Hungarian Heritage (HU ISSN 1585-9924) presents an overall picture of the traditional culture of Hungary and the Hungarian folklore revival. It features original articles on folk literature, folk music, and folk dance (with special focus on the Hungarian táncház movement), and also deals with folk mythology, rituals, customs and games, and traditional arts, crafts, and architecture. Book reviews, and a critical look at some topical exhibitions, films, videos and sound recordings form a part of every issue, as do reports on the late folk dance and music festivals, folk dance and music camps and folk craft fairs. The journal also provides practical and up-to-date information on coming events (festivals, fairs, exhibitions, etc.), and new audio releases.

Hungarian Heritage covers the traditional culture of Magyars living within and outside the borders of present-day Hungary, as well as the culture of Hungary’s non-Magyar ethnic minorities.

The table of contents for each issue, along with abstracts of the articles and examples of the music discussed, can be seen on the Internet at www.folkline.hu, as can the “The Folk Scene in 2000—Practical Information” section on upcoming events.

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The aim of Hungarian Heritage is to present an overall picture of the traditional culture of Hungary, and of the Hungarian folklore revival. The preservation of our cultural heritage has become an especially important task of late. UNESCO has been financing special programs for decades to preserve world heritage sites and the samples of material culture found there: churches, palaces, groups of buildings, and so on. In the 1990s, a special program was launched to preserve and spread “traditional culture and folklore”, i.e., to rescue intangible culture from oblivion, and to try to pass on traditional handicraft skills and folk wisdom. Cultural policymakers throughout the world have finally realized that the spiritual and oral parts of our cultures are a great deal more vulnerable than stones and objects and that, therefore, intellectual riches call for special protection in our rapidly globalizing world.

Hungarian Heritage, the new journal launched by the European Folklore Institute, is a part of this program. It publishes original articles on folk literature, narratives, and legends, folk music and folk dance (with special focus on the Hungarian tâncház [dance hall] movement), and also looks at mythology, folk rituals, customs, and games, as well as traditional arts, crafts, and architecture. In other words, our notion of heritage comprehends the most diverse forms of traditional artistic self-expression, individual and collective alike, and always involves a value judgement. In this sense, heritage is those “objects” of our material culture that society deems worthy of being passed on to future generations. Most of these “objects” are of symbolic significance. Indeed, in many cases, it is precisely this symbolic meaning that is of the essence from the community’s point of view, because it serves to define its cultural behavior. We might say that the reproduction of cultural heritage is the “grammar” of tradition.

This journal will regularly publish studies of varying lengths, theoretical articles and essays on the nature of tradition, and on the viability of the Bartókian model of the preservation of culture. (Béla Bartók’s idea was to preserve folk culture by incorporating elements of it into the classical culture of the twentieth century). We will feature a regular column with reports on projects at the major workshops of traditional culture. Book reviews, as well as reviews of current exhibitions, films, videos, and sound recordings will constitute a part of every issue, as will reports on the latest folk dance and music festivals, folk dance and music camps, and folk craft fairs. The journal will also provide practical and up-to-date information on forthcoming events (festivals, fairs, exhibitions, etc.), and on new audio releases. Finally, we plan to include a photo essay in every issue by way of the visual representation of our heritage.

With such a variety of topics to choose from, the Editorial Board is hard put to present a balanced picture of this rich heritage, given its limited finan-
cial resources. We consider it our duty to not only give a faithful accounting of present-day conditions, but also to trace their historical roots, and chart the path that has led to the transformation of our traditions.

Naturally, our journal will deal with Hungary’s minority ethnic groups as well, for our cultural heritage is manifold, and has been shaped by a variety of influences, the borrowed elements often living on in their original forms.

We hope to show that familiarity with one’s own cultural traditions does not separate peoples and ethnic communities, but rather brings them together. What the world and Europe really need is not cultural homogeneity, but the full blossoming of each culture in its individual colors. And to appreciate and safeguard one’s traditions is to preserve one’s cultural identity.

We recommend our journal as useful and entertaining reading to every Hungarian, whether living in the territory of present-day Hungary or beyond its borders anywhere in the world: may it help the older generations to remember their Hungarian roots, and the younger generation to discover them.

Mihály Hoppál

Budapest, June 1, 2000
The discovery of folk culture and folk art in Hungary in the last third of the nineteenth century was motivated by concerns as diverse as the social strata involved in the process of discovery. Patriotism and national pride, economic considerations, scholarly interest and artistic trends all played a part. Associated with a series of landmark events, the discovery of folk art took the form of focusing attention on select regions, types of objects and styles of ornamentation, ones deemed to be “representative” of Hungarian folk art as a whole. Certain preferred elements of peasant culture even found their way into the national symbolism of Hungary in a stylized form (Kresz 1968; Hofer 1989; Fejős 1991).

The Matyós living in the southern part of Borsod County were one of the groups which received considerable popular attention in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Ethnographers had shown a scholarly interest in the Matyós quite early on. But their findings had no real impact on the very different popular image of this distinctive group, an image shaped by the romantic “national” mythology of the time. This mythology, like the popularization of Matyó folk art, was the work of zealous artists, writers, and aristocrats committed to encouraging cottage industry.

The first description we have of the Matyós appeared in 1857 in the journal Napkelet (The East). Here already, mention is made of this ethnic group’s distinctiveness, with the Matyós being spoken of as “a separate race of Magyars”.

The first depiction of Matyó peasant wear in the journal Napkelet (The East) in 1857.

The next time the Matyós came into the focus of public attention was in 1885 at the national cottage industry exhibition (Országos Háziipari Kiállítás), which featured fifteen “lifelike peasant rooms” in an attempt to present a full and detailed ethnographic portrait of the country. Reports of the exhibition noted “the Oriental air of the motley, the vibrant colors, and the ornate embroidery” (Herich 1886). Reflecting on the success of the event, a contemporary commentator wrote: “It was at this exhibition that Hungary discovered herself” (Herrmann 1890: 56). The folk art of Kalotaszeg was the most admired, but the traditional Matyó costumes of the Mezőkövesd “room” also drew enthusiastic crowds.
The public was offered some fascinating new details about the Matyós in 1891, in the second volume of *Az Osztrák Magyar Monarchia írásban és képeken* (The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Words and Pictures), an imposing publication launched by Crown Prince Rudolf of the house of the Habsburg. “In and around the market town of Mező-Kövesd, we find a sizeable population of Matyós, a fascinating Magyar stock which traces its origins to King Matthias Corvinus. The Matyós are the most distinctive people of the region as regards both dialect and traditional costumes; and, as a racial type, they are one of the most attractive of all the peoples living in the Great Plain (Alföld)” (Kandra 1891: 266).

Kandra describes the Matyós’ traditional costumes as downright “glaring”; but the chief attribute of the people themselves, he tells us, is industry. His depiction of the Matyó “racial type” would become their standard characterization in the twentieth century: “The Matyós stand out with their prominent cheek bones, small eyes, and stocky constitution”—features which add up to what he calls the “Mezőkövesd Tartar” type. Here already, we have all the elements that would go into making the Matyós a “representative” ethnic group: bright and multicolored traditional costumes unlike any other—and so ostensibly “archaic” and “Oriental” in origin; anthropological features consistent with this “Oriental” interpretation; and personality traits epitomizing everything society most valued in the Hungarian peasantry: industry, tirelessness, and respect for one’s betters.

That the Matyós were assigned the role of the “typical Magyar” from the first moments of their discovery is illustrated by several striking examples. Mihály Munkácsy, the celebrated late-nineteenth-century painter, in his search for models for his splendid *Honfoglalás* (Taking Possession of the New Homeland), travelled the country with the photog-
raper László Schabinszky, looking for “typically Magyar plebeian characters”. They visited Mezőkövesd in October of 1891. Local tradition has it that “the figure of Árpád’s wife was modelled on a Matyó woman from Tárd”.

A decade or so later, a newspaper article reported that the painter István Csók and the drawing teacher Lipót Auerbach of Szekszárd sought out the Matyó migrants working in the Sárköz in order to find “at least a trace of something Magyar—a face, a physique, a costume; something in the heart, the soul”. They came upon what they were after in the person of a Matyó migrant woman: “The way she looked and moved had the typical charm and grace of a real Magyar woman, a certain innate racial quality which cannot be acquired... she was everything the Magyar princess, Emőse, must once have been” (Szilágyi 1982: 70).

What contemporaries saw as the Matyós’ salient attributes, thus, fit right in with the Hungarian national self-image of the turn of the century. It was a process of selection that peaked in 1896, in the series of events marking the thousand years of Hungarian statehood. The newly-formed Magyar Néprajzi Társaság (Hungarian Ethnographic Society) set up an “ethnographic village” as part of the millennial celebrations, two “streets” lined with houses characteristic of the country’s various regions

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
The entire route was lined with crowds of curious Budapesters, who applauded the colorful procession with genuine enthusiasm.

