDER 2014a; ABELLO et al. 2012; TANGHERLINI 2014; HOLGER et al. (eds.) 2014). In fact, an appropriate digital textualization not only ensures full-text search capabilities, but also makes it possible through various text mining tools that the multidimensional category system be generated

[42] For the idea of hierarchical classifications following the example of natural sciences, cf. TANGHERLINI 2013b:39–40.

[43] On the issue of folklore genres up until the 1980s, see Ben-Amos' critical overview: BEN-AMOS 1981, later FINNEGAN 1992:127–147. On. the issue of emic-etic genre categories: BEN-AMOS 1969; on the instability of genres: SHUMAN et al. 2012:61–62. On the recent theories of folklore genres, most recently: SHUMAN et al. 2012.

[44] http://skvr.fi/ and http://www.folklore.ee/regilaul/andmebaas/. (accessed June 6, 2017).

[45] All Estonian folklore databases can be accessed at the following link: http://en.folklore.ee/dbases/. (accessed January 10, 2017).

[46] http://sagnagrunnur.com/en/. (accessed June 6, 2017).

[47] http://depts.washington.edu/hisprom/, (accessed January 10, 2017).

[48] http://sephardifolklit.illinois.edu/. (accessed April 21, 2017)

[49] Israeli Proverb Index Project (IPIP), currently not available online.

[50] https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/. (accessed January 18, 2017). Also the Broadside Ballads Online project at Bodlein Library in Oxford, where English broadside ballads were collected from the early modern era until the 20th century. http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/. (accessed January 18, 2017).

[51] http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/romanianCharms/. (accessed January 18, 2017).

[52] Theo Meder's overview of the online fairy tale databases he knows of. (MEDER 2014b:2). http://www.isfnr.org/files/CommitteeInternet.pdf, (accessed June 6, 2017).

[53] For a rethinking of the comparative method and historic-geographic trend(s) independent of digital databases, see Linda Dégh's introduction and other studies in the special edition of the *Journal of Folklore Research*, "The Comparative Method in Folklore." DÉGH 1986, and VIRTANEN 1993; WOLF-KNUTS 2000. Most recently it was Frog who presented in his paper how historic-geographic methods can be applied productively in contemporary folkloristics. FROG 2013:23–30.

[54] For more on the theoretical assumptions underlying the problem, see "Theoretical frameworks" of the current study.

and determined not only by the researcher(s) but also by the algorithms that can analyze the texts to find characteristics that show similarities among certain texts.[55]

Digital technology also solves one of the highly criticized points of mapping. In the past, an insurmountable difficulty of analog ethnographic atlases was the rigid representation of diachronous data on a synchronous map, the very reason for most of the criticisms of the cartographic method (MUNK – JENSEN 2014:40–41).[56] But digital maps can represent the dimension of time and space simultaneously. In the databases of Dutch folktales and Icelandic folk legends, one can choose which period's texts one wants to see on the map.

The new medium thus aids and reforms folklore studies in many ways, and we can expect many results from it. At the same time, the concept of the genre-based database raises several theoretical and methodological issues. It seems that the corpora are practically given for genre databases, or at least that is what the archives' genre-based card indexes and genre-based folklore text editions seem to suggest. In fact, some databases are merely a digitized version of a previously closed corpus. Such is, for example, the Finnish rune database that made the 34-volume *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (The Ancient Poems of the Finnish People, 1908–1948, 1998) available, thereby making more than 89,000 texts digitally searchable.[57]

A more complicated case is when the authors create a database by selecting the most important volumes representing the genre. An example of this is the Icelandic folk legend database, the *Sagragrunnur*. In the past, Icelandic folk legends did not have an index, collection or catalog of any sort, and publications did not reference international parallels or types. Terry Gunnell and more than 25 of his students published a digital database that referenced the text of about 10,000 Icelandic folk legends. It is important, however, that, contrary to the databases mentioned earlier, texts are not published here; in fact, the only one available is the Icelandic, and in some cases English-language, abstract of the texts, with an English-language search interface and keyword search option, which accomplished the innovative replacement of a never-existing catalog of Icelandic folk legends, thus completely bypassing the textualization problems arising from various publications (GUNNELL 2010).

Although previously published books and catalogs can be relatively helpful in selecting texts that should be part of a collection in a given genre database, a variety of dilemmas may arise around the building of a corpus, as different cultures and eras, as well as folkloristic practices, feature different genre repertoires, and databases usually select texts based on a genre concept that was constructed and solidified in the late 19th, early 20th century, despite the fact that they cover an extended period of time. Who decides whether a 17th-century religious-magical text is a prayer or an incantation? Another complicating factor is that in order to include as many texts of the given genre as possible, genre databases usually go beyond the limits of physically existing

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[55] For more on text-mining methods, see "Text mining and network theory methods" of the current study.

[56] For more on digital maps, see "Visualization" of the current study.

[57] However, the Estonian counterpart of the database called *Eesti regilaulude andmebaas* (The Database of Estonian Oral Poetry), which basically follows the Finnish model and contains 80,000 texts, also includes manuscripts and published texts; moreover, if a text exists in two versions (manuscript/publication), one can switch between the two transcripts.

text collection(s) or archives.[58] Thus, databases need to display and manage a fairly heterogeneous source type. The Dutch folktale database, for example, includes texts from 16th-century manuscripts, 20th-century folklore collections and newspapers, as well as the Internet (MEDER 2014a).

Another criticism could be that databases based on artificial genres divide oral culture and are therefore not suitable for comprehending the complexity of verbal arts or for examining the texts of a given locality, and are, in fact, and impediment to re-imagined comparative folklore studies, as independent databases do not show the multifaceted relationship of motifs and themes across genres. A good example of this is the case of Estonian folklorists who have tapped the potential of the digital technology from the very beginning and now have more than twenty types of genre databases. At the moment, however, one of their biggest challenges is how to integrate these genre databases into a joint digital repository, thus ensuring joint search and research capabilities across a variety of virtual archives (KÕIVA 2003; JÄRV – SARV 2014:55–56; JÄRV 2013:295–296). Recognizing the issue, there is currently a growing number of thematic folklore databases that are operating in comprehensive genre categories. The Dutch folktale database, for example, retains its folktale nature only in its name. The extended purpose of Theo Meder and his colleagues was to document the entire stock of Dutch folk prose, which is why the *Nederlandse Volksverhalenbank* stores many kinds of material, from anecdotes and myths through folk legends to personal stories (MEDER 2014a). The Norwegian magic database of the University of Oslo has been compiled by processing three types of sources – early modern grimoires and witch trials, as well as folk legends collected in the 19th and early 20th centuries – which are published on a common interface.[59] The Portuguese legend database includes sacred, historical and urban legends, origin myths and supernatural stories.[60]

With such degree of heterogeneity, it is questionable how databases can capture and display the context of these diverse sources, and how they can solve the textualization issue raised by the different types of texts.[61]

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[58] The dilemma of corpus building is characteristic of the digital humanities in general; a Hungarian literary example: Gergely Labádi's study of the compilation of the 19th-century corpus of the "Hungarian novel". LABÁDI 2014.

[59] Trolldomsarkivet, Norsk Folkeminnesamling. http://www.hf.uio.no/ikos/english/services/norwegian-folklore/magic-in-norway/ The database can only be searched and used in Norwegian: http://www.edd.uio.no/ikos/trolldom.html (accessed June 20, 2017)

[60] http://www.lendarium.org/ (accessed June 20, 2017).

[61] For the issue, cf. "Technique. Platform independence, interoperability, sustainability" of the current study.

Focus on the collection

The other main approach of folklore databases is to digitize the entire collection of a prominent collector, which in the case of European archives often coincides with the important foundation or key collection of the institution[62] and therefore enjoys priority due to its antiquity.[63] This approach can be justified not only by the digital preservation of physical objects, but also, as indicated at the beginning of the study, by the fact that ancillary materials linked to research questions make up a major part of the folklore archives, and in such cases, the objective must be the digitization of this complex material. I would like to compare two important examples. The digitized collection of Danish folklorist Evald Tang Kristensen (1843–1929), *Danish Folklore Nexus* and *ETKSpace*, by Timothy R. Tangherlini, and the *WossidDia*, i.e., the *Digital Wossidlo Archive*, which, made the collection of Mecklenburg folklorist Richard Wossidlo (1859–1939) available digitally under the leadership of Christoph Schmitt.[64] The most striking similarity between the two collections that were created around the same time is their almost inconceivable volume. During almost fifty years, Kristensen recorded more than a quarter of a million texts (including ballads, folk songs, folktales, folk legends, proverbs, incantations, limericks/rhymes, folk games, jokes, folk medicine, and other descriptions of everyday life) that were collected from about 4,000 informants. Altogether, the collection contains 12,000 site names, 60,000 collection data, and more than 24,000 pages of manuscripts (ABELLO et al. 2012:63–65; TANGHERLINI 2013b). During his ethnographic and dialectological collections, Wossidlo also focused on a great deal of subjects such as folk customs and beliefs, coastal rural labor and everyday life, ethnobotanics and sexuality, and genres such as the folktale, joke, anecdote, and proverb. The Wossidlo Archive of the Institute for Volkskunde/European Ethnology at University of Rostock consists of approximately 2 million data and thousands of manuscripts (HOLGER et al. 2014: 64–65).

Despite the similarities, the nature of the two collections and the purposes of digitization have resulted in different implementations. Beyond the incredible volume of his collection, Kristensen also stands out from well-known 19th-century folklorists thanks to his high degree of precision including documenting variants, informants' living conditions, life histories and everyday life. His collection is unmatched in its many source types, as it preserved his own manuscripts, drafts, thousands of pages of field notes, memoirs, correspondence with attachments, that is, a multitude of manuscripts of local folklore collections. If we add to this the works he edited and published and the thematic indexes, a picture of late 19th-, early 20th-century collection and editing methodology and

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[62] There are also instances of scattered collections being virtually consolidated in an online database (cf. the projects to publish digitally the collections of Adolf Spamer or the Opies, see SEIFERT – KELLER 2014; BISHOP 2013). When digitizing the collection of Iona and Peter Opie (project name: Childhoods and Play), multiple types of documents (handwritten and typed notes, questionnaires, correspondence, sound recordings, photographs, newspaper clippings) created between 1950 and 2000 were processed; most of the material is in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, a smaller portion in the Folklore Society Archive in London, and sound recordings are physically located in the British Library Sound Archive. http://www.opieproject.group.shef.ac.uk/. (accessed January 18, 2017). http://www.opieproject.group.shef.ac.uk/about-collection.html. (accessed January 18, 2017) (BISHOP 2013:205–206).

[63] The collection of Hungarian folklorist, Lajos Kálmány was advanced for this reason, GRANASZTÓI 2008.

[64] http://etkspace.scandinavian.ucla.edu/macroscope.html, https://apps.wossidia.de/webapp/run (accessed June 27, 2017).

textualization practices emerges. The Danish Folklore Nexus offers a glimpse into only one, somewhat small, corpus, compiling about 500 texts from five informants, but it does so in their full complexity (TANGHERLINI – BROADWELL 2014). Its greatest merit is that we can view simultaneously the field-collection trips, and the different texts they produced. On a computer screen, the scanned image of the manuscript can be placed side by side with the translation of the manuscript, and we can even display the version edited and published by Kristensen. Each field-collection trip can be traced on a digital map (both 19th-century and modern), making it possible to connect the research trips and the collected materials and their social contexts. One can quickly switch perspectives at any point between the field sites, informants and their repertoires, even the collector's manuscript.

Because Kristensen's collection is important not only for its complexity but also for the enormous amount of material, another interface, ETKSpace, was created to handle it.
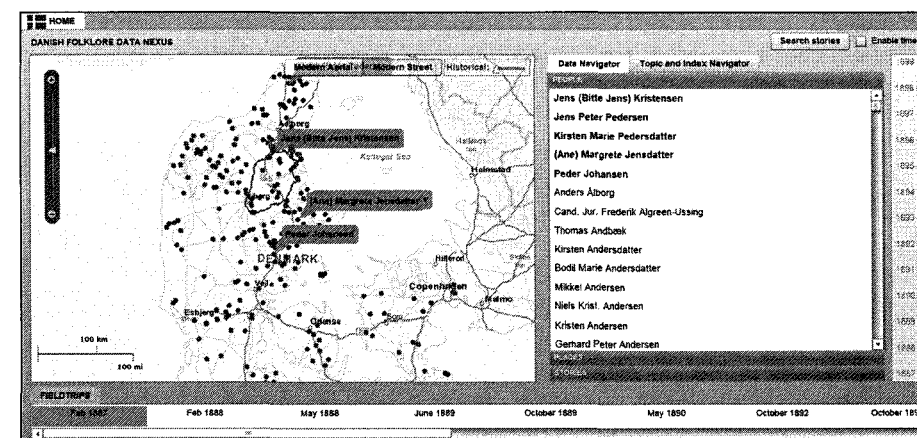
Figure 1. Danish Folklore Nexus, the 1887 collection trip of Evald Tang Kristensen. http://etkspace.scandinavian.ucla.edu/danishfolklore/# (accessed September 28, 2017)
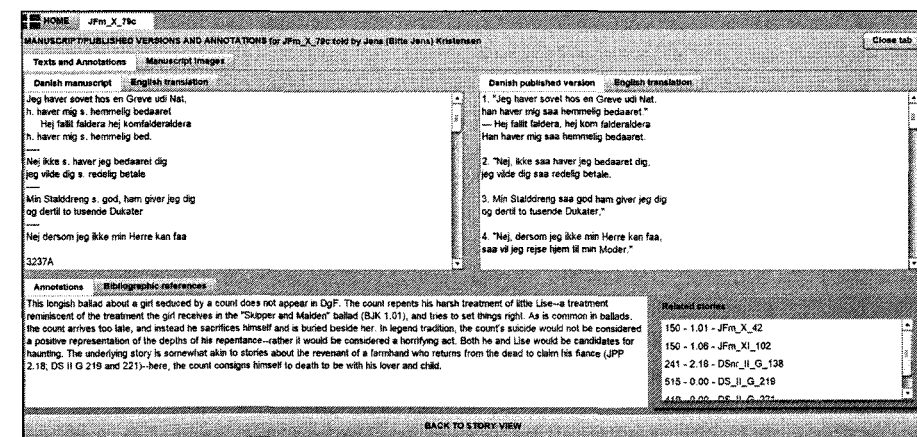

