



Nemzeti Művelődési Intézet

KULTURÁLIS SZEMLE

VII. évfolyam, 2020. évi 1. szám

Angol nyelvű cikkek

A Nemzeti Művelődési Intézet interdiszciplináris online folyóirata

A lapszám megjelenését a „Művelődő Közösségek Észak-Magyarországon” nevű EFOP-3.7.3-16-2017-00148 projekt támogatta.

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Renáta Bozsó – Angelika Nagy – Edit Újvári:

Intersections of Regional and Local Cultural Heritage and Local identity – Assessing the Functions of Local Repositories of Values in Vojvodina¹

Abstract: The paper analyzes the role of Hungarian cultural traditions in education, community building and the strengthening of local identity in the communities along the Tisza in Vojvodina, Serbia. Furthermore, it examines the operation and impact of a vital actor in this process, the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina. The paper wishes to illuminate the institutional framework within which the preservation and maintenance of local cultural traditions is promoted: what is the role of cultural institutions and local civil groups in this process? How does the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina, established in 2016, contribute to the endeavors of maintaining local traditions in the selected communities, where and how does this process being realized? Besides reviewing relevant literature, our methodology is based on website analysis and conducting interviews. Our interviewees are working in different capacities in the local cultural life of their communities, as leaders of cultural and educational institutions, who are all fulfilling vital roles in the preservation of Hungarian cultural values in the region.

“...tradition is the warehouse of cultural values repeatedly communicated between generations. Tradition may be seen as a cultural memory of the community (or society).” (Hoppál 2010b. 12.)

Introduction

With the support of the Cultural Academic Research Program 2019-2020, launched by the National Cultural Institute, we set out to explore a topic related to public culture of Vojvodina. Szeged and the University of Szeged has multiple links to this border region, populated by Hungarian minorities in large numbers.² Researchers from the region have been participating in the work of our Institute Identity Research Workshop, established in 2007, and the current group³ also has three members from the Vojvodina region.

Our region of inquiry was tied to the region along the river Tisza, the northern part of the Vojvodina Autonomous Region. Throughout our research, we have chosen cities and other settlements from both the Banat and Bačka regions that have Hungarians as the majority of the population, or Hungarians are represented significantly, such as Kanjiža, Novi Kneževac, Senta,

¹ The publication/presentation was supported by the Cultural Research Program of the National Cultural Institution Nemzeti Művelődési Intézet Közművelődési Tudományos Kutatási Programja).

² The new chapter of the common historical-regional relations and the preservation of identity of those moving from Vojvodina to Szeged (partly due to the 1991 outbreak of the Yugoslav Wars) is exhibited by the operation of the Szeged Chapter of the VMSZ since 1992.: <http://www.vmdk-szeged.hu/> [2020.04.20.]

Recognizing the region's historical and economic traditions, the Duna-Körös-Maros-Tisza European region was formed on 1997, with the involvement of Arad, Temes, Bács-Kiskun, Békés, Csongrád and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok counties and the Vojvodina Autonomous Region: <http://dkmt.net/hu/> [2020.07.30.]

³ The members of the research groups: lecturers *Dr. habil. Edit Újvári*, (group director), *Renáta Bozsó*, *Dr. Angelika Nagy*, *Dr. Norbert Szűcs*; cultural professionals: *Livia Barát Tóth*, *Endre Máriás*; students: *Zsófia Székely*, *Valéria Balán*, *Viktória Kifut* (Community Organizing BA, 2nd year).

Ada, Čoka, Utrine, Tornjoš, Horgoš, Bačko Petrovo Selo, Novi Bečej, Bečej, Martonoš, all along the river Tisza.⁴ From a folkloristic perspective, this regions encompasses the territory south of the Hungarian border, on the northern parts of Vojvodina, on the right bank of the lower Tisza, ranging from Horgoš to Titel, and “still the most characteristically Hungarian region of Bačka” (Ortutay 1982. 297–298). The region is presented as a separate item in the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina as natural environment, because “the Tisza plays a major role on the lives of communities living here and used to be definitive for the whole manner of life in the past: it was a source of food supply, ensuring employment, being inspiring for folk poetry, keeping traditions alive, and being an ever-present theme for the arts. The following local saying is not without merit: those who drink from the Tisza, long to come back.”⁵

The purpose of our research was to analyze the connections between local values, local cultural heritage, community life and local identity. We were inclined to examine which traditional cultural practices prevailed and what sort of new cultural tendencies emerged in the cultural life of the communities? What is the institutional framework for preserving these traditions, what is the role of local institutions and local NGOs in this process? Furthermore, how does the Hungarian Repository of Values (established in 2016) contribute to this process, where and how does it aid the preservation and dissemination of cultural values?

Besides reviewing the relevant literature, the main part of our methodology consists on website analysis and interviews. Our interviewees are professionals working in the cultural life of the region, leaders of cultural institutions and associations, who are also leaders in their communities and the local Hungarian cultural sphere.

1. Intersections of Local Cultural Values and Communal Identity

1.1. Basic Terms

The historical heritage and the distinct cultural traditions of a given local territory provide sound foundations for the prevalence of local cultures and identity formation. Local clubs, groups and communities have a major role in the strengthening and preservation of the community's identity, as highlighted by other researchers (Hoppál 2010a. 7., Csurgó – Szatmári 2014). The devotion to a given community by one of its members, and thus collective identity is never a phenomenon on its own, as expressed by Jan Assmann (Assmann, 1992: 13.1). Identification with the community is realized in certain acts, vital connections, and thus active communal programs are of paramount importance.

Local tradition is defined within the terminological framework of cultural heritage adapted by UNESCO in 2003: “The *intangible cultural heritage* means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.”⁶ The Treaty encourages the identification and documentation of local cultural heritages, as well as providing access to these, taking related legislative action, and employing methods of dissemination via education and dissemination of knowledge. “In order to be able

⁴ This municipal form encompasses a number of communities, including towns and villages.

⁵ <http://ertektar.rs/ertektar/ertek/A-Tisza-mente/116> [2020.03.25.]

⁶ Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention> [2020.06.10]

to manage a cultural heritage site and protect its values, for current and future generations, we need tools. The tools, each, separately and all together, should identify and solve problems defined thorough the above and other lists.” (Solar, 2011. 10.)

Identity, closely related to culture, is a phenomenon that is examined by multiple disciplines of the humanities and social sciences with their own methods. Social psychology, cultural history, folklore studies, sociology, and cultural anthropology are all devoted to the subject, albeit examining it from divergent perspectives. The established social psychological literature related to the issue designates self-identity and group identity to be necessary for the existence of the individual and the functioning of society. (Pataki 1997. 514) The formation of this is greatly influenced by community culture and local traditions, since for both the individual and the community, “tradition is the cultural memory of the community, a repository of memories that holds the information necessary for its self-identification.” (Hoppál 2017. 6) Local cultural heritage, local traditions and local values are thus intertwined with the territory in which they emerge, being characteristic for the region. (Czene 2002)

Since our research is, as mentioned, concerned with the cultural life of the Hungarian population living along the Tisza in Northern Vojvodina, our point of departure consisted of analyzing the research conducted in the region. Róbert Badis highlights based on data gathered in the 2000s that locals have strong connection primarily to their local and regional identity, identifying with Vojvodina and their city, followed by their identification with their sub-region (Bačka, Banat, Srem). (Badis 2008. 321–323) Our research has affirmed that out of the various forms of communal consciousness, the territorial connection proves the most relevant for Hungarians in Vojvodina.⁷ Identifying with territory is intrinsically linked to identifying with the traditions that prevail in the regions, designated as intellectual heritage, consisting of the totality of accumulated and possessed intellectual goods, values, stances – and of course, identities themselves (Czene 2002).

1.2. Safeguarding Cultural Traditions and Local Identity in Vojvodina

Hungarians in Vojvodina have found themselves on the other end of the borders in 1921 as the result of the peace processes after the First World War, becoming part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, formed in 1918. It was Ágnes Ózer who analyzed the intellectual heritage and identity construction of Vojvodina Hungarians in 20th century historical contexts, highlighting that after gaining the status of “autonomous region”, local identity began to strengthen in the region. The rising levels of educational attainment in the region was also a contributing factor to this process. (Ózer 2008. 593) Furthermore, local folklore traditions also had an immensely important role in preserving and maintaining cultural practices. Attila Pejin designates these traditions to be strengthening the realization of collective memory in Vojvodina, along with oral traditions, lifestyle characteristics, architecture, and the marking and annual celebration of anniversaries and other festive days, and the use of symbols attached to these. (Pejin 2008. 111). The preservation, maintenance and dissemination of local Hungarian traditions and values is incumbent upon the cultural institutions and civil actors in the contemporary Hungarian communities in Vojvodina, rendering their role in the continuation of Hungarian culture in the region vital. Therefore, our research is concerned mainly with their efforts.

1.3. The Repository of Values

In the 2000s, a new movement was launched in Hungary concerned with the summation and systemization of Hungarian values, known as the “Hungaricum Movement”. The main aim was

⁷ According to one of the classical forms of defining communities, it can be „defined based on geographic characteristics, on a geographical basis”. (Tóth G. 2002. 11).

to collect and sort into repository of values the various forms of Hungarian treasures, providing an opportunity for ensuring their protection and preservation. The movement has been highlighting from its beginning that values are part of national identity, but their preservations and popularizing has additional touristic and economic benefits. The Hungarian Parliament has adapted a law on Hungarian national values and so-called “hungaricums”, based on the legislative framework of cultural heritage protection. As Árpád Tőhötöm Szabó stressed: “The concept of cultural heritage is a global one, while its interpretations might be, and indeed are, very specific, depending on the national context and also on the background of the scholars dealing with this concept” (Szabó – Szikaszai 2018. 9) in a complex, bottom-up system. The discovery of values starts locally, as local values are known best by the inhabitants. The values of local repositories can develop into regional values or, eventually, hungaricums. Anyone can suggest a value into the local repository by filling in a certain form and sending it to the local repository committees.

In the Hungarian communities outside of our borders, similar repositories have to be formed, with a similar admission process adapted. The legal background for this was provided in Law LXXX. of 2015. Coordinated by the Department of Hungaricums of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Hungarian state has provided the opportunity for communities throughout the whole of the Carpathian Basin to enter into the repositories than forming. The Parliament has ruled that those associations participating in the Hungarian Constant Meeting (Magyar Állandó Értekezlet, MÁÉERT) can form a specific repository and a committee to oversee the processes. In 2015 and 2016, the Department launched funds (HUNG-15 and HUNG-16) to strengthen and support these processes.

2. Research results, analyses

In our research, the actual interviews with local cultural workers were definitive (see Appendix). We have asked the two members of our research group that work in Vojvodina media and cultural sphere to designate the interviewees based on their experience and local expertise, who were further assessed using the snow-ball method. There are young, middle-age, and older respondents, ones that are actively working, and also retirees, males and females, showcasing a diverse group. Some are working in smaller communities, others in bigger ones, there are some who work in predominantly Hungarian communities and those that are in more ethnically diverse communities. A common feature is that all of them are Hungarians born in Vojvodina, with the majority of them having some connection to folklore of folk art since childhood, and most of them pursue their activity on a voluntary basis, whether it is chairing a civil association or managing a country house museum. Some of them participate in/founded a local repository committees, some pursue their activities independently. All 25 of them⁸ – to quote István Fodor⁹ – are part of that sourdough that keeps the local communities and traditions together and alive.

2.1. Demographic and ethnic proportions

One of the leitmotifs of the research targeting Hungarians in Vojvodina in the past decades is the survival of this ethnic minority, their demographic situation, their decreasing number and their aging. The decrease in the number of Hungarians in the region can be attributed, besides

⁸ 23 individual and 1 coupled on-field interviews were conducted, along with a roundtable discussion, functioning as a focus group, with colleagues of the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute.

⁹ István Fodor is the retired director of the Senta Archives, and the co-organizer of the Senta Collegium.

their low birthrate, to the westward economic migration. These are not specific to Hungarians in the region, but the numbers are further decreased due to mixed marriages, resulting in assimilation. *"In Čoka, if we go along the street, it is really sad, every third, fourth house is empty. (Erika Kiss Tóth, president of the Ferenc Móra Hungarian Cultural Association, Čoka)*

"I really don't get it... When they were bombing us, shooting at us from every direction, there were a couple of young people leaving. But now, complete families are leaving, with two, three kids, every month. They leave and they sell their house." (Frigyes Tóth Ugyonka, Endre Ady Cultural Association, Tornjoš)

The last census in Serbia was held in 2011, the communities examined by us were numbering a total of 150,000, 56% of them Hungarians.¹⁰ It is lower than the number in the 2002 census. For instance, the decrease was by 11,5% in communities in and around Senta, and there has been an observable decrease ever since.¹¹ Our interviewees were talking about a tragic decrease in the number of children in their communities, especially when it comes to Hungarian children, endangering not only effective education, but also the Hungarian artistic youth groups. Even where there are children, they tend to go to high school in bigger cities, leaving the groups behind. Furthermore, higher education brings them even further away from their hometowns, and they come to visit only occasionally. The adults, if they happen to stay in the community, commute to work to Hungary every day. Therefore, their leisure time decreases and they cannot effectively participate in local happenings. Sadly, those concerned with the preservation of values come almost exclusively from these groups, subsequently taking over their leadership. *"This demographic decay has decapitated us intellectually,"* summarizes István Fodor in his interview, stating that those remaining behind tend not to be actively concerned with traditions and participating in the preservation of cultural values.

Local professionals are striving to make young people stay, applying for funds and redistributing these, but they do see that *"national identity can never be stronger than their daily bread."*¹² Those leaving for a foreign country rarely ever move back to their former communities, with their identities switching from indigenous minority to voluntary minority. Although they may have the tendency to comment social media contents nostalgically, but they do not actively participate in the preservation of local cultural values. In more fortunate communities, we may still find a core, the aforementioned "sourdough", someone to *"lead the pack"*,¹³ but they tend to be older members of the community, worried that they will have no one to fill their seat. The average age in these communities is well above 40 years of age (Fodor 2016), which is even higher among those pursuing amateur artistic endeavors. Immigration and aging is threatening the preservation of Hungarian cultural values. On the one hand, as we have seen, there are not enough people to carry it forward, and on the other, this is due not only to deaths in the community, but also immigration. There are a few examples, however, when traditions and their preservation is the main factor for remaining. *"...There is a family which has stayed here in Ada, because the children did not want to leave Vadvirág, our association." (Livia Varga, Vadvirág Traditional Circle, Ada)*

To simplify, we may assert that on the right bank of the Tisza, in Bačka region, Hungarians are leaving in larger blocks, whereas on the left bank, in the Banat region, they are more scattered. The proportions differ in every community, due to the aforementioned factors of immigration and intermarriage. In general, the coexistence of Hungarians and Serbs are largely without conflict. Where Hungarians form the majority, Serbians tend to understand and even speak

¹⁰ <http://media.popis2011.stat.rs/2012/Nacionalna%20pripadnost-Ethnicity.pdf> p. 94. [2020.07.20]

¹¹ The center of the region is Senta (the town itself and the surrounding villages), with the population of 23,316, with 18,441 Hungarians.

¹² Source: Interview conducted with Nándor Újhelyi, the funder of the For Novi Kneževac Association.

¹³ Source: Interview conducted with István Fodor, the retired director of the Senta Archives, and the co-organizer of the Senta Collegium.

Hungarian (whereas Hungarians may not learn Serbian), they respect each other's customs, but they form different groups, organize different events. Today, children do not tend to mix, do not learn each other's language during play. Only those born in mixed marriages tend to speak both languages.

"Ada is a curious community, since even today, around 90% of the town is Hungarian, which presents difficulties to Serbians moving here. As the saying goes, they either get used to it, or they leave – they either learn the language, or move away." (Éva Sóti, artistic leader of the Aranykapu Cultural Association, Ada)

"We live in an environment in which there is a Serbian neighbor here, a Serbian neighbor there, you must learn the language. Here in Banat, in Novi Kneževac, if there is a group of people, three Hungarians and one Serbian, they will speak in Serbian." (Magdaléna Kovás, president of the Tiszagyöngye Cultural Association, Novi Kneževac)

"Outside of mixed marriages, Hungarian children do not learn Serbian, and Serbian children do not learn Hungarian. They do not meet, there are no joint events, where they could meet." (Erika Nadriľjanski Tornai, Cnesa Educational and Cultural Institution, Kanjiža)

In the ethnically mixed families, the festivities of both parties are held (maintaining one form of the formerly mentioned collective memory), but their children attend Serbian classes in school, especially if the father is Serbian, considering this to be a way to better advancement, should they decide to remain in the country. Within the Hungarian community, those interviewees living in scattered communities talked about a stronger sense of unity than those living in larger block communities, in which there is a marked fragmentation and disunity. An exception for this are the children and young people who attend local organizations, spending most of their leisure time there. Theirs is a more coherent community with life-long friendships, which signals the exceptional local significance of amateur artistic groups.