A perfect example of what folk culture and its appreciation were thought to consist of at the turn of the century, the event also exemplified the Matyós’ growing self-esteem.

The real popularization of Matyó folk art, however, was largely the work of the Archduchess Isabella, Archduke Frederick’s wife, and the self-appointed “chief patroness and propagator of cottage-industrial art”.

It was the archduchess who came up with the idea of putting on a Matyó “wedding” at the Isabella Ball, the highlight of the Budapest pre-Lenten festival season (farsang), the goal being “to popularizing the Matyós’ handicrafts”. The gala performance—a wedding play in seven tableaux vivants staged by the Opera’s managing director and enacted by the creme of aristocratic society—took place at the Opera House on February 12, 1911. Several Matyó couples had been brought up to the city to help with the rehearsals. The “authentic” folkish props included furniture borrowed from the Miskolc museum. The costumes were peasant wear brought from Mezőkövesd, and the Alispán of Borsod County was himself one of the players.

The Matyó “wedding” held at the Opera definitively placed Mezőkövesd on the map. Archduchess Isabella herself spent an entire day there in the autumn of the same year, getting a taste of the local folklife, and capturing her impressions in some excellent amateur photographs. The Vasárnapi Újság (Sunday News) illustrated its account of the archduchess’ visit with some of the photographs she herself had taken.

From then on, it became customary to go to Mezőkövesd to see the Matyós if one wanted to show a tourist something typically Magyar or folkish. A stereotype program soon evolved, with the script reading roughly as follows: a “look” at the Matyós (if possible on a Sunday or holiday on their way to church); attendance at a performance of a medley of folk ways, usually a marriage ceremonial
For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer

The Discovery of Matyó Folk Art

Kálmán Kóri's photo of a Matyó family taken in 1903, when ethnographic research on the Matyós first began.

(for special guests only); the opportunity to view some authentic Matyó embroidery, and to make purchases; and finally, the chance to get one's picture taken dressed up in Matyó peasant wear (Fügedi 1997: 127-140).

The discovery of Matyó embroidery as a marketable tourist attraction was a process facilitated by a variety of interested parties.

The Országos Magyar Háziipari Szövetség (Hungarian National Cottage Industry Society) headed by Countess Batthyány was working on propagating and popularizing Matyó embroidery from the turn of the century on. Matyó embroidery as well as Matyó dolls were among the items on display at the world's fair held in Turin in 1911. So popular did the exhibits prove that Poiret, the celebrated French designer, accepted Countess Batthyány's invitation to go to Budapest to study Hungarian folk motifs, and perhaps draw on them for inspiration. The following season, the Paris fashion magazines showed a number of embroidered Poiret models with clear traces of Matyó influence (Margit Pongrácz's recollections in the Archives of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, 1952. No. 3540).

That Matyó embroidery in itself would likely sell well was soon obvious to the merchants and intelligentsia of the region. Certain members of the local intelligentsia were the first to place substantial orders with the peasant women, largely by way of providing them with some lucrative employment. It
A picture postcard from the turn of the century.
was not long, however, before large numbers of Jewish merchants, too, started placing orders specifically for retail purposes (Szarvas 1990).

Matyó embroidery’s metamorphosis into merchandise promoted a distinctive kind of door-to-door sales activity known as bátyuzás (going around with a bátyu, a kerchief tied as a sort of knapsack) and faluzás (going from village to village). Matyó women went from place to place, the embroidered textiles piled in baskets tied with large kerchiefs onto their backs, offering their wares for sale farther and farther from home (Fülemile 1991). Some of them went as far as the fashionable seaside resorts, others sought customers in the mountain resort towns. If oral testimony is to be trusted, some of these daring saleswoman even ventured into the trenches during the First World War. And some of them made considerable fortunes selling embroidery in this way.

Matyó embroidery separated into two distinct stylistic trends in the first decade of the twentieth century. For textiles embroidered for personal and family use, they even embellished on the elaborate local traditions; the articles meant for sale, on the other hand, were mass-produced on poorer-quality linen with larger and looser stitches, using toned-down color schemes adapted to the taste of the middle classes.
Photograph of a young Matyó couple taken by the Archduchess Isabella in Mezőkövesd, October, 1911.

Photograph of a young Matyó woman on a bicycle. Mezőkövesd tradition has it that she bought the bicycle with what she earned selling Matyó embroidery.

Matyó Granny Reading Her Bible. Pencil sketch by Sándor Nagy, an artist of the Gödöllő School.
But Matyó folk art had an impact also on the work produced in that outstanding workshop of the Hungarian Art Nouveau, the Gödöllő School (Fügedi 1994). Mezőkövesd was near enough Gödöllő, and its folk art famous enough to act as an irresistible magnet. The folklife the artists experienced there, as well as the Matyó’s spectacular folk art was quite in keeping with their own artistic creed. Through the work of the Gödöllő group, thus, Matyó folklife became one of the themes of the Hungarian art of the early twentieth century. Their Matyó paintings—like their paintings of Kalotaszeg—were to symbolize the ideal harmony and beauty of folklife as they conceived it, with the Matyó being meant to represent what they saw as “the fullness of life”. Thanks to the Gödöllő group, many artists from the rest of the country and abroad visited Mezőkövesd.

By the outbreak of the First World War, thus, the Matyóföld (Matyó Land) or Matyónia, as it was called, “the queen of Hungarian villages”, had established its reputation as one of the symbols of Hungarian national culture and folk art. The discovery of Matyó folk art and its appreciation had been facilitated by some well-intentioned aristocratic patrons of “folk industry”, by fin-de-siècle artists and intellectuals working to establish a Hungarian national art, as well as by some of the local intelligentsia. This initial phase of the popularization of Matyó folk art had an essentially positive impact on the ethnic group and its cultural traditions. It gave the Matyós a sense of self-worth, a strong sense of identity, and a more secure livelihood. At the same time, the incursion into the community of outsiders and foreign interests also tended to undermine their traditional culture, and would, in time, necessarily lead to conflicts.
REFERENCES


István Györffy (1884-1939), one of the pioneers of Hungarian ethnography, was born in the market town of Karcag in the Nagykunság, on February 12. Occupying roughly the central part of the Great Plain (Alföld), the Nagykunság and the Kiskunság were named after a Turkic people, the Kipchak Cumans (“kun” is Hungarian for “Cuman”), who, in 1238, fled to Hungary to escape the Mongol onslaught, and were settled—all seven tribes of them—in the depopulated regions of the Great Plain by Hungary’s King Béla IV. Though assimilated to the Hungarian population in respect of language by the late sixteenth century, the Cumans retained their distinctive soldier status, and enjoyed the same collective liberties as the Hungarian nobility—the reason why the powerful Cumanian free towns, which had weathered the Ottoman occupation (1526-1697), attracted so many of the lesser nobility. István Györffy’s family was of this class: some Györffys had served in the armies of the princes of Transylvania (Erdély), and had been granted a small estate to retire on. The family relocated to the Nagykunság in the eighteenth century, and continued to farm, and engage in various trades.

Sámuel, the Györffy who made the move to Karcag, was the town’s first potter. István Györffy’s grandfather was a prosperous szűr (frieze-coat) tailor, a man rich enough to send his sons off to school. István Györffy’s father was a restless man who moved around from place to place and changed jobs with a regularity so disconcerting that his wife asked for a divorce. She herself provided for the education of her son who, from early boyhood, had a passion for the natural sciences, particularly botany.

István Györffy started secondary school in Karcag; he finished it in Késmárk (Kešmarok, Slovakia)—an old Saxon town in what today is Slovakia but was then Upper Hungary (Felvidék)—where he had been sent to perfect his knowledge of the German
language. He first attended the university in Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Transylvania, then a part of Hungary), and then transferred to the Pázmány Péter University in Budapest, where he received his degree. He was still a student at the university when his former high school teacher, Zsigmond Bátky, the eminent ethnographer and museologist, invited him to join the staff of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography.

Györffy had an intimate knowledge of village life, having spent a year, as a young lad, working on the family’s isolated farm outside Karcag at his father’s behest. He knew a lot about farming, and had seen frieze-coat tailors, potters, furriers, and many other master craftsmen at work. During his high school years, he had toured the Carpathian Basin on foot with a couple of his friends, traveling from the Adriatic to Moldavia. He thus entered the Museum’s service with the preparedness of a man with personal experience of Hungary and the day-to-day lives and artifacts of its people—not just Hungarians, but also Romanians, Slovaks, Ruthenes, Croats, and Germans. He was, furthermore, familiar with the primary sources, thanks to his years of training in Kolozsvár at the Transylvanian Museum. (To make the most of its splendid collection of primary sources on social and cultural history, the museum employed university students, among others, to transcribe these hand-written sources, and encouraged them to annotate and edit for publication the material they had worked on.) Motivated by his keen boyhood interest in the Cumans, Györffy had also learned Turkish, and had spent time studying in Istanbul during his university years.