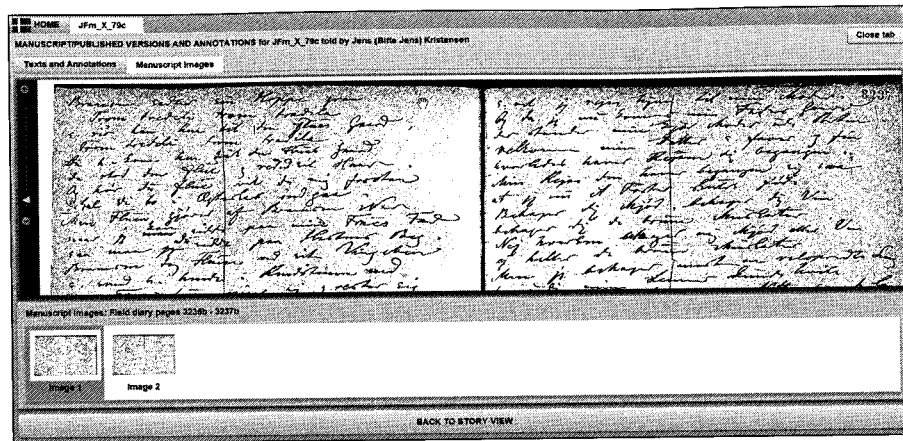*Figure 2.* Danish Folklore Nexus, window system for parallel reading of different text versions. http://etkspace.scandinavian.ucla.edu/danishfolklore/# (accessed September 28, 2017)

Figure 3. Danish Folklore Nexus, scan of the original document. http://etkspace.scandinavian.ucla.edu/danishfolklore/# (accessed September 28, 2017)

Here, in the digitized version of the full, published material, search capabilities and access to texts is ensured, but we have fewer metadata to choose from. In a corpus containing more than 30,000 texts, one can search by Kristensen's own indexes, locations as well as a Tangherlini's category system, keywords that encapsulate his earlier research results. On the one hand, the Tangherlini concept created an interface suitable for exploring the collection's context, the different relationships between collection participants and texts, and the textological practices of the folkloristics of the era; on the other hand, the automated digitization (OCR) of the immense volume of Kristensen's printed works made the entire corpus accessible. So the interfaces they created fit well with the new direction of critical archival folkloristics mentioned at the beginning of the paper, while the coherence of the vast amount of material, in contrast to many genre databases, makes it suitable for both comparative research and the contextual understanding of 19th-century narratives of rural Denmark. Apart from the aforementioned positive aspects, one criticism of the Danish Nexus and ETKSpace can be the fact that the sources of the collections are not sufficiently displayed on the digital interface. The website does not provide an introduction or information about what resources were consulted, or what percentage of the corpus has been made available and how. Users of the website may figure out what the the abbreviations used in the database stand for with the help of Tangherlini's printed book (TANGHERLINI 2013b).

In contrast to the above, WossiDia attempts to display Richard Wossidlo's material in the context of the archive, in the complexity of the archival system. The largest part of WossiDia consists of the handwritten notes of Richard Wossidlo, which mainly document the Mecklenburg collections he or his collectors acquired. Wossidlo made notes not only on fieldwork data but also on Mecklenburg data gained from various published sources such as journals, books and newspapers, and their parallels in German and, to a lesser extent, Slavic and Scandinavian ethnography. The second most important unit of the archive is the collector's corpus of correspondence. However, the true significance of the collection lies in the archival system itself, which, with its various cross-references, attempted to document the semiotics of a rich and diverse cultural system. In the first phase of digitization, the entire collection was scanned including all notes and letters, and then a complex directed
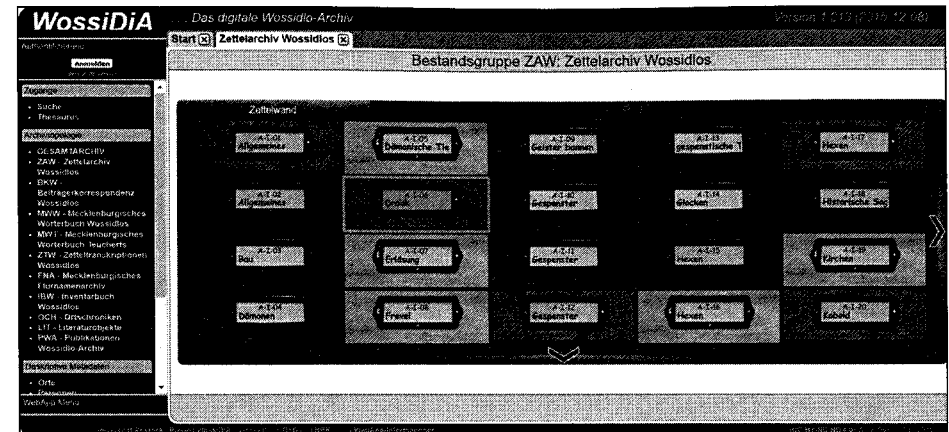
Figure 4. WossiDiA, the original index card catalog. https://apps.wossidia.de/webapp/run (accessed September 28, 2017)
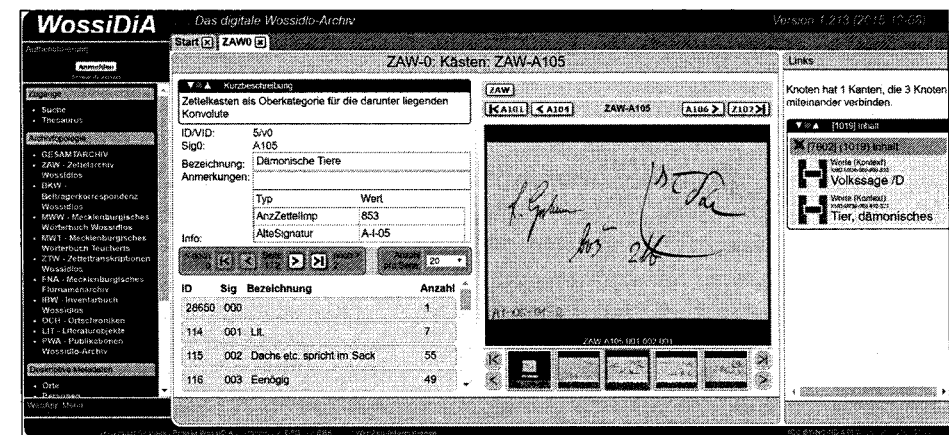
Figure 5. WossiDiA, visualization of a digitized index card in the database. https://apps.wossidia.de/webapp/run (accessed September 28, 2017)

hypergraph model and search interface was created which was capable of simultaneously storing and displaying the possible connection points between different documents. The goal of the creators was to "re-contextualize the lost link between researchers and collectors and their networks within an intelligent digital archive" (HOLGER et al. 2014:84).

According to the creators of the database, even though the WossiDia was designed specifically for the Wossidlo archive, the model they developed can generally be used to digitally process and display complex ethnographic collections. It should be added, however, that WossiDia was able to do this because they were working with Wossidlo's existing rich category system and cross-references. A theoretically and practically closed and completed archival system was transposed into the digital sphere, thus discovering links between elements that would not have been possible during a manual search. At the same time, in this approach, digital edition does not

override the existing category system, the indexes and descriptors, so the foundation set by Wossidlo ultimately determines the database, too, along with its possible errors. Most folklore archives are not so lucky. As mentioned previously, due to their analog nature, archives could never complete the organization of their material, but a prerequisite of a solution like WossiDia is a well-structured, well-organized folklore material.

One of the main objectives of digital archives and electronic text editions is to publish data and texts in their original context (McGann 2010). What does this mean, however, from the perspective of folkloristics? Obviously, folklore texts can never be restored to their original, primary context of utterance, but these texts have many other contexts (Anttonen 2013), which is exactly what is exciting and complex about database creators trying to determine what contexts they should restore the data to reflect. Genre databases placed texts in the context of space and time and many millions of similar texts; the Danish Nexus placed them in the context of the historical and geographical relationship between collection, collector, informant and 19th-century Denmark; while WossiDia contextualized its material within the archival structure and the collection. However, their digital mode also places them in a new context, in the world of digital databases, where the focus is on interoperability and long-term sustainability. In view of this, it is also necessary to talk about a third relevant issue, namely, how genre- and collection-centered databases can be integrated into the digitization concepts of complete folklore archives.

Focus on the archive

A common issue of genre- and collection-centered folklore databases is the creation of categories necessary for data retrieval, an issue that is no longer independent of how folklore databases operating on different concepts can be integrated into the complete digitization project of certain folklore archives.[65] How and where do they connect, how can they be linked together? My study cannot go into detail about the general question of the digitization of folklore archives, as it focuses on folklore databases, but some things need to be addressed, mainly because folklore databases are typically part of a folklore archive and their sustainability can only be ensured by these institutions.

According to Jerome McGann, who mainly studies 19th-century English literature, one of the great lessons of archival history is that mankind always fails in trying to decide what is worth preserving. Many believe the illusion that this almost entirely digitized culture fully maps the physical archive, which is why it is unnecessary to visit it anymore (McGann 2014:42–45). Although digitizing and publishing material in its entirety is in many respects not the objective of folklore archives, due to ethical and legal issues and lack of resources, McGann's ideas are worth considering. What needs to be digitized? The earliest? The most complete? The typical, the individual, or the disintegrating? In many cases, the physical maintenance of the objects may be

neglected on account of digital preservation that has an uncertain lifespan, even though the digital image is merely a numerical code that is a thousand times more vulnerable than 19th-century paper or ancient parchment. Seeing the two million scanned notes in WossiDia, one might rightfully ask: what is the principal task of the digitization of an archive or collection? Is it worth digitizing the often erroneous notes with a few lines of references just so someone could have access to them from home? Or should a folklore archive focus on revealing the content of the material as accurately as possible, providing digital aids and indexes to ensure the most detailed data retrieval (Granasztói 2008:126–127)? At the same time, because of the aforementioned disorganization of folklore archives, in some cases this can only be achieved with the full digitization of the content, as we will see below.

DIGITAL CONTENT CREATION

After a brief history of folklore archiving and a concise summary of digital folklore databases, let us now see how these concepts can be implemented in practice. What can digital humanities offer, what new issues are emerging, and how have folklorists implemented these ideas so far?

Practical issues and resources

One of the most important steps in digitization efforts is the creation of machine-readable textual data. How do we create this resource? How can we give voice to the millions of texts in the archive that have not yet been cataloged? The digital transcription of manuscripts is expensive and time-consuming, and folklore archives that typically work with but a few specialists are unlikely to be able to carry it out on their own. As a solution, methods like *citizen science* or *crowd science, crowdsourcing, civic science* (volunteer-based science, community collaboration)[66] have become popular. *Crowdsourcing* involves volunteer civilians in data production or even in certain phases of the data collection process. Volunteering is already a familiar notion in folkloristics thanks to the networks of collectors, and it seems that this new version can also be operated effectively. When recording folklore texts, the greatest need for civil volunteers is where OCRs do not work, for example with handwritten documents, or if they do work, they need a continuous manual review such as when typography or language features cause the program to make mistakes.

The National Folklore Collection's *The Schools' Collection* project in Ireland is a good example of the productive application of crowdsourcing. The Schools' Collection was collected by about 50,000 students from more than 5,000 elementary schools between 1937 and 1939, containing approximately 740,000 pages of manuscripts

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[65] On the digitization of Estonian and Irish folklore archives, see Järv – Sarv 2014; Ógáin 2013. In the Hungarian context, on the development of the Ethnological Archives of the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest see Granasztói 2013.

[66] http://www.oszk.hu/civic. (accessed January 9, 2017). For a critique on his role in digital text editions, see: Shillingsburg 2016; for an overview of opportunities for civic science and digital humanities, see Terras 2016, for a general summary and historical presentation: Riesch 2015.

(BRIODY 2007:260–270).[67] With the *Meitheal Dúchas.ie: Community Transcription* project, launched in 2013 and operated by the folklore archive at the University College Dublin, in a narrow three-year period, volunteers transcribed over 12,000 pages of Irish and 27,000 pages of English-language material which constitutes 15% of the Irish and 9% of the English-language segment of the entire collection.[68] A similar campaign was also used by the Latvian folklore archives (*Latviešu folkloras krātuve*) for their *Simtgades burtnieki* (Wizards of Centenary) program,[69] where they joined the volunteer civilian preparations for the country's centenary celebrations.[70] In June 2016, the archives launched the opportunity of transcribing their manuscripts to the public, and in almost six months, nearly 30,000 pages of text were transcribed by civilians. In the multi-lingual collection registered users could choose from eleven languages: Latvian, Latgalian, Livonian, Lithuanian, Estonian, Russian, Belarusian, Yiddish, Romany, Polish and German. On the digital interface of the Latvian folklore archive, volunteering works regardless: committed enthusiasts of community science can even transcribe audio materials here.[71]

Obviously, the above cannot be applied in all cases, as some philological pre-qualification is needed to transcribe the handwriting of the 19th or earlier centuries. However, a large part of the immense corpora of European folklore archives created in the 20th century consist of mostly legible handwritten or typed texts of school children, pupils, teachers or rural intellectuals.[72]

The transcriptions of texts must be reviewed by folklorists or philologists proficient in folkloristic textology. This is the case with the Irish and Latvian material. There is still an enormous potential in crowdsourcing, which of course can be used for more than just transcribing texts, for example for data collection, data review, photo recognition, localization of data. In the Latvian campaign, for example, beyond transcription, volunteers are also allowed to add any keywords they create to the transcribed text. Thus, crowdsourcing is not merely a source of free workforce for public institutions struggling to process data. With the involvement of civilians, museums and manuscript libraries can increase their social function and usefulness, leaving the ivory tower of science and interactively making the public become participants in knowledge production. Increased civilian interest in national, folk, local and various cultural traditions, and the former collection networks' capital can, in the case of folklore archives, make participatory

[67] http://www.duchas.ie/en/info/cbe. (accessed January 18, 2017).

[68] A scientific overview of the motivation, speed, and effectiveness of lay participants has also been produced in *Crowdsourcing Motivations in a GLAM Context: A Research Survey of Transcriber Motivations of the Meitheal Dúchas.ie Crowdsourcing Project.* http://digitalirishheritage.com/dissertation/uncategorized/data-visualizations-of-qualitative-data/. (accessed January 9, 2017). The digital dissertation provides a generous bibliography and references of portals that use *crowdsourcing* and scientific writings on the phenomenon.

[69] http://lv100.garamantas.lv/en. (accessed January 9, 2017).

[70] For Latvia's 2018 centenary programs, see: http://www.latvia.eu/latvias-centenary. (accessed January 9, 2017).

[71] http://garamantas.lv/en. (accessed January 9, 2017).

[72] Encouraged by the above example, the same method could be productively applied in the processing of the Hungarian Folklore Fellows manuscript material of more than 10,000 pages found in the Ethnological Archives of the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest, since the texts were noted down between 1912 and 1921 by schoolchildren in an often legible, cursive style.

civic science initiatives particularly viable, which may lead to the revival of the, often never-ending, traditional, voluntary ethnographic collecting.[73]

Technique. Platform independence, interoperability, sustainability

Data production is a time-consuming and tedious process, and still one of the most expensive operations of digitization even if in some cases crowdsourcing initiatives can reduce the costs. For this reason, long-term preservation and widespread utilization are primary requirements, but this is where the most uncertainty can be detected in the paradigm of digital humanities. Which format will hold up in ten years? What should the data be prepared for at all? How and where will the various humanities disciplines find the common denominator in digital textology and digital data preparation to ensure interoperability?