2.2. Community life, cultural traditions

From the interviews, we gain the image of a certain consciousness when it comes to maintaining local values, highlighting their power to create group coherence and a desire to stay in their homeland. Both institutional and civil actors maintain various forms of preserving intellectual cultural heritages: female choir, folk dance, zither, tambura, arts and crafts, literary endeavors, local history groups. Maintaining traditions is seen to be closely connected to everyday life, to community life and experiences, and the local professionals tend to highlight this. *"We are concerned with the preservation of Hungarian cultural heritage, especially around Ada, with our motto being: to our children, the heritage of our parents."* (Éva Sóti, artistic leader of the Aranykapu Cultural Association, Ada)

"...we will revive the traditions of the region along the Tisza. We can mention here folk traditions, our folk songs, folk dances [...] and folk music. Having a good time here, unity, and remaining in our homeland, this is the point." (Lívía Varga, Vadvirág Traditional Circle, Ada)

However, there are several factors that hinder the success of their mission. Transmitting traditions are quite difficult, it is not easy to involve younger generations, and they are key to preserving traditions. Immigration, as mentioned, is also a major factor.

There are a number of communities that try to capitalize on their touristic value. Of course, a proper institutional framework with professionals is very important for this: for instance, there is a Touristic Association in Senta, which relies on the promotion of local culture, as well as on commemorating (since its 300th anniversary in 1997) on the Battle of Senta¹⁴, which not only strengthens local patriotism, but also became a touristic product.

¹⁴ The Battle of Senta, fought on September 11, 1697, was one of the most important battles in the effort to recapture Hungarian territories from the Ottoman Empire, led by the Austrian Eugene of Savoy and the forces of the international Holy League.

"The point is to attract as many tourists as we can to Senta. Every region has had its own tradition and customs, and we can use this as a marketing tool, we can build on this brightly, to bring in local colors. (...) For instance, we have the Tisza Mayfly Festival, and also our Town's Day. People like to come here, and locals invite their friends, showing them that we have this here. This is our event." (Kornél Laskovity, Touristic Association of Senta)

In communities with a Hungarian majority, it is also a good opportunity to rely on coexistence with the Serbian population, maintaining cultural relations. Some of our interviewees also talked about their experiences and the importance of strengthening these ties of peaceful coexistence. This is especially important in the regional center of Senta, where there is a significant number of Serbians.

"We have large concerts in Hungarian and also Serbian. This has an entertainment aspect to it, but it is also important that these events create cohesion that can transcend possible antagonisms, bringing together Serbians and Hungarians. There is a commonality that transcends national differences. (Richárd Hugyik, Lajos Thurzó Cultural and Educational Center, Senta)

"... not only in Hungarian, but also in Serbian... We try to pay equal attention to the festivities of both communities." (Éva Kobrehel, Cultural and Educational Center, Čoka)

However, in smaller communities, it is not common for the two ethnic groups to visit each other's events, except for famous performers.

2.3. Local identity

In accordance with prior research on identity, the local identity of our interviewees is strong and pronounced, and they also talked about the Banat regions relations with Szeged. They have also mentioned to fall of the Yugoslavia as a factor in strengthening local identity in Vojvodina. Besides family life and education, the third factor in strengthening Hungarian identity are the observing of traditions, folk dance, and personal example. In the region examined, the totality of these contribute greatly to the preservation of Vojvodina-Hungarian identity. Almost without exception, our interviewees mentioned the strong cultural ties that were formed in early childhood. Thus, they are especially worried about the aging of their communities and the aforementioned tendency to immigrate. Who will carry on with the traditions? What will happen to traditions and identity on the long run?

"I consider Vojvodina and the Tisza region to be my home (...) geographically, we belong to the Hungarian Great Plains. (Richárd Hugyik, Lajos Thurzó Cultural and Educational Center, Senta)

"...the Hungarian community is concentrated here, along the Tisza. This is where I feel good – along the Tisza. (...) Preserving Hungarian culture and identity depends greatly upon who or what we idolize or see as examples. (András Szerda, Sándor Petőfi Hungarian Cultural Circle, Botra Male Choir, Bečej)

2.4 The role and characteristics of the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina

The Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute (Vajdasági Magyar Művelődési Intézet, VMMI), located in Senta, is responsible for providing an institutional framework for the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina. Directed by Martina Gondi, the Institution successfully applied for funds for the aforementioned HUNG-16 funding program. As a result, the Committee of Value Repository of Vojvodina (Vajdasági Magyar Értéktár Bizottság VMÉB) was established in June 2016, presided over by Tamás Varga, a theater professional and the culture referee of the VMMI. The main task of the committee is the identification, registration and the introduction of national values of Hungarians in Vojvodina into the repository of the abroad repository section, the national repository and into the section of hungaricums. They have used the funds to create a website for the Committee (ertektar.rs) and have launched a competition

to explore and popularize the cultural values of Vojvodina with the name “All over this region” (“Kerek e vidéken”) for elementary and high school students, as well as publishing materials. We have organized a roundtable discussion with the participation of the committee members about their work.¹⁵ As a regional institution, the VMMI maintains contact with Hungarian minority institutions and associations that are concerned with public collections, education, and culture. The repository is only one element of the multifaceted work carried out by the Institute, but also a great opportunity to advise and aid their target groups that are mostly organized on a voluntary basis. Of the 11 colleagues at the VMMI, three of them are working with the repository. Besides Tamás Varga, Csilla Vázsonyi, the Institute’s librarian has been responsible for the communication since 2015. Viktor Fehér, a doctoral student in the field of folklore studies, has been working as an external colleague, but there are no funds for his full-time employment. Viktor and Csilla are editing the website jointly and handle the nominations they receive. Their task is mainly operative, handling the database. Furthermore, they go to the field quite often, trying to convince locals to participate in the program. They provide help to local leaders and volunteers to seek out local values.

This process has two basic tenets: either the VMMI starts contact with a local community, or the local committees are formed via personal correspondence, on behalf of the local community. The coordinators value these personal meetings as a way to strengthen the belief that everything that the locals see as a value is also a value in terms of the program. The main benefit of the repository is that it highlights the work of those concerned with maintaining traditions and preserving values. They feel that their work is important, not only for the repository, but also for their local community and sub-region. The platform for maintaining communication is the website and the Facebook page, with phone correspondence also being frequent. Despite the extensive communication system, there may still be communities that have not heard of the repository. Throughout our 25 interviews, there was only one person who has not heard of the repository, three mentioned that they have no contact with them, and one person stated that they know about the repository but they do not know about their operations. Therefore, their operational work can be considered successful, despite the lack of human resources that often hinder their work.

The National Cultural Institute provides professional help, organizing training courses for professionals working in Value Repositories abroad, but forming strategies and crafting methodology is incumbent upon the organizations abroad, as they are the ones possessing adequate local knowledge and connections. The support of the Institute encompasses help with strategic and methodological issues, as well.

Throughout our research, the interviewees confirmed the problems mentioned by members of the VMMI: there are two major negative factors, the lack of human resources and the lack of time.

“... There would be so much material, for me and others, like, back at home, the Bethlehem-performances, the zither-culture, and so on, one would have only to sit down and write about this. But this is, well, difficult (laughs). (Balázs Szerda, leader of the Fokos band, Bečej)”

According to actors within the repository movement in Vojvodina, a stable and permanent system of funding would help with the lack of funds and human resources, thus strengthening the effectivity of the local work of collecting sources and values. The adaptation of Hungarian models in Vojvodina can only function on the level of individual projects, for which funds are also needed. Monetary funds on their own could only solve problems on the short term – as was

¹⁵ Senta, Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute, January 17, 2020. Participants: *Martina Gondi*, director of the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute, *Tamás Varga*, president of the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina, *Viktor Fehér*, doctoral student, and *Csilla Vázsonyi*, colleague at the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina, and members of the research group: *dr. Edit Újvári*, *dr. Angelika Nagy*, *Renáta Bozsó*.

the case in the initial enthusiasm in 2016 –, but there would be a need for crafting a system that ensures constant work. The development of the website is among the long-term aims of the VMML.

“The long-term goal is a multilingual site on which the visitors can gain information on what to visit in different communities, where one can buy local products, and what are some of the major local events to visit.” (Viktor Fehér)

They plan to translate the Hungarian materials to English (currently only the landing page can be read in English: <http://ertektar.rs/en>), but they do not plan Serbian materials. Among the long-term plans are also a form of economic advancement of the collected materials, besides further utilizing them as a means to enhance local tourism.

3. Conclusion

The interviews conducted during the research activity exhibited a conscious devotion and emotional motivation towards preserving and maintaining traditions. It was proven that although the majority of the communities examined face one form of difficulty or another in their work of voluntary preservation of traditions and cultural organizing, and the subsequent administrative work that is related to admissions to the Repository, but this latter activity can also contribute greatly to the further preservation of local cultural heritages, their dissemination and the affirmation of their importance, as well as their use in the field of tourism.

Based on the interviews, it is safe to state that the annual search for funds hinders the work of local leaders greatly, rendering long-term planning very difficult. A more wide-ranging, simpler system of funding spanning over a period longer than annual funds would be beneficial. Furthermore, there is a need for a couple of professionals, employed full-time who could provide assistance for communities, local institutions and associations (either independently or within the framework of VMML) in their attempts to collect, coordinate and systematize the different local values, value repositories, and events. This would further strengthen local identities and would contribute to encouraging locals to stay in their hometowns, moderating the worryingly high number of people leaving. The professionals working at the Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina highlighted that the digitization of local traditions and values is useful and important, but cannot replace the lively, prevalent traditions and their values. The point is the human!

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- Hungarian Repository of Values in Vojvodina –Treasures of Vojvodina <https://www.facebook.com/vajdasag.kincsei>

Appendix

<p>Novi Bečej</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local chapter of Rákóczi Szövetség • Mór Jókai Hungarian Cultural Association 	<p>Bačko Petrovo Selo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tisza Region Cultural and Folklore Association
<p>Utrine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Százszorszép Cultural Association 	<p>Martonoš</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortinus Village Protection Association
<p>Ada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gábor Szarvas Library • Aranykapu Cultural Association • Vadvirág Traditional Circle 	<p>Bečej</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sándor Petőfi Hungarian Cultural Association • Ricsaj Folklore Festival • Fokos band
<p>Senta</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lajos Thurzó Cultural and Educational Center • Touristic Association of Senta Zenta • City Museum, Rozetta Arts and Crafts Association • Artistic Competitions for High Schools 	<p>Čoka</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Csóka Cultural and Educational Center – Ferenc Móra Hungarian Cultural Association • Csalogány Female Choir • Ferenc Móra Hungarian Cultural Association •
<p>Novi Knežvac</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiszagyöngye Cultural Association • Country House, Kéknefelejcs Traditonal Circle • Ricze House, Firigyháza 	<p>Kanjiža</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cnesa Educational and Cultural Institution • Tisza Folklore Dance Troupe
<p>Tornjoš</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endre Ady Cultural Association • “Magda-lak” Country House Association 	<p>Horgoš</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Béla Bartók Hungarian Cultural Association

The cultural and communal institutions and civil cultural groups involved in the research project

Róbert M. Drabancz – Szilárd Mészáros:

The Cultural Heritage of the “Kuruc” World in Transcarpathia¹⁶

Absztrakt: A magyar közösség a 19. században alakította ki a nemzeti fejlődéshez szükséges gazdasági, társadalmi, politikai és kulturális eszközrendszerét, melyek segítségével teremtette meg a nemzet tudatát. A magyar nemzettudat a kultúrnemzeti koncepció köré szerveződött, mely a nemzeti nyelv, a történeti hagyományok és a kultúra eszközével tudta hatékonyan leírni a Kárpát-medence magyarságának jellemzőit. A 20. században a magyar nemzeti kisebbségek kényszerű elkülönültsége miatt kialakultak azok a regionális jelenségek, melyeket Kárpátalján is kimutattak a kutatások. Tanulmányunkban a kárpátaljai Rákóczi-kultusz elemeit vizsgáljuk meg a magyar nemzeti identitás szempontjából. A munka célja bemutatni a kuruc világ hagyományait, illetve kulturális örökség jellemzőit a történeti leíró módszerek segítségével. Munkánkban a kultusz meghatározó elemeire helyeztük a hangsúlyt: a néphagyományok értékképző szerepére, valamint a tradíció kiépülésének állomásaira. A szöveg széles forrásanyagra épült, melyek közül ki kell emelnünk a 18. században keletkezett naplókát és emlékiratokat, valamint a kárpátaljai magyar történeti munkákat, illetve a 19-20. században megindult ruszin kutatások klasszikus monográfiáit.

Abstract: 19th-century Hungary was marked by economic, social, political, and cultural changes which were essential for the emergence of national consciousness. A shared sense of Hungarian identity was organised around the concept of national culture that was able to effectively depict the characteristics of the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin through national language, historical traditions, and cultural patterns. The forced separation of Hungarian national minorities in the 20th century led to the formation of phenomena that research has also identified and described in the Transcarpathian region. This study examines elements of the Rákóczi cult in Transcarpathia with regards to Hungarian national identity. The aim is to present the traditions of the so-called “Kuruc world” and the characteristics of cultural heritage using descriptive historical methods. The focus falls on certain defining elements of the cult, namely, the role of folk traditions in value formation and the stages of its development. The study draws on a wide range of sources including 18th-century diaries and memoirs, Hungarian historical works written in Transcarpathia, and authoritative monographs of Ruthenian studies which began in the 19th and 20th century.

Introduction

Ferenc Rákóczi II's family played a decisive role in 17th-century Hungarian history. Their incredible political influence was accompanied by material growth and estates spreading over 1.3 million acres in 27 counties, most of them – almost 1 million acres – concentrated in the north-eastern part of the Kingdom of Hungary. The great prince could have lived a luxurious and carefree life, but his religious upbringing, morals, and sense of responsibility prompted him to engage in public affairs. He felt that privilege was accompanied by an obligation that he had to fulfil to God, his country, and the people who lived there. In his writings Rákóczi frequently

¹⁶ The term “Kuruc” refers to anti-Habsburg rebels in the Kingdom of Hungary between ca. 1671 and 1711. The term “Transcarpathia” (“Kárpátalja” in Hungarian) refers to the territory that used to be part of the Kingdom of Hungary and now generally means the lands which today are in Ukraine.

referred to these obligations that were often in conflict with self-interest. At the beginning of the War of Independence he reacted to the people's call as follows: "I must confess, this was against all rules of reason, but the impulsiveness of youth and patriotism enthused me. I could have turned back, and I had plenty of reasons to do so. But I was encouraged and inspired to earn the trust and love of my people, so I persisted." (Rákóczi II 1942) This study¹⁷ examines the elements of the Rákóczi cult in Transcarpathia with regards to Hungarian national identity. The aim¹⁸ is to present the traditions of the so-called "Kuruc world" and the characteristics of cultural heritage using descriptive historical methods.¹⁹ The focus falls on certain defining elements of the cult, namely, the role of folk traditions in value formation and the stages of its development. The study draws on a wide range of sources including 18th-century diaries and memoirs,²⁰ Hungarian historical works written in Transcarpathia,²¹ and authoritative monographs of Ruthenian studies which began in the 19th and 20th century.²²

The Character of Rákóczi in Folklore

The events of the Rákóczi War of Independence were mainly linked to the estates of Ferenc Rákóczi II in the current Transcarpathian region. It should be noted that the largest estate of the family was the one in Bereg county and, unsurprisingly, the revolution began in this region and persisted the longest in the counties of Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa and Máramaros (currently, these counties are partly situated in Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, and Slovakia). The commitment of the people of Transcarpathia to the cause of freedom is also shown by the fact that Ugocsa is referred to as a "Kuruc county" in the sources. The first lost and won battles²³ of the War of Independence took place here, and two parliaments were also held in the region.²⁴ Additionally, these counties provided loyal soldiers for the cause (e.g. Tamás Esze and Miklós Bercsényi) and supported the war with financial resources from the revenues of the salt mines in Máramaros.²⁵ Historical eras dear to people are embellished and recorded in cultural memory. Besides glorious and difficult historical events (e.g. the Turkish occupation and the War of Independence in 1848–1849), stories about outstanding historical figures such as Saint Ladislaus (Szent László), the Hunyadi family, or Lajos Kossuth are also preserved in folklore. Both Rákóczi and the War of Independence enjoyed such special esteem among the people of Hungary, including the various nationalities living in the country at the time. Accordingly, several legends depict this period. The most typical themes in the stories are as follows.²⁶ The legend about the flowers of Rákóczi shows that the people endowed their beloved hero with almost supernatural abilities. According to the story, his mother, Ilona Zrínyi, had a wonderful garden in Munkács (Mukachevo) Castle, in which, among other things, tulips grew.

¹⁷ This study was written with the help of the Public Cultural Research Program of the National Institute of Culture.

¹⁸ This study draws on the research the Culture Research Group of the Mihály Váci Cultural Centre in Nyíregyháza conducted in Transcarpathia in 2020.

¹⁹ The period is a popular field of research in Hungarian historiography. For a selected bibliography see R. Ágnes Várkonyi–Domokos Dániel Kis (2004): *A Rákóczi-szabadságharc*. Nemzet és emlékezet. (*The Rákóczi War of Independence*. Nation and Remembrance). Budapest, Osiris Kiadó. 793–795.

²⁰ Köpeczi–R. Várkonyi 1973.

²¹ Várady–Sternberg 1981; Csátary 2002, 2008, 2012.

²² Bonkáló 1940; Hodinka 1937; Udvari 1994.

²³ Dolha (Dovhe) 7 June 1703, and Tiszabecs–Tiszaújlak (Vylok) 14–16 July 1703.

²⁴ Huszt (Khust) 1706, Salánk (Shalanky) 1711.

²⁵ Historical research usually places the Kuruc era between 1671 and 1735. See Romsics 2019: 131–165.