Little wonder, thus, that Györffy did not confine himself to some one area of the embryonic field of Hungarian ethnography, but took a complex approach to the study of Hungarian folk society. In this respect, too, he had much in common with the pioneers of Hungarian ethnography, Otto Herman, János Jankó, and Zsigmond Bátky, poly-historians one and all. Otto Herman (1835-1914) did major research in entomology, ornithology and archaeology, besides his trailblazing works on fishing and herding in Hungary. János Jankó (1868-1902) specialized in geography and anthropology, but, within his short lifetime, also wrote monographs on three of Hungary’s ethnic groups, and did comparative research on the artifacts of the peoples of Eastern Europe. Zsigmond Bátky (1874-1939), a man of great erudition who published little, made contributions to geography, ethnology, cartography, and settlement history, wrote comparative studies on the folk architecture of Eastern Europe, and, with his handbook on the subject, laid the foundations of ethnographic museology.

Györffy himself brought all his varied interests and considerable learning to bear on the task of researching and explaining the complex world of folk culture. He used his knowledge of botany, for instance, but only to write a study on the plant dyes employed in folk art. His impressive background in history he put to use to draw ethnographic maps of fifteenth-century Transylvanian counties, analyze seventeenth-century censuses, and expound on the cultural history of the eighteenth century. Even the archaeological digs on medieval sites that he initiated, and his inauguration of a project aimed at the systematic collection of proper names and place names was meant to profit ethnography, his all-consuming passion.

The breadth of his vision is well attested by one of the first articles he ever wrote, “Alakítsunk Nagykun Múzeumot” (Let’s establish a Greater Cumania museum). Published in 1906, the article makes clear that then already, there was before Györffy’s mind’s eye the museum that would subsequently bear his name: a museum that would conduct the visitor, from its beginnings in paleogeography and archaeology, through a collection of historical relics and documentary sources, to the world of ethnography, and the pressing social issues of the times.

For nearly thirty years, Györffy was an employee of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography. These were the most productive years of his life. He trav-
eled the country’s various regions collecting artifacts and making photographs, and thoroughly researched the past and present of several of Hungary’s distinct cultural groups: the people of the Nagykunság, the Magyars of the Fekete-Körös völgy adjoining Transylvania; the hajdús1 (Haiduks) and the Matyós2, giving due attention also to the history of the region that each of these various groups called home. (The Hungarians of the Fekete-Körös völgy and the Matyós he examined also for the impact that they had on the settlement structure of their particular county: the former on southern Bihar, the latter on southern Borsod.) His beautifully-written Nagykunsági krónika (A Chronicle of Greater Cumania) quotes verbatim from eighteenth-century depositions to illustrate the kinds of livelihood that the environment had once allotted the inhabitants of the swamp-studded plains: traditional lifestyles like szilaj pásztorkodás3 and pákászkodás4, both of which disappeared once and for all when the marshlands were drained for agriculture in the course of the nineteenth century.

History played the lead in Györffy’s reconstruction of how the hajdús, that caste of soldiering freemen, were settled in the early seventeenth century in the Tiszántúl, a region laid waste by the Ottoman Turks. Besides doing research on the hajdús’ origins, he used eighteenth-century maps and charters to identify the settlement structure of their market towns. This was when he discovered the kertes város5 as a unique settlement type, and identified the dual economic system associated with it.

Györffy had always been interested in the question of settlement types. “A nagykun tanya6” (The farmsteads of Greater Cumania) had been the subject of his doctoral dissertation. There already he did more than just characterize this particular type of isolated rural habitat: he also described how people lived there, and what economic ties they had to the nearby villages. It was in the course of doing research on the kertes város that he realized that in the Great Plain, this was a prevalent settlement type. The core of the settlement, in these communities, was the relatively densely-packed set of unfenced houses where the women, the children, and the elderly lived; ringing this inner circle was the assortment of őlaskertek7 where the men kept the animals, and the fodder. Györffy recognized, furthermore, that the tanya was genetically related to the őlaskert, for when the common that ringed the settlement was parcelled out in the course of the nineteenth century, the őlaskertek were moved out to the newly-parcelled lands to form tanyas, and houses were raised on the site of the old őlaskertek to accommodate the growing population.

Investigating the production methods employed in the two types of Hungarian farmstead, Györffy noted that there were two different methods of threshing the harvested grain. In the drier wheat-growing regions of the Carpathian Basin, the harvested grain was stacked on a prepared “corn floor” (szérû) in the őlaskert, and the grain was separated from the ear of wheat by “treading” (nyomtatás), i.e., having the horses walk around and trample on the stacked sheaves of wheat. The grain was then stored right there in pits dug expressly for the purpose. In the rainier highland regions, where the main grain crop tended to be rye, the harvest was stacked in sheaves in barns built at the bottom of the housing property, and was thrashed by hand with flails as needed. The grain, too, was stored in the barn. The two technologies had, of course, been mentioned in the literature on agriculture written in the first half of the nineteenth century, but it was Györffy who pointed out their distinguishing features, and drew their correlation to the different settlement types.

Györffy’s portrait of the archaic economy and settlement structure of the Great Plain is no less brilliant for his—mistaken, as it turned out—assumption that the origins of the kertes város were to be sought in the szállás8 of the semi-nomadic Magyars of the tenth century. It was an assumption that seemed reasonable as late as the 1950s; historical and geographical research and the archaeological findings of the last few decades, however, have failed to substantiate it. Györffy himself, in his “Az ősi magyar földművelés” (The archaic agriculture
of the Hungarians), a study written in 1935, emphasized that the nomadic features of the farming done on the Great Plain developed in the wake of the Ottoman occupation (1526–1697), when the survivors of, say, a dozen or so settlements would seek refuge in some privileged market town, but would continue to graze what was left of their flocks and herds in the remote pastures of their home villages. At the same time, Györffy’s account of the semi-nomadic lifestyle of the tenth-century Magyars and his postulate of their permanent winter szállás has been confirmed by the work done by István Szabó (d. 1969), while I myself have found Eastern analogies and concrete evidence to support his views on the Magyars’ winter and summer szál- lás, and the rotation practiced by their headmen.

Györffy’s work in “settlement studies” is best described in terms of a camera mounted on an airplane. His viewfinder would bring an entire part of the country into focus when he looked for migration patterns or wanted to portray a particular region’s settlement history. When it came to depicting the form of a given settlement and the economic activities on its rural outskirts, he took a bird’s-eye-view. Then, swooping down, he would get a close shot of the shape of a particular property, and the house and farm buildings on it; and finally, he would zoom in on the house itself, and get pictures of the interior and the daily lives of its residents. With this technique, he as able to present pictures of the settlement and building types of the Nagykunság and the Fekete-Körös völgy, for instance, in detail more graphic and more vivid than any of his predecessors.

Peasant wear was Györffy’s other great area of research, with special reference to embroidered folk motifs. A study of his, “A régi magyar népviselet” (Old Hungarian peasant wear), appeared in 1909 already, and when he died thirty years later, he was planning to write a book on the motifs furriers embroidered on sheepskin coats and vests, but only three articles of his actually appeared on the subject. In 1928, he and two of his colleagues from the museum, Zsigmond Bátky and Károly Viski, used the occasion of the ethnographic congress held in Prague to publish L’art populaire hongrois, an illustrated album introducing the reader not just to embroidery motifs, but also to numerous other branches of Hungarian folk art.

In the 1930s, Hungary’s leading interwar ethnographers published A magyarság néprajza (The ethnography of the Hungarians), a four-volume handbook. Györffy’s contribution was the “Viselet” (Peasant wear) chapter in Volume I, and the “Gazdálkodás” (Husbandry) chapter in Volume II where, taking a broad view of his subject, he included everything that was known about every facet of the gathering, fishing, hunting, animal husbandry and agriculture ever practiced in Hungary. At the time of their publication, the four volumes—which were clearly written, well illustrated and amply documented—had no peer in international ethnography.

Györffy published not only in professional journals, but was an excellent popularizer of his subject as well. In the 1920s already, he published several short essays on particular aspects of Hungarian folk culture, specific ethnic groups (the Gypsies, for instance), and various cultural phenomena (e.g. “witches” and táltosok). During the First World War, articles of his on the geography, history and
ethnography of the regions of Eastern Europe affected by the war appeared in the popular press. In 1918, he was the Turkish-speaking ethnographer in Jenő Lénárd’s expedition to Asia Minor, Turkey’s suing for peace was what obliged the group to return home earlier than planned.