The purpose of digital textology is to mark up all internal and external information associated with the text that could be relevant to its analysis in the future in a machine-readable way. The greatest theoretical and methodological paradox of digital text or data preparation lies precisely in this. Data must be prepared in a versatile way so that it is suitable for as many different types of analyses as possible and reinstatable into as many contexts as possible, and in the virtual world of databases, they should be able to connect to and network with as much data as possible. At the same time, it is not possible to standardize data preparation because it always depends on the purpose of the research, which in digital humanities is often difficult to foresee (JOCKERS – UNDERWOOD 2016:299–300; McGANN 2016).

The selected markup language must be simultaneously uniform yet flexible and expandable. To do so, one of the best choices currently appears to be encoding texts in Extensible Markup Language (XML), which is platform-independent and relatively resistant to technical changes. The Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) itself, which provides text encoding suggestions for digital scientific text editions, also recommends the XML markup language because it does not define a finite set of elements but merely sets out the rules for creating a well-formatted markup language.[74] However, the appropriately selected markup language is only one side of the coin; the next problematic question is what material should be marked up and how (McGANN 2016).

In folkloristics, the previously mentioned Finnish and Estonian rune databases and the Romanian love charm database were the first to use the XML markup language (SAARINEN 2001); ETKSpace and the recently launched Irish The Schools' Collection project followed in their footsteps, but due to their different objectives, the coding procedures of all of these databases are different from each other. Even if TEI is used by folklore databases,

[73] For example, Carsten Bregenhøy reported in his brief presentation on the history of the Danish folklore archive that Danes already lost interest in traditional folklore materials in the 1970s, and raised the question of how to make people interested in maintaining these institutions and where to find a new relationship with audiences. *NIF Newsletter* 1978. 6. In Hungary, the activity of the volunteer collecting network reached its peak in the 1960s-1970s (with around 1,200 applicants), but at the same time professionals found it inexhaustible, as they could not be used for the current scientific purposes (FORRAI 2000:632).

[74] For more details on TEI, see most recently: PIERAZZO 2016.

Figure 6. Transcript of a belief legend on ETKSpace encoded with XML markup language. http://etkspace.scandinavian.ucla.edu/etkSpace/export/export.php?col=Story&ID= 1&stylesheet=XML (accessed September 28, 2017)

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="ISO-8859-1"?>
<?xml-stylesheet href="http://www.folklore.ee/regilaul/regifont.css?
20141027" type="text/css"?>
<!--?xml-stylesheet type="text/xsl" href="andm.xsl"?-->
<KOGUM xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
xsi:noNamespaceSchemaLocation="XSDregilaul.xsd">
<ITEM nro="e0000000X0078">

<META>
<ID>E X 17 (78)</ID> &lt; <LOC>Elva al.</LOC> - <COL>M. J. Eisen</COL>
&lt; <INF><NIMI>Marie Kivi</NIMI>, <ELUL>65 a</ELUL></INF>
<TYP_KONT>tüübinimed kontrollimata</TYP_KONT>
<TYP_YHT>Sirbiviskamise laul</TYP_YHT>
<LLIIK_YHT>Töölaulud </LLIIK_YHT>

</META>
<TEXT>
<V>Sirise, sirise, sirpi,</V>
<V>Kõrise, kõrise rauda,</V>
<V>Kelle sirpi ette jõuab,</V>
<V>Selle juurde peigu jõuab,</V>
<V>Sellel peigu põlle ostab,</V>
<V>Ja tasuks tanugi ostab,</V>
<V>Passib pähä naise mütsi,</V>
<V>Naise mütsi, pruudi paelad.</V>
</TEXT></ITEM>