²⁶ Upon the suggestion of the Transcarpathian Community College Association, the Rákóczi cult in Transcarpathia became part of the Foreign National Depository of the Collection of Hungarian Values in 2013.

Once, the infant Rákóczi dreamed that his mother's flowers were in danger. After saving them, a fairy gave him a protective golden trumpet as a reward for his good deeds. Later when the castle was threatened by the enemy, the boy blew into the instrument, the tulips became soldiers and defeated the enemy (Dupka–Zubánics 2019: 13).

Another story, dating back to the time of the War of Independence, also suggests that Rákóczi was supported by divine forces. According to this, in July 1703, in the battle near Tiszabecs and Tiszaújlak (Vylok), his guardian angel, a Turul bird²⁷ hovered over the prince and helped Rákóczi when the enemy knocked the sword out of his hand. It plucked out the attacker's eyes and helped the Rákóczi with a weapon in his beak. To commemorate the story, a monument was erected on the banks of River Tisza, near the Tiszaújlak bridge in 1903. An artificial hill was constructed from a cartload of land brought from all counties of Hungary, and a Turul bird with extended wings and a sword in its mouth was installed on the top of a 18-meter-high column, which was partly made from public donations. The memorial was inaugurated in 1903 but was destroyed when the Soviet troops arrived in 1945. A tombstone was made from the stone material of the column to commemorate the deceased Soviet soldiers, while the Turul bird was relocated to the castle in Ungvár (Uzhhorod). The second Turul bird memorial, still standing, was inaugurated after a long dispute in 1989 (Dupka- Zubánics 2019: 19).

Of course, most narratives are related to the Rákóczi War of Independence. Among other things, the heroic acts of the Kuruc soldiers, the events of the War, geographical names, the origins of famous memorabilia feature folk traditions. A common element in these stories is that the people and the Kuruc army joined forces and fought heroically against the Habsburg troops. On one occasion, for example, the fleeing Rákóczi was aided by the village blacksmith in Salank (Shalanky) who deceived the persecutors by putting the horseshoes backwards on the feet of Rákóczi's horse. Another proof of mutual love between the prince and the people is the story according to which after the lost battle, Rákóczi, who was fleeing to Poland accompanied by a few Ruthenians, was aided by the people of Bovcár village. The prince, who was hidden from the enemy, had a well dug by his soldiers to express his gratitude. According to the story, Rákóczi also participated in the work, and then carved the following inscription on a stone: "Ferenc Rákóczi was here, he built the wall of this well." Following this, the village took the name Bovcár, which in Hungarian means "the tsar was here." This description demonstrates that people regarded the leader of the War of Independence as the true ruler of the people. One proof of Rákóczi's positive treatment in cultural memory is a memorial wall built over the spring of Bovcár in 1896. The inscription on the wall reads as follows: "Here was Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II; 18 February 1711 – 1896" (Magyar 2000: 107).

The legend of the Pudpolóc (Pidpolozzja) table is also an interesting story which confirms the persistence of historical memory. The village near the Verecke Pass (Veretsky Pass) hosted Rákóczi who fled to Poland after losing a battle in 1703. As a sign of distinctive respect and love, the prince spent the night on the table which the family kept. Later many visitors viewed the relic, and many aimed to buy it. The family was reluctant to sell for a long time, but in 1882 the county of Bereg bought it. A year later, the relic was moved to Sáropspatak and became part of the local Rákóczi Museum. The building of this museum was also tendered by Munkács, but then Sáropspatak received this opportunity (Magyar 2000: 103).

Much of the folklore reveals how Rákóczi's patriotism related to his homeland. According to one of the stories, when he first saw Munkács on the map as a child, he burst out in tears. Another story tells how Rákóczi had said goodbye to the vineyards around Beregszász (Berehove) before he went into exile: "My coffers lost, my lands, my vines, but dearest loss of

²⁷ The Turul is a mythological bird resembling a falcon; it has been a Hungarian national symbol for centuries.

all my wines.”²⁸ Rákóczi knew and loved every corner of his homeland, and this bitter sigh implies the great sorrow the prince felt when he separated from the Bocskor Mountain and his vineyards which gave particularly succulent wine (Dupka–Zubánics 2019: 30).

Traditions related to Rákóczi remained alive in some of the Ruthenian villages of Transcarpathia until the period between the two World Wars; here it was customary for everyone to take a seat at the family table on Christmas Eve. If, however, a family member was unable to attend, their chair was left empty and the table was also set for the missing person. In some of the above municipalities in Bereg county, the empty seat (head of the table) signified the tribute paid to Rákóczi's memory, symbolically waiting for their former lord to return. In order to understand the roots of this tradition, it is necessary to go back to the ancient past; to feed the ancestors and supernatural beings, it was customary for the Slavs to present such magical acts of sacrifice (Márkus 1972: 121–124).

The Cult of Rákóczi in Transcarpathia

Rákóczi's figure became an integral part of the Hungarian “national narrative” over the past centuries; not only our image of Hungarian history would be incomplete without knowledge about the War of independence, but also our national consciousness and identity. The first work depicting the prince was Kelemen Mikes's *Letters from Turkey* (*Törökországi levelek*), which gave an authentic and detailed picture about the leader of the War of Independence. Mikes' work contributed greatly to the creation and recording of Rákóczi's character in cultural memory.²⁹ His figure became prominent in folklore³⁰ and literature,³¹ as well as in academia and modern everyday life.

The cult of Rákóczi appeared in Transcarpathia during the era of dualism after the failed 1848/49 War of Independence, the suffocating era of neo-absolutism, and the Austro-Hungarian Compromise in 1867. The discovery and promotion of Kuruc poetry and culture can be associated with the distinguished literary historian, Kálmán Thaly, who visited Bereg county several times and gave lectures on the events of the War of Independence in the region. As a result of his dedicated work, the poetry of the Kuruc world was explored, the most important memorials were catalogued, and a statue of a Turul bird was erected in the Castle of Munkács during the millennium celebrations. On the 200th anniversary of the Rákóczi War of Independence, a monument was built in the main square of Dolha (Dovhe) to commemorate the loyalty of Ruthenians to the prince.

In the last two decades of dualism, the Kuruc movement, which permeated political life, succeeded in the endeavour to repatriate the ashes of Ferenc Rákóczi in 1906. Contemporary press dealt with the repatriation of the ashes of the exiles and the reburial in Kassa (Košice) in many articles and historical publications.³² The coffins were carried through the capital in a decorative procession and then transported to Kassa.³³ The funeral took place on 29 October in

²⁸ In Hungarian “Kerekhegyem, Kalmárom csak a Bocskorom sajnálom.”

²⁹ As for 18th-century sources, the writings of Ferenc Pápay, Gáspár Beniczky, and Ádám Király Szathmáry gave authentic characterisations of Rákóczi's figure. See. Köpeczy–R. Várkonyi 1973.

³⁰ *Rákóczi's Lamentations*, known as the *Rákóczi Song* became important and was considered the first national anthem for a long time.

³¹ The figure of Rákóczi and the Kuruc world were discovered in the poetry of 19th-century Hungarian romanticism, for instance in the poetry of Ferenc Kölcsey, Mihály Vörösmarty, János Arany and Sándor Petőfi, who depicted figures of Hungarian heroes fighting against the Austrians.

³² The reburial ceremony in Kassa was an important event for the Rákóczi cult in Transcarpathia. Between 1918 and 1945 the area was part of Czechoslovakia, and many people visited the prince's tomb.

³³ In 1906, the exiles of the Rákóczi War of Independence were reburied in three places. On 29 October Ferenc

Kassa. 15 000 people could view the ceremony from behind cordons in the streets, from their windows, and with a ticket in the mourning hall and the cathedral next to the train station. The ashes arrived at Kassa train station at 5.16 a.m. accompanied by 24 welcoming cannon shots and ringing bells. The guard of honour sent by the county legislatures watched the remains of the prince and his companions in the ceremonial hall set up for the occasion until the commencement of the memorial service at 8 a.m. After Kálmán Thaly's memorial speech, a procession of 2,500 people marched to the cathedral, where invited ecclesiastical dignitaries, state officials, Kassa governors, and members of the press could take part in the service. The ashes were placed in the crypt privately by the clergy at 5 p.m. At the end of the ceremony, the crowd was able to pay tribute by the coffins temporarily exhibited in the cathedral. During these years, Rákóczi's figure and the heroic behaviour of the Kuruc people became part of the national canon, which was largely due to folk memory that preserved the stories (Kincses 2018: 106–112).

After Trianon, the Rákóczi cult remained uninterrupted despite the unfavourable political conditions. 8 April, 1935 marked the 200th anniversary of Rákóczi's death. The prince and the War of Independence were commemorated both in Hungary and in the formerly Hungarian areas. In Upper Hungary, then the south of Czechoslovakia, the cultural societies of Kassa, Pozsony (Bratislava), and Komárom organised the celebrations, while the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association in Szlovénzsó was the main organiser of the events. On 5 April, the on-site correspondent of the Prágai Magyar Hírlap (Prague Magyar Hírlap) reported that all the bells of Transcarpathia had sounded at 10 a.m. on the famous day. On 7 and 8 April, under the coordination of the Hungarian Association of Transcarpathians, large-scale celebrations took place: "Almost all the municipalities and towns of Transcarpathia are involved. Where there is a local organisation, there will be cultural evenings, matinees, and in many places, there will be theatre performances which portray and re-enact the events of the Kuruc times. In addition, a pilgrimage to the Rákóczi memorial column in Tiszaújlak is organised, and Romanian pilgrims take part too, bringing with them a flag received from Rákóczi." (Prágai Magyar Hírlap 1935: 5) As part of the celebrations in Munkács, a torchlight procession to the Rákóczi Castle was launched on the evening of 7 April, where a wreath was laid down on the Rákóczi memorial plaque.

According to a retrospective report on 9 April, the anniversary of the prince's death was celebrated in a truly impressive way. Besides the Hungarians, members of different nationalities, such as Saxons, Slovaks, Romanians, and Ruthenians attended the events. A fine example of the peaceful cooperation of diverse nationalities, based on common respect for Rákóczi, is a celebration held in Tiszaújlak, the site of the first victory of the Kuruc revolutionary fighters. A cavalry escort of 100 horsemen led the participants to the memorial where the speeches were held, and the wreaths were placed. The extent to which the local population has embraced the legacy of the Rákóczi War of Independence and how much it respected its leader is shown in the more than 3000 people who attended the event on 7 April (Prágai Magyar Hírlap 1935: 1).

Finally, this study aims to enumerate further important monuments, plaques, and statues that commemorate the Rákóczi War of Independence and its leader in different eras. We present some of the most important places where the number of memorabilia and venues related to Rákóczi is outstanding. The castle of Ungvár hosts a Rákóczi exhibition (a permanent exhibition of the Transcarpathian County Museum of Homeland Studies) pays tribute to the memory of the prince. The already mentioned Tiszaújlak monument, erected in 1903, and the Turul bird,

Rákóczi II, Ilona Zrínyi, József Rákóczi, Miklós Bercsényi, Krisztina Csáky, Antal Esterházy and Miklós Sibrik were buried in Kassa; on 30 October Imre Thököly in Késmárk (Kežmarok); on 15 November Adam Vay arrived to his final resting place.

which was removed in 1945, were placed here in the castle courtyard, and the word “Millennium” was inscribed on its base. Miklós Bercsényi, the former count of Ung County, the former lord of the castle, and the second most important character of the War of Independence has also received special attention in the city. His bust was installed in the fortress, and a work of art commemorating his second wife, Krisztina Csáky, was erected nearby. The city itself also has memorial plaques and sculptures that commemorate these three people.

The city of Munkács holds and even wider variety of mementos of the Rákóczi War of Independence. Ilona Zrínyi inherited the castle in 1680, and when she married Imre Thököly, the fortress became a centre of resistance to the Habsburgs. The child Rákóczi, his mother, and sister lived through the siege led by General Caraffa between 1686 and 1688. After Ilona Zrínyi handed over the castle to the emperor, the family was taken to Vienna.

As the folk story quoted earlier reveals, Munkács was very dear to Rákóczi. In 1704 the prince reclaimed his former home, which remained in Kuruc hands until 1711. Munkács was the headquarters of the prince’s operations, he spent a lot of time in the fortress and he hired a French military engineer to fortify the building.

Unsurprisingly, there are several memorials dedicated to Ilona Zrínyi and her son in the castle. In 1993, the Rákóczi Museum in Sárospatak and the Ferenc Rákóczi II Literary and Cultural Circle had a memorial plaque installed in the inner courtyard in honour of the memory of the heroic woman. In 1999, the Sárospatak Museum also designed a Rákóczi memorial room in the fortress. In 2006, a group of sculptures was erected to commemorate mother and son in the upper castle.

In 1896, a 24-meter-high column with the famous Turul bird was erected on the north-eastern bastion of the fort as part of the millennium commemoration. After the Treaty of Trianon Transcarpathia became part of Czechoslovakia, the monument was demolished and then rebuilt in 2008. Further statues and memorial plaques in several places in the city depict Ilona Zrínyi and her son. The Rákóczy Castle (Fejér House), in which the prince stayed on several occasions, should also be mentioned.

Beregszász, which many consider to be the most important venue of the war of independence, is also an outstanding Rákóczi memorial site. On 22 May 1703, Tamás Esze unfurled the flag of the War of Independence here;³⁴ this act was marked by a plaque on the local post office building. He was a serf in Tarpa who later became a Kuruc brigadier, received special attention in Beregszász and has a memorial plaque and a bust in the city, which was inaugurated in 2011 and was placed in the park in front of the former Casino. Rákóczi visited the city several times, and the War of Independence began in the square named after the prince. The former Bethlen-Rákóczi castle stood in the settlement; it burned down in 1686 and was probably restored by Rákóczi. The Bereg Country Museum is located in a building called Grófudvar by the locals, and it holds relics of Rákóczi. The memory of the prince is also preserved in the plaque placed on the former castle’s present lyceum part in 1996. A 1991 memorial plaque commemorates Mikes Kelemen. Beregszász is home to the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, where a statue was erected to commemorate Rákóczi’s mother in 2006, and another one to commemorate Rákóczi in 2008. On 17 December 2019, as part of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Memorial Year,³⁵ Rákóczi’s equestrian statue was inaugurated in the city centre, thus fulfilling the wish of the citizens of Beregszász.³⁶

³⁴ Tamás Esze unfurled the “Pro libertate” flags on 21 May 1703 in Tarpa and Vári, and then on 22 May in Beregszász.

³⁵ The Hungarian Parliament declared 2019 a Ferenc Rákóczi II memorial year; see decree 32/2018. (XI. 27.) OGY.

³⁶ The history of the Rákóczi statue in Beregszász dates back to 126 years ago. In 1893, at the time of the 190th anniversary of the beginning of the Rákóczi War of Independence, the people of Bereg county aimed to erect an equestrian statue in memory of the Great Prince. After Tarpa and Vári, they wanted to commemorate the breaking

Another famous location of the War of Independence is Salánk (Shalanky), where several buildings remind locals of the events of the era. The Rákóczi family had a castle here (now destroyed) and the last Kuruc parliament was held here in February 1711. According to the legend, the participants gathered in a very strange place in the forest at the top of Hömlőc Hill. The last documents of the War of Independence were written on the huge stone used here as a table, which can still be seen on the spot. 1935 marked the 200th anniversary of the prince's death, and a memorial plaque was placed on the wall of the porch of the Reformed Church to commemorate the National Assembly. A notable memorial site in the settlement is the Mikes well, from where Kelemen Mikes took fresh water to his lord daily. This place was the site of turbulent times over the centuries, the well was filled in 1970 and then restored in 1991. At the same time, an obelisk was erected to mark the place and commemorate the last parliament.

Conclusion

In the 19th century, the Hungarian community developed an economic, social, political, and cultural framework which was necessary for national development and for the creation of national identity. Hungarian national consciousness was organised around the concept of "cultural nation", an idea which effectively encompassed the characteristics of "Hungarianness" in the Carpathian Basin through national language, historical traditions, and culture. The dual nature of Hungarian national consciousness (cultural nation, state nation) was emphasised in the research of Jenő Szűcs, and the famous political theorist, István Bibó, wrote that the nation-state concept was problematic because of multilingualism and the differences in the development of the different regions over the centuries (Szűcs 1984: 30–31; Bibó 2011: 23–24). Because of power shift after World War I and the Treaty of Trianon, some of the Hungarians became minorities, which defined the directions of the evolution of the Hungarian nation. As a result, cultural nationalism became the dominant attitude in Hungarian communities.

The process of becoming a unified nation was connected with socio-economic factors and may be traced back to the period between 1867 and 1918; during the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, Hungary was a unified country and the Hungarian state aimed to create a unified nation state through national ideology and education. Although this period did not eliminate the previous regional differences, especially the differences and peculiarities resulting from centuries of parallel economic and cultural development between Hungary and Transylvania, it undoubtedly lessened their significance. After World War I, different trends in the process of nation-building took place compared to the pre-War era.

Nation-building can be defined as the institutionalisation of national principles and the formation of a community identity. On the one hand, each community forms an image of itself that provides a framework for self-interpretation. These sets of rules become the norm, and the given group defines itself by making its own system of ideas the starting point of any interpretation of the world. On the other hand, the established idea is always forced to justify its demands through itself at the political level of social contact (Kántor 2000: 219–241). The reflexivity of politics is developed not only within the framework of the nation-state, but also in the process of minority nation-building.