At the time that Györffy embarked on his career, ethnography was not one of the subjects taught at Hungarian universities. Count Kunó Klebersberg, the Minister of Culture, was the first to recognize this shortcoming, and Count Pál Teleki, professor of commercial geography at the University of Economics, was the first to fill this hiatus in 1926 by attaching Györffy, his old friend and colleague, to his department, and asking him to lecture on the ethnography of South-Eastern Europe, and then Hungary. Inspired by Györffy, several would-be economists (e.g. Béla Gunda and László K. Kovács) decided to make a career of ethnography. When, in 1934, the Pázmány Péter University established a department of ethnography, Györffy was invited to head it. Ethnographers and folklorists of the stature of István Tálasi, Mihály Márkus and Lajos Vargyas were among his first graduates. As a professor, Györffy was never one to improvise: he wrote all his lectures with the same care as he wrote his studies, and read them to his students. He was at his most inspiring not so much at his formal lectures, as in the more relaxed atmosphere of seminars and one-on-one tutorials, and on the field trips he and his students made to gather material throughout the countryside.

The 1930s in Hungary were the time of the falukutató mozgalom (“come-to-understand-the-village” movement), whose purpose was to get a clear

With Turkish friends in Constantinople; István Györffy is on the extreme left.
picture of the circumstances in which the peasantry lived. Young writers and sociologists would spend months in a particular region, where the predominance of the great estates left the agricultural wage laborers no hope of ever farming land of their own. Everything they saw led them to draw but one political conclusion: land reform! Initially, the conservative government would hear nothing of this, but when Count Pál Teleki became minister of education (1938), he, Györffy, and Professor Zoltán Magyari set up the Táj és Népkutató Központ (Center for Regional and Ethnographic Research) whose real purpose was to conduct in-depth studies of the economic and social conditions of each particular locality with a view to determining the necessary degree of land reform. Though the first “get-acquainted” exhibition held by the Táj és Népkutató Központ in 1938 was closed under pressure from the ultra-conservatives, its research projects did get under way at Györffy’s department of ethnography, and in the field. Györffy himself took personal charge of these projects, and at the same time, embarked on a campaign of “educating the nation” in the popular press.

As Györffy saw it, there was too great a rift between the “masses” and their “betters” in Hungarian society. What was needed was rapprochement at every level of social and cultural exchange, and it was up to the country’s leaders and intellectuals to take the first step. The sense of urgency in Györffy’s call for this social renaissance was fuelled by his fear of German political expansion, and his concern that the Nazi’s racist doctrines would serve to further divide the nation. In the summer of 1939, he published his program in his A néphagyomány és a nemzeti művelődés (Folk tradition and national culture), but the ideas expressed therein were soon rendered obsolete by the outbreak of Second World War (to say nothing of its aftermath). A month later, on October 3, 1939, István Györffy died of a stroke. News of his death reached his colleagues just as they gathered to work out the details of a college meant to facilitate the university education of poor peasant lads. When the college was set up not much later, it was named in his honor. In 1945, the college took a more progressive turn, and was able to set up several affiliates; it was closed down in the wave of repression that started to peak in 1950.

Györffy’s personal magnetism was what made him so effective as a scholar and educator. A heavy-set, bald man with a Roman nose, he had such an air of calm dignity that some of his students spoke of him as the “Cuman god” enthroned motionless in his “thinking chair”. Behind the gravity of his demeanor, however, there was such a genuinely warm interest in the thoughts and lives of his students, colleagues, and ethnographic “subjects” that right from his own student years, he was able to persuade people of all walks of life (teachers, painters, sculptors, actors, physicians, engineers, economists, lawyers, and even factory workers, peasants and landowners) to take an active interest in ethnography.

He was still in high school when he talked his young fellow townsman, Gyula Németh into switching from classical philology to Turkic studies, and gave his own Turkish grammar book to the boy who would grow into a world-famous Orientalist. During his university years, it was Lajos Kiss, who was planning to be an actor, whom he seduced into studying ethnography instead, and thus won the discipline one of its most outstanding literary men. Károly Viski was a language teacher when he urged him to undertake the study of Hungarian dialects; later, he got him a job at the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, as indeed he talked the biology teacher Sándor (Ébner) Gönyei into joining the Museum’s team. It was during the years that he taught at the two universities, however, that he made the most converts to his beloved discipline. More persuasive than his lectures were the objects he would show the students who visited his office at the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, and the simple folk he would introduce them to on the field trips he organized.

Györffy had no use for the romanticism of the “pseudo-folk”—whether music, dance, or any other art form. He did not like the popular Gypsy music
that passed for folk music, and encouraged the col-
lection of archaic folk songs instead. When, on a
trip to the region of the Ipoly river, he learned that
the swineherds were preparing for a bagpiper con-
test, he sent a telegram to Béla Bartók to come and
record the tunes. He kept an eye on the folk dance
groups springing up at the time, lest the choreogra-
phy introduce elements foreign to the Magyar
dance culture.

Where he was most effective, however, was in fos-
tering the use of authentic folk motifs in the decora-
tive arts. He was anxious to see the pseudo-folk pat-
terns decorating so many of the cheap trinkets for
sale at the country fairs replaced by the incredibly
varied treasury of authentic folk motifs. And his
determination was rewarded with no small success:
thanks to his richly illustrated publications and arti-
cles in popular magazines, authentic folk embroidery
and ceramics soon supplanted the vulgar, rootless,
invented patterns and shapes. It is typical of Györffy's
modus operandi that when Sándor Kántor, an indus-
trious and talented potter from his own home town,
started making cheap fair novelties and Balkan-style
jugs, he lent him some original pieces of folk pot-
ttery—plates and tankards, and his own “Miska
jug”—to serve him as models. Kántor became a
world-class ceramicist, with many emulators.

Györffy's approach and scholarship laid the foun-
dation of an entire school. There would be many
who would follow him in his choice of subject mat-
ter, but few would adopt his methods. Györffy was
always up on the literature, but never took what
others wrote as his point of departure; he always
went to the source. He would handle objects, listen
to his informants, examine old maps, and read the
records to see whether they might all fit together,
and whether they allowed one to deduce cause from
effect, and postulate how all formed part of larger
system. Therein lies his originality. Some philolo-
gists have tried to trace Györffy's creative conclu-
sions to some Western school of thought or to the
influence of certain Hungarian writers, but to do so
is nothing but a case of mistaken, post facto ration-
alization. In reality, Györffy set the literature aside
when he worked, and then checked his conclusions
against the scholarly literature.

The other area in which he is unrivaled is his
style as a writer. He is always lucid, to the point,
and a sheer delight to read. As a man of letters, he
has had few followers among ethnographers; per-
haps the most successful in this respect was Sándor
Szűcs (d. 1982), the director of the Györffy István
Museum in Karcag, whose research interests and
methodology likewise recalled Györffy's.

Nor can the new generation taught by Györffy's
erstwhile students be expected to emulate the mas-
ter's work methods. Folk culture has given way to
modern civilization; the old customs and ways of
doing things have disappeared; the old objects have
found their way into museums. Today, one needs to
read the professional literature, go to data banks,
and look at old photographs. For all that, Györffy's
methodology—going to the source and making

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer.
István Györffy, a Pioneer of Hungarian Ethnography


NOTES


1 In the early sixteenth century yet, hajdú meant “cowherd”. Armed hajdús protected the livestock exported to the urban markets of Austria, Bavaria and Northern Italy from marauding Turks and feudal armies. As more and more of Hungary fell under Ottoman occupation, and people lost their homes and livelihoods, the hajdús served as mercenaries to whoever would pay them: kings, princes of Transylvania, or aristocrats, and were just as indiscriminate in despoiling the population. They elected their own officers, and, by the end of the Long War (1593-1606), were functioning as a regular army. István Bocskai, Prince of Transylvania (1604-1606) made use of their services, and then settled the hajdús (over 9,000 of them) on his own lands. They contracted to fight for him in time of war, and in return, enjoyed a “collective nobility”, i.e., exemption from all feudal dues and services. The hajdús settlements extended in a semi-circle from southern Bihar to the mouth of the Sajó and Hernád rivers; there were also certain hajdú-type settlements in the Transdanubia and Transylvania. In the seventeenth century, the hajdús liberties were not officially recognized either by the Hungarian Diet or the Habsburg government, but were respected in practice until the first decade of the eighteenth century, when the hajdús were reduced to serfdom in the wake of the crushing defeat suffered by Francis Rákóczi II, whom they had supported against the Habsburgs. Many hajdús communities, however, would not give up, and continued, for generations, to petition the courts for the recognition of their old liberties. Some of the “old hajdús towns” founded by Bocskai’s troops finally won back their right to self-government, and, in 1790, were recognized as the “Hajdúkertület”, an autonomous administrative unit independent of the county system.