</KOGUM>
```

Figure 7. Transcript of a rune text in Eesti regilaulude andmebaas (The Database of Estonian Oral Poetry) encoded with XML markup language. http://www.folklore.ee/regilaul/andmebaas/?op=1&oid=4 (accessed September 28, 2017)

they do not necessarily find the same elements worthy of tagging. The XML encoding of one of ETKSpace's belief legends reveals what the creators actually coded. We can see the keywords that have been assigned to the text as metadata ("Keywords"), the place names occurring in the text ("Places Mentioned"), Kristensen's typology ("ETK Index"), the text identifier ("Story"), and finally the text itself ("Story Text"). In comparison, in the case of a text of the Estonian rune database, they tagged the location of the collection, information about the collector and informant such as age, and even the line breaks in the part where it appeared in the actual text.

For each transcribed text on the interface of The Schools' Collection, one can download up to three XML files. One applies to the school, one to the relevant manuscript page, and one to the text itself. These three examples are a good illustration of the fact that even with the same markup language applied across textualization processes, text editions with different depths and detail may be produced. The difference may be even larger if a folkloristically important genre is published by representatives of

Figure 8a-8b. Transcript of a broadside ballad in EBBA (English Broadside Ballad Archive) encoded with XML markup language. https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/31034/ebba-xml-31034 (accessed September 28, 2017)

other disciplines. *The English Broadside Ballad Archive* (EBBA), which has more of a literary and book-historical approach, also uses TEI tags. The encoding of these broadside ballads, however, includes the precise description of the early modern printed matter; author, publication date and publisher, for example, the poetic characteristics of the individual ballads such as stanzas, rows, chorus, and even the typographical features of the edition, whether it was in cursive or in capitals, which could, in theory, accurately reproduce the printed matter in case the object was destroyed, as all of its existing physical qualities have been encoded.[75]

The standardization of digital textology across disciplines is obviously a utopian daydream or nightmare, and uniformization would practically destroy the texts and their pluralistic readings created through various textualizations. The editions should be primarily based on the nature of the material and provide answers to certain questions, even if these questions are multiplied in the digital world. At the same time, another opinion holds that if everyone annotates something different, the corpora may become fragmented. According to Martin Wynne, a leading expert on digital humanities at Oxford University, through a lengthy and meticulous data preparation, we are effectively focusing on future interpretative possibilities rather than interpreting the actual data, and this can only be eliminated by developing better and faster tools for automatic annotation. In this case, the programs would index the corpora through various digital procedures (WYNNE 2012).[76]

Despite the above uncertainties, it is important that folkloristics also develop a suitable annotation strategy for its discipline, because if it does not, it may lose properties that are crucial. The TEI, for example, has primarily literary-linguistic motivations and is thus using a philological approach. However, in the case of a folkloristic edition, the tagging of paragraphs is not that relevant, unless we want to produce a historical or textological study, but indicating whether the title or the genre definition of the folklore

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[75] http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/tei-xml (accessed January 9, 2017)
[76] For the various resolutions on the issue, see also: PIERAZZO 2016:316–318.

text is etic or emic, whether the given notation was made from memory, shorthand or a sound recording, and whether the collection was the result of an informal interview, questionnaire or participant observation would be justified, even if in many cases these are not known. In the world of digital text editions, the textualization of the source text has replaced the production of the main text.[77] The catalog systems of historic-geographic method(s) and the notes of folklore archives still fulfill this role, but the later, oral history-type folklore materials, field notes, and other ancillary notes can no longer be objectified and divided so easily, and the descriptive metadata templates describing physical objects do not favor the digital archiving of intangible heritage and orality.

There is much debate about annotation, but it is clear that true interoperability between different databases and corpora can only be implemented if database creators and designers annotate the same properties of the texts and, preferably, in the same system, or at least in compatible systems.[78] Consistency and interoperability between databases are key, for which there is no strong example in folkloristics to date.[79] The development of international standards in folkloristics will take some time, although several people have underlined the need for it recently.[80]

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[77] According to Attila Debreczeni, a source text is a manuscript or printed document of physical existence. For more on switching between main text and source text, See: DEBRECZENI 2014:32.

[78] There are countless initiatives within digital humanities (e.g., Dublin Core Metadata Harvesting: DCMI, Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting: OAI-PMH, CLARIN) to standardize these metadata in hopes of an exchange. MEDER 2014a:125. On a proposal for the standardization of digital textualization procedures of different national charm and incantation databases, cf. ILYEFALVI 2017.

[79] The first such project might be *ISEBEL: Intelligent Search Engine for Belief Legends*, whose search engine will be able to simultaneously analyze texts found in the Dutch, Danish and the Mecklenburg folklore databases. At a panel on archives at the SIEF congress in Göttingen (2017), Theo Meder announced that a grant made it possible for them to co-operate with Timothy R. Tangherlini and Christoph Schmitt to coordinate the three databases and develop a search engine. See also https://www.researchgate.net/project/Trans-Atlantic-Digging-into-Data (accessed June 20, 2017). From the perspective of integration, it is also relevant for folklore archives how they can connect to the digital archiving standards of other national/international institutions and what the consequences, advantages and disadvantages of that might be. Well-thought-out joint projects can greatly help and simplify digitization. The scanning of the important manuscripts of the Estonian folklore archive (for example, of founder Jakob Hurt), is happening through the uniform digitization of the Estonian Literary Museum that maintains it. It is therefore not necessary to include manuscript versions in image format in the aforementioned Estonian rune database, as they can be displayed very quickly in the other database, and it is obviously only a matter of time when this can be accomplished with direct built-in links without a separate manual search. Another good example of cooperation between institutions and projects is the Icelandic folk legend database. Although one cannot read full texts in the Sagragrunnur, in cases where a volume has already been digitized by the National and University Library of Iceland, a built-in link can immediately help one navigate to the cited page of the volume so that the text can be read in its entirety. www.Bækur.is. (accessed June 21, 2017).

[80] Furthermore, at the 2015 workshop of the SIEF Working Group on Archives in Zagreb, the plan for a guide to standardizing the recording of the metadata of folklore databases was raised. E.g.: MEDER 2014a:124; KATAJAMÄKI – LUKIN 2013:13. For the objectives of the SIEF Working Group on Archives, see http://www.siefhome.org/wg/arch/ (accessed June 21, 2017).

Methodological and theoretical issues. Reliability, credibility.

Choosing the markup language and tags is a critical and controversial point of the digitization process because it is not just a technical matter. The important issues that are crucial for the edition are practically determined here, as this determines how the digital data will be used later, and it is difficult to correct it later (McGANN 2016; PIERAZZO 2016; DEBRECZENI 2014:2–8). Already at the developmental stage, the creators of the database must be aware of what they want to use the database for, but digital databases are also designed to be scalable and complementary. In comparison with previous scientific practices, constant renewal and instability creates uncertainty. Book-based critical editions of texts have never been perfect either, but at the time of their creation, from theoretical, methodological and practical aspects, they were closed creations and that is how they came into the world of scientific research (McGANN 2014:26). Digital databases will, by their very nature, never achieve this. However, in terms of reliability and credibility, it is even more confusing that most digital text editions do not explain what textualization procedures have been performed on their texts, i.e., they do not disclose the "history" of the texts and do not make them available in their raw form. They do not display the entire corpus, the criteria for text selection are not clear, and neither

| Vlaams (1020) |
| Noord-Brabants (927) |
| [+] Toon resterende 44 |
| **Type bron** |
| mondeling (26115) |
| boek (8360) |
| internet (3473) |
| e-mail (1581) |
| vragenlijst (1010) |
| brief (908) |
| [+] Toon resterende 17 |
| **Subgenre** |
| sage (25724) |
| mop (10460) |
| broodjeaapverhaal (3024) |
| raadsel (2125) |
| sprookje (1921) |
| personal narrative (1040) |
| [+] Toon resterende 7 |

Figure 9a.

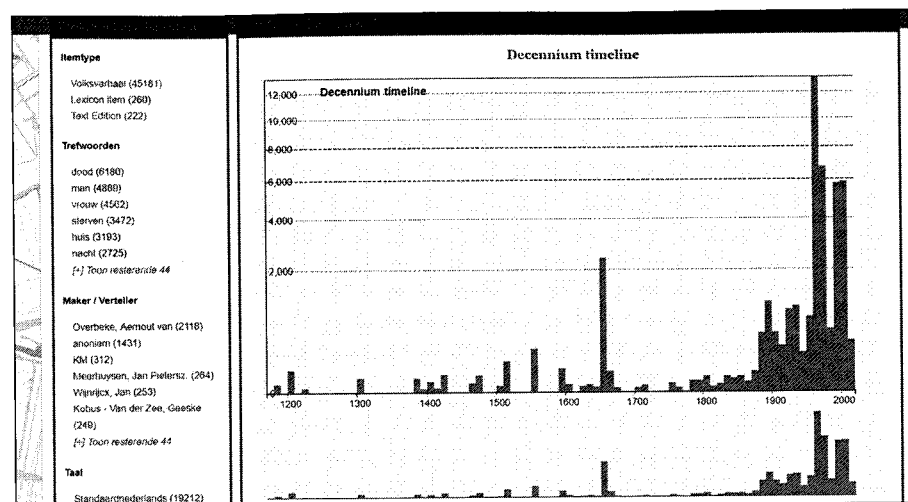| Helmond (Noord-Brabant) (60) |
| Broek in Waterland (Noord-Holland) (50) |
| Schiedam (Zuid-Holland) (48) |
| Oostermeer (46) |
| Wittenberg (45) |
| Amsterdam (Noord-Holland) (41) |
| [+] Toon resterende 44 |
| **Naam Overig in Tekst** |
| God (933) |
| Sterke Hearke (623) |
| Jan (417) |
| Belg (403) |
| Hearke (251) |
| Nederlander (250) |
| [+] Toon resterende 44 |

Figure 9b.

Figure 9c.

Figure 9a-9b-9c. Details from the left sidebar of the Dutch folktale database. Figure 9a shows the quantification of source types, Figure 9b the quantification of word occurrence, and Figure 9c is the dynamic timeline of the folktale database. http://www.verhalenbank.nl/visuals/timeline?q=&facet=&free= (accessed September 28, 2017)

Figure 10. A quantified overview of keyword sets in Sagnagrunnur. http://sagnagrunnur.com/grunnur/tags.php?lang=en (accessed September 28, 2017)

is what might not be included in the database. As a counterexample, the Dutch folktale database is a unique and refreshing exception, which quantifies its corpus of more than 40,000 texts through a variety of criteria in a clear, user-friendly way. In the right sidebar of the interface, one has metrics regarding the entire and constantly expanding stock, essentially all the major metadata in the database, such as source type, genre, subject, collector, collection time and location, names in the texts; by clicking on them, one may immediately navigate to the desired texts. Sorting is done in a descending order, starting
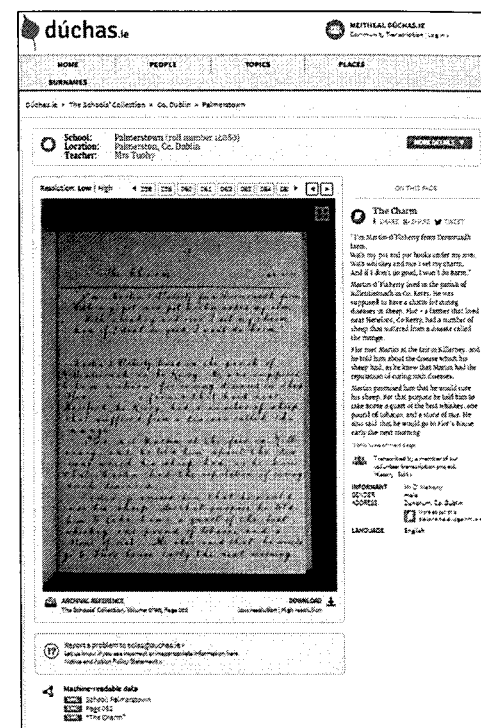
Figure 11. User interface of The Schools' Collection. https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbes/4428221/4386886/4456663 (accessed September 28, 2017)

with the most common data. For example, with regard to the source type, it is clear that texts that come from "mondeling," i.e., collection from orality, are the most numerous with 26,115 data, and among the names found in the texts, God leads with 933 hits. In the Dutch folktale database, the review of the corpus is also supported by user-driven dynamic time graphs.

Contrary to the above, Sagragrunnur provides quantified, synoptic views only in terms of keywords.

The Danish Folklore Nexus or the Portuguese legend database also do not disclose their principles of transcription, and numerous other examples could be listed. In many cases, as mentioned above, it is not even clear where exactly the text on the screen comes from. Of course, there are some positive counterexamples of this; in the Irish The Schools' Collection project, the manuscripts are scanned page by page, volunteers can also transcribe them page by page, and at the bottom of each page, one finds the exact reference to that page. They even produced a transcription guide and demo video for volunteer transcribers.[81]

In some folklore databases, e.g., Romanian love charms, Finnish and Estonian runes, ETKSpace, or the Irish The Schools' Collection, the XML download of the raw text they used has been made accessible, while others, like the Dutch folktale database, the Pan-Hispanic ballad or Portuguese legend database or the databases of the Lithuanian folklore archive do not, even though this would be crucial in terms of later usability. According to digital humanities experts, the publication of raw data and the self-reflexive documentation of the databases will be indispensable in the future, and due to the ever-changing nature of digital texts, analyses should be rerun from time to time, not published statically as a definitive outcome reflecting a certain state (RIEDER – RÖHLE 2012:81).

The creation of scientific digital database content is a difficult, complex task that present the humanities with new challenges. At the same time, in parallel with the accurate and conscientious scientific digital textology work, there is massive digitization taking place in the world that is mainly motivated by commerce such as GoogleBooks and library science and of which it is also important to say a few words, since much of the digital content available on the web is precisely due to these efforts. The elusive, philologically unreliable and constantly changing corpus of big data circulating in the

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[81] https://www.duchas.ie/en/info/meitheal (accessed August 16, 2017).

virtual space is in fact contrary to the former humanities practice where the first step in the research was to produce the most accurate and authentic text. Should we deal with these texts, and if so, how can they be used? Opinions in this regard are also divided. Jerome McGann draws attention to the disadvantages of commercial digitization and the monopolization of the field, such as GoogleBooks, highlighting the importance of producing reliable digital data (McGANN 2014:20–40). According to Jockers and Underwood, however, the digital paradigm can often only reach the level of "good enough" texts, while some new types of research do not require extremely precise text editions, so working with "dirty" texts is also possible (JOCKERS – UNDERWOOD 2016:299–301; PRICE 2016). For Leonard and Tangherlini's analysis of the corpus of 19th-century Danish novels found on GoogleBooks, this kind of text quality was quite sufficient. For the texts on ETKSpace, the most important themes were identified with a subcorpus topic modeling algorithm, and then this algorithm was used to filter the corpus of GoogleBoooks for 19th-century novels that deal with "rurality" and a "rural" lifestyle. This, in turn, opened the opportunity to create a pre-selected subcorpus that would be relevant for further research (LEONARD – TANGHERLINI 2013).

DIGITAL METHODS AND ANALYSES

In the abundance of material that digitization brought, new methods are needed to analyze the data, to see the relationships and dynamics between them. Digital humanities use a variety of methods and tools, many of which are just a computer version of an earlier practice, such as statistical methods.[82] According to Bernhard Rieder and Theo Röhle's critical survey of digital methods, the only methods that can be connected to the computer as a new medium are *stimulation, data exploration*, and *automated visualization* (RIEDER – RÖHLE 2012:69–70). Of these methods, it was mostly the various text mining, network theory and visualization methods and tools that have introduced novelties in the digital humanities and thus in the field of computational folkloristics, which is why the examples below are introduced.

Text mining and network theory methods

The basic tools of computer analysis include various methods of *text mining*. As long as a machine-readable text is produced, there are countless options available for analysis, from simple statistics of word frequency through keywords to more complex topic modeling and latent semantic indexing (JOCKERS – UNDERWOOD 2016). Due to the abundance of digital data, often even the simplest, purely statistical surveys and analyses are able to put texts and corpora in a new light. However, text mining methods are capable of much more, a good example of which in the field of folkloristics is the Meertens Institute's MOMFER (Meertens Online Motif FindER), a digitized version of the Thompson *Motif-Index of Folk Literature*. The same motif index has had several online versions already,

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[82] For digital humanities methods and their development, see the most recent overview: HUGHES et al. 2016.

but it was MOMFER that first utilized the additional potential provided by digital methods. Apart from its multiple search options and speed, which is not just for words but also word connections, MOMFER's novelty is that the index has been expanded with a semantic search option. An English semantic dictionary, WordNet, is assigned to the lemmatized motifs of the Thompson index, which indicates syntactic relationships between words with a synonym set. Expansion thus provides an opportunity to explore more general categories and to see the relationships between each motif. According to the developers' own examples, if one searches for animals of color, one will find the green horse, even though neither green nor horse has been given as a search keyword; or if searching for poisoned fruit, the search engine will list the poisoned apple. In view of the current scientific assessment of the motif index, the creators themselves have called into question the true utility of MOMFER; nonetheless, it does provide an exemplar of an innovative, digital edition of a former folkloristic work that can be produced simply and quickly (KARSDORP et al. 2015).[83]

Text mining methods can be a major step forward in the seemingly never-ending cataloging and organizing of folklore archives and corpora. Manual annotation entails many errors that can be eliminated by various supervised and unsupervised automated techniques; moreover, the volume of the content also necessitates the indexing of content by programs (MUISER et al. 2012; BROADWELL et al. 2014). As mentioned above, in the campaign of the Latvian folklore archive, one can add keywords to the typed material, which is an interesting "folksonomy" experiment, actually to find out what a folklore text collected in the early 20th century conjures up in the minds of the contributing lay volunteers, but it is quite questionable whether the Latvian folklore archive will truly be more organized through this method. Subjective, individual keywording can be a concern even in the case of archive staff (GRANASZTÓI 2008), but the new possibilities of keyword generation also gave rise to very productive initiatives. A joint initiative of the Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) and the National Library of Ireland (NLI) has created the *MoTIF Pilot Thesaurus of Irish Folklore*, an experimental digital thesaurus of Irish folklore, which has since been utilized by the staff of University College Dublin for the thematic organization of the material of the aforementioned The Schools' Collection. In order to create the digital thesaurus, seminal handbooks, journals on Irish ethnography and folklore and works of international folkloristics have been used, from which they obtained and created a concept list through controlled retrieval (RYAN 2014a, 2014b).[84] As long as the entire content is machine-readable (in the Irish case: readable), programs can automatically associate texts with different categories.