Until 1918, the make-up of an "ethnic Hungarian nation" and "political Hungary" meant that the nation was smaller than the country, and after the Trianon peace treaty, the country became smaller than the nation. After Trianon, a quarter of the Hungarian nation – more than three

of the Kuruc flag in Beregszász on 21–22 May 1703, during which the infantry and equestrian companies were formed.

million people – became nationals outside Hungary. Those three million Hungarians remained parts of the nation, but the national existence of these communities in the diaspora became uncertain and maintaining ways of contact became highly complicated in post-war Central Europe. As a result, the Hungarians of the neighbouring states were forced to redefine their national identity, as their rights and opportunities changed. The identity research of recent years underlines the fact that the consciousness of the “unified Hungarian nation” formed before 1918 still exists in the Carpathian Basin. Those who considered themselves Hungarians also considered themselves to be part of the Hungarian ethnocultural framework, which meant the use of a common language (Brubaker 2011:34- 43; Veres 2008:36). However, we must see that the centuries-old separation has led to the formation of certain regional phenomena detectable in Transcarpathia too. The head of research at the Spectrum Social Research Workshop wrote in the mid-1990s: “The “homeland image” of Hungarians in Transcarpathia is quite contradictory, as they have lived six decades of their minority existence in several social contexts.” Having analysed the patriotism of Transcarpathian Hungarians, the author concluded that the Hungarian population of the region had created its own narrowed concept of patriotism, “according to which the homeland was not a country, but a broken piece of the real homeland, a narrower region: the homeland, the area where people live according to their own traditions, where they use their mother tongue, to form a community with their own fellow Hungarians” (Kovács 1996:18).

Identification with the national community can be grasped in the context of individual identity. Individual identity is all the knowledge and abilities of the person by which he or she asserts his or her own values and interests in a system of social communication and action. The identity of the individual is organised in increasingly complex ways in complex societies, and information influences from outside, called ideologies, which have their own moral, intellectual and ideological contexts, play a role in this. The individual’s value system, attitudes, behavioural patterns, moral and thought patterns are shaped by ideologies that come from the world of social institutions (school, media, organised communities). National identity is based on the process whereby individuals develop behavioural habits and attitudes in their own micro-universe as a result of the social implementation of national ideology, which allows them to function as a group that distinguishes members of a community in a specific way as part of individual identity. Members of the symbolic universe called “nation” are more or less familiar with the scenarios and behaviour patterns by which they can act as participants in national “rituals” (Csepi 1992: 108-120).

The historical legacy of Transcarpathia shows that the Kuruc era, the Rákóczi War of Independence, and Rákóczi’s life are of particular significance in the history of the people in these regions; Rákóczi’s character was the source of the rich, almost mythological, collection of stories in which his figure transcends historical boundaries. Transcarpathia has been important for many reasons: the Castle of Munkács was an important venue, Ilona Zrínyi protected her children and homeland here, Miklós Bercsényi set out to fight for the country’s independence in this region, and Rákóczi’s Turul bird, which became a symbol of the Hungarian community’s desire for freedom, is also related to Transcarpathia. Folk traditions and heroism in battles are all part of national mythology. Stories with intense emotional elements deliver a sense of strength, especially when the majority of a country’s population (Hungarians, Ruthenians, Romanians) identify with them, and when individual and community needs are met. The Rákóczi cult represents a consciousness-forming force that defined the national identity of large communities in the regions populated by Hungarians. In the history and consciousness of the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia, Ferenc Rákóczi II lives as he put it in his *Memoirs*: “The sole purpose of my actions was driven by the love of freedom and the desire to liberate

my country from foreign shackles. I was encouraged and strengthened by the intention to earn the trust and love of the people” (Rákóczi II 1942: 48).

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Andrea Koncz:

Choirs as communities in Kecskemét

„Community is a basic human condition”

/Arapovics – Vercseg 2017/

Abstract: As my motto says community is a major condition of a human being. Many of us have had experienced the miss of our own communities during 2020 because of the pandemic and the social distancing. From the very beginning people have lived in communities which first were the condition of staying alive then became a place where people could spend their free time with others like doing sports together, get cultural skills or singing in a choir. The history of choir singing had the same way, it first was a part of a religious tradition then became a leisure activity. The publication is destined to focus on the history of choir singing, the past and the present of choir singing in the town of Kecskemét cultural life. I am going to present two Kecskemét based choirs, the Zoltán Kodály Mixed Choir which is working since 1888 and the Aurin Girls' Choir. The interviews which I made with the conductors and the choir members show the motivation of the choirs in different age and their works as a community.

Introduction

The roots of choral singing go back to the Schola Cantorum, the institution of the Catholic Church, which was a singing school founded by Pope Sylvester I in the 4th century. Its members were representatives of artistic church singing, who initially performed musical tasks, later they completed administrative and legal tasks as well. With the spread of Christianity, this form of education became established all over Europe. In the Middle Ages, several similar institutions were established with educational purposes: they were not intended to train musicians, but to educate a new generation of the intelligentsia with a European spirit, that is, to "educate the intellectuals" (Szikszayné 2007).

From the 10th century, Hungary also became a Christian state, and church traditions took hold, in our country as well. For hundreds of years the culture of institutional choirs operated in the same form as in the times of St. Stephen. The different denominations maintained their church choirs and professional bands and singers played a prominent role in the courtyards of the wealthier strata of the society. Knowledge and cultivation of the sciences and arts, including music, belonged to the intellectual circles and the upper social class. The 19th century - as in so many other things - also brought about changes in choral communities. As a result of the urbanization that accompanied the economic transformation, the society was rearranged, new types of communities appeared and spread. Large cities were developed and, as the middle class was formed, leisure activities, self-organised movements and communities became available and also in demand for more and more people. The various societies, associations and circles carried out versatile activities: they represented interests, but they were also engaged in self-education, politics, being active in social life, philanthropy as well as to providing opportunities for leisure activities. In many cases, these organizations ran song clubs and glee clubs at all the levels of social stratification (Dobszay 1998). These choirs and singing groups were the direct predecessors of the choirs that operate today.

Song clubs, glee clubs as the antecedents of the present day choral singing

The glee club or choral society is usually a male choir that originated in England in the 18th century and became known in Hungary through German mediation. It appeared for the first time in England that a lord and his serf sang together, community membership was not based on origin and it was organized throughout the whole settlement, not just in the church. The first Hungarian glee clubs were modeled on the men's choir of the Berlin Liedertafel.

In the 1830s and 40s, a similar movement started in more and more Hungarian villages, polyphonic choirs were formed, the members of which were mainly craftsmen. These actually functioned as informal communities, friends's circles who helped each other and also went to song festivals, where they performed romantic pieces by Hungarian composers, Hungarian sword songs, folk songs and their adaptations. In the age of the awakening to national self-awareness, apart from creating communities, the purpose of singing groups was to sing in Hungarian as often as possible, thus helping to spread the language (Fazekas 2016). The revolution and war of independence of 1848 marked a turning point in the operation of choirs, the number of singing groups decreased, they could not undertake public performances or sing Hungarian songs. But the popularity and necessity of singing together is shown by the fact that the glee clubs were reestablished within a short period of time and in 1867 they were brought together by the National Hungarian Song Society under the leadership of Ferenc Erkel. At the song festival of 1868 - where there were also competitions - already sixty glee clubs were represented, with more than 1,000 choir members (Fazekas 2017).

The beginnings of choir life in Kecskemét

In the above outlined period, in 1864, the Glee club of Kecskemét was also founded, which then became a regular participant in the national song festivals. According to the basic rules of the association defined at its general meeting in 1868, the purpose of the glee club is to: cultivate and distribute art songs, and especially Hungarian national songs, develop fine tastes by their public performances and in this way also to promote cultural education. They serve as a means to achieve the following goals: singing exercises, timely trips, participation in national song festivals (...) contributing to charity and respectable goals" (Basic rules: 1). Members could be any "socially immaculate man or woman", whose task was to maintain the good reputation of the association and their obligation was to obey the basic rules (Uo. 4). Its income came from membership fees, revenues collected at its own concerts and interest paid by the founders. There could be active, supporting, founding and honorary members.

1. 1. An active member could be someone who had "a sufficient sense of music and good voice". He was obliged to participate in events (rehearsals, song festivals) determined by the community, if they refused to participate and did not show up for 3 consecutive rehearsals without a reason, he could be excluded. Active members did not pay membership fees.
2. 2. Those wanting to support the respectable goals could become supporting members, and therefore paid an annual fee of two forints for at least three years.
3. 3. A founding member was a person who paid 25 forints into the budget of the association or 5% annual interest of the capital and made a declaration about it.
4. 4. The election of honorary members was the exclusive right of the general assembly. "Publicly respected and socially outstanding individuals can be elected who have distinguished themselves through their keen efforts for the benefit of the association or who have generally recognized merits in the field of music and song." (Uo. 6).

In terms of its organizational structure, the glee club had a general assembly, a committee, various officials and a song judging committee. All the issues that affected the members and the association were discussed in the general assembly according to specific rules. The committee carried out and undertook the tasks that were decided in the general assembly. They supervised the operation and the financials of the association. The officers of the association were: the president, the vice-president, the chorus-master, the notary, the treasurer, the governor and the flag bearer. The president was the representative of the association at all times, he congregated, opened, led and closed the meetings. He guarded the seal and flag of the association. The vice president (active member) replaced him if the president failed to participate. The chorus master held the rehearsals, conducted the concerts, supervised the repertoire and the quality of the singing. The notary kept a record of the members, took the minutes of the general assembly, answered letters with the president's countersignature. The treasurer handled the financial transactions related to the association. The governor was responsible for creating the physical environment: he took care of the heating and lighting, and kept an inventory of the movables. The task of the flag bearer was to keep the association's flag in order and carry it during parades and concerts. The judging committee decided on the songs to be learnt, considered the conductor's suggestions and commented on the choir's achievement after the performances.

The basic rules of the association also states what should be done in the case of conflicts between members: "they are settled by the presidency, they are inefficient, the committee and, in the last case, the general assembly are to make a decision" (Uo. 15).

The glee club of Kecskemét performed successfully between 1874 and 1907, collecting diplomas and prizes at song competitions. Dezső Huszár praised them in his article about the association's 50-year history as follows: "It is recognized all over the country that few glee clubs can perform Hungarian folk songs with such Hungarian flavor as the Kecskemét Municipal Glee Club (...). From 1864 to the present day, the Kecskemét Municipal Glee club is one of the most active public cultural factors of the social life of the town and especially in the first two decades of its existence, it was the sole director of its cultural development. (...) nothing proves it more clearly than the fact that now there is a town music school and two other song groups operating in Kecskemét" (Huszár 1909: 129).

Below I will present two choirs of Kecskemét, which operate as communities with a similar purpose, and whose foundation are 110 years apart.

I wanted to get a picture of the classical music life of Kecskemét, including the operation of the two different choirs and their experience of isolation due to the coronavirus. Therefore, in the summer of 2020 I conducted semi-structured interviews with, among others, the leader of the Aurin Girls' Choir, László Durányik and three members of the choir, as well as the leader of the Kodály Zoltán Mixes Choir, Mónika Korompai Zöldi-Kovácsné.

The Civil Choral Society of Kecskemét, the present-day Kodály Mixed Choir

One of the two choral societies mentioned by Dezső Huszár in 1909 was the Civil Choral Society founded on March 9, 1888. In its fundamentals and organizational structure, it was very similar to the Glee Club of Kecskemét and the Choral Society of Kecskemét. The most significant difference, however, is that only men belonging to industrial guilds could enter the Civil Choral Society. For many years, there could not be a female member of the choir at all. Their first president was Mihály Böszörményi, and their first conductor was István Nemesszeghy, a music teacher, whose expertise made it possible that craftsmen who could not or could barely read

sheet music later gained national fame. They also built the Industrial Home to provide a venue for their rehearsals. (Now it is the Youth Home, an institution belonging to the Hírös Agóra)

They operated for decades under the name of Civil Choral Society of Kecskemét, which was later changed to Civil and Workers' Choral Society. In the spring of 1948, in the spirit of the construction of the socialist state, the liquidation of civil associations began, which also hit choral societies. The then president of the Choral Society of Kecskemét, László Tóth, was ordered to resign by the cultural affairs department of the town. Their aim was to eliminate the "civil influence". István Szili, a member of the Socialist Party, was made the new president, who proposed that the choir should take the name of Zoltán Kodály. They were the second in the country to be allowed to bear the master's name by the master himself, thus the choir became the Kodály Zoltán Choir of the Workers of Kecskemét. At the same time of the name change, they were transformed into a mixed choir and operated like this in the following decades. They were regular participants in national and international choir meetings. (Heltai 2008).

The mixed choir named after Zoltán Kodály, with a history dating back more than 130 years, is currently (in 2019-2020) led by Mrs Mónika Zöldi-Kovácsné Korompai, who feels to keep the long-standing community alive. Due to the state of the epidemic at the time of the data collection, I did not have the opportunity to meet the members of the choir, so Mrs Mónika Zöldi-Kovácsné Korompai, who leads the choir, explained the motivations of the choir and the members. The average age of the members is over 60, those who are still active have usually been singing together in the choir since the age of 40. That is why maintaining the choir has never been as challenging as it is today, when the repertoire has shrunk both in terms of quantity and quality, and this was worsened by the fact that rehearsals were canceled due to the pandemic.

It is typical anyway that new members rarely join the choir, and if they do, they are also over 60. Entry is by invitation, which means that there is typically no way to filter out those who do not have the right voice for choir singing. However, the slow expansion and stagnation will now probably be followed by a decrease in the number of the members. The choir rehearsed once a week before the coronavirus. Years ago, having the proper repertoire, they more often participated in national choir meetings and had a well-established relationship with choirs operating in Galánta. The number of meetings has decreased over the years. They last performed in December 2019 at the Afternoon of Choirs program organized by the József Katona Library. This performance was encouraging, but then came the pandemic, which had (and still has) an impact on the professional activities and life of the choir as a community. Several members go to the choir not only to sing, it happens that for some it is the only community in their lives. After the rehearsals, groups are also formed that entertain together: they go to the opera or the theater. The lack of chorus meetings had a negative effect on several members, as it is common knowledge that amateur artistic activity in itself, as well as the community experience, has a beneficial effect on the perceived quality of life and mental health (Dudás 2015).

The Mixed Choir has retained the original organizational structure outlined above. Today it operates as a foundation, but the choir still has a president who manages the finances, coordinates the performances, tenders, settles conflicts between members (if there are any) and acts also as a member of the choir. There is a small management team (see Committee) and a treasurer, because members can join the choir by paying a membership fee. The chorus-master is subordinate to the president in most matters, but independent professionally. This community is authentic, because they adhere to the rules that they set together.

Kodály School, the cradle of choirs and the Miraculum-Aurin choir family

The Kodály School in Kecskemét was established in 1950 as the first singing and music school of the country. Its director was Márta Nemesszeghy Lajosné Szentkirályi, whom Zoltán Kodály met for the first time in 1947, at his inauguration as an honorary citizen in Kecskemét. The young teacher performed children's plays with the children of the music kindergarten after the composer had encouraged her to continue her work with school-aged children. Márta Szentkirályi accepted the advice, and the first day of teaching took place on October 27, 1950. During its 70 years, the institution was expanded with a high school and a music secondary technical school. It was awarded the Hungarian Heritage Award, the Zoltán Kodály Award and the institutional professional Award for the Hungarian Art Education. Besides its significant educational activities, it became a determinant of choir life in Kecskemét (the website of the Kodály School).

The Aurin Girls' Choir was founded in 1998 under the leadership of László Durányik, its members were the 9-12 grade female students of the Kodály School. Earlier, these students were members of the Miraculum choir (children's choir consisting of 6th-8th graders) also led by László Durányik. It was probably the master's leadership style and the well-functioning community that led the school leaving 8th graders to found a new choir. (They could have joined the school's mixed choir, but they stuck to the already existing customs and community.) Therefore, there is little difference between the two choirs as far as the rules are concerned, girls who leave the Miraculum due to their age enter the Aurin. The aim of the choir is to "play an important role in the cultural life of the town, to be integrated in the Hungarian music life, to participate and perform successfully in national and foreign concerts, festivals and choir competitions, to make high-quality recordings, to represent the name of Kecskemét, the hometown of Zoltán Kodály in the world" (Miraculum-Aurin choir family website).

Apart from educating committed young people who love and know how to sing, it is its duty is to get to know the world through the culture of music. One might say that the girls become cosmopolitan during their year in the choir due to the tours as they have been to several countries of Europe. During its 22 years of existence, the choir won 20 first, 6 second and 4 third prizes in 28 international choir competitions. In 2006, for instance, they won the Choir Olympics in China, beating 42 choirs in their category. The research interviews with three members of the Girls' Choir (aged 18-21) revealed that the primary task during these performances was to create quality sounding, but they could learn other things in the meantime. The members have the opportunity to learn the norms of behavior in an official environment as well as the cultural customs of other countries during the tours, they can practice their language skills and develop the social competences that are necessary during the trips with the group. Practically they can broaden their horizons in all respects.

The Aurin and Miraculum Foundations support the choir. László Durányik expressed in the interview that the organization is made up of the president (himself) and the members of the board of trustees. During their two meetings a year, they decide on tenders, tours, financial matters, thus the conditions necessary for the operation. The budget of the choir is made up of tender funds, sums received from performances, 1% of the tax and the annual membership fees. The payment of the membership fee is neither an old tradition nor a formal activity, the amount of which is used to buy new sheet music. However, the payment of the membership fee is not a requirement for membership, the foundation takes it over for those who cannot afford it.