2 Matyós: the inhabitants of three neighboring settlements—Mezőkövesd, Tard and Szentistván—in the western half of Borsod County. Though Mezőkövesd was a town already in medieval times (Tard and Szentistván were settled somewhat later), the Matyós—an island of Roman Catholics among largely Calvinist neighboring communities—evolved into a distinctive ethnographic group only in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Matyó embroidery and the celebrated Matyó peasant wear is a new development dating to the second half of the nineteenth century.

3 Szilaj pásztorkodás: an extensive form of semi-nomadic animal husbandry involving the seasonal migration of livestock kept outdoors year round, and tended by unattached, unmarried, homeless herdsmen.

4 Pákászkodás: making a living off the fens by fishing, trapping amphibious rodents and waterfowl, and gathering (medicinal) plants, eggs and feathers; pákás families lived in the marshes in huts raised of mud and rushes, and regularly moved “house” to wherever the fishing and gathering was good.

5 Kertes város: a largely obsolete form of settlement in which the housing plots are located in an area quite separate from the plots on which the farm buildings stand. The houses were grouped on small plots in the middle of the village or town, with at most a chicken coop or pigsty next to the house. The farms and farm buildings—complexes called kert, szállókert, akol, ólaskert, majorkert, istállókert, os szeráskert—were on strips of land surrounding the settlement, or farther off, when necessary for reasons of topography.
Tanya: isolated farmsteads, lived-in and worked full-time, and consisting, as a rule, of a house and several farm buildings, scattered at some distance from one another in the environs of villages and towns in the Great Plain.

Ólaskert: see note 5.

Szállás: originally, the shifting habitat of small groups (extended families) of nomadic pastoral farmers, the essence being movement due to the needs of their livestock. In more recent centuries, it came to mean any sort of farmland and farm buildings used by agricultural or pastoral families, the criterion being that certain members of the family live and work there seasonally. A szálláskert located at the edge of town, forest or field buildings where the livestock was wintered, a szérûskert in the Great Plain used at harvest time, and a solitary rural tanya used from time to time were all called szállás.

Táltos: a (male) person with supernatural powers, predestined by the spirits to be a táltos, as shown by his being born with a táltos tooth, or more than ten fingers. He could foretell the future, saw the hidden treasure underground, could bring on storms and make them pass, and was invulnerable to bullets. His most characteristic activity: fighting another táltos (both having taken on the form of a flaming wheel, a brightly colored flame or some animal) in order to bring on a turn in the weather (for the better or the worse). The táltos is a typically Hungarian concept, a remnant of the pagan Magyars’ archaic shamanic religion.

In Hungary, the latest wave of “folklorism” began with the folk revival of the early 1970s. It was a period of intense interest in every kind of folk art. The most novel and most original aspect of this focus on folk culture was the birth of the táncház movement. Though beset by professional problems and political obstacles, the movement has grown steadily in the past twenty-five years, spread beyond the country’s borders, and acquired an international dimension. The success of the táncház movement in Hungary and abroad owes a great deal to the living traditions of Hungarian folk music and folk dance (particularly in Transylvania [Erdély]), the highly-developed state of these forms of art, and the fact that both folk music and folk dance have been researched in detail, and are being taught in an organized fashion using techniques based on these research findings. But the real secret of the movement’s success is a functional approach, which aims to make the whole complex of folk traditions a part of everyday life.

The táncház, thus—expressive as it is of “the natural”, an outlook on life that modern man can ill afford to be without—has come to serve as an example the world over of how to salvage for future generations the viable elements of our disappearing—or worse yet, transmogrified—traditional cultures. In this sense (and this is not a hypothesis, but a conclusion based on over two decades of táncház operations in Hungary and abroad) the táncház movement can help ease the palpable tension between the various national traditions and the new world culture now in the making, and help forge a network of communication between them.

Of the features distinguishing the “modern” táncház, the following are the most essential:

1. The táncház is not a production, but a form of recreation in which folk music and folk dance appear in their original forms and functions as the “native language”—musical language and body language—of those taking part.

2. The folk music played and the folk dances danced at a táncház have not been passed down from one generation to the next in the traditional way, but have been incorporated into the táncház repertoire as a consequence of considered value judgements based on the comparative study of the traditional material.

3. The táncház movement is a loosely-knit association of informal “communities” whose members (rather than being passive consumers of the artificial products of the music industry) play an active role in their own entertainment, and do some hard work in the process, for it takes years of effort and practice for dancing and music making to become pure pleasure—though there is joy enough in the first dance steps mastered and the first tune learned.

4. From the very beginning, the táncház movement has treated the folk cultures of Hungary’s non-Magyar ethnic groups, and indeed, of every nation, as treasures of coequal value (and, in this sense, followed a principle and a practice which anticipated the “Common European House” idea by some twenty years).

To date, there has been no comprehensive study offering a complex analysis of the history of the táncház movement from the moment of its inception. From the very outset, however, journal arti-
articles, reports, and interviews have documented events in the life of the movement, and/or addressed some of the issues raised by its existence (this published material in its entirety is to be found only in private collections). The táncház movement has also been the subject of several books and studies.  

The Táncház Movement: Past and Present

The Archetype

The word táncház has always had a twofold meaning: on the one hand, it means the place—the house (ház)—where the dancing (tánc) takes place; on the other, it means an occasion, the opportunity to dance. The place was either a space within a building or an outdoor area: the inn and its courtyard, according to Hungarian peasant tradition. The exception was Transylvania, where the young people met to dance at some villager's house, and called it the táncház. In the winter, they danced in one of the rooms of the house; in the summer, in the csûr (a shed with a roof and open sides, standing in the courtyard of peasant houses, and used to store tools and crops).

In Transylvania, as elsewhere, the peasant way of life provided many occasions for dancing, but the táncház was reserved exclusively for single young...
men and women. A married man who wanted to
dance had to wait for a holiday, a wedding or a ball;
for him, the táncház was off limits.

In the traditional táncház, the music was usually
provided by semi-professional Gypsy musicians
(making music was not their only means of liveli-
hood). From time to time, one would come across
a Hungarian táncház band.

For generations, the táncház was the only form of
recreation available to young peasant men and
women in Transylvania. The operation of the
táncház was regulated by customary law. The youth
of the village, or a certain group of village youths,
themselves elected their leaders, called the “under-
writers”. It was they who chose the house to rent as
the village táncház, engaged the musicians, admin-
istered the finances, and made sure that there was
no rowdiness, etc., at the dances. Their agreement
with the owner of the house and the musicians was
verbal, and for a specified period of time. The musi-
cians were generally engaged for ten Sundays at a
stretch; the house was rented for a year or longer.
The young people who frequented the táncház all
contributed to paying the rent and the musicians in
cash, labor, or produce.

Like the other branches of folk culture, the music
played and the dances danced were passed on in the
traditional way from one generation to the next.
The dancers were still children when they began
learning the local dances, songs and customs from
one another, their parents, and their fellow villagers.
There were regular “tiny ones’ dances”, where small
children were taught how to dance. There was no
dance teaching at the táncház, which was meant to
be nothing but fun. The musicians providing the
music had learned to play in much the same way as
the dancers had learned to dance. But playing, for
them, was work, and they were paid by the dancers
accordingly (although music making was not con-
sidered to be a “job”).

In any given village, only the local dances were
danced. In villages of mixed ethnicity, people would
learn the dances of every ethnic group, and dance
every one of them in turn at village events attended
by all; at their own táncház, however, each ethnic
group would dance only their own dances. Most of
the musicians would play not just in their own
community, but in neighboring villages as well. In
The Bartók Dance Ensemble performing at the Zalaegerszeg Folk Dance Festival (Zala County, Southwestern Hungary), in 1972. They are dancing to “Meg kell a búzának érni...” [“The wheat can’t help but ripen...”], as choreographed by Sándor Timár. Photo: György Hidas, Táncház Foundation.
ethnically mixed areas, they know the music of every ethnic group. In Transylvania, it is not unusual to find “polyglot” bands, who play for Hungarians, Romanians and Gypsies equally, and equally well. Comparing the “know-how” and practices of village dancers and village musicians, we can draw the following conclusions: while the dancers know only the local dances, the musicians are at home in several musical styles, and play the music of several villages and ethnic groups. In any particular tánházh, however, they will be expected to play only the music that goes with the local dances.