With more complicated methods of text mining, additional novel results can be achieved. According to Tangherlini and Leonard, the analysis of the previously mentioned GoogleBooks corpus of 19th-century Danish novels is so very progressive because when topic modeling the texts of ETKSpace, the program was not designed to capture identical or similar texts, but rather "semantic similarities across a corpus based on word co-occurrence". That is why topic modeling is good at revealing topics that share the same semantic "feel" (LEONARD – TANGHERLINI 2013:741). Text mining methods complemented by a variety of graph theory and network theory methods can

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[83] http://www.momfer.ml/. (accessed April 10, 2017).
[84] http://apps.dri.ie/motif/vocab/preamble.php (accessed June 8, 2017).

be useful where the keyword method would not be able to find the similar texts. In his idiosyncratic typology, Kristensen himself classified the ghost stories of the headless horses into the category of "unnamed manor lords," but with their computer analysis, Tangherlini and his associates succeeded in classifying the text as a ghost story, even though it did not contain the word ghost or any of its synonyms (ABELLO et al. 2012). In another analysis of the *Danske Sagen*'s texts, they used a latent topic discovery method (LDA: Latent Dirichlet Allocation), which helped topics emerge from the corpus that did not appear in Kristensen's or Tangherlini's classification. Further research should reveal why and how these texts are associated (TANGHERLINI 2013a:17–19).

Text mining connects with the methods and tools of complex network research at several points. Jamshid J. Tehrani, an anthropologist at Durham University, analyzes folktales using the theories and methods of phylogenetics (study of the evolution of cognate relationships) and cladistics (methodology of tracing descendant lineages) (TEHRANI 2013a). In his first study, he attempted to solve the much debated folkloristic issue of the relationship between Little Red Riding Hood (ATU 333) and The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids (ATU 123) with the help of algorithms.The article was accompanied by extraordinary interest in the natural sciences, was among the 100 most read articles in its year of publication, and was downloaded more than 73,000 times. His results were sharply criticized by the folklorists of CNRS (French National Center for Scientific Research), mainly in terms of the texts studied (58 tales, in English, thus completely ignoring the rich data of German and French variants of the type), the use of concepts (what is a motif), and the method used (NeighborNet software) (LAJOYE et al. 2013).[85] Since then, he has adjusted the method of analysis and the test material in many ways to make them much more nuanced, and working with computer scientists, he attempted to reexamine another highly debated folkloristic issue. Does Little Red Riding Hood come from an oral source, that is, did Perrault (and subsequently the Grimms) adapt it from there or from a written source? Tehrani and his associates try to prove the former, and thereby refute the assertion of recent folktale research (TEHRANI et al. 2015; TEHRANI – D'HUY 2017). A great deal of media coverage was also generated by his joint article with Sara Graça da Silva of the University of Lisbon's Institute for the Study of Literature and Tradition, in which they attempted to determine the age of many well-known international fairy tales. For example, they claim that The Smith and the Devil (ATU 330) is six thousand years old, that is, the roots of the text can be traced back to the Bronze Age (GRAÇA DA SILVA – TEHRANI 2016).

Visualization

In addition to text mining methods, the most popular ones are the various *visualization procedures*,[86] so much so that, according to some, the digital paradigm is seeing a geographic and visual revolution (PRESNER – SHEPARD 2016). Of the visualization tools, it is the visualization of data on a digital map that has to be highlighted foremost, as it has significantly spread since the advent of the geographic information system (GIS). The
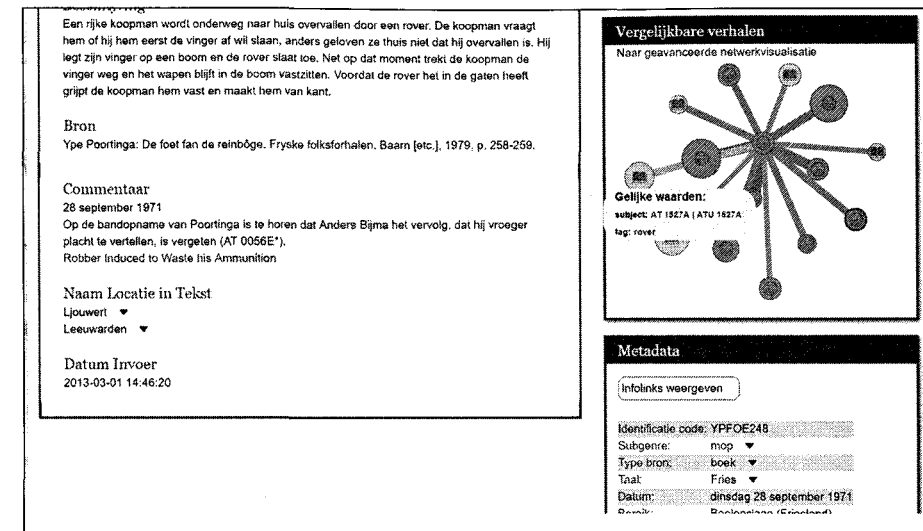
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[85] For Tehrani's response to the critique, see TEHRANI 2013b.
[86] For an overview, see: SINCLAIR – ROCKWELL 2016.

Figure 12. Dynamic visualization of the data connections of a text in the Dutch folktale database in the right sidebar. http://www.verhalenbank.nl/items/show/14643 (accessed September 28, 2017)

Icelandic folk legend database or the Dutch folktale database also use dynamic maps linked to Googlemaps. Digital cartography has widely increased the ways and means of data visualization. In ETKSpace, Kristensen's material was assigned to a 19th-century historical map from roughly the time of collection, and the frequency of a topic is displayed on heat maps (TANGHERLINI 2013:22–23; TANGHERLINI – BROADWELL 2016). One can zoom in on heatmaps, where each vertical column indicates the number of texts collected in a given town: the taller the column, the higher the number. Naturally, digital visualization is not exhausted in maps. It is typically used to represent multimodal and multidimensional interfaces between data, graphs and networks. For example, in the Dutch folktale database, when one sees a specific text, one can immediately see in the right sidebar the possible connection points of the text, which can be opened right away with a click. In this case, the user can once again zoom in on the data visualization, where the location of the connection points (the farther they are from each other, the fewer common properties of the two data there are) and the thickness of the connecting lines (the thicker they are, the more matching metadata there are) can provide opportunities for further interpretation. A similar visualization solution is offered by the Icelandic Sagragrunnur for the keyword sets of legends. WossiDia also quantifies the connection points associated with individual data and displays them on the right side of the interface with a visualization that imitates the drawer system of the physical archive.

Due to its nature, data visualization is the most conspicuous element of innovation in the digital humanities. At the same time, many are pointing out that colorful, eye-catching images should be used with sufficient criticism because they can be misleading and, in contrast to an argumentation, hard to refute; a new visualization is actually needed, behind which there might be another algorithm (RIEDER – RÖHLE 2012:73–75). Not only do some in the humanities find the digital humanities strange and suspicious because the new text editing practice entails thousands of challenges and unpredictable

Figure 13. Data connections in WossiDIA. https://apps.wossidia.de/webapp/run (accessed September 28, 2017)
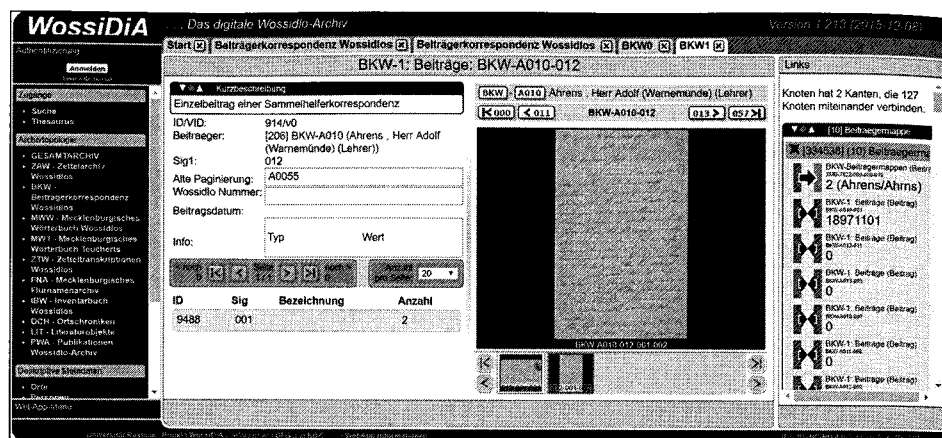
problems, but also because they have had little access to the analytical processes. The complicated mathematical calculations of algorithms and graphs may be understood by few in the humanities as they have not been trained for this. In an analysis, they only see the input and the output, not the actual analysis procedures performed by the program. Since they cannot criticize the method or the analysis itself, they are usually forced to do so with other elements of the research, such as the quality of the examined corpus and the theoretical principles of the research. Tehrani's and his colleagues' claims, for example, cannot be refuted by a traditional humanities argumentation; they can only be confirmed or repudiated by an analysis of another corpus or an extended corpus, or of the same corpus but with other algorithms and other software programs. In the absence of this, one can only point out that the motif definition they use is too subjective or that the analysis does not take into account the translation theory issues of texts translated from different languages, and so on. The phenomenon of "black boxes" is a common concern within digital humanities, and theorists of the discipline are proposing more collaborative, inter- and multidisciplinary research where those in the humanities and computer scientists work together while maintaining an ongoing discourse and genuine dialogue (RIEDER – RÖHLE 2012:75–76; LIN 2012).[87]

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

A discussion of the broader theoretical frameworks and scientific hypotheses of digital content and methods is far beyond the scope of this study, but it is necessary to touch on the subject briefly, since digital data and databases and the digital methods used

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[87] With regard to the phenomenon, Paßmann and Boersma recently said that in doing research, there will always be "black boxes" that cannot and should not be opened. It is more important for a researcher to develop a competence that, although s/he may not fully understand the algorithm, would allow him/her to determine when to trust a result and when to question it. PASSMANN – BOERSMA 2017: 141–142.

for their analysis are bound to theories equally heavily, if not more heavily, than their analog counterparts. This is important to point out because technological innovation may lead some, especially the more popular readership of scientific results, to a heuristic misconception that through computer-based procedures, humanities research can finally become more objective and quantifiable, and that this hard data will make it more like natural sciences, and data-driven research will eventually put an end to the world of theories and hypotheses (RIEDER – RÖHLE 2012; SCHÄFER – VAN ES 2017:15). Few people, even among the creators of folklore databases, reflect on how pre-determined digital content and methods themselves are from a theoretical point of view. It is only in the self-reflexive, second and third wave of digital humanities that the epistemological characteristics of digitization are more emphatically recognized. Let us look at the theoretical frameworks digital humanities research fits into, what basic assumptions it relies on, to what extent it is a paradigm changer, and how computational folkloristics relates to all this.

One of the most important theoretical and methodological starting points is undoubtedly the change of scale, which the authors capture in many kinds of expressions. The general term *large-scale* data analysis, or *distant reading,* a term used mainly by literary scholars (MORETTI 2007), literary *macroanalysis* (JOCKERS 2013), or *folklore macroscope* (TANGHERLINI 2014) are all terms that try to convey the same, mostly quantitative, change of perspective, the bird's-eye view or God's eye view from where one can finally "see the forest from the tree" (ABELLO et al. 2012:70). The premise of the view is that, in contrast to the earlier *close reading* of texts/phenomena/data, the totality of the data can help us better understand the context of each text, and hence the individual texts themselves (JOCKERS 2013:27). Many have already argued that this change of scale is not the result of digital humanities. Quantitative humanities have a long history; one just has to think of 19th-century positivism or the *longue durée* concept of macrostructures that emerge from data associated with the Annales school (JOCKERS 2013:19; KOKAS 2016:407; JOCKERS – UNDERWOOD 2016:292). From a little further away, the traditional historic-geographic method(s) in folkloristics also started out from similar foundations, since the collection of as many variants and as many texts as possible was a prerequisite for discerning and unraveling the story and diffusion route of an individual motif or form in order to ultimately determine the origin of these texts. According to Timothy R. Tangherlini, for this reason, digital folklore databases and computer analyses led to the emergence of a "new historic-geographic method," where the end goal is not finding the origin, the *Urform,* but rather the understanding of the latent geo-semantic relatedness of texts (TANGHERLINI 2013:21). Why is this important in folkloristics? What added meaning can 30,000 belief legends have from a bird's-eye view that could not be accessed before through close reading? Using the *WitchHunter & TrollFinder* program, ETKSpace researchers determined from texts and their geographical locations, for example, that stories of giants were told exclusively along large former glacier beds, or that along major trade routes, a significant number of stories survived of hidden folk/mound dwellers who, according to Danish folklore, routinely rob travellers, or that tellers consistently placed elves hundreds of kilometers away, in Jutland, which in 19th-century Denmark was still an uncultivated, wild territory (TANGHERLINI – BROADWELL 2017:144–151). With *GhostScope & TreasureX: Conceptual Geographies*, they explored the geographic direction between individual tellers and their stories, the starting point of the analysis being that each story teller

is a conceptual center, and in the case of thousands of tellers, geographic locations, directions and distances should be examined from this vantage point, too. The analysis showed that in 19th-century Denmark, most women's narratives contained references only to their actual residence or maximum a neighboring settlement. In contrast, the narratives of men, who led a more mobile lifestyle, covered a range of 20-40 km and important economic sites, too (TANGHERLINI 2013:20). From the relationship between lifeworlds, lifestyles and the geography of stories, it has also become apparent that while informants generally talk about events close to their place of residence, among mariners, this may increase several fold along the coast (TANGHERLINI – BROADWELL 2017:139–140). Although the above may not seem like a remarkable result at first glance, by fine-tuning the database and formulating new questions, we can get closer to understanding the way men relate to their environment through stories.

In terms of volume, large-scaleness in digital humanities is displayed not only horizontally, but also in depth, vertically. Another key concept in databases is a *thick/ deep corpus/map*. From the use of the concept, it is clear that the approach is related to the Geertzian thick description, albeit considerably adapted in its own image (PRESNER et al. 2014:18–19). In fact, thickness here practically means that by linking a variety of data sets, it becomes possible to analyze the same material from different perspectives, and the emphasis is on meaning-making defined by the context. According to this view, databases are never completed, thus they are always relative. At the same time, their "thickness" lies not only in the fact that they represent more data sets simultaneously, but also in the fact that they reveal different paths to understanding. Thick maps thereby bring certain natural science disciplines, for example, the former descriptive, static geography, closer to the modes of understanding of humanities and to the pluralistic interpretation of phenomena (PRESNER et al. 2014:18–19; PRESNER – SHEPARD 2016).

The mass digitization of data and texts and large-scale analyses can often override existing literary or folklore canons and expand the examined corpora in unprecedented ways. At the same time, it must be recognized that, currently, digitization is often haphazard, and obviously it is not only that which is on the Internet, i.e., what has already been digitized, that exists.[88] Therefore, once databases are successfully coordinated, the results of computer analyses should be treated with due criticism. As for folkloristics, for example, there are numerous unfinished initiatives and projects on the Internet, and the databases differ widely not only in terms of quality but also in terms of the volume of folklore texts. In the Romanian love charms database, for instance, there are only 119 texts, but an even better illustration is that while the Belgian or Dutch folktale databases contain more than 40,000 texts, in the Catalan database, 6,000 of the texts are only referenced, and in the French folktale database, there were around 100 texts in 2014 (MEDER 2014a). How can such disproportions be offset in computer analyses?

Researchers carrying out large-scale data analyses often point out that new, computer-based facilities are not a substitute for earlier humanities research. Close reading is not eliminated by distant reading, because both are required. In fact, the combination of the two, that is, the possibility of navigating between the two, is what can truly rejuvenate research (ABELLO et al. 2012; JOCKERS 2014).

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[88] On the issue of the irregularity of corpora, cf. JOCKERS – UNDERWOOD 2016:301.

Large-scale analyses, thick corpora, and even network theory have been part of humanities long before the emergence of digital technology, although the new medium has been extremely helpful in their development. Even in traditional humanities, their main role was to point out structures, patterns and meanings that would not have been noticed otherwise. *Pattern (frame)* is a favorite, much-used magical terminus technicus in digital humanities, although its definition raises philosophical questions, and because of the inconsistent use of the concept, it is not at all clear what traditional and digital humanities mean by it, and often not even what it can be applied to (RIEDER – RÖHLE 2012:70; DIXON 2012). Comparing the pattern recognition of analog research with the methods of digital humanities, however, the huge difference is that in the latter, the patterns are offered by computer programs and not recognized by the researcher.[89] While in some cases patterns may be offered through computer algorithms in places where they are completely meaningless and irrelevant (TANGHERLINI 2013a:23), this is in fact the paradigm-changing novelty of digital humanities. At this point, we have arrived at artificial intelligence research, where the objective is to teach the program not just to read but also to "understand" what it is reading. Behind the operation of the digital methods and tools addressed in this study lies the basic research in artificial intelligence (language technology, computational linguistics, computational narratology). In practice, text mining and Natural Language Process (NLP) use a variety of methods and tools for this. Each of them needs a consistent knowledge base, such as a detailed thesaurus, a lexicon, and regular grammars. Folklore genres provide an excellent homogeneous raw material for this, a good example of which is that many of the presenters at the 2012 conference of *The Third Workshop on Computational Models of Narrative* reported on the results of folklore research, and the organizer of the conference was none other than computer scientist and artificial intelligence researcher Mark A. Finlayson, who wrote his dissertation on the machine learning of Proppian tale morphology (FINLAYSON 2016).

CONCLUSION

From the beginning up until the present day, folkloristics has been struggling to legitimize itself as an independent discipline. According to Lajos Katona, an important figure of Hungarian folkloristics in the early 20th century, a separate discipline is that which has its own subject and method, and the acquired knowledge forms an independent system distinct from its co-disciplines (LANDGRAF 2016:507). Compared with this early 20th-century notion, the inter- and multidisciplinary research of postmodernity has significantly transformed this concept of science; the boundaries of the various disciplines are today less distinct, and a great number of new, temporary forms have emerged due to a high degree of specialization. Moreover, the digital humanities seem to be radically transforming the organizational and structural way of academic life (BERRY 2012; EVANS – REES 2012; THOMAS 2016; McCARTY 2016), while new forms of knowledge production are also emerging. We do not yet know what the text editing practice which is completely independent of book-based thinking will be like, and what the knowledge production

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[89] For statistics-based computer pattern recognition procedures, see GOLDEN 2015.

that is not thinking in books and footnotes will look like – this will only be seen by the next generation who is born into it (DEBRECZENI 2014:38–39).

However, the digital humanities are functioning progressively more like an independent discipline, even in the sense that Lajos Katona defined it.[90] If one looks more closely at the objectives of computational folkloristics, one can see that most of them correspond to the general objectives and areas of digital humanities (ABELLO et al. 2012; TANGHERLINI 2014, 2016). The practical aspects of digitization, the classification of texts, the issues of canons and corpora, the tools and methods used on digital content (text mining, visualization), and the theories behind them (distant reading, thick corpora, pattern recognition), are not exclusively folkloristic issues. What then is folklore in computational folkloristics? Where and what exactly is the role of the folklorist?