Thus belonging to the community cannot depend on financial things, but rather on the right singing voice, but even this can be developed if necessary, however, participation in rehearsals is a must. For the members who do not appear for a certain percentage of the rehearsals, the choir master orders an exam where they have to give an account of their knowledge. They do all this because the quality work of the choir lies in the two-hour joint rehearsals on Fridays

and Saturdays. Those who do not participate can hardly catch up at home, they may sing the wrong notes and, in the wrong rhythm, and this way they hindering the community and the representation of quality.

The interviewees all confirmed: without a doubt the choir is a community, within which the members are united by regular meetings, personal contacts and a common goal. However, this does not mean that it is completely homogeneous. Based on the years spent in the choir, a kind of hierarchy was formed within the choir, longer-term membership comes with certain advantages and privileges. The elder members have priority to take part in the tours if there are limitations, to choose a seat on the bus or to jump the queue for shared meals, etc. These rules apply in the community, it is not typical for the elder members to misuse their privileges. The leader of the choir is always the choir master, only the information from him/her is official, and he/she is the one who chooses the pieces of the repertoire. The source of conflicts between the choir master and the choir can be the list of works if they do not like to sing some of them. There are no or very little conflict between the members, they discuss and talk them over with each other.

Within the choir, which has approximately 50 members, apart from the hierarchy of age and choir master/choir members, there are also smaller groupings, which are typically based on going to the same class. Apart from the fact that the choir has common programs, these smaller groups function as friends' circles, communities within the community, who go out to entertain together, like to spend their free time together, which is typical of the Kodály Mixed Choir.

The community of the choir is also kept together by its own traditions and common programs, apart from work and established friendships. On the occasion of the choir Christmas, for instance, it was customary to gifts each other, followed by dancing and singing together. The Miraculum pass was typical: for a token sum, tickets for a series of concerts featuring different famous performers could be bought. (Within the framework of this, the audience could hear for the first time the Quimby song "It passes exactly now" performed by the Csík Orchestra.) These traditions have been somewhat left behind, more recently the choir community receives tickets to the concerts organized by the Hírös Agóra and they pay a visit together.

Above all this, the interviews with the members of the choir revealed that they consider representing a value and create something together the greatest unifying force.

The choir of this age group survived the spring pandemic more successfully than the Kodály Mixed Choir, as they felt more comfortable in the virtual space and the contact remained more intense, they were able to experience joint creation and value creation during the online events.

Do the choir members form communities?

Yes, without a doubt. Scientists in different fields have defined the nature of communities based on different aspects. A German sociologist, Ferdinand Tönnies, for example, in his work "Community and Society", which was published in 1887, formulated the foundations of the concept of community that is still in use. *He defined the two formations in relation to each other: traditional communities and their positive effects, as well as the social conditions that changed as a result of industrialization in the XIX. century. He puts it this way: "in the society, just like in the community, people live together in peace.* However, they are not basically related to each other, but rather separated from each other, and while in the case of the community the relationship exists despite all the separation, here the situation is reversed: people live separately from each other despite all the relationships" (Tönnies, quoted in Vercseg 2018: 59).

Ilona Vercseg summarizes the three most common principles of the organization of modern communities in her article on The Theory of Communities:

1. Location: the community appears as a synonym of a locality, it brings together those living in the neighborhood geographically.
2. Interest-based/chosen communities: the individuals can belong to several communities of their choice based on their own decision. Let it be a group of their identity, leisure activities, religious life, etc.
3. Intellectual and spiritual community: the role of religious communities and scenes (Vercseg 2018: 75).

Ágnes Heller a philosopher believes that joining a group is random, while choosing a community is a conscious process. She categorizes the two depending on the degree of integration: she considers the group primitive, with low level of integration, while the community an organization with higher order, thus setting up a kind of qualitative ranking (Heller 1970).

And Vilmos Csányi, the human ethologist, created the concept of community in 2011, taking into account the analysis of human behavior and habits: *"Defining the human community from the perspective of human ethology, it is a group whose members are ready to recognize the interests of the group during their life activities and they are willing to put their own individual interests behind the interests of the group (...)"* The major difference between the group and the community is that groups are held together by chance, common good, interest, and pressure, while the community has its own culture and can be characterized by the above-mentioned traits" (Csányi 2011: 42).

Based on the above outlined aspects and the empirical research, it can be stated that in the case of choirs - regardless of their age group - we can talk about communities, since:

1. the members maintain the community even if they cannot meet regularly for a certain period of time (e.g. only in the virtual space): "while in the case of the community, the relationship persists despite any separation" (Tönnies).
2. they are communities organized according to the interests of the individuals, in which the characteristics of spiritual communities also appear (Ilona Vercseg).
3. the choice of membership is deliberate (Heller).
4. they have their own culture, an established system of rules, and a "we-consciousness", that is why the individual is ready to recognize the interests of the group (Csányi).

The studied choirs are communities, because their goal is to form their members into a community. Only those who respect the internal norms of the group and subject themselves to the rules can become members. The basic rules are not a package of measures and regulations imposed from above, but a system of norms resting on the mutual agreement of the members. They create them together and expect everyone to obey them. Apart from singing together, they set out tasks, nurture traditions, spread culture, this way they also serve the culture of the wider community and the population.

They have revived the beginning of choral culture in the church, where the goal was not to educate professional singers, but to educate European intellectuals, "educated humans". It is therefore important that they continue to exist and function despite situation caused by the epidemic.

Summary

In connection with choral singing, which dates back several centuries, it is important to note that music has always played an important role in people's lives, and singing together was and

remains a prominent part of community events. After the initial religious tradition, singing together became more and more a leisure activity, the communities were given a permanent framework and became institutionalized, and although they were sometimes limited, choral communities were usually re-established, they were brought to life by people's need for community. Nowadays, the epidemic poses a serious challenge to communities, especially those whose operation is difficult in the online space. The experience of my research is that the work of the choirs and the relationships within them are continuous even though the in person sessions have been suspended. Members of different ages aim to maintain communication between each other in some way in order to preserve the strength of the community. However, we must not forget that choral music (and all the other cultural experiences) can be truly enjoyed with personal presence, the online operation of choirs can only be temporary.

Offline communities and singing together in the same place at the same time can permanently improve the perceived quality of life of the members, and common programs really forge choirs regardless of the age group. In this way, they will be able to provide programs for the public, nurture traditions at the community level and contribute to the education of "the educated people" at the society level.

Further extended research can also shed light on the future of classical music communities, what tools and steps are needed to stop the aging of the audience of classical music events and the decrease in the number of those interested.

This publication was supported by the Cultural Education Scientific Research Program of the Hungarian National Institute of Culture.
2019-2020.

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 - Zöldi-Kovácsné Korompai Mónikával, a Kodály Zoltán Vegyeskar vezetőjével

Zsuzsanna Lanczendorfer

Our intellectual cultural heritage through the work of a blue-dyer family from Győr (Part I)

„Where there is no traditional form, neither religion nor art can develop.”
Béla Hamvas: Five geniuses

Abstract: In my study I am introducing a blue-dying workshop of Győr, where they are making the textiles with original tools and technology until the present day. At the same time, I am pointing out the family history of the blue-dying family Éhling, which spans 5 generations. In addition, with the help of the interviews I have made with Ildikó Tóth, who has gained the title 'Master of Folk Art' recently, and her family, I am presenting their excellent work done in the survival of our cultural heritage, education and community development. In 2018, proposed by five countries including Hungary, blue-dying was recognised as a traditional craft, and it appeared on the list of intellectual cultural heritage of UNESCO, in the elaboration of which Ildikó Tóth and her family also participated. In my study I am touching upon this as well, and I am also publishing the true stories about blue-dying masters, the trade and the family.

Introduction

As a teacher and ethnographer, I have always been interested in folk crafts and handicraft techniques. At my first workplace, at the Children's House of Győr, I often organized playhouses and folk craft demonstrations as a folk dance teacher, where I got to know famous folk artists and various handicraft techniques. At our university, I still teach folk crafts in theory and practice. I am pleased to say that our trainee teachers and special education teacher trainees enjoy felting, sewing, beading, or "daub" eggs for Easter. I have always been interested in blue dyeing, and we often visit the Blue Dyer Workshop of Győr with our students, where they can learn about this beautiful craft and even try out the technique. My choice of topic was inspired by this, as well as the fact that the "Tradition of blue dyeing" is recognized both at the county and international level. Ildikó Tóth and her family helped me prepare my publication, they shared their family stories with me, showed me their memory documents and presented their craftsmanship and the contemporary ways of its transmission.

Blue dying as a value

My interviewee, Ildikó Tóth, defined the present day blue dyeing technique as follows: "Blue dyeing is a special textile dyeing process: It spread to a greater extent in the 18th century. It has two main work phases: applying a covering material (so-called "pap" in Hungarian) to the surface of the textile with the help of pressure molds (crutches). Coloring in indigo bath in a dyeing pool sunk into the ground or in a tub in indatré bath."³⁷

³⁷ The texts of the interviews are marked in italics.

In 2003, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the Convention on the Preservation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its objective is to preserve the intellectual cultural heritage, to respect the intellectual heritage of the concerned communities, to raise awareness of the importance of heritage at the local, national and international level (Csonka-Takács 2013).

To our delight, based on the recommendation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee of the Hungarian National Committee of UNESCO, the tradition of blue dyeing in Hungary - thus the activities of the blue dyers of Győr - was included in the National Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2015.

Picture 1: Document confirming this
(Photo: Zsuzsanna Lanczendorfer, Győr, 2020)



And in 2018, at the proposal of five countries, including Hungary, the above mentioned traditional craft was recognized and added to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO. It was also a beautiful example of the cooperation of different nations, because Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany and Slovakia submitted their nomination together. I would like to note that this is the second time that Hungary participated in a joint submission, because falconry as a living human heritage had been submitted together with 18 countries. The ceremonial announcement and handing over of the document certifying that the "Tradition of Blue dyeing" was added to the representative list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity took place on February 12, 2019, in the Blue Dyer's Museum of the Count Esterházy Károly Museum in Pápa. At the ceremony, the UNESCO document certifying the admission was handed over to the blue-painting workshops of Hungary by Dr. Eszter Csonka-Takács, the director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Board. Besides, the Blue Dyeing Museum of Pápa and Dr. Ottó Domonkos, an ethnographer and an excellent expert of the subject were also rewarded.

Picture 2: Document authenticated by the General Director of UNESCO on the wall of the family shop
(Photo: Zsuzsanna Lanczendorfer, Győr, 2020)



Picture 3: Receiving the UNESCO certificate in the Blue Dyeing Museum of Pápa. Next to the blue dyers, Dr. Ottó Domonkos can be seen on the right side of the picture and the fifth from the right is Ildikó Tóth.
(Photo: Farkas-Balázs Mohi, Pápa, 12/02/2019)



There are currently six blue dyeing workshops operating in Hungary: the workshop in Bácsalmás, Győr, Nagynyárád, Szombathely, Tiszakécske and Tolna. I personally met two of these workshops and their masters. In 2019, I managed to visit the Kossuth Prize-winning blue

dyeer Miklós Kovács' workshop in Tiszaújváros³⁸. The other master, Ildikó Tóth also participated in the development of the "Tradition of Blue dyeing" component. I have known her for a long time and I can consider her a friend. During my research on the ballad Mária Dely she even turned out to be a relative of mine.³⁹ In our county, and even in the region, she and her family are now the only ones dealing with blue dyeing.

The blue dyers of Győr

As Ottó Domonkos, an excellent researcher on the topic, wrote: "The history of European textile printing – including blue dyeing – has a library of literature..." (Domonkos 1981: 7). My choice of topic was also justified by the fact that, with one exception, no details were published about the dying family from Győr. In 1998, Ferenc Bakó published an interview with the master Péter Éhling, who was the founder of the workshop in Győr. (Bakó 1998: 161-171).

"We have information about the first authentic practice of textile printing from 1695." (Domonkos 1981: 13). In the recorded minutes of the council of Győr, the names of two linen printers are listed: "György Balogh" and "Mihály Fábián." Therefore we already have data on the settling down of linen printers responding to the needs of Győr from this time.

The first written Hungarian mention of the term "blue dyer" dates back to 1770" (Domonkos 1981: 27), namely in a letter of a complaint in Pápa. By the middle of 18th century, there was a dyer master in every city, including Győr, and a new process of textile dyeing, reserve pressure blue dyeing, could be launched.⁴⁰ For this, it was necessary to switch from the use of traditional woad to the use of more color-fast, more effective indigo and to the cold indigo bate process. The journeys of the master students also helped spread new procedures. "In the old days, when they did not dye with indigo, but with woad, they used human urine. Urine was collected in stone containers. But only urine before reproductive age was good. This is how the color was developed." - says Ildikó. Since indigo was less known in the beginning, it was called as a "devil's dye", "Teufelsaugé". As Ottó Domonkos writes in his book, in our county, there is information about the new procedure from the family chronicle of the dyer master, Jakab Kistler from Sopron from the 70s of the 18th century.⁴¹ The presence of dyers in Győr is revealed by the fact that "in 1831, the city council named a street after the painters. The famous baize and fabric painters worked here." Ottó Domonkos also mentions that: "There is also Festő street (Dyer's street) in Győr, Veszprém, Szeged, and Kecskemét, as painters have always worked in these places." (Domonkos 1981: 40). This was also confirmed by Ildikó: "My great-grandfather lived at 12 Festő street and worked with a partner dyer named Mészáros. It used to be a beautiful arcaded house. At the bottom of one of the dyeing baths, the date of 1854 can be read, so dyeing was present then." The fact that they even had a magazine (Hungarian Fabric Dyer Newspaper 1909-1913, Fabric Dyer Newspaper (1934-1944)) which also belonged to the Éhling family can also prove the presence of dyers in large numbers. The family owns another copy published in

³⁸ The workshop of master Miklós Kovács is a few kilometers from the Lakitelek Folk High School. Many thanks to Erzsébet Tajti, a teacher and local history researcher, and Péter Szűcs, the head of the Győr-Moson-Sopron County Directorate of the Hungarian National Institute of Culture for helping me to get to know the master!

³⁹ Mária Dely's ballad was added to the Győr-Moson-Sopron County Value Repository in 2015. I note that the heroine of the ballad was my relative.

⁴⁰ In the 18th century, the so-called Porcellan Druck, a technical term denoting a reserve print imitating the color effect of oriental blue-and-white patterned porcelains, referred to blue dyeing."Domonkos 1991: 387.

⁴¹ I must note that if they were not sufficiently diluted, the sulfuric acid could tear the canvas apart. Domonkos 1981: 24.

1933. I note that on the publications of the expert magazine published from 1934, the word blue dyer no longer appears in the title.

Picture 4: Hungarian Fabric Dyer Newspaper (1909-1913)



Picture 5: Fabric Dyer Newspaper (1934-1944)



Picture 6: The newspaper of 1933, in the property of the family. The coats of arms and the process of blue dyeing are clearly visible



Thus, the street in Újváros⁴² was named Festő street after the master dyers who lived and worked here. "Earlier, the noisy, smelly crafts were put out in the suburbs. Like cloth dyers, tanners, and nail smiths." Ildikó even showed me the lion stone that can still be seen at the beginning of the street. "If we turn into Festő street, one of the stone lions can still be seen in front of the Puntigám house.⁴³ It is a boundary stone, a wheel-throwing marble stone. There is a saying here: from here to Puntigám or over. Craftsmen and musician gypsies lived on the other side of Festő street." What is more, I was enriched with a story of belief during the interview: "The coat of arms of the dyers is the lion. In the coat of arms of the blue dyers, there is a large blue dyeing cauldron, the dyer's stick, the indigo breaker in the middle and two lions standing on the sides. The masters believed that since it was their emblem, the lion would protect them from all the misfortune. In Győr, the entrance to Festő street is still guarded by a stone lion on one side in front of the Puntigám house. The old masters say that there will be dyers, this craft will not die out as long as a lion guards Festő street."

⁴² A district of Győr.

⁴³ name of a merchant family.

Picture 7, 8: A stone lion at the entrance of Festő street in Győr

Photo: Zsuzsanna Lanczendorfer, Győr, 2020



Several families of dyers worked in this street. In 1950, Péter Éhling mentions the names of Aschendorfer, Sáfrány and Potfai as masters to Ferenc Bakó. "The Potfai family had six houses in the street." Ildikó's great-grandfather often said: "A dyer can never be a poor man, but he works a lot for it."⁴⁴ I must add that it is regardless of the fact that the German equivalent of the blue dyer (Blaumachen) also means a do-nothing - I learned this from Ildikó's husband Zsolt Gerencsér: "The German term is *Blaumachen* (do-nothing). This comes from the fact that when the textile is lowered into the dyeing bath or well, during blue dyeing, it must be there for 15 minutes, and then it must be pulled up and we should wait at least 15 minutes for it to oxidize in the air. During this time, practically nothing can be done. When the master stood at the door and was asked what he was doing, he said: »Ich mache blau«, which means I'm making blue, and that meant, nothing now, I have time. This term is still in use today and it comes from blue dyeing."