In Hungary, the dissolution of the traditional peasant way of life was essentially a fait accompli by the late 1960s. In Transylvania, on the other hand, this process was delayed until the 1970s, when, however, it speeded up with a vengeance. The gradual repression of the tánházh in Transylvania—its practical disappearance in certain places—coincided with the tánházh revival in Hungary. There was, in short, a point in time when the tánházh as folk culture converged with the tánházh movement as a part of the folk-cultural revival: skills and knowledge were passed on in this encounter, and seminal personal ties were forged.

The Tánházh of the Tánházh Movement

Much as the essence of the archetypal tánházh—dancing folk dances to folk music as a form of recreation—remained unchanged when the institution was revived by the tánházh movement, there are significant differences between them. The most salient difference is that in the tánházh movement, the tánházh functions as a form of recreation not for some homogeneous Transylvanian village community, but for the very heterogeneous urban populations of Hungary's towns and cities. This is the reason why we include the tánházh movement under the heading of “folklorism”, and this is what explains all the other differences between the two kinds of tánházh. Those frequenting an urban tánházh have no family tradi-
Like in Transylvania, there is a special táncház for children—between the ages of 3 and 10—generally before the adults’ táncház begins. The average age of those frequenting the táncház in Hungary today happens to be the same as of those attending the traditional Transylvanian táncház, but within the movement, there is no age or marital-status restriction on attendance. The táncház movement welcomes anyone interested in folk music and folk dancing.

But for a few exceptions, urban Gypsy musicians do not play in the táncház. The “táncház orchestra”, as it is called, is generally comprised of Hungarian musicians, semi-professionals, like their Transylvanian counterparts. They all have some other occupation, or are still studying. The musicians learn to play outside the táncház. Many of those playing today have never had any formal musical training, but learned to play and picked up the tunes from the peasant or Gypsy musicians of the Transylvanian villages. In the last ten years or so, the teaching of folk singing and instrumental folk music has become a part of the curriculum of a number of schools of music, and special adult workshops are now also being taught.

The táncház is generally managed by the members of the orchestra and the dancing instructors. They are the ones who sign the written contracts with the state-run cultural centers which, to this day, are likely to be the location of any given táncház. The cultural center provides the dance hall, the staff (ushers, coat-check ladies, refreshment stand operators, etc.), and pays the musicians and the dance instructors. Those attending the táncház pay an admission fee, which goes to the cultural center. Since the fees do not cover the expenses, the operation of practically every táncház depends on state subsidies.

There are two things that need to be noted. One is that in the Hungarian táncház movement, it is the
“orchestra”, the musicians, who have the leading role and the final word. Even the dance instructors are often selected by the musicians. The other difference as compared to the Transylvanian tâncház is that a Hungarian tâncház will play not just in one particular musical idiom or the music of one particular village, but successive sets of tunes. (A “set” comprises the sum total of all the dance tunes of a particular village or locality, with the dances succeeding each other in a definite order—a “dance suite”, so to speak.) In an urban tâncház, therefore, both musicians and dancers are familiar with several styles of folk dancing. A good tâncház dancer will be comfortable with eight to ten “dance suites”, and a good tâncház musician with a corresponding diversity of dance tunes.

The Antecedents of the Tâncház Movement

Though folk cultural revivals are not specific to this century, we shall confine our retrospective to the more significant twentieth-century movements.

The first of these was the so-called Gyöngyösbokréta movement of the period between 1931 and 1944. Coordinated by a Budapest newspaperman, Béla Paulini, the village intelligentsia organized peasant dance troupes which performed folk dances, folk plays, and skits of folk customs at Budapest theaters once a year. In the latter part of the period, these troupes, organized under the auspices of the Bokréta Szövetség, would play several times a year and not only in the capital city. The impact of the Gyöngyösbokréta movement was twofold. On the one hand, it gave townspeople some first-hand experience of folk dancing and folk music. On the other hand, it awakened the peasantry to the realization of the value and importance of their own art—something which has definitely contributed to the survival of folk art.

The second movement started in the late ’40s and continued into the early ’50s. By this time, Hungary was a “people’s democracy”, and “the people” were required to sing folk songs and dance folk dances in this dark period of the country’s history. It was not so much a movement, as a terror tactic. The result: several generations learned to abhor folk art for the rest of their lives. The decline of folk culture in Hungary dates to that time.

The third movement was the formation of amateur folk dance groups: begun in the late ’50s, for all practical purposes, it continues to this day. Modeled on the highly successful Soviet folk ensembles (some of which toured the entire world), several hundred amateur folk dance groups came into

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For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
being, and still flourish today. To the 1970s, it was these groups which kept folk dancing and folk music alive. Their operation was confined to performing folk dances on stage, according to a learned choreography. For all that, the amateur folk dance groups were one of the immediate antecedents, indeed the hotbed, of the táncházmovement.

The fourth precursor—and the second immediate antecedent of the táncházmovement—was the folk music revival triggered by the Röpülj PávaTV Talent Show that made its debut in the late 1960s. The approach to folk music here was the same as would be formulated by the táncházmovement which started in 1972: folk music (and folk culture in general) was of value just as it was; there was no need to “elevate it” to the realm of classical music, or to “elaborate” on its “themes”. It was the people who had taken part in the Röpülj Páva movement who began to focus on instrumental folk music, too, particularly the polyphonic dance music of traditional folk dancing. They would be the ones to form the first táncházo orchestras.

The Social Milieu Which Shaped the Táncházmovement

Whether a movement will ever be born, let alone flourish, depends on the social milieu. Something that a few people do for a hobby will grow into a movement only if the particular activity meets the needs and interests of the majority, and if the political and cultural constellation is propitious for its growing into a movement. The early 1970s in Hungary were such a propitious time. The most important positive developments from the point of view of the táncházmovement were the following:

1. As a consequence of the revolution of 1956, the political pressure on the population began to ease up in the last years of the ’50s. The gradual liberalization was attended by a rise in the standards of living. The early 1970s saw the coming of age of the first post-1948 generation which could freely decide, for instance, what it wanted to sing and dance.

2. There was a gradual “thaw” in Hungary’s international isolation; foreign relations were not as one-sided as they had been. A thriving multilateral tourist trade and an ever-widening ring of cultural contacts meant that Hungarians came in touch with the folk culture of Hungarians living outside the country’s borders, and got news of the folk song revivals sweeping Western Europe and the United States. By the end of the ’60s, beat music, the first musical language understood the world over, had made its way into Hungary. It would have a definite impact on the development of the folk music movement and the táncházmovement, in both a negative and a positive sense.

3. There were some breakthroughs in Hungarian folk music research, and folk dance research had grown into an independent discipline. The new technology (records, microphones, VCRs, etc.) modernized the recording and dissemination of folk music collected on location. By this time, folk dance and instrumental folk music research were qualitatively on a par with folk song research, both as regards the volume collected, and the scholarship involved.

4. Most importantly, however, the folk culture of Transylvania continued to thrive and flourish right into the 1970s. This extraordinary wealth of folk tradition would come to form the basis of the táncházmovement.
Certain negative societal developments also served as an impetus to the genesis of the táncház movement. One cardinal negative circumstance was that by the 1970s, traditional folk art and folk culture had all but disappeared in Hungary. This was a natural consequence of the sham ideology and forced urbanization which had totally altered the peasantry’s way of life. The peasantry ended up repudiating their own folk culture, and with this, cut short a tradition that had been handed down from generation to generation for centuries.

Folk culture had become relegated to the status of a school subject, and folk art to an artistic style. And by the 1970s, folklore and folk art were being snubbed as outlandish and passé. There was a total chaos as to values. Which gave rise to yet another set of negative developments. Folk singing was made a compulsory part of the school curriculum; a child would either learn the folk songs the same way he learned algebra, or would come to hate them as something shoved down his throat—in neither case would he ever think of singing folk songs for his own pleasure. Instrumental folk music was something that simply no one taught. Gypsy musicians had practically stopped playing folk songs: they played operetta, popular songs, themes from the Hit Parade, and so on. As for the classical music of the time, the best-case scenario was that folk motifs provided the composer with at least his raw material; in fact, however, very few of the contemporary Hungarian composers paid any mind to their musical mother tongue. Folk music in its original form was practically never played. When it came to folk dancing, it was much the same situation, the difference being that you could see folk dancing on stage; but they danced not folk dances, but a choreographed composite of various folk dance steps. Far and wide, there was no original folk dancing to be found.

By the end of the 1960s, thus, it looked as if folk art and folk culture had disappeared in Hungary. The peasantry had ceased to pass on its own traditions, and the attempts to integrate folk cultural elements into the school system had proved a failure. With the exception of a few fanatics, everyone believed that a total cultural vacuum had set in. It was at that point that the newest wave of folk art movements stirred up the country.