On the one hand, for a successful digitization, experts in the field, or to use an IT jargon, *domain experts* are indispensable. Namely, without the background knowledge and the knowledge of folkloristics and folklore archives presented in the first part of the study, it is hard to imagine the establishment and operation of a well-functioning scientific folklore database. On the other hand, a folklore database can only be designed and implemented by someone who knows not only the material but also the opportunities and pitfalls of the new technology. But this does not mean that folklorists or other humanities experts need to re-train themselves into mathematicians and computer scientists, or that in the future only folklorists that are able to write programs will be needed. What it does mean is that in the current fever of digitization, folklorists also need to be aware of the process of knowledge production and be able to utilize the new technological tools for themselves. It is important, therefore, in the 21st century that humanists be versed in content creation so that they can treat them with adequate source criticism, since the data generated and retrieved by computer programs must be used and interpreted by a researcher just as critically and rigorously as a historian would with material retrieved from an archive or other repository. The data is never passive, and data production is an active process in the digital paradigm (RIEDER – RÖHLE 2012; JOCKERS 2013; KOKAS 2016:412; VAN ES – SCHÄFER 2017).

In the early 2000s, the folklore database seemed to be a mere tool; in Vilmos Voigt's words, "database is a label of product, a trademark" and it could therefore not be "challenged" or even criticized because it is merely a new technological innovation "without any deeper theoretical background or profound mental activity" (VOIGT 2006:308). Although the database is indeed a tool, behind it, just as behind analog text editions, lie many theoretical and methodological decisions that need to be recognized in order to interpret the results in a scientifically valid way. The focal points and patterns produced via data visualization or text mining are not the ultimate objective of research, and neither is the database itself. The syndetic, encyclopedic logic of databases, the patterns and focal points are worthless without the interpretive narrative of the researcher, since "there will always be a movement from facts to interpretation of facts" (JOCKERS 2013:30).[91]

In addition to acquiring adequate skills in source criticism, the main task of folklorists, knowing the opportunities afforded by computers, is to pose folkloristically relevant

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[90] Major areas of digital humanities developments: 1. digital content 2. digital tools 3. digital methods. Cf. HUGHES et al. 2016:151.

[91] Cf. also: MANOVICH 2009; KOKAS 2016:412.

questions to the digital material, especially ones that would have been impossible to answer because of the earlier technology (MEDER et al. 2016:93). It would be too bold to delineate what constitutes a folkloristic question today. According to Tangherlini's broad and slightly simplified definition, folkloristics has from the beginning to the present comprised the study of a diverse relationship between *people* (tellers and researchers), *places* (where they were collected and mentioned in stories), and *stories* (or folkloric expression in general) (ABELLO et al. 2012:65). Although there are few good examples of how to digitize the folklore archive or collection so that it will indeed become a tool for folklore research (TANGHERLINI – BROADWELL 2014:225), the rudimentary attempts briefly summarized in this study show that researchers in the digital paradigm are concerned with and pose questions about all the folkloristic issues (textualization dilemmas, classification and typology issues, oikotypes, structuralism, diffusion and variation, intangible cultural heritage, origins, and so on) that were important in the past. With the informatization of tools and methods, individual research theories or models from the natural sciences (probability analysis and static physics, phylogenetic biology, etc.) are being reiterated. However, some authors urge us to reconsider whether adopting the theories of hard science is necessary, since humanities function fundamentally differently, and their purpose is not necessarily to provide evidence but to "develop questions and discover new insights" (RAMSAY 2003:173).[92]

There is no real criticism of computational folkloristic analyses yet; its practitioners choose their words carefully and focus more on developing and testing tools and methods for the time being, as they cannot yet offer radically new questions and results. The many dilemmas and unanswered questions outlined in the study, however, were not meant to be a criticism of digital textology, and especially not a deterrent to the creation of folklore databases or computer analyses; in fact, the purpose of the study was quite the opposite. Although digitization entails many problems and pitfalls, the question remains open: how do we store, analyze and deal with folklore archives of gigantic dimensions? The digital humanities, and computational folkloristics in particular, provide a new but non-exclusive opportunity to answer these questions.

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[92] Referenced in VAN ES – SCHÄFER 2017:15.

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Reviews

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Emese Ilyefalvi earned her Master's Degrees at Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest) as a Folklorist and Ethnographer (2013) and as an Expert in Religious Studies (2014). Presently she is a PhD Candidate at the same university. In her dissertation, she examines early modern Hungarian witch trials. The main focus of her research is to understand different verbal interactions, especially the use of verbal magic. From 2013 to 2018 she has worked as a junior research fellow in the "East–West" Research Project. Within the framework of this project, she published a new Hungarian charm collection from written sources in 2014: *Ráolvasások. Gyűjtemény a történeti forrásokból (1488–1850).[Charms. Collection from the Historical Sources (1488–1850)]*. Currently she is working on the English edition of the Hungarian charm collection together with Éva Pócs. She also engaged with digital humanities and computational folkloristics. In 2015, she attended the Folklore Fellows' Summer School ("Doing Folkloristics in the Digital Age") and started to make an online digital database for Hungarian charms and incantations. She published several articles in Hungarian and international journals *(Ethnographia, Replika, Incantatio)* on these topics. In 2017, she was a visiting scholar for 3 months in Vienna (Collegium Hungaricum Wien), and in 2018 for 5 months in Amsterdam (University of Amsterdam). Since 2013, she has been giving lectures and seminars related to her research at Eötvös Loránd University and the University of Pécs. E-mail: mseilyefalvi@gmail.com

This collection of studies is the outcome of a long-term cooperation of Hungarian historians, ethnographers and archivists working on early modern witchcraft documents. The interdisciplinary research group of witchcraft and demonology studies was originally formed thirty years ago, underwent several minor and major changes over the years, published a great number of source editions (exceeding 6,000 pages in 15 volumes) as well as studies both in Hungarian and English. However, a representative overview accessible to international audiences was still missing. More recently, thanks to an ERC advanced grant in 2013, the research group received considerable new impetus and prepared this volume (among other outputs). The book is edited by Éva Pócs and Gábor Klaniczay, both members of the research group from the start, organizers of two major international conferences (1988 and 1998), and authors of books and articles on witchcraft and demonology issues in Hungary and Transylvania.

The appeal of witchcraft documents attracts scholars who wish to directly reconstruct the great number of trials, their causes and consequences. As a matter of fact, such documents provide information about many further details of historical people's lives: their attitudes, beliefs, fears, everyday life, and so on. A historical anthropologist interested in such issues can indulge in the abundance of judicial sources. It is for this reason that Le Roy Ladurie starts his famous *Montaillou* with a foreword on the close relationship of inquisition and ethnography and Carlo Ginzburg portrays the inquisitor as an anthropologist. Religion and its folkloristic representations, the normative role of religion in micro and macro communities, religious norms and worldviews, conflicts among different confessions and nationalities, the cult of saints, communication with the supernatural, demonology, ethno-medicine, creation myths, practices of cursing and incantations, everyday conflicts and the magical world view of early modern rural life are topics on which the documentation of witch trials provides the richest sources, and of which the erstwhile inquisitors prove to be the earliest experts.

The preface of the volume emphasizes the belatedness of witchcraft accusations in the Central European area. The number of trials increases after 1686; two thirds of the cases are dated after the reoccupation of Buda. We are aware of 2,275 trials altogether, 4,263 witches (3,673 women and 590 men) were accused, and – according to our present understanding – 702 capital punishments were delivered.

The first study is a translation of a chapter from a 1998 book by Ildikó Kristóf on early modern trials in Debrecen and Bihar county (Ördögi *mesterséget nem cselekedtem:*

a boszorkányüldözés társadalmi és *kulturális háttere a kora* újkori *Debrecenben* és *Bihar vármegyében,* 1998, Debrecen: Ethnica). The original research focused on the period of 1575–1766, reviewed 217 trials (303 accused), and – following a historical-anthropological methodology – reconstructed everyday conflicts that underlay the accusations in this urban milieu. The Calvinist environment viewed the benign magic, divination and healing practices with skepticism, suspecting that such activities go against divine providence. Ildikó Kristóf includes medical documents in addition to the usual judicial ones and points out how close the "victim" and the witch lived to each other in spatial and socio-cultural terms. Those who were "far" and did not participate in these everyday conflicts – Gypsies and Roman Catholics – would be left out of the accusations.

László Pakó approached the issue from the opposite direction. By choosing György Igyártó as his subject, a corrupt and selfish procurator in Kolozsvár (today: Cluj-Napoca, Romania) famous for accusing of witchcraft those who accused him – probably rightly – of adultery, corruption, and so on, Pakó provides an example in which it was not local, everyday conflicts of more or less equal actors, but power, influence and ambition that underlay the accusations.

A third party, that of healers, plays the central role in Gábor Klaniczay's study. Modeling the usual structures of witchcraft stories in Kolozsvár, Kiskunhalas, and Hódmezővásárhely, the author emphasizes that besides church demonologists and official prosecutors, healers were the main perpetuators of witchcraft beliefs. Ironically, the boundaries between healing and bewitchment were not always clear, as both were interferences with the mechanisms of the supernatural world, and unsuccessful healing could be easily interpreted as cursing, thus the profession of the healer was not always without dangers.

Judit Kis-Halas reviews the interaction of magic and healing in Nagybánya (Baia Mare), and explores the functioning "medical market" of the town. Specialists of folk magic, divining, treasure hunting, and love charms are just as important actors of the story as the witch herself. A recurrent topic in the volume, also discussed in this study, is how Protestant demonology and Catholic conceptions influenced witchcraft beliefs.

In "Shamanism or Witchcraft?" Éva Pócs examines 35 táltos (24 women, 9 men, one boy, and one girl) in the documents of 18th-century trials. A táltos could find himself or herself in both roles: that of the healer and that of the witch. Táltos had themselves serious convictions about their own supernatural capacities, as theirs was not seen as a punishable activity in itself. In other cases, though, the role of the táltos was merely used by some actors as an excuse to evade punishment or simply to get money. The author also reconsiders the continuity theory of the táltos with the pagan Hungarian shamans of the early medieval centuries.

Péter Tóth G. tries to reconstruct the end of the story, which is not all that easy, as witchcraft accusations considerably post-date their official ban in the 1740's. The decriminalization of witchcraft was a long story (1740–1848), partly because the attitude of the Habsburg court was somewhat ambivalent, and partly because some magical activities (fraud, cemetery exhuming, etc.) remained punishable long after witch accusations were prohibited. Maria Theresa banned witch accusations only from the judicial courts, not from the scene of public morals.

Dániel Bárth contrasts 18th-century Catholic Enlightenment with the enduring accusations and points out how conflicted the Catholic leaders' attitude was towards

miracles and white magic, and how they tried to denounce them as folk superstitions. A case study of self-appointed exorcists is highly informative about the unease the Church felt about the concepts of benediction.

Finally, Ágnes Hesz shows that the story is not really over; in her narrative analysis, she reviews the explanations of an unnamed contemporary rural community in Transylvania and points out how witchcraft beliefs help structure the world and interpret life, and how it is in fact necessary for certain contemporary communities to maintain such beliefs.

I find the volume an exciting read not only because it is the most recent selection of witchcraft studies in Hungary, which it certainly is, but rather because through its case studies and historical models, it brings close historical people's lives, fears, and activities. As historical anthropology and micro-history usually does: it brings history close to the reader.

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Orvosistenektől a hortikulturális utópiáig [From Gods of Medicine to Horticultural Utopias] is the second publication in the series of Anthropological Studies of Religion from Central and Eastern Europe. Despite the studies being organized around a single topic, the editors' concept was to provide the most comprehensive presentation of the research group's activities. This is reflected not only in the thematic diversity indicated by the title but also in the objectives of the interdisciplinary study and its methodological versatility. The analyses provide a broad cross-section in time and space, and these two aspects (time and space) define the volume's structure. Following the editors' preface, the series of studies is opened by Judit Anna Tóth's article titled *Animal masquerades in the late Antiquity – St. Augustine's testimony?* By presenting ancient and medieval sources regarding the celebration of Kalendae Ianuariae, the author mediates the various phenomena of community religious life in the centuries of the evolution of Christianity through intersections of interpretation axes such as paganism–Christianity, Antiquity–Middle Ages, east–west, institutionalized cult and spontaneous, grassroots organizations. The focus of Ildikó Csepregi's study, *The emergence of the divine physician and physician saints,* is the special form of sacred communication related to saints and sacred places called incubation. The framework of interpretation is once again provided by the transition from paganism to Christianity, as well as the many parallelisms that can be demonstrated in the phenomena she examines. Many elements of the narratives of ancient healing deities providing cures through a dream can also

be found in the stories of Christian healing saints. Bea Vidacs's study, *A Hungarian and a Lebanese Seer*, presents two women who are separated by a huge geographical distance but linked by their visions of the suffering of Jesus. The scientific representation of the Lebanese seer and the material of the documentary about her is compared with her own research experience with the Hungarian seer. One of the common feature of the cults that developed around the two persons is that they are both localized in the [habitat?] of the seers, and an interpretation that goes beyond the Christian creed and correlates the sufferings of the Passion with the fate of one's own nation can be observed in both. Éva Szacsvay's writing, *On the workings of the devil of the storm: "On the nature of natural phenomena..." Lessons from a translated sermon*, deals with the Hungarian adaptation of a German sermon and investigates the causes that brought on the modification of the text. The differences in the Hungarian translation are manifested primarily in the use of Hungarian beliefs as examples and the simplification or lack of scientific explanations. For the latter, the author seeks the explanation in the educational background of the two (Hungarian and German) pastors, but also refers to the possibility of formulation tailored to the understanding of Hungarian audiences. It seems that, to the Hungarian pastor, more important than a preparedness in the subject of physics was a rhetorical motivation, that is, the presentation of examples that could be interpreted by the audience. Laura Iancu's study, *"Religion should be slowly taking root." Historical data to the 19th-century religiosity of Moldavian Catholics*, explores local doctrinal religious phenomena and their impact on individual lives. In his study, *"In his left hand, his little written book." The relationship between book, literacy, and "science" among the Csángós along the Trotuş river*, György Takács focuses on literacy and its magical aspects by analyzing an excerpt from a prayer common in Csíkszék that regards the book as a symbolic object. He enumerates the important connotations of the verb 'read' in terms of ethnographic/anthropological interpretation and highlights the common semantic range of reading and praying. The importance of the unchanged repetition of the text emerges in the linguistic relationship of reading and praying. In her study, *Love as a disease: The notions of the Hungarians of Gyimes regarding romantic love and love spells*, Judit Balatonyi deals with a topic less often studied by anthropologists: love, its symptoms and its social interpretations. The work, rich on data gained from extensive fieldwork and numerous interviews, approaches the subject primarily through the medical-anthropological definition of the disease, but through its descriptions and conclusions, it organically connects with the literature of a much wider scope on spells and witchcraft. Éva Pócs's *Shamanism or witchcraft? The táltos in witch courts* examines the community role of a specialist called táltos based on the testimonies of 18th-century Hungarian witch trial documents. The author revises the former concept of the táltos, reinterpreting and supplementing it in many respects. The sources indicate that it is only in their name that the táltos differ from the magical specialists with other supernatural abilities of the period being examined. In this sense, the táltos and witches appear in a common system in the contemporary beliefs and ritual practices of Hungarians. Lehel Peti's writing, *The gifts of the Holy Spirit and charismatic rites in the Pentecostal communities of a Moldavian micro-region*, presents the various local adaptations of the movement through the example of three local Pentecostal groups. The understanding of the function of Pentecostalism in communities with different socio-cultural backgrounds is examined primarily through the concepts of gifts from the Holy