In the collection of Ferenc Bakó - when talking about the picture depicting the process of blue dyeing - the name of another master from Győr is mentioned. "The pictures that hung on the wall of Schiffer's former blue dyeing workshop in Győr and that were painted on tin plates, present the blue dyeing work as they were once done in Schiffer's workshop by the master and his 28 assistants." (Bakó 1998: 168). From him, the above mentioned master, "Aschendorf took over the workshop at 1 Festő street, whose grandson was the famous writer and aesthete Béla Hamvas".⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ottó Domonkos mentions only one reported blue-dyer from Győr, László Róka. Domonkos 1981: 97.

"The dyer earns white money with his black hands = fabric dyeing is a profitable occupation." See: O. Nagy 1982: 212.

⁴⁵ Ildiko Tóth.

Over time, the number of blue dyers decreased: "While there were 414 of them in 1890, around 1940 there were only 70 independent workshops in the country." (Domonkos 1991: 388). The Trianon peace decree did not do good to this craft either. Several workshops lost their markets and their access to fairs. This is also true for the masters of Győr. As Ildikó describes: *"In the heyday of the craft, until World War II, dyers held their annual gatherings in Budapest every year. Our family keeps a photo of this from 1945."*

Picture 9: Blue dyeing meeting. Budapest, 1945. All the three blue-painting families of Győr can be seen here. On the left Péter Éhling with his three daughters (the mother of the 7-year-old Ildikó Tóth, Mrs. Józsefné Tóth). Opposite them the widow, Mrs. Romanek and her son József Róka, and Péter Berecz, blue dyer.

Source: the website of the Blue dyer Workshop



Ferenc Bakó writes about the blue dyers of Győr that they were left out of the register of 1946, and he believes that the reason for this can be that they were presumably classified as fabric dyers and dry cleaners, probably because the profession was declining. *"In 1954, my great-grandfather donated most of his printing boards to the Xantus Museum of Győr, only a few were kept and the family mainly switched to textile dyeing. This was due to the fact that factory production started, women stopped wearing national costumes and the Swabians who were wearing the blue-dyed clothes were deported."*⁴⁶ In 1963, Frigyes Grábits, tailor, listed three blue dyers in Győr for Ferenc Bakó: "Péter Ehling and Péter Berecz who were over 80, and a younger "fabric dyer" named Róka. (Bakó 1998: 162). "The Róka family came to Győr after Trianon, their original name was Romanek." – Zsolt revealed it to me.

⁴⁶ Ildiko Tóth. I write the name Éhling according to the records. e.g.: Ferenc Bakó wrote Ehling in his study.

Pictures 10 and 11: The dyeing workshop of the Róka (Romanek) family in Festő street, Győr
The initials "VR"= Vitéz Róka (Vailan Fox) is still visible on the door
Photo: Zsuzsanna Lanczendorfer, Győr, 2020



Due to the proliferation of textile factories from the second half of the 20th century, few workshops were able to survive. In the 1970s, their number did not even reach thirty, and in the 1990s only fifteen masters worked in this profession. (Domonkos 1991: 391). Disrobing and abandoning the national costume did not do good to this craft either. The workshops closed down, however, blue dyeing still continued for centuries. The introduction of indantrene and its good properties helped the demand for linen materials. As a positive example we can mentioned that in 1962 The Blue Dyer's Museum was established in Pápa, on the site of the workshop of the Kluge company, which played a major role in preserving and popularizing blue dyeing as a craft.

Pictures 12 and 13: With trainee teachers in the Blue Dyer's Museum of Pápa
Photo: Zsuzsanna Lanczendorfer, Pápa, 1996.



Summary

As it became clear from the literature and the interviews, this old beautiful craft has been present in Győr since the 17th century, according to the first data. *Several families (e.g.: Aschendorfer, Balogh, Berecz, Éhling, Fabian, Potfai, Róka, Sáfrány, Schiffer) practiced this profession, which provided a living for many masters. Sometimes ingenuity helped to survive: "A lot of water was needed for fabric dyeing. This was a there in Győr. However, around 1908 the Rábca was diverted, so several masters*

stopped this craft. My great-grandfather did not despair, he had the water laid into the street, so he could continue his craft."⁴⁷

Negative historical processes (wars, deportation), the industrial development, and changes in the tastes of the people have also significantly reduced the number of people practicing this craft. In our county, and even in our region, only Ildikó Tóth and his family deal with blue dyeing. You can read about their value-preserving activity, about the transmission of the family craft, their role in education and cultural education in the next part.

Interviewees:

- Zsolt Gerencsér: born in Győr, 1969. (Young Master of Folk Art)
- Tóth Ildikó: born in Győr, 1962. (Master of Folk Art)

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Forrás: https://adtplus.arcanum.hu/hu/collection/BME_KelmefestoUjsag/ letöltés: 2020. 08. 13.

⁴⁷ Tóth Ildikó.

Éva Magné Szaitz:

The goals and possibilities of amateur acting through examples from Csongrád-Csanád County and over the border

Abstract: One well known type of amateur drama art is amateur acting. Not only pastime or hobby but a tool to build a community and to strengthen the connection between generations. To finalize my cultural mediator master thesis, I have done a detailed analysis of the operation of amateur drama art groups. I had conversations with seven drama art leader. I used the method of interviews to get the answers to my questions. I looked into Csongrad county, Vojvodina and Szeklerland. I interviewed five drama art leaders from Csongrad county. I will describe and analyse the results below.

Introduction

This study was based on the thesis titled: "The goals and possibilities of amateur acting through examples from Csongrád-Csanád county and over the border" prepared for the master's course in cultural mediation of the Gyula Juhász Teacher Training Faculty of the University of Szeged. Thanks to my work at the National Institute of Culture, I have been part of the life of rural theater companies for seven years, so during my research work I conducted interviews with representatives of amateur theater companies operating in Csongrád-Csanád county, which I extended with two examples from over the border. Two of the county groups also participated in the Barn Theater Program.

Acting and the "flow" state

Is there an expression that reflects the experience or state actors feel during acting in a single word? Yes. This is the flow. Whether we are talking about amateurs or professional actors, the individual's interest, dedication, and affection for acting is well illustrated by the wording of Mihály Csíkszentmihályi. According to Csíkszentmihályi, the flow state is a situation in which the person can freely devote his attention to achieving his goal, as there is no distraction that he/she should sort out and there is no threat against which the self should protect itself. In this case, the activity itself is the goal: we do it for its own sake, because the given action gives us pleasure and satisfaction, and not for a goal to achieve. Csíkszentmihályi calls this state the "flow", the experience of the stream (Csíkszentmihályi, 2018: p. 67). During the interviews the respondents also reported on this state.

The beginning of Hungarian acting

We consider László Kelemen to be the first Hungarian theater director. His name is linked to the start of Hungarian-language amateur acting in the traditional sense, as he was the first to create Hungarian-language amateur acting groups, which dates back to the end of the 18th century.

Recognizing the importance of Hungarian theater in the fight for the independence of the Hungarian nation and the Hungarian language, Kelemen founded the first professional Hungarian theater company in 1790, whose programs included classic dramas from world literature. Through Ferenc Kazinczy, the company came into contact with the Martinovics movement, which was the first revolutionary attempt to overthrow the feudal power in Hungary. After the fall of the revolution, the authorities removed Kelemen from his position, so in 1796 the company also failed. From 1799 to 1801, he attempted to work with another troupe in the countryside (at that time they played in Nagyvárad, Szeged, Kecskemét, Nagykőrös, Gyöngyös and Losonc). However, this only worked until 1801 (Staud, 1961: p. 77).

Later, he worked as a lawyer and choir-master, then moved to Makó, and from there to Csanádpalota in 1811, where he established acting groups. He lived here until his death in 1814. His grave can be found in the Kelemen László Memorial Park in Csanádpalota.

In Csongrád-Csanád County, a cultural center, a foundation, a street, and an acting school were named after him, and the amateur acting meeting held in Csanádpalota also bears his name.

Kelemen's contemporaries were also important forerunners of the foundations of Hungarian-language amateur acting, such were György Bessenyei, the first great figure of the Hungarian Enlightenment, and Ferenc Kazinczy, who became the manager of Hungarian culture after Bessenyei and to whom the Hungarian language reform is also attached.

It is important that the press, books, and printing houses have legitimacy because of the Enlightenment.

One of the most important events of the 19th century was the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. After the compromise, the demand for informal communities grew stronger in Hungary, that is, clubs and associations were established in large numbers enforcing the right to association. In the age of dualism, although no law had yet been passed on the right of association, it was regulated by a decree of the Minister of the Interior. The scenes of the middle class were civil reading circles and social circles, while the peasantry gathered in farmers' circles, lads' associations, rural reading circles, and farmworkers' reading circles. After Trianon, the self-organized communities continued to operate in the system developed during the dualism. In 1932, there were more than 3,800 social circles, nearly 2,000 cultural, artistic, literary and scientific communities in operation. There were also amateur acting groups among them. The training of the groups was primarily coordinated by teachers.

Legislation on amateur acting

When dealing with the topic of amateur acting, it is essential to talk about the legal aspects, the role of theater agencies and the basic services of cultural education as well. These are not discussed at all or only marginally in the groups. That is why it is essential for them to be aware of their opportunities as well as their obligations. Two laws are worth mentioning in the subject, they are the following: CXL Act of 1997, Act on museum institutions, public library services and cultural education, LXXVI of 1999. Law on copyright.

About copyright

The role of theater agencies operating in Hungary is also noteworthy. The Theatrum Mundi Theater and Literature Agency, the Hofra Theater and Literature Agency, and the Proscenium Literary Agency are known among others. The agencies convey the rights of the works of stage authors and translators for Hungarian and cross-border theaters, book publishers, and film

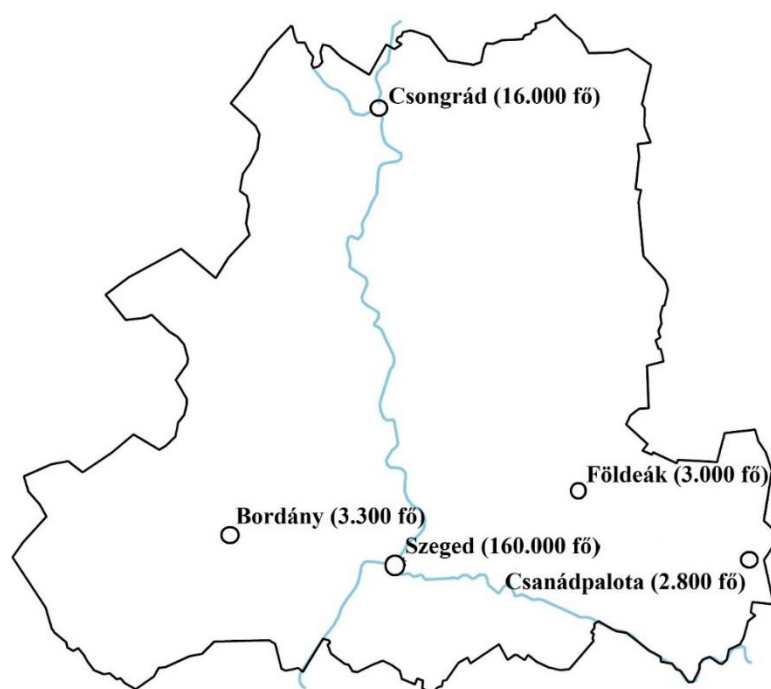
producers. Some agencies deal with American works in the first place, while others deal with the representation of Anglo-Saxon, French, German and other European authors.

According to Miklós Lekli, an expert of the Hofra Theater and Literature Agency, Tamás Vereb's writing on copyright well reflects how the issue of copyright affects amateur actors. According to Vereb: "the majority of the Hungarian theater profession considers the institutional system of copyright in Hungary to be an opaque and impenetrable purple fog. Others consider copyright itself to be strange and to be circumvented, to be ignored, to be mentioned only in whispers, or an unnecessary shackle - if they are aware of it at all" (Színház Kritikai és Elméleti Folyóirat, Volume XXXVIII, No. 1, 2005:43).

Two of the 7 basic cultural education services set out in the Culture Act are extremely important for amateur theater groups:

- *facilitating the foundation of cultural communities, supporting their operation, assisting their development, providing a venue for cultural education activities and cultural communities. (This must also be provided in the smallest basic unit of community activities, the community scenes).*
- providing the conditions for amateur creative and performing arts activities (Act CXL of 1997 on museum institutions, public library services and cultural education (<https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=99700140.tv>, [31.10.2020]))

Figure 1: the interviews with the leaders of the amateur theater groups in Csongrád county by settlement with the number of inhabitants



About the conditions and results of the empirical data collection

I conducted the interviews in November and December 2019. 4 were carried out face-to-face, two via Messenger, and one over the phone. The interviews in person lasted for 2-2.5 hours and the others for about 1-1.5 hours.

I interviewed the director of the Kelemen László Amateur Theater Company (KLASZ) in Csanádpalota, the retired teacher Mrs. Andrásné Szügyi, in Bordány, the director of the Bordányi Amateur Theater Circle (BASZK), Roland Börcsök, the director of the Csongrád Theater Company, the retired teacher Katalin Ferentzi, in Szeged, the director of the Genéziusz Theater, István Horváth and Katalin Boros in Csíkcsomortán in Szeklerland.

In Földeák, Ilona Szabó, a teacher answered my questions. (The Földeák group was no longer working at the time of the interview.)

I conducted one more interview with a different method from the above. I spoke with Tamás Varga, who works at the Vojvodina Institute of Hungarian Culture. Tamás is an actor, besides, thanks to his work, he supports the Hungarian theater circles operating in Vojvodina in Hungarian.

The group leaders of Szeklerland and Csongrád-Csanád county were asked 33 questions, divided into 6 units. After the introductory questions, I asked them about the group and directing, internal and external contentment and feedback, conditions of operation, needs and forms of support, and then, as closing questions, about their vision of the future.

And I asked Tamás Varga about his activities in the field of amateur acting in the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute as well as the situation of Hungarian amateur actors and the forms of support available in Vojvodina.

The launch and the core data of the companies

Experience has shown that the formation of amateur theater companies is mostly initiated by the head of the local cultural institution, but in several cases, by 2 or 3 community-oriented local residents and local patriots. It is also typical that a local teacher is entrusted with the tasks of the director or group leader.

The examined settlements all have a history and traditions of acting.

Founded in 2001, the KLASZ of Csanádpalota is the company with the oldest history. The Bordány group was founded in 2002, Földeák in 2009, Csongrád and Csíkcsomortán in 2010, and Genéziusz from Szeged in 2011.

In Csanádpalota, László Kelemen, the first Hungarian theater director, formed groups at the beginning of the 19th century. Later, acting was also present in the 20th century. Most of the time teachers patronised acting, but sometimes it occurred that an art-loving shoemaker or a room painter took over the role of the director.

In the meantime, the groups broke up and new ones were formed. Most recently, in 2001, István Ádók, the former director of the Kelemen László Cultural Center, started the reorganization. Mrs. Andrásné Szügyi, a retired teacher, has been directing the group since then.

The group has been operating in Bordány since December 2002. The role of Roland Börcsök as group leader is multiple, at the beginning, he only helped the work of the group from the outside, later he even performed.

However, at present he is unable to take on a role, because he cannot reconcile the tasks of running the Village Hall with rehearsals.

They regularly recruit new actors by advertising in the local newspaper, on Facebook and on posters.

In Földeák, Judit Búzásné Vízi, who was then the head of the cultural center, kept a very close relationship with Csanádpalota. Thanks to this, KLASZ performed in Földeák with two plays in 2009. They were packed houses, which meant about 250 people, that is, nearly 10% of the population. After the performance in Csanádpalota, some people decided to form the local acting group in Földeák as well. Its leader was Ilona Szabó, cultural manager and teacher. First,

they tried to recruit people from the circle of acquaintances and only staged small cabaret scenes.

They worked continuously until 2014, with a packed house of 250 people here as well. Then between 2014 and 2015, 3 members of the group died unexpectedly, which meant the end of the group itself.

Acting groups have been operating in Csongrád for decades, with several groups working at the same time, for instance, a group of the Furniture Factory and the Cultural Center. These were stopped after a time, and in 2010, Tamás Bedő, the mayor then and now, asked Katalin Ferentzi, a teacher, to revive adult acting in Csongrád. Their headquarters were the Cultural Center and the City Gallery.

Katalin has been organizing the group and performances since the beginning. She is responsible for their work, she searches for the plays and directs them. She is particularly proud that the use of the name "Csongrádi" has officially been registered.

In Szekelerland, acting plays an important role in the lives of the inhabitants of Csíkcsomortán. Written data prove that in 1911 the village already had an acting group. At that time, primary school teachers worked as directors and they forged the community as well. They prepared plays for bigger holidays and balls. Veronika Birta, a kindergarten teacher, took charge of acting. After her death cultural life collapsed until 2010, when István Bartalis initiated the revival of acting in the village of Csíkcsomortán. István's work was later taken over by Katalin Boros.

The youngest company I examined, the Genezisz Theater of Szeged, was founded in 2011. Its founders graduated as actors at the László Kelemen Theater in Szeged, in the class of László Barnák.

István Horváth, who is in his thirties, works as a founding member and company leader, he also writes, plays and directs them.

Just as there are similarities, there are also differences between the groups. One similarity is that the tours and transportation of the companies always demand serious logistics and financials. The same applies to the preparation, acquisition and often the delivery of the stage-sets. Technical issues are solved collectively in each company (drilling, carving, installation, painting).

The differences are most noticeable in terms of tenders. Several leaders mentioned that they could no longer concentrate on the tenders besides their voluntary group leader duties.