The Story of the Táncház Movement, and Its State Today

The first táncház was organized in Budapest by Ferenc Novák and the Bihari Dance Ensemble on May 6, 1972. The idea was to set up a members-only club modeled on the Transylvanian táncház, the membership being restricted to Budapest’s four best amateur folk dance ensembles.

“Outsider” interest was strong from the very beginning, but initially the organizers did not let in anyone who was not a member. However, in view of the ever-growing interest, the four founding dance ensembles soon began wondering whether or not they should continue to insist on the dance club’s members-only policy. In the end, György Martin, Sándor Tímár, the members of the Bartók Dance Ensemble and the Sebő Band—the first táncház orchestra—jointly decided to open the táncház to everyone. From then on, anyone could go in and join in the dancing, because the club’s managers/organizers, in opening it up to the public, committed themselves to providing dance instructions as well.

Beginning with the spring of 1973, the Fővárosi Művelődési Ház (Municipal Cultural Center) was the scene of weekly táncház sessions, with dance instructions being provided right there on every occasion. The same year yet, the second táncház orchestra, the Muzsikás Band, was formed, and from 1974, there were two táncház events a week: one run by the Sebő Band, the other by the Muzsikás Band. In both places, the dance instructors were Sándor Tímár and members of the Bartók Dance Ensemble. The táncház movement was on its way. Several new “orchestras” were formed (the Virágvölgyi, the Jánosi, the Téka, etc.), and new
táncházak were springing up everywhere. In the first while, both the musicians and the dance teachers trained with the Bartók Dance Ensemble.

The next stage in the development of the movement was the two-year training course which the Hungarian Institute for Culture organized for táncház musicians and dance instructors between 1976 and 1978. The result was an upsurge of táncház founding in the provincial towns, and several more were established in Budapest. They also enlarged the dance repertoire, adding to the dances from Szék dances from other regions of Transylvania, as well as Hungary. The dances of Hungary’s minority nationalities—Romanian, South Slav, and Gypsy dances—had been taught from the very first. Before long, independent ethnic táncházak were being set up: South Slav, Greek, Bulgarian, and so on.

From the late ’70s on, would-be táncház musicians and dance instructors received regular training, though only on the peripheries of the official educational system. More and more people attended the special workshops and summer camps—held primarily under the auspices of cultural centers and dance ensembles—and more and more of the students were Hungarians living abroad. For it did not take long for the táncház movement to cross state boundaries: táncházak were springing up in Romania, in what was then Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, in Germany and Switzerland, as well as overseas in Canada, the United States, and Australia. But it was not just Hungarians living abroad who were drawn to the táncház. People of all nationalities will be found among táncház musicians and dancers today. The táncház movement has become truly international.

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer.
Today, there are about 60 or 70 “táncház orchestras” throughout Hungary, to say nothing of the folk singers, the solo instrumentalists, and the dance instructors. Besides their work at the táncház, these people give concerts and appear live at various functions, help both amateur dance ensembles and professional troupes with their work, and take part in folk music education at home and abroad. The number of táncházak held regularly has also grown: in Budapest alone, there is one or two Hungarian and/or ethnic táncház every day of the week; and several provincial towns have regular táncház sessions once a week or once a month. The ethnic táncházak, too, have shown a growing diversity, with attempts being made to set up ones devoted exclusively to the Gypsy, Jewish, Flamenco and Cajun dance traditions.

The countries that are Hungary’s immediate neighbors have also seen a táncház revival, with the Hungarians living there rediscovering their folk dance heritage at dance workshops and special summer camps. In Western Europe and overseas, there are about as many regular táncházak today as at the beginning of the 1980s.

NOTES

1 From the Hungarian folklorizmus, defined as “the adaptation by professional artists of folklore elements and folklore motifs”.


For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
Béla Halmos (1946- ) architect, fiddler, ethnomusicologist, a founding member of the Sebő Band, first fiddler (prímás) of the táncház movement. Presently, a senior fellow of the Hungarian Institute for Culture, and director of the Táncház Foundation. He has authored several studies on instrumental folk music, released numerous folk records and cassettes, and directed films and documentaries on folk music and the táncház.
The Treaty of Trianon, signed in 1920, provided for Hungary’s cession of parts of the counties of Vas and Zala, home to approximately 22,000 Hungarian citizens, and the annexation of this area to the Slovenian part of the newly-founded kingdom of Yugoslavia. The ceded parts of these two counties came to be called the Muravidék (Mura Region), an area of approximately 910 square kilometers. In 1921, a quarter of the population declared themselves to be of Hungarian nationality. By contrast, this figure is a mere 7 or -8 percent today.

The Muravidék, a composite of bits of several older ethnographic regions, is comprised of a number of villages that once formed part of the Őrség (the region’s northernmost corner); the spurs of the Göcsej Hills (somewhat south of the old Őrség villages); about half of the ethnographic region of Hetés, i.e., the area south of the old village of Lendvavásárhely, today’s Dobronak (Dobrovnik); as well as what is known as the Lendva region around the historical village of Alsólendva (Lendava). The Muravidék, accordingly, is characterized by the folk traditions, folklore and folk motifs of the Göcsej, Hetés, and Őrség regions of Hungary.

The Hungarians of the interwar years who, at a stroke of a pen, found themselves living in the “Muravidék” faced a great many hardships in their “new surroundings”, which, directly or indirectly, would seriously effect their ethnic identity, and the subsequent status of the Hungarian language in the region. Immediately following the cession, nearly the entire Hungarian intellectual community left the Muravidék, some of their own choosing, some under duress. No less importantly, only those who did not identify themselves as Hungarians received their share of the large Esterházy family estate being parceled out in generous portions among those newly settled in the region in the postwar wave of population shifts. These “settlers” usually set themselves up in self-contained communities within existing towns and villages, though several new villages were also founded in the course of the resettlement process. Those resettled came from the Goricia region and from Istria (both regions belonged to Italy at the time), as well as from parts of Slovenia nearer by. The resettlement programs, as it is common knowledge today, were meant to serve the purpose of assimilating the region’s Hungarian population, and would be a source of enormous problems for both communities (the native Hungarians as well as the new settlers) and of countless conflicts.

Two negative circumstances of a fairly objective kind also worked against the ability of the Hungarians of the Muravidék to preserve their national identity. One was the fact of their being a small community: as a small community with minority status, they had only limited scope for national self-expression. The other factor was that with the post-World War I annexation, the people of the Muravidék found themselves attached to a region which was unquestionably more developed economically than their prewar Hungarian milieu (the Slovenian parts of the former Austrian Empire had been among the more developed provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy). The end result was the Hungarian population’s gradual acceptance of the Slovenian system of values. This crisis of values was followed, from the 1950s and 1960s on, by a
major national-identity crisis for the Hungarians of the Muravidék, when the national identity of the community as a whole was seriously challenged from several quarters.

Certain Catholic priests with Slovenian national sentiments had played a key role in the postwar annexation of the Muravidék. As a consequence, Catholicism—and the vast majority of the Hungarians in the Muravidék are still Roman Catholics—was, if anything, counter-productive from the point of view of the preservation of their Hungarian national identity. Thus, although Catholic church services are regularly held in Hungarian to this day in the Hungarian-speaking areas, this native-language church has had no significant positive influence on the development of Hungarian national consciousness, nor even on the preservation of the Hungarian-speaking community’s native tongue. There are also some Lutherans and Calvinists living in the villages of the Őrség, as well as in the Szentlásló (Laslovo, Croatia) area.

Formally speaking, during the interwar years, the law provided that the Hungarian minority of the Muravidék receive its education in the vernacular (teaching in Hungarian was outlawed in 1939); in practice, however, the law was inconsistently applied, its implementation further hampered by the lack of Hungarian teachers.

Amateur groups have always been the mainstays of Hungarian culture in the region. However, between the two world wars, some peculiar discriminatory measures were adopted in this area as well. For example, if a Hungarian theater group wanted to perform a Hungarian play, the actors were obliged to learn—and put on—the same piece in Slovenian, too, though they could not speak a word of the language.

In spite of all this, the national consciousness of the Hungarians in the Muravidék remained unbroken throughout the interwar period. The process of disintegration had barely begun.

The 1960s brought radical changes in the official minority policy of Slovenia, marking the beginning of a period of positive discrimination (i.e., additional rights for minorities). There are three plausible explanations for this change in policy:

1. The total population of the native Italian
2. and Hungarian communities did not exceed 1 percent of the population of the Slovenian Republic at that time; thus, the policy was probably seen as a low-risk investment.
3. The Slovenian nation had to set a precedent, in order to all the more effectively champion the cause of ethnic Slovenians living in Austria, Italy, and elsewhere.