Spirit and their ritual representation. Judit Kis-Halas's study, *Horticultural utopia: The local interpretations of a global spiritual movement*, aims to present the interactions between globality and locality based on the example of the Hungarian reception of the Russian New Age movement of Anastasianism. According to the author, the humble reception of the movement in Hungary may be explained by the fact that the ideology of an environmentally conscious economy that returns to old techniques and organizational frameworks, which is of central importance to the Anastasians, has already been „claimed" by the more established eco-village initiatives (along with the social base susceptible to such ideology). Ilona Nagy's article, *From apocrypha to folk bibles*, the closing essay dealing with issues of textual folkloristics, discusses the examination of parabiblical narratives about the Old Testament in Hungarian folklore in the context of apocryphal documents. She presents the literature of apocrypha spanning multiple disciplines, focusing mainly on the problems of defining the concept.

Terminology and conceptual definitions often define research topics, directions, methods, and may influence their conclusions. The need to reconsider definitions emerges not only in Ilona Nagy's study but also in Éva Pócs's, such as regarding the semantic domain of táltos canonized in ethnography. Its association with the pre-Conquest shamanistic practice of the Hungarians was most probably facilitated by the Finno-Ugric origin of the word and its correspondences in current-day related languages. The essential issue that links several studies in the volume is the relationship between literacy and orality. Writing and book appear as magical entities in traditional village communities separated by time and space as well as in contemporary, esoteric movements of diverse composition (György Takács and Judit Kis-Halas). Éva Szacsvay presents the combined effect of orality and the written forms of elite culture in the translation practice of sermon literature, while Ilona Nagy points out that although oral and written literature are different, they cannot be separated. The studies of Lehel Peti and Judit Kis-Halas are linked by the examination of the effects of linguistic and cultural discrepancies. They reveal the specific interactions between globality and locality and investigate the possible causes of local adaptations considerably diverging from the initial phenomenon. Lehel Peti's research also illustrates how the disappearance of pagan healing and divining specialists brings on the emergence of alternative Christian solutions for functions for which there is still a strong social demand.

The monographic studies that appear in the volume and the writings presenting the initial phase of a particular research are combined with novel questions and adequate conclusions based on rich data and thorough fieldwork. By aligning philological studies with contemporary ethnographic and anthropological field experiences, not only do processes of change emerge, so do significant motifs and phenomena appearing in newer and newer contexts, connecting the present and the past.

MISKOLCZY, Ambrus (ed.): *Felvilágosodás és babonaság. Erdélyi néphiedelem-gyűjtés 1789-90-ben.* [Enlightenment and Superstitions. Collecting Folk Beliefs in Transylvania in 1789-1790]. 2016, Budapest: L'Harmattan – PTE Néprajz Kulturális Antropológia Tanszék. 297. ISBN 978-963-414-165-5 (Fontes Ethnologiae Hungaricae XII.) ISSN 1586-2062

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In recent decades, significant changes have taken place in the Hungarian research of folk belief texts. Myths, legends, folk belief texts and their cognates collected "from the people" continue to be published in succession. The devotional practices of Christian denominations are being studied more and more by scholars of "folk religiosity." Since they rely on mostly written (and even printed) sources, the textological value of historical sources has increased and more and more of them have been published (witch trials, incantations, etc.).

An appropriate examination of all these calls for historical philology and accurate source editions. After all, written texts are much clearer in their references to parallels than orally transmitted data. Anyone who has worked with such texts knows that even the most well-known texts are unique, often containing a real surprise. And their presentation requires deep textological knowledge. Fortunately, the text editions directed by Éva Pócs (see, for example, the previous volumes of *Fontes Ethnologiae Hungaricae*) encompass both Hungarian and international perspectives. The present volume provides a remarkably thorough commentary: about 40 percent of the book is comprised of the introduction of historian-philologist Ambrus Miskolczy, which, in fact, makes it a mini-monograph. He was the best specialist for accomplishing this precise edition (following many long years of work). That some documents of an Enlightenment-era Transylvanian folk belief survey have been preserved has been a known fact. However, Miskolczy's overview clarifies what was done differently in this survey than we thought and what we still cannot paint an accurate picture of.

In the spring of 1789, Michael Brukenthal (1746–1813), the governor of the military district of Fogaras at the time, assembled a questionnaire and handed it over to about twenty pastors. According to the Hungarian-language version dated April 26, 1789, he „… wished to know what superstitions and false beliefs prevailed …" in individual settlements, especially among ordinary people. (The document is now in the Hungarian National Archives, which Miskolczy addresses on pages 131–134.) The Hungarian circular had ten addressees. The German version of the circular (… Waß für Vorurtheile und Aberglauben noch unter dem gemeinen Mann herschen …) that was also sent to ten recipients is similarly in the Hungarian National Archives, and Miskolczy addresses it on pages 134–136. The governor expected to receive the responses to the questions by October of that year. All in all, the texts that were found came from three Evangelical Saxon, three Calvinist Hungarian, and one Greek Catholic Romanian priest in Transylvania.

At the end of the 18th century, the social sciences of the Enlightenment attempted to change habitual lifestyle, among other things, by trying to acquire specific, systematized knowledge first. The superstition survey served this same purpose, so that, after polemicizing the world view it revealed, rationality may win. Evaluating some of the questions and answers is still complicated today, and even more so as the individual communities represented a very complicated social environment.

But by the time the texts of the Brukenthal survey were produced, the age of the French Revolution had arrived, and not only the Catholic Church but the ruling class were also frightened by the actions of the wildly secularized French state and the French peasants that were encouraged to be anti-religionist. The Viennese court was no longer concerned with the criticism of peasant superstitions and customs. Contemporaries knew something about the survey, but not the details of it. Remarks that arose about the whereabouts of the responses turned out to be rumors. Nor was it true that it was Emperor Joseph who had the questionnaires prepared. Saxon cultural historians have seen some of these responses, and some of them have even been published. As we understand it now, after complicated inheritance battles and money-making schemes, they were sold on the manuscript market and made their way to the National Archives in Budapest, but not at the same time and not into the same fonds, not even the related documents.

As a result of Miskolczy's philological detective work, this volume provides all the important texts. The German and Hungarian questionnaires are three pages long each, and they even provide "sample" answers to some of the questions. Based on these, it is clear that the two texts are not translations of one another, since the German or Hungarian superstitions used as examples are different.

The present edition provides each answer in its entirety and separately: in the only truly useful way. Since the answers have no "order," Miskolczy grouped them according to their value. The first one is a precise text (two printed sheets) by Sámuel Köpeczi Bodos, the Calvinist pastor of Kóbor. The author was obviously interested in the subject, returning to certain questions: a veritable mini-treatise on superstition. The author of the second writing is the Unitarian priest of Keresztúr, János Bodor (seven sheets): he only answers precisely the questions. (It seems that he did not have accurate knowledge of some of the topics.) The priest of Fogaras, Bán Baló, provides similarly precise answers. At times, an exaggerated rationality common among the Protestants of the time also emerges, such as referring to the "superstitious watering of Easter and the childishness of painted eggs." He describes the superstitions in a systematic way. Ion Halmaghi, the vicar of Fogaras, is familiar with "Greek Catholic" folk superstitions; he knows of three main groups: divination – charms – superstitious acts. Johann Samuel Barberius, who taught in Brassó, discusses beliefs and witches separately. Michael Binder's thorough description is about 50 sheets long. J. G. Schenker of Segesvár submitted a veritable monograph of superstition (*Aberglaube*).

In short: so many responses, so many documenting styles and approaches. Miskolczy does not address the individual texts, and he does not examine the beliefs or customs that show up in them. Because of the thousands of motifs mentioned, this would have been impossible. However, he delivers an introduction of great breadth, in which he addresses the concept of superstition at the time and the views of the representatives of the Enlightenment on superstitions. He provides a European outlook on all of this and presents contemporary "Hungarian" reports of superstitions, such as vampire beliefs, witch trials, and even references of occultism.

Commentary on some of Miskolczy's chapters could yield a volume in their own right. "The World View of Collectors of Superstition and the Superstitious" (sheets 84-

100) outlines the mentality of the participants of the survey in a believable way. In a separate chapter, he discusses the contemporary debates on the origins of the Saxons (and Transylvanian Romanians). This is what Freemason and Josephinist Joseph Carl Eder (1760-1810) found himself in the midst of, whose estate eventually ensured the survival of the materials of the Brukenthal survey.

Miskolczy is masterful in his illustration of the era's convoluted research of religion and superstition. The issue would warrant a separate study. Of course, however multifaceted the material of the survey is, it only reflects the observations of a small social and religious group. The reader will first look up the beliefs held in certain settlements, then the grouping of the superstitions, ultimately arriving at the ideology. From this point of view, the volume is just as much of a novelty in terms of the history of culture and the history of religion as it is in terms of its data. This source publication is another important achievement in our historical folkloristics (I almost wrote *intellectual history*). My recommendation to everyone: read it first with paper and pencil in hand, ready to note down the curiosities. Then start re-reading it, this time by plowing through Miskolczy's introduction.

TÓTH G., Péter – PAKÓ, László (eds.): *Kolozsvári boszorkányperek 1564–1743* [Kolozsvár Witch Trials 1564–1743]. 2014, Budapest: Balassi Kiadó. 427. ISBN 978-963-506-930-9. (A magyarországi boszorkányság forrásai. Várostörténeti források 4.) [Sources of Witchcraft in Hungary. Sources of Urban History 4.] ISSN 1589-6080

TÓTH G., Péter – BRANDL, Gergely (eds.): *Szegedi boszorkányperek 1726–1744* [Szeged Witch Trials 1726–1744]. 2016, Budapest – Szeged: Balassi Kiadó – Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Csongrád Megyei Levéltára. 478. ISBN 978-963-506-979-8. (A magyarországi boszorkányság forrásai. Várostörténeti források 5.) [Sources of Witchcraft in Hungary. Sources of Urban History 5.] ISSN 1589-6080

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As a result of a decades-long research exploring and publishing sources of Hungarian witch trials, two new volumes on the witch, wizard and libel suits of Kolozsvár and Szeged have been published. The editions are the latest in the Sources of Urban History series that started with Nagybánya and continued with Segesvár and Sopron. In the 1980s, a research group that brought together historians and ethnographers was founded on the initiative of Éva Pócs, the aim of which was to treat and analyze the already published Hungarian witch trial files and to find the latent or little-known and hard-to-find documents. As a first step, *Witch Trials in Hungary: A Collection of Source Publications*, edited by Gábor Klaniczay, Ildikó Kristóf and Éva Pócs, was published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1989. The series continued with two volumes by József Bessenyei (*The Sources of Hungarian Witchcraft I-II*, 1997 and 2001) and

by historian-archivists András Kiss and Pál-Antal Sándor (*The Sources of Hungarian Witchcraft III*, 2002). Their work was greatly helped by Péter Tóth G., who has already compiled a *Register of Sources on Witchcraft in Hungary* (Veszprém – Budapest, 2000). Since 2003, he has been coordinating the exploration and publication of trials, and the forthcoming fourth volume has been published under his editorial oversight.

Based on Péter Tóth G.'s idea and with the involvement of local archivists, the *Sources of Urban History* series, which published the documents of urban community witch hunts, was launched in 2003 with the aforementioned volume on Nagybánya, edited by historian-archivist Béla Balogh. Péter Tóth G. took on this project with plenty of verve, as the diverse documents of urban archives provide an excellent opportunity for studying the social processes underlying the accusations of witchcraft in the context of micro-historiography or historical anthropology. In the international research on witchcraft, this trend has enjoyed unwaning popularity since Paul Boyne and Steven Nissenbaum's pioneering monograph on the Salem witch trials (*Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*, 1976). In the Hungarian context, Ildikó Kristóf produced an excellent micro-sociological examination of the witch trials of Debrecen and Bihar county (*"I have not pursued an evil craft": The social and cultural background of witch trials in early modern Debrecen and Bihar county*, 1998). The logical structure of publishing and processing the sources, which is consistently applied in all volumes of the Urban History series, reflects the series editors' well thought-out and conscious concept. Each volume is divided into three main sections: 1. in the introductory, explanatory and descriptive section, the basic principles of text publishing and the social-historical aspects of the sources are presented in a preface; 2. followed by the source texts; 3. the appendix contains the indexes (personal names grouped by their role in the trial and place names), the glossary, and, finally, the notes with the full bibliography. In fact, this method of text publishing makes possible not just the exploration of the micro-sociological context of the witch trials by allowing identification of the network of accusers and defendants based on the indexes and the topographical environment of the accusations. Such presentation of sources can also provide a starting point for further exploration of the talking and emotional communities of early modern urban societies. It also means that these documents may offer an attractive research subject for many disciplines besides history and ethnography.

This statement is particularly valid in the case of Kolozsvár and Szeged, as both cities have played a prominent role in the research of the history of witchcraft in Hungary from the beginning. László Pakó (Kolozsvár) and Gergely Brandl (Szeged) provide a brief overview of these historiographical antecedents in the volumes' introduction. In the case of the Kolozsvár trials, László Pakó highlights the work of historians Andor Komáromy and András Kiss. He recalls and considers the research methods of Komáromy to be still valid today: on the one hand, because he examined the correlation of local event history and witch trials by considering a wide variety of sources, such as municipal legislative records. On the other hand, because he insisted that the history of witchcraft in Kolozsvár could only truly be presented in a wider perspective of witch trials in Transylvania and Hungary, by virtue of comparative criteria. Pakó emphasizes that András Kiss, who compiled this current volume, essentially followed in the footsteps of Komáromy and included new sources (such as municipal ledgers) in his analyses, and his exciting case studies depicted several figures who played a key role in the Kolozsvár witch trials. László Pakó not only completed the editing when András Kiss passed away, but, as a true disciple, deliberately

follows the line he designated in presenting the figure of city prosecutor György Igyártó, who generated and directed witchcraft accusations (*Witchcraft Accusations in the Service of Financial Interest and Revenge*, 2014). Finally, László Pakó points out that sources on witchcraft in Kolozsvár have always been used efficiently by researchers, and that it is thanks to Hungarian experts such as Gábor Klaniczay and Péter Tóth G. that Kolozsvár is on the international scene of witchcraft research. According to Gergely Brandl's introduction, the situation is somewhat similar as far as the general knowledge and scientific treatment of the Szeged witch trials goes. The difference lies mostly in the fact that, unlike Kolozsvár, the name of Szeged became known throughout Europe after the "great trial" of 1728 and continued to be included in 19th-century descriptions of Hungary as a gruesome curiosity. The majority of these trial documents were also published at the beginning of the 20th century, just like with the Kolozsvár trials. The texts were published in János Reizner's multi-volume urban history work in 1900, along with the author's thorough study. Another similarity with Kolozsvár is that nearly seven decades passed after the first edition of Reizner's benchmark work before further trial documents from Szeged were published. Gergely Brandl emphasizes that from the first half of the 20th century, the documents of witchcraft in Szeged were used more in local history research, and this local perspective slightly distorted the image of the local witch trials. Comparative studies of the Szeged materials were mainly carried out by ethnographers (Tamás Körner, Éva Pócs, Melinda Égető) and historians dealing with witch hunts (Gábor Klaniczay, Ildikó Kristóf). Thanks to them, the Szeged witch trials – just like the ones in Kolozsvár – have made their entry onto the international scene of research.

The reviewer was concerned with two issues when reviewing the volumes. The first is actually a matter of rhetoric and not so much a real issue. If the documents of the witch trials of Szeged and Kolozsvár have already seen a number of publications and have been a decisive factor in Hungarian and international witchcraft research for a long time, why it is necessary to republish these sources? After all, the Urban History series has published mostly as yet unexplored source materials. The editors themselves provide convincing arguments to this effect in the preface. They believe the revision of previous editions and the results of recent archival research justify the republishing of the Kolozsvár and Szeged witch trial documents supplemented by the latest documents. The fact that the texts that have already been published need to be revised in many places, such as for incompleteness or an erroneous transcription, supports the need for republishing. If we take into account the Kolozsvár cases published so far, we find that the 88 cases published in the present volume are more than double of the 36 cases published by Andor Komáromy. In the case of Szeged, the number of new documents may not reach the level that the Kolozsvár materials did, but the 62 files published by János Reizner and later by Ferenc Oltvai have been supplemented by 27 newer ones, which is also a considerable quantity. And if we consider that – for the first time in the history of the publishing of witchcraft sources – the editors of the Szeged edition have published the Hungarian translation of a vast amount of Latin texts, including a glossary of frequently occurring Latin terms, their intention of making these sources accessible to a much wider community of readers and researchers than ever before becomes quite clear. The monographic treatment of the history of witch trials in Szeged or Kolozsvár has yet to be written, but these two new text publications with their related aids could be a good starting point for such a big endeavor.