Two of the seven interviewees were not familiar with the Barn Theater Program of the National Institute of Culture, while the other five believe that it is a great opportunity for any amateur company. (In the previous years, Csánádpalota and Bordány have already participated as performers).

The amount of local government subsidies differs among the studied groups. Some group leaders stated that the annual support of HUF 20-30,000 means a lot, while in another settlement HUF 350,000 per year is considered to be little amount.

Seasons and plays

At the Csongrád Theater Company and the Genezisz Theater of Szeged, we can talk about the seasons in the traditional sense. The others do not consider this aspect. It is interesting that the groups, whose performances can be visited by purchasing a ticket, have seasons. The permanent staff in Csongrád is 10-12 people. Mostly adults who are active workers act in the group, but there are also some retired members.

In Csongrád the Cultural Center launches a series of theater passes consisting of 5 performances every year. The 5th performance of the series has been played by the Csongrád Theatre Group for many years.

In 2015, the Association for Acting in Csongrád was established, which is a registered organization working alongside the theatre group. For more outstanding plays, they have to make and buy serious stage-sets and furniture. And they also have to pay a lot for copyrights. These expenditures are coordinated by the association. There are two engineers in the group, who can design the technical things and stage-set elements free of charge as voluntary workers. Tuesdays and Thursdays are their regular rehearsal days in Csongrád at the Cultural Center. They start rehearsing for the full-length plays in October, November at the latest. For smaller plays rehearsing usually takes 2-3 months.

In Szeged, the Geneziusz Theater has 25 employees between 19-35 of age. At Geneziusz the theater season lasts from September to June. They choose the plays together, but they also have their own plays, written mainly by István, such as the musical cabaret "Sanzon Izé" or "Good day today", which dealt with the topic of child abuse.

Unlike in the case of the above groups, the opportunity for developing speech techniques, singing and movement is available here. Each play has a rehearsal period before the performances, which is 2 or maximum 2.5 months.

The group currently operates with 18 people in Csánádpalota. The youngest is a fourth-grader student and the eldest are pensioners, 3 of whom have been playing since the beginning.

Twice a year they perform for the locals. They choose the plays together.

There is a rehearsal on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The rehearsal period of each play before the performance depends on the play and the free time of the actors.

In Földeák, the group consisted of 15 people when it was the biggest, but in the end, only 10 members remained, who finished acting in 2014. The youngest were 19-20-year-old girls and the oldest was a 75-year-old lady.

In the first year in Földeák they managed to stage 2 and then 4-5 performances a year. Everyone had a say in the selection of the plays. At first, they found scripts on the Internet, and then exchanged them with troupes operating in the surrounding settlements.

They received help from the municipality with the stage-sets and costumes. They provided the material for the stage. The planning and implementation were carried out by the members. The rehearsal period before the performance was maximum 2 months.

In Csíkcsomortán, a settlement with 500 inhabitants, the group has 8 active members between the ages of 20 and 60. This troupe does not have a season, they learn a play for holidays and major events. About twice or three times a year.

They collect the stage-sets themselves, they sew or transform the clothes.

The rehearsal period of each play takes 2-3 months before the performance. They rehearse 2-3 times a week.

There is no theater season in Bordány, they prepare plays only for the Culture Day in March. The group currently has 12 members aged 15, 18, 35, 40 and 60. They always choose plays together, which they mostly search for on the internet. The stage-sets and costumes are assembled by the group. There is a rehearsal once a week, on Mondays. The rehearsal period of each play takes 1-3 months before the performance.

The amateur acting groups I interviewed, typically rehearse once or twice a week, and they can perform a play after 1-3 months of rehearsals. It is also typical that the leaders of the groups are entrusted with the casting and often the selection of the plays. This method worked out most successfully, but of course anyone can have suggestions for pros and cons. However, in most cases, farces and cabarets are in preference. Two groups mentioned packed-house

performances, but it is difficult to compare as for one troupe this means 60 people, and for the other 350 people.

Hungarian-language amateur acting in Vojvodina

Summary of the interview with Tamás Varga¹, a staff member of the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute:

Currently, 18-20 Hungarian amateur theater groups are active in Vojvodina, but there are even more. They can ask for the help of the Institute (Hungarian Cultural Institute of Vojvodina) and the Hungarian Cultural Association of Vojvodina 3 times a year free of charge. In this mentoring program, the Institute sends a professional (actor or director) to them free of charge, who provides professional assistance during rehearsals.

Rozália Brestyánszki Boros, dramaturge of the Szabadka Folk Theater, György Hernyák, teacher of the Academy, Tímea Lőrincz, actor of the Zenta Theater, and Margaréta Táborosi, an actor, have already mentored the group.

These 3 times are not for them to direct the play for them, but to show them how to direct it. So they are shown the methodology.

According to Tamás Varga, in Kupuszina (Bácskertes) the acting group sing, play, dance, and work as if Vojvodina had another professional theater.

The amateur theater groups of Vojvodina usually know each other. There is an organization called "Négyesfogat" (Coach-and-four) in which theater groups from 4 settlements take their performances to each other. It is self-organised, the Institute plays no role in this.

They also go "neighboring", for example, Magyarcernye was happy to take his own performances to other places, but this group has just ceased to exist because all its members have moved abroad. Tamás believes that acting groups can end up having the same fate in several places if there are not at least two people supporting the group - a leader and an assistant - who direct the group. If something happens to one of them, the group should not be stopped.

In Vojvodina, the KSZFFV (Film and Theater Competition of High School Actors) is organized in Zenta for student actors, and there is a Children's Actor Workshop in Feketics (Bácsfeketehegy) for elementary school students. Adult amateur actors take part in the Vojvodina Hungarian Amateur Actors' Meeting.

According to Tamás, performing and acting primarily have a team-building and community-building power. In this genre, personalities meet personalities. Acting is a social game to meet each other most deeply, it is a kind of self-discovery.

VMMI also pays a lot of attention to amateur acting groups. They organize trainings and professional days for group leaders, and invite drama teachers, directors or actors.

As part of his work, Tamás digitizes the drama libraries of professional theaters, so they have all the scripts of the performances of the Újvidéki Theater up to now.

The Vojvodina Hungarian Amateur Actors' Meeting would have been held for the 25th time in 2020 (this year it would have been in Szaján) if the coronavirus epidemic had not intervened. Every year a different settlement hosts the meeting. One year it is held in Bácska, another year in Bánát. And the Bácska-Bánát balance is also monitored from other aspects. One of the prizes of the acting meeting is that a group can perform in a professional theater.

The meeting is a one-week parade with 2-3 performances a day. The main organizer of the event is the Cultural Association, which is a branch institution of the Vojvodina Hungarian Cultural Institute.

Their other important and popular program is MAdT. The MAdT camp is the Vojvodina Hungarian Amateur and Student Theater Camp. Its primary goal is to train acting groups, directing groups and movement groups in the camp. It is of key importance that those who take part should get professional training that they can then use later. The camp lasts for one week and it always takes place in Zenta.

On May 15, 2019, Színtér, the Society of Actors of the Carpathian Basin was established in Lakitelek, and according to the points laid down, the amateur theater groups operating in the Carpathian Basin will perform at each other's place. Accordingly, Kupusztina went to perform in Slovakia on the Elijah Days. Then, the hosts took one of their performances to Kupusztina. They have tendering opportunities, but it is primarily managed by the Cultural Association.

Tamás believes, if there were fixed state norms for amateur acting groups, or a source, target support that could easily be applied for, it should be spent on technology, but there are groups where there is no heating in the rehearsal rooms.

They have a good relationship with professional theaters and if they need something, they lend them the equipment (free of charge). They help amateurs like this. It is of key importance that they should have a heated place to rehearse, the right technology and if they have to sew something, there should be support for that as well.

Tamás Varga says that apart from the amateur and professional sectors, there is also a third one that is not in the spotlight, they are the students at the Academy, who are no longer amateurs, but not yet professionals. The future plans of VMMI include involving the students of the Academy in the mentoring activity in such a way that together with their teachers, they could hold an open class in each settlement.

Another goal is to operate the Színtér (Stage) established in Lakitelek in May 2019, coordinated by Tamás, which brings together the amateur theater groups of the Carpathian Basin. The Carpathian Basin Amateur Acting Camp could be a planned further program.

Experience, lessons learnt and facts based on the interviews

As part of my thesis, I conducted 7 interviews, which took almost 20 hours, including conversations and travelling to the location.

The leaders of the groups proudly reported on their success, about the packed-house performances in the countryside, which meant 60 to 350 spectators depending on the settlement.

Two interviewees mentioned that it is not possible to hold rehearsals in the cultural center in winter because there is no heating (one was in Vojvodina, the other was in Szeklerland).

My interviewees can be grouped into two, ones who like the competitions at meetings or qualifiers, and those who prefer only the meetings.

I received almost the same answer to the question about what the amateur company meant to them and to the members. They think that it is like a big family, where everyone helps each other in their private life as well.

I still follow these groups, I am in contact with the group leaders, therefore, I plan to visit them again to compare what happened after 1 year. Furthermore, it would be useful and informative to conduct interviews with the leaders of amateur theater groups of all the counties to be able to report on the present state.

In Csongrád-Csanád County, amateur acting has been present in several forms. László Kelemen, the first Hungarian theater director, formed acting groups in Csanádpalota, and later he died here as well. Antal Páger was born in Makó. A high school with drama major classes operates in Szentes.

In addition to the good relationship with the county groups, our board maintains good professional relations with the actors of Vojvodina and Szeklerland. Therefore, amateur acting remains an important segment of our profession. It has legitimacy and a role in forming the community.

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Image 1: Actors of Földeák in 1915
(the photo is owned by Zsuzsa Tamásiné)



Image 2: Actors of Földeák 100 years later, in 2015,
(photo: Anikó Paraginé Monostori)



Tóthné Boda Éva Mária:

***Scenes of informal and non-formal learning
among the folk craftsmen of Győr-Moson-Sopron County***

Abstract: Nowadays the process of knowledge acquisition in the field of handicrafts still bears the traditional solutions. The aim of my research is to present, with the involvement of folk craftsmen, the methods and procedures that make it possible to pass on the wealth of knowledge that is part of the national tradition to the younger generations. The reference area of the study is Győr-Moson-Sopron county, where I carried out a questionnaire survey and interview data collection within the framework of primary research.

Introduction

I assume that the non-formal and informal learning scenes of the county represent a rich capacity for those learning folk handicrafts. However, the currently available scenes are not utilized as much as they could be.

In my primary research, I examined the methods of acquiring and transmitting the knowledge required for performing folk crafts and small crafts, as well as the dynamics of teaching and learning. I attempt to uncover the blank spots of Győr-Moson-Sopron county in this respect and, focusing on the folk craftsmen, I am going to summarize the cadastre of the available scenes. The results of the interview-based study provide information about the motivations and ambitions of the master craftsmen and small craftsmen, and give insight into the knowledge acquisition of the studied population and their difficulties of passing on their craft. Based on these surveys, I determine the directions for further study and the areas of intervention. Finally, I will specify who should be helped and in what way in order to ensure that this Hungarian intellectual property can be safely preserved for the future.

Theoretical background of the research

The hypotheses formulated in my research can mostly be summarized with concepts and pairs of concepts. One of the most important pairs of concepts is the dynamics of teaching and learning. In the stage of research, I ascertained that the knowledge of handicrafts was an important element of the knowledge market in all historical periods. Although this phrase was not used in the previous centuries, nowadays these concepts have clearly taken shape in the world of formal, informal and non-formal education.

The document composed by the European Council in March 2000 titled "Memorandum on lifelong learning" states that "Lifelong learning is no longer just one aspect of education and training; it should become a guiding principle for provision and participation all through the sequence of learning processes. In the coming decade, this idea (vision) should be put into practice. All residents of Europe - without exception - must be provided with equal opportunities so that they could adapt to the demands of social and economic changes and could actively participate in shaping the future of Europe." (Komenczi, 2001)

The Memorandum defines "the three basic categories of reasonable learning activities:

- **Formal learning:** takes place in educational and training institutions and it is certified with a diploma or professional qualification.
- **Non-formal learning:** *takes place along with regular education and training systems and it is generally not approved with an official certificate. A possible arena for non-formal learning is the workplace, but it can also take place in activities of civil society organizations and groups (e.g. youth organizations, trade unions, political parties). It can also appear through organizations or services that supplement the formal system (e.g. art and music courses, sports training or private exam preparation).*
- **Informal learning:** a natural part of everyday life. Unlike formal and non-formal learning, informal learning is not necessarily a conscious learning process, and it may happen that not even the individuals recognize the development of their knowledge and skills.” (Komenczi, 2001)

Katalin R. Forray and Erika Juhász expand the concept of informal learning by learning processes which are not carried out in educational institutions, but performed voluntarily and can be connected to life activities of the individuals. It can be a spontaneous, unconscious, random or conscious, deliberate, organized learning process. They are called autonomous learning. Autonomous learning can be found in formal, non-formal and informal adult learning forming a minor part of them. (Forray and Juhász, 2009)

The 21st century demands and supports quick access to knowledge, which, along with lifelong learning, is adequately rewarded by the economic sector. The synergy of knowledge and creation is one of the crucial elements of guaranteeing employability and existence. It is no wonder that creativity and innovation are also gaining ground in the knowledge market. The new technologies of our days have created not only new procedures, but new communities as well. Perhaps this is another reason why the concept of knowledge creation is beginning to unfold and spread. The acquisition of knowledge and experience creates changing communities and unique solutions. In the last few decades, the acquisition of knowledge from network systems has become widespread. However, the core element of effectiveness is still the individual.

Around the crafts, there have always been communities since the Middle Ages. The existence of the guilds clearly expresses its mode of operation. From the second half of the 20th century handicraft cooperatives performed such supporting functions. Nowadays, folk art associations actively perform this role. Compared to previous centuries the major difference lies in the fact that back then the guilds and cooperatives had members, and today the creators have associations and communities. This is a different approach. Craft knowledge is "collectivized" in a different way than before. Nowadays, creators do their work in a freer, more informal way, but at the same time they are also more open. Network collaboration becomes an informal scene of exchanging professional experience. The conducted interviews definitely confirmed that the experience of master craftsmen and small masters is a huge social value. The further development and maintenance of this social asset is an individual but primarily a community interest. In the study, Győr-Moson-Sopron county served as a reference region. The conclusions and recommendations established here may also be relevant in other regions of the country.

Features of learning and teaching handicrafts and small folk crafts in Győr-Moson-Sopron County

According to my basic hypothesis, the future of the craft culture of the county lies in sustainability and revitalization. By default, sustainability can be examined from the point of

view of personal, institutional, organizational and financial sustainability. In the case of craftsmen, this personal condition is of primary importance. Moreover, in the case of crafts that no longer have living representatives, embedding, transferring and bringing the competence to life requires even more attention and effort. Many professions have died out in the county in the last 40-50 years and their number is increasing. The near future is not very promising either. Currently there are 11 branches in the county with only one craftsman working. This trend must be reversed. The answers given to the interview question of "the purpose of acquiring knowledge" shed light on what platform would be optimal for the preservation of these skills. The survey and the interviews showed that it is worth directing the attention of the present-day youth and adults to the sense, goals, and possibilities of learning folk crafts and small crafts. All this should be done taking into account the needs and expectations of the 21st century. Here, the actions hidden behind the pair of concepts of tradition and modernity must be highlighted. We should not strive to bring back the old world, but to maintain practices that have added value through folk crafts even today. I received good answers to this practicality from the questionnaire survey and from the interviews as well.

The introduction of the research

The theory of teaching and learning of the information society is certainly unique in three elements, and all of this greatly supports the relevance of my present paper. One element can be the speed of acquiring knowledge. The added value of the employee of our time becomes truly measurable when he not only keeps his formally acquired knowledge at the same level, but also regularly updates and modernizes it. As a result, the dynamics of teaching and learning, as well as its consequence, the employability result, become a competitive advantage on the labor market. On the other hand, in our age, the ability to create knowledge is becoming more and more valuable. In addition to the forms and methods of traditional knowledge acquisition, a series of procedures - stemming from the technological development of our time - support the foundation of usable knowledge and its lifelong development. It is not a coincidence that nowadays they raise students' awareness about the importance of their life path and the personal development program at a very young age. The actors of the knowledge market provision formulate well-definable entry inputs and output indicators for formal and non-formal training courses. Results-oriented courses build their vision on the principle of "knowing how" instead of "knowing what". The third characteristic, to which I attach particular importance, is the value of extracting, applying and utilizing knowledge from network systems. In result-oriented trainings, the speed of acquiring knowledge, the ability to create knowledge, as well as applying network procedures takes place in an unusual way.

Nowadays, the interpretation of informal and non-formal learning scenes is of particular importance. Primarily because they offer more informal and open solutions compared to formal education. In these models, a sense of achievement and positive feedback appear more often and more strongly. In many cases, acquiring knowledge means a joyful experience for the participant. Non-formal and informal learning instinctively opens up the inner world of people and in this way forms a close bond with the environmental elements of the outside world. In many cases, learning remains unnoticed, which is unimaginable with traditional frameworks. I consider my chosen research topic important as in these models of training, individual volunteering appears more strongly, and personal motivation plays a greater role. Since nowadays one of the great challenges in the preservation of folk traditions is the ability to deal with human experience, these human factors have increased value both in the acquisition and the utilization of knowledge. Human knowledge, skills and experience are important elements

of sustainable development. Those participating in education and training that serve this purpose contribute to the building of the future regardless of their age.