The second issue is also not a real dilemma but rather a thought about the legitimacy of traditional paper-based publishing in the era of digitization. The publication of witch trial documents in electronic format is not a novelty. I will just mention two examples here. As a result of a successful transcription and digitization project, since 2002, the entire documentation of the Salem witch trials can be accessed and searched online, supplemented with diaries, notes, maps, relevant contemporary literature, and a few other annexes (http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/ home.html). In 2003, the database of Scottish witch trials containing 4,000 records was added to the Internet, courtesy of the research team of the University of Edinburgh (Julian Goodare et al.) (http://www.shca.ed.ac.uk/Research/witches/). Péter Tóth G. is not only coordinating the publication of witch trial materials, he has also been working for years on the digital archive of the entire Hungarian trial material (about 7,000 records and about 4,600 trials or trial fragments), currently as a member of the "East–West" Research Group on the Ethnology of Religion at the Institute of Ethnology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, within the framework of ERC project No. 324214. However, this large-scale endeavor is not yet complete, and until the full source material becomes available, and probably even afterwards, tangible, physical copies of books like these two provide a secure point and serve us well in the sea of digital data.

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The author approaches 18th-century religious life, and especially demonic possession and exorcism, through the story and letters of Rochus Szmendrovich (1727–1782), a Franciscan friar of Croatian origins. Analyzing a well-documented scandal, he sets apart Pater Rochus from the multitude of contemporary monks. Rochus was the protagonist of the exorcism scandal that caused quite a stir at the regional level in the city of Zombor in Bácska (today Sombor, Serbia) between 1766 and 1769.

What happened in the parish church run by the Franciscans? What were the intentions and aspirations of their service to the local and neighboring faithful? How did they fight Satan to cure demonic possessions? What role did the outsider friar play in the inner political life of the Catholic and Orthodox population? What lied behind the fascination with him? Who was Rochus, this anti-hero of the 18th-century Catholic Enlightenment made famous by his scandal? And finally, how was the Catholic Enlightenment received locally?

Many of these questions have been raised in the volume, for which Bárth, deciphering the causes of the erstwhile conflict, outlines a variety of contexts (and possible answers)

in terms of social, ecclesiastical, liturgical and the history of mentality. The volume goes beyond the boundaries of a case study at several points: Bárth models the differences in 18th-century ecclesiastical ways of thinking and the diversity of clerical attitudes along the intentions and motives of the participants and outlines the different intentions of those utilizing the services of the exorcist. He places the participants of the story in the context of the Enlightenment, and particularly in the context of the Catholic Enlightenment.

This excellent biography about the life of the exorcist of Zombor is not the first time the author tackles the subject of possession and exorcism. As he writes in the epilogue: "today, a historian rarely holds out hope that the biographical narrative of an individual historical actor can be reconstructed in all its details." Choosing biography as one of the possible genres, Bárth basically offers his readers a socio-historical narrative. By finding the central documentation of the Zombor exorcism scandal in Kalocsa's church archives and by untangling the threads and contexts of the scandal, we are presented with a fresh and readable work. It is thanks to Bárth that Pater Rochus emerged from the obscurity of "anonymity" among thousands of 18th-century Franciscan friars. We can read about him and with the author reinterpret his half a hundred folio-length correspondence, gain insight into the most important turning points of his life, browse with him among the books in his parish and his friary – and we can almost hear him in the spectacular, public exorcism ritual as he shouts the exorcism formulas he deems most useful, utilizing all available tools of Baroque dramatics, and as he explains, educates and cures with expansive gestures. We might believe (or laugh at) his demonically mediated ramblings, imagine (or see) the patients' physical signs caused by possession syndromes, witness their suffering, the worst of their agony and anguish. We get a picture of the protagonist's conspiratorial intentions, his zeal, his human weaknesses, the depths and heights of the craze he ignited. We can see him being brilliant and being brought down by the clergy.

The book allows us to examine from several perspectives the issue of "who in fact may have truly been there and then." Keeping the reader on the edge of his seat, the author successfully outlines the local, socio-cultural and cultural-historical contexts of the given situation, the strategy of the individual actor. We can see that the historian selecting, contextualizing and "analyzing" the sources unintentionally develops a subjective image of the story at the center of his attention, and we can sense that the author comes to love his protagonist.

The sources he studied depict a person who was socialized in a rural social milieu which he partially ascended through his education, but in terms of his existential relations, he was trapped for most of his life. When compared with the opinions of his contemporaries, the letters of Pater Rochus diverged from the "standard" official correspondence articulations of their time. In the official sessions where his circulars and long-winded letters were read, his ecclesiastical and secular superiors often became nervous and troubled. It is no coincidence that the responses to the candid, gratuitously conspiratorial reports of the Franciscan Pater were much the same in the Archbishopric of Kalocsa, the governing body of the Franciscan Province, or the current department of the Hungarian Royal Council. Szmendrovich tried to reinstate an earlier pastoral practice in a transitional era. He talked about curses and blessings at a time when alternative blessing/curse texts seemed to be permanently disappearing from the liturgical and material (sacramental) roster of ecclesiastical practice. Pater Rochus tried to reactivate this obscure and superstitious toolbox when "the removal of magic from the world"

was almost complete. Even being on the ecclesiastical side, in the eyes of his superiors, his suspicious activity did not differ much from the contemporary folk or quasi-folk charlatans and itinerant miracle workers for whom he himself was a competitor in the contemporary "market of magic."

By revisiting Hungarian exorcism scandals, Bárth moves from the discussion of the highly formalized and ritualized side of the sacred communication of church ordinances to the informal forms of communication with demonic forces. It was also from these case studies that he learned of the circumspect way official regulations had prohibited clerics from engaging in a lengthy chitchat with the devil. Their purpose was to limit the space the devil would have for his deceptive and divergent chatter, and only allow him space for answering what they were asking during the exorcism. Just like in a court hearing. Besides, spectacular exorcisms staged for the local community also amounted to torture: hearing the words, seeing the consecrated devices, the demons experienced painful agony. It is this staged exorcism that the more enlightened clerics wanted to eliminate from use in public, because they sensed, they knew that social peace would be at stake if they allowed the beliefs of the devil to break loose instead of being kept within the confines of the Church.

Looking at it from the enlightened 18th-century courts, it was exactly these exposed scandalous cases that triggered the more conscious separation between the clergy and the lower priesthood that encouraged the former practice. Even though the Roman ritual ordinance warned priests against listening to the devil talking about the future through the possessed individual, a parish priest in today Ciucsângeorgiu, Romania still grabbed a pen in the 1720s and noted down all the predictions of his possessed patient. The same priest quoted in his letter of defense the statements of the possessing demons, which, absurdly, related to their own expulsion. To church leaders, however, these notes were evidence of the lack of the possessed person's credibility and the priest's ineptitude. The Franciscan friar of Zombor, Pater Rochus, set the bar even higher when he presented himself to both the faithful and the clergy as the most serious opponent of Satan. Since he had already been successful in his battles with demons before his arrival in the city, subsequent narratives suggest that the devil himself had respected him as an opponent. It is no coincidence then that the activities of the charismatic Franciscan – who has maintained a "mediated" relationship with demonic forces, has been highly successful with his alternative methods, and enjoyed popularity at the local level regardless of language or religion – has eventually been noticed by the diocesan leadership driven by the ethos of Church Enlightenment. So much so that he was removed from the city following a lengthy, adventurous (and fortunately well-documented) procedure.

The main charge, as articulated by the clergy, at center of the 18th-century exorcism scandals elaborated by Bárth – the 1727 case in Csíkszentgyörgy and the 1766–69 case presented in this book – is the illegal use of alternative methods. Both the parish priest of Csíkszentgyörgy and the Franciscan friar of Zombor argued that the official rituals (of Esztergom and Kalocsa, identical to each other and verbatim derivatives of the Roman Order) simply did not achieve success, thus, to avoid further failure, they had to turn to the alternative – and in the eyes of the clergy, outdated and illegitimate – handbooks that contained more powerful tools and texts. The Franciscan of Zombor achieved particularly spectacular successes, his popularity consequently growing rapidly beyond the city limits, even among the Orthodox faithful, the news of which created a delicate situation with the clerical leadership.

The ideological currents that emerged in the second half of the 18th century, but especially in the last third of the century, were aimed at implementing and accelerating new reforms within the Church whose perspectives were influenced by the Enlightenment. In the Catholic Church, changes first occurred at the elite level of theological thinking, and gradually became part of the world view of the various layers of the priesthood through the mediation of seminaries. Bárth's book presents the process in which this thinking and knowledge, sometimes at the behest of authority, reaches the level of the lower priesthood, bringing about among them at times incomprehension, at other times a veritable resistance. The story of Bárth's book takes place in an era when the ethos of Catholic/Church Enlightenment was already embattled – amidst fierce scandals – with the "enthusiastic," curative movements described by H. C. Erik Midelfort (*Exorcism and Enlightenment. Johann Joseph Gassner and the Demons of Eighteenth-Century Germany*, Gruyter, 2005). These conflicts point far beyond the scope of the priesthood. The scandals symbolized the struggle between the ecclesiastical "elite's" rational, changed mentality imbued with the ethos of Catholic Enlightenment and the medieval, "folksy" religious attitude of the members of the Franciscan order. The latter attitude roughly corresponds with the mentality of the so-called Counter-Enlightenment (*Gegen-Aufklärung*). Of course, such conflicts did not only develop around the Franciscans. Standing out among the European analogies is the activity of Johann Joseph Gassner, the most famous exorcist of the 18th century, which occupied the attention of not only the contemporary European media but also the highest levels of church and state leadership. The state administration also formed an opinion on his person – Joseph II. expressed his displeasure regarding the noisy miracles – so that shortly before his own death, Gassner would eventually give up his curing activity after receiving a proscription from the highest existing level: the pope. The influence of Gassner's contemporary, Pater Rochus, and the media attention that surrounded him was much smaller in scale. Nonetheless, he left a remarkable story for Hungarian church history, and thanks to Dániel Bárth, an exciting biography for us 21st-century readers.

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The reviewed work examines the wedding and "wedding culture" in its social contexts and, using Mauss' terminology, as a "total social fact," and fits into "a line of research on rituals that [...] attempt to grasp the functioning of local society in its complexity along one segment of ritual life. By analyzing wedding festivities [i.e., nuptials staged for *presentation* purposes, VG] and [*real,* VG] weddings, the book aims to contribute to the European discourse and debate [...] about the past, present and possible future of multi-ethnic communities" (p. 11). This new approach and research problem evolved as a result of a lengthy fieldwork uncommon in Hungarian ethnography and folkloristics, the details of which are discussed by the author on pages 19–22.

Wedding in Gyimes is a novelty in Hungarian ethnography and folkloristics for at least four reasons. First, abandoning the essentialist concept of tradition, the author views tradition as a dynamic construct and examines the process by which "the participants of the wedding organize, create, operate and interpret the ritual processes based on their preliminary concepts, and occasionally even diverging from them," as well as the way they "pick from the symbolic repertoire of weddings the ritual accessories that are considered most appropriate for the occasion of the particular wedding ceremony" (p. 148). In the spirit of and with the arsenal of performance theory, in the second part of the book, based on case studies, the author investigates *how* certain individuals with different background knowledge, desires, and personal histories try to steer – successfully or unsuccessfully – the course of events in a certain direction. The main question, therefore, is how "tradition" is constructed. In view of the above, and contrary to the conventional approach in Hungarian ethnography and folkloristics, the author's concern in this process lies not in the general patterns of the wedding but, first and foremost, in the dissimilarities that can be observed in the weddings and broken down to the level of individuals, and the reasons behind them.

Moreover, the author examines the wedding traditions of not *one* village, Gyimesközéplok, and within that of the Hidegség, but of three villages (Középlok, Felsőlok and Gyimesbükk), that is, a small but in many ways non-uniform region. This region, and Gyimesbükk in particular, is known as the boundary of the Hungarian and Romanian language area, of Eastern and Western Christianity, Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy, a transition zone where – and this is another great novelty of the book – the opposing and even competing cultures, religions, languages, and identities interact with one another and "hybridize," *despite all their separation efforts.*

In the first half of the book, the author focuses her examination on the macro- and meso-level contexts that shape hybridity: the political-economic frameworks, public community discourses, the role of local and non-local knowledge elites, the identity-forming activities of local churches and schools, and the education and pastoral care taking place at these scenes. One of her important observations is that "while ethnic, cultural and religious boundaries are being constructed, strengthened and represented and the culture of Gyimes is being safeguarded at the macro and meso levels of local society, at the micro level of local society, boundaries are being continuously crossed by human relationships, friendships and love" (p. 235). Although this is actually natural, few have stressed it so far: in a contact/conflict zone, at the micro level, the slow but continuous interaction of coexisting cultures, religions, ideologies and identities is inevitable, in which the role of the catalyst, as the author keenly observes, is played by friendships and romantic relationships. These are "centrifugal forces [...] that make individuals move away from their identity [...], one of their identities, and move towards heterogeneity" (p. 105), that is, as per the reviewer, towards hybridization.

It then follows – and this is the third important positive – that the author examines the wedding culture not only from the perspective of the Hungarian population of

Gyimes, but also from the Romanian perspective, that is, she places the investigation in an interethnic framework. The significance of this viewpoint can be truly understood and appreciated only if we are reminded that in both the Hungarian and Romanian literature on Gyimes, which could fill a library, one can count on *one* hand the number of writings whose author approaches the subject from an interethnic perspective, even though we are dealing with a region of mixed populations and cultures!

Finally, the fourth novelty or positive. Judit Balatonyi's study encompasses not only the "traditional" wedding but also the "new/modern" wedding ceremonies, the present-day wedding industry, and all the changes that have by now reached this "archaic" region's society through globalization. Moreover, she examines not only "real" but also staged "*nuptials*" and "*children's* [pretend] weddings," that is, all the phenomena and processes that are nowadays described and examined *by* and *through* terms like "festivalization" and "heritagization," formerly "folklorism" and "invented/staged tradition." She does this because, as we have seen, in her perception and reasoning, tradition is not some essence given from the start and remaining static for centuries, but a very dynamic reality that is constantly changing. This constant change is also the reason why the study initially designed as a contemporary study and using contemporary studies as a starting point has been inevitably supplemented with a diachronic aspect over the years: that is to say, the research has extended to the investigation of the most distant past accessible. The perspective, however, is inverse compared to what we are used to in Hungarian ethnography and folkloristics. Here, the past is inevitable for the interpretation of the present, and the present is not a corollary of the past that interest is focused on.

Perhaps I was able to convey with the above the importance of this publication and the novelty of the study. I must say, however, that while the book is exemplary in its objectives, the implementation is not always consistent. There are chapters that one can "race through" because they are easy to read, where one is fascinated by the richness of data, the "smell" of the terrain, the style of the wording; and there are parts that are less readable and more cumbersome, feeling more like a task. For example, the reviewer enjoyed reading the parts about friendships, mixed marriages, or the strategies of wedding gift-giving and reciprocation. However, despite the holistic objective, the parts do not always come together as an organic whole, brilliant hypotheses are not always elaborated, and at times some statements are rather issues that need to be proven.

All these remarks do not retract from the value of the work. In fact, the author's goal was not to examine the wedding itself, but to look far beyond it, at the correlations of wedding and society, wedding and ethnic identity and/or ethnicity, wedding and social memory. This is what sets her book apart from other books about weddings, this is why this work is not just another one among the many similar books, but a book that everyone who deals with the subject needs to know and use.

Thematic Issue:

Vernacular religion on the boundary of Eastern and Western Christianity: continuity, changes and interactions

Guest Editor: Éva Pócs

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