My interest in folk crafts has been part of my everyday life for decades. I am a soap maker, cornhusk spinner and folk bead jewellery maker craftswoman myself. I constantly participate in trainings and courses. All of these somehow preordained me to connect the guideline of this investigation to this topic.

In my research, I examine the non-formal and informal learning scenes, as well as the chances of folk craftsmen to utilize and preserve the knowledge acquired in this way. In the course of the empirical research, I examine the acquisition of the set of knowledge necessary to do folk crafts and small crafts and the possibilities of its transmission in Győr-Moson-Sopron county. The overall goal of my study is to highlight the strength of the county in this respect and to contribute to its preservation by analyzing individual problem packages. My research, based on a questionnaire survey and 6 interviews, helps to determine the possible scenes of intervention through the analysis of the collected data. With my proposals, I would like to contribute to the huge effort to support the survival of folk crafts and, in some cases, help individuals to make a living.

My basic assumption starts from the fact that the non-formal and informal learning scenes of the county provide a rich background for those learning folk crafts. However, these capacities are not utilized as much as they could be. To investigate the hypothesis, I will attempt to reveal the blank spots of Győr-Moson-Sopron County in this respect, and I will compile the cadastre of the available scenes focusing on the folk craftsmen. Based on this, I will determine the possibilities and directions for moving forward.

Another focus of my research is the folk craftsmen working in the county as holders of special knowledge. In my view, their intellectual knowledge is an integral part of the Hungarian heritage, so it is of crucial importance how this heritage can be preserved and in what quality it can be passed on. During the empirical research, I contacted folk craftsmen and small craftsmen living in the county and enquired about their acquisition of knowledge, their motivations, and the difficulties of passing on their craft. My basic question in this regard was who should help them and in what way, so that this Hungarian intellectual wealth can be preserved for the future.

Presentation of the research results

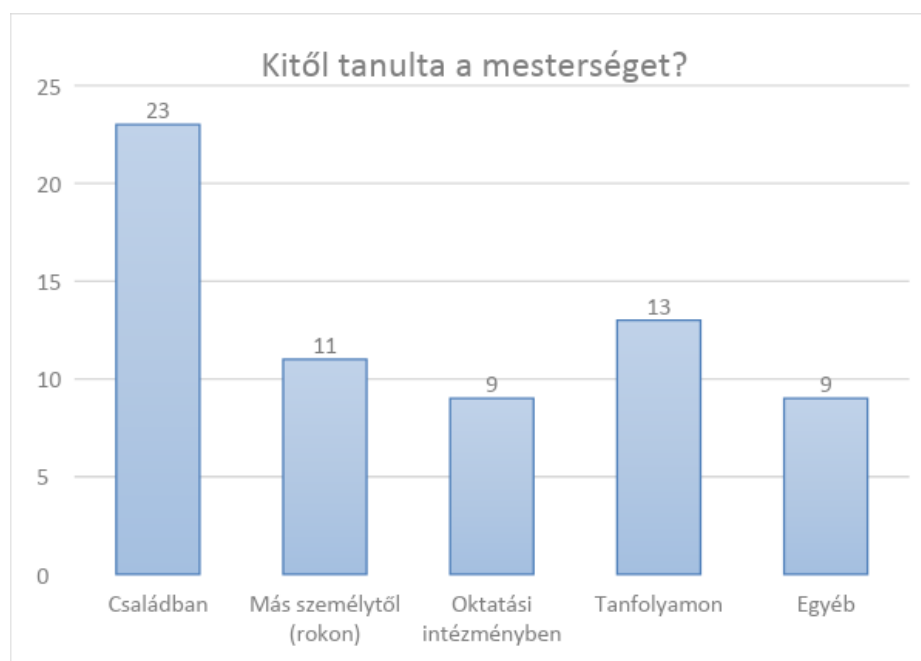
I aimed to answer the following four questions with the questionnaire survey and the interview-based investigation.

- I analysed which age group typically learn folk crafts and small crafts in Győr-Moson-Sopron county? What could be done to make handicrafts attractive to others?
- To what extent did the folk craftsmen presently working in Győr-Moson-Sopron County acquire their knowledge through formal, non-formal and informal education methods?
- What motivates folk craftsmen in Győr-Moson-Sopron County? What do they use the acquired knowledge for in the first decades of the 21st century?
- What chances and methods are available for transmitting folk crafts? To what extent can folk craftsmanship be characterized by the coexistence of value preservation and modernization?

47 master craftsmen and small craftsmen were involved in the questionnaire survey. Apart from the usual demographic data, the survey covered the professions, the methods, goals, and process of acquiring the profession, the exploration of scenes suitable for informal and non-formal learning, the transmission of the profession, and the possibilities and practices of transferring this knowledge.

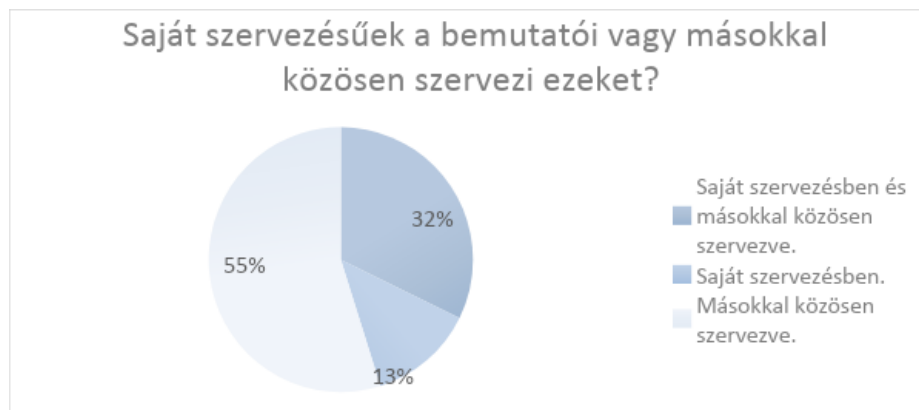
The results of analyses of the answers to the compiled question packages are the following: The craftsmen who took part in the study typically belong to the middle and elderly age group and represent 20 branches of art from Győr-Moson-Sopron County. Besides making a living and running their businesses by mastering folk crafts, their important goal is to preserve traditional values and pass on professional knowledge. They learned the crafts and small crafts already in their childhood in the family or from other close relatives. Apart from the family, the interviewees acquired the knowledge in an educational institution or in courses. In the "Other" category museum visits, summer camps and individual study were listed. (More than one answer could be selected for the question.)

Figure 1. Distribution of the answers to the question "Who did you learn the craft from?"
(Source: Author, 2020)



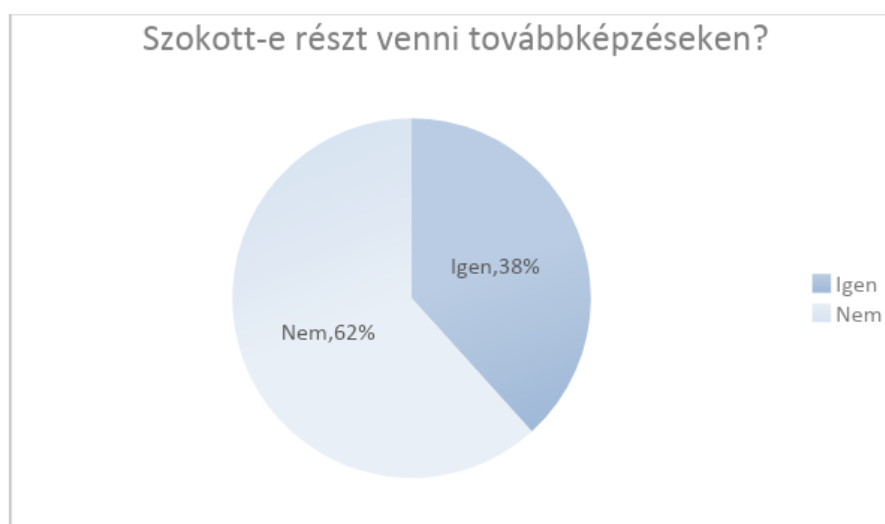
97% of the respondents stated that they would like to share and teach their professional knowledge and experience. The model of knowledge transfer within the family is an available solution for 43% of the participants of the survey. Those who do not have this opportunity (53%) are delighted to teach those interested in the profession. Almost a quarter of the respondents, 23%, deal with students. They are the ones who can pass on the folk traditions and the love of folk art to the next generations in the form of formal education within the school system (in educational institutions) and in non-formal and informal learning scenes outside the school system (study circles, creative camps, courses, craft shows). One third of the respondents perform artefact making as a hobby. Figure 2 shows that two-thirds of the interviewed craftsmen hold workshops and take part in introduction events with greater or lesser frequency. They typically organize these events together with others in their settlements and in other villages and towns. 1% of the craftsmen take part in exhibitions and shows abroad.

Figure 2. Forms of organizing introduction events
(Source: Author, 2020)



More than half of the craftsmen have their products judged, which clearly shows professional commitment, being exacting and feeling the need for development. This competition is also a good motivation force. It has an inspiring effect on learning, as well as on making new artefacts that meet the needs of today, using old traditions. This continuous learning, which accompanies folk craftsmen lifelong, manifests itself not only in the quality of the created objects, but also during the transmission of knowledge and experience and during teaching. Relatively few of the masters and junior masters train themselves, the ratio of which is shown in Figure 3. This can be due to several reasons, for instance, they do not have the right motivation or there are no opportunities for training or further training or there is a lack of non-formal and informal learning scenes.

Figure 3: Participation of craftsmen in training and further training
(Source: Author, 2020)



After the questionnaire survey, in order to be able to determine the results even more precisely and to obtain quality data, I conducted interviews with the representatives of six handicraft branches.

Each of the 6 folk craftsmen taking part in the interview study represents a different profession. Three are artisans – a potter, a bluedyer and a woodcarver – and three are small craftsmen –

an embroiderer, a cornhusk spinner and a folk bead jewellery maker. During the interviews, I asked the craftsmen about their history of acquiring the crafts or small crafts, the scenes of non-formal and informal learning, methods of transmitting knowledge, making it attractive to the younger age group, and the coexistence of value preservation and modernization. I summarize the results of the investigation by analyzing their answers.

Formal, non-formal and informal learning activities appeared during the acquisition of folk crafts. The woodcarver and embroiderer acquired the knowledge within the framework of formal education (vocational secondary school), while the potter gained the knowledge in an educational institution, during adult training. And two small craftsmen (a cornhusk spinner and a folk bead jewellery maker) learned the trade during summer camps, courses and self-training. Only a few craftsmen (bluedyer, woodcarver) had access to knowledge transfer between generations. Even after mastering the basics, craftsmen continue to learn and expand their knowledge. As for the non-formal and informal learning scenes, craft fairs, presentations, courses, summer camps organized for the profession were mentioned as well as museums as ethnographic collections. At the invitation of educational and cultural education institutions and civil organizations, they hold craft classes and workshops, in which both young and adult age groups take part. They expressed the demand for the establishment of a Creative House, where creation and knowledge transfer could take place in a community. It is very important for artisans to be able to hand down their crafts and small crafts. They urged the introduction of craft traditions and the active involvement in the process of creation from childhood.

Almost all of them regard modernization (creating artefacts that meet the needs of today and preserve the traditions of the past at the same time) as the guarantee of the survival of handicraft professions. In addition to books, films, and educational events, they also consider the positive impact of the creators' personality and their love of the profession to be important. Summarizing the empirical research, we can conclude that both the questionnaire survey and the interview study revealed that transferring the love, practice and the approach of creation must start from childhood. And further learning and gaining experience will be a lifelong process for the future creators - if a profession really gets close to their hearts.

The research revealed that craftsmen and those transferring knowledge do not represent a completely overlapping target group. As one of them indicated, there are good craftsmen, but not all of them are good knowledge transmitters. (For this reason, it would be worth accrediting the knowledge base, and especially the method necessary for teaching and learning the craft, especially for children.) One way of transferring knowledge is to have students beside the folk craftsmen. The location of the master's work is his own workshop, which is also a scene for transmitting knowledge. In addition, the craftsmen of the county often hold introductory sessions and camps outside the workshop in many cases. One area of our research was to review the informal and non-formal training locations of the county. Perhaps one of the most neglected training locations in terms of usage is the heritage house museum. Heritage house museums have been established in dozens of settlements in the county, however, in most of them, only the exhibition space functions. There are only a few events that can achieve the promotion of crafts in the triad of knowledge - creation - transfer, and can address and retain those interested. This spare capacity for informal and non-formal craft trainings is still available in the county. Primarily there is a need for organizing skill to generate demand, that is, give the chance for young people to get impressions from authentic people, in authentic places and in ethnographically authentic ways. That is why it is definitely desirable to achieve the following goals with the involvement of the stakeholders.

The Open Workshops learning scene should be extended. The Open Workshops and Gates include a wider set of crafts than the former. In addition to the manufacturing work it also covers the topic of local food processing. The local economy is concerned in the utilization and

operation of local resources on the spot. In consequence, local profits also remain local. A classic example is the development of regional tourism and the forming a system of those working in it.

In Győr-Moson-Sopron county, these Craft workshops have not yet been organized into a network, although there have been initiatives. Tourism is one of the bases of sustainability. In this case, the supply of accommodation and catering services, as well as attractions and programs, represents the supply portfolio that attracts the guests to the area. The areas of the county frequented by tourists and the location of the folk craftsmen do not overlap geographically. This reason alone necessitates networking. On the other hand, this area is one of the strengths of the Rábaköz region, which is rich in folk crafts and small crafts. In this way, the positioning of the region as a handicraft tourist destination can be a real development goal, therefore, the craftsmen and trainers must join their forces.

Craftsmanship is more than a profession. Basically, it is a procedure that moves both hemispheres of the brain, a process, where knowledge and creation must coexist with the ability of creativity and intuitive vision. The individual interviews reflect this perspective and this ability to empathize. This empathic approach and behavior make the creator unique as well as the result of the creation. All the interviewees conveyed the message of their mission about the goal of mastering the craft in a thought-provoking and convincing way: "Preserving the tradition of our nation for posterity." Folk craftsmen and small craftsmen fulfill a mission today, just as they have always done in the past centuries. It is up to us, the people living today, to ensure that this intellectual - spiritual - material continuum is preserved for the future.

Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of my research:

- There has been a sharp decline in folk small crafts over the past 40 years. The survival of the crafts was either due to a strong identity or their contribution to making a living.
- Even today, non-formal and informal learning is significant in the transmission of the knowledge base of small handicrafts.
- Inner drive is significant in acquiring this knowledge and practicing the craft. It is possible to strengthen this commitment.
- Attachment to the craft has different levels in terms of quality and strength: hobby, semi-professional (earning additional income), doing arts and crafts for a living.
- The past roots and future strength of a nation, country, region, settlement are shown by the ability and willingness to preserve them.
- This way, the social role of folk crafts helps self-identity.

It is outside the subject of my research, but the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic provides an opportunity for interesting observations. The acute natural disaster drastically affects everyday life, now I will only highlight its impact on training and knowledge acquisition. On the one hand, the entire formal education sector immediately took a different direction. On the other hand, being confined to homes also affects informal, non-formal learning needs and compulsions. Social media shows that many people are looking for new knowledge and new solutions in the direction of knowledge acquisition and community building. Many try their hand at arts and crafts, gardening, cooking, and many other, but especially creative, activities and fields. This is beneficial because in many cases people get to know themselves from a new perspective and surprise their surroundings with the results and, thanks to the virtual network,

their wider audience as well. The situation makes everyday people come up with creative and innovative solutions.

Specific proposals and points of intervention for the near future:

- At the regional (county) and local (region, settlement) level, it would be worth setting up an inventory of crafts. Those who once gained personal experience of certain handicrafts are still alive. It would be important to document them with present tools. The Committees of the Collections of Hungarian Values and other tradition preservation communities can also participate in this work.
- Research should be carried out on knowledge and identity in educational institutions among children and youngsters. Those acquiring the craft will emerge from them.
- It would be worth compiling thesis recommendation lists for university students in the field of folk crafts. It is necessary to develop sets of topics that, by virtue of their size, enable the perfect completion of a scientific work integrated in research. Discovery must be started at the settlement level, and then the proposed topics must be sent to the concerned departments of the higher education institutions.
- In the county of Győr-Moson-Sopron, in order to teach children, summer camps and craftsmen should be organized in a network. In order to facilitate this, it is advisable to create a county craft website in cooperation with the rural development organizations or the gestor association.
- It would be useful to develop more, but smaller projects in order to fill the townhouses of the county with life and events, for instance: public holidays, craft days, value display forums.
- Close cooperation with the 4 Leader organizations of the county would help strengthen this crucial element of rural development in preparation for the new EU development cycle (2021-2027). The professional and financial planning period is starting now, so you can certainly build on the topicality of the case. The host of the topic is the trade association of craftsmen as well as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Győr-Moson-Sopron County.
- It would be necessary to organize further trainings, study tours and exhibitions for each target group: hobbyists, semi-professionals, professionals. This should be done in two ways. Partners from other regions can be invited to events held in the county. At the same time, the locals must be taken to other regions, such as the frequented regions of the Carpathian Basin and Europe.

Given that I work in the field of cultural education and community development, I would like to devote my energy to deal with some of the above topics and represent them in various professional platforms of the county.

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