4. An astute assessment of the international political climate on the part of Slovenian politicians: the institutional guarantees of minority rights bore high interest for Slovenia as it attained independent statehood in the early 1990s.

The main point of the Slovenian minority policy of positive discrimination is that in the areas of education, culture, and the media, as well as in relations with the mother country, the minority group has special opportunities and institutional means that are subsidized by the state directly out of the central budget. Native minority groups have been able to assert their interests through their own organizations which are linked to networks of local institutions. These minority organizations (today they are called ethnic corporations) have founded the cultural institutions and ethnic media of the Muravidék Hungarians, and are also co-founders of the bilingual schools that are becoming more and more common in the area. Hungarian has formally been acknowledged as one of the official languages of Slovenia but, naturally, its coequal use cannot be consistently implemented in practice. At the end of the 1980s, the minorities were granted some supplementary rights: native minority groups now have permanent membership in parliament, their representatives being elected exclusively by members of the given national minority. These minority representatives with special status have also been admitted to the institutions of self-government.

In addition, there are Hungarian ethnic councils operating in each self-governing territory (at the moment there are five of them), their representa-
tives being elected at the general local elections. These ethnic councils elect, from among their own circles, the members of the highest Hungarian representative forum of the Muravidék, the Hungarian National Self-Governing Community Council of the Mura Region. Both bodies have veto rights in the areas of minority education, culture, and the media, the ethnic councils at the local level, and the Hungarian council of the Muravidék on larger questions, much as the minority representatives in parliament have veto rights on cultural issues affecting the entire ethnic community.

This system, considered to be ideal and unprecedented in theory, can, of course, be only partially implemented in practice. The greatest impediment to its realization is the displeasure and inflexibility of certain members of the majority nation, our next-door neighbors; but just as much of a hindrance, perhaps, is the identity crisis that has beset many small Hungarian communities, as well as certain reflex reactions inherited from the pre-1990 decades. Another factor of significance is the percentage of mixed marriages: approximately 50 percent of all marriages contracted by the Hungarians of the region. The vast majority (approximately 80-85 percent) of individuals born into mixed-marriage families identify themselves as members of the majority nation. They still speak Hungarian to some degree; however, they make no particular effort to perfect their knowledge of the language.

Today, the cultural activities of the Muravidék Hungarians are coordinated and supported by the Institute for Culture of the Hungarian National Minority. The organization coordinates the work of approximately forty lay groups; publishes the Hungarian books that come out in the Muravidék (about ten literary, professional, and scholarly books are published a year, as well as a regular journal and a yearbook); finds various ways of fostering the use of Hungarian as a mother tongue (essay competitions for children and adults, literature and history competitions, poetry recitals, native-language summer camps where children can learn about Hungarian culture, theater and puppet theater performances, music and folk dance programs, etc.); and supports a variety of scholarly activities, whose numbers, happily, are steadily increasing (especially in the fields of ethnography, local history, sociography, and cultural history).

As far as education is concerned, bilingual education was introduced in the Muravidék in 1959. The system has instilled in the younger generations a certain feel for coexistence, since Slovenians and Hungarians alike have no choice but this type of schooling at present (the decision to that effect was brought at a local, and not at the state level). However, the system's disadvantages for the preservation of the Hungarians' ethnic identity and mother tongue are becoming increasingly clear; still, for the moment, there is no power strong enough—not the will, even among Hungarians—to reform the present system.

In the field of journalism and telecommunications, the Hungarians of the Muravidék are in an enviable position. Our weekly journal, the Népujság, is published by a permanent editorial staff; the Hungarian Radio of the Mura Region broadcasts eight hours a day to listeners in the region as well as to those in the neighboring counties of Hungary; and the Board for Hungarian Television Programming is gradually gaining importance.

The Hungarians of the Muravidék and their institutions cooperate with the mother country and its various institutions in many ways, but the immediate cooperation between border communities based on direct bilateral relations is of a very special importance.

The help of experts from Hungary is valued particularly in the field of education. There has also been significant progress in pan-Hungarian cooperation in recent years. The Muravidék Hungarian community as a collective is a member of the World Federation of Hungarians and of the Mother Tongue Conference, and is engaged in a wide variety of cooperative efforts with the Hungarians of the Csallóköz, the Vajdaság (Voivodina, Yugoslavia), and Croatia.

The chances of preserving our Hungarian ethnicity in this region will depend on how far we manage
to establish the prestige of our national values and native language in the near future. The Euro-Atlantic integration process is only of minor consequence in this regard. The truly decisive factors are whether Hungary will manage to become an influential state in the region, and whether the Hungarian intellectuals of the Muravidék will manage to exploit our cultural and linguistic riches to their full potential.

The Vajdaság Center for Hungarian Folklore, an independent, non-profit, non-political, grass-roots organization, was founded in Bácstopolya (Bačka Topola, Yugoslavia) in September, 1995.

“Vajdaság” (Voivodina) is the first and most important element of our name, our primary aim being to gather everyone in the Vajdaság involved in folk music, folk dance, and folk art into one institution. “Hungarian” is another key constituent of our name, because we are an association of professionals and non-professionals composing in Hungarian, and engaged in the folk culture of the Hungarian people. This, of course, by no means precludes cooperation with organizations and professionals dealing with other folk cultures; indeed, among the aims of our organization is to bring together individuals and associations involved in two or more folk traditions. Finally, we call ourselves a “Center for Folklore” because we mean to be an information center coordinating the efforts of individuals involved in folklore, both in its narrow and broader sense, both inside and outside the country’s borders.

The center’s objectives, as specified in the articles of association, is to study, preserve, cultivate, process, and popularize Hungarian folk tradition both in the Vajdaság and beyond, and to assemble and instruct those active in non-professional folk movements with the aim of achieving a higher degree of professionalism in the fields of folk music, folk dance, and applied folk arts.

We also wish to set up a research center that will collect and classify the documentary sources (written, audio, audio-visual and digital) of Hungarian ethnography, to make them available primarily to our members, but also to the public at large.

In view of the great demand for the rapid synthesis and exchange of information on folklore and related fields, the Center for Folklore launched a newsletter soon after its foundation. Initiated and edited by István Nagy, it is the first and still the only bulletin in the region meant to satisfy the needs of the amateur folklore movement. It has set into motion an unprecedented flow of information, from both inside and outside Yugoslavia, on a wide range of topics of general interest in the fields mentioned above.

From the very beginning, the organization has paid special attention to the professional training of people involved in amateur folk movements. Having never had any form of Hungarian folk art taught in the region’s schools, and with little hope of the curriculum changing in that direction, we began to organize meetings, conferences, and long-term courses (running one to two school years) in various areas of folk art, inviting our own specialists from the Vajdaság, as well as from Hungary to serve as instructors. We have organized courses in folk games and dancing for elementary school and kindergarten teachers, courses in basic embroidery, and advanced courses for embroidery instructors in Szabadka (Subotica), Becskerek (Zrenjanin), and Újvidék (Novi Sad). We have sent our members to seminars (choreographer training in Budapest), conferences and craft camps (in Békéscsaba and Zalaegerszeg, Hungary) and have organized field trips to Budapest (to the “Discovering Kalotaszeg” exhibition at the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography). We regularly
visit local exhibitions, and gratefully acknowledge the cooperation, professional supervision and sponsorship of the Hungarian Culture Foundation, the Folk Dance Center, the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, the Folk Game and Handicraft Teachers School, the György Martin Association for Folk Dance, the European Folklore Institute, the Táncház Foundation, the Discover Hungary Alliance, and the Foundation for the Teaching of Folk Art (all in Budapest), as well as the Craftsmen’s Halls of the Baranya, Békés, and Csongrád county cultural centers, and the Gönczi Ferenc Cultural Center of Zalaegerszeg.

Our professional embroiderers and embroidery instructors have exhibited their works at the International Folk Art Festival (Szeged, 1998) and the National Folk Art Exhibition (Budapest, 1996), and have taken part in the Twenty-second Bori Kis Jankó National Embroidery Competition (Mezőkövesd, Hungary, 1999). Our folk dancers, bands, and various individuals from the amateur movements have performed at the Festival of Hungarian Minorities in Pécs (Hungary).

We have released our first audio cassette, providing the folk music groups and soloists of the Vajdaság the opportunity to reach a wider audience. In the autumn of 1997, the music on the cassette was played at live performances in Hungary, in Szeged, Kecskemét, and Budapest.

We started holding folk dance and music classes for beginners; unfortunately, however, we have had to suspend this program for lack of funds. Inspired by folk embroidery instructor Rozália Raj, we held the Margit Polák Embroidery Competition for the first time in 1998, and hope to hold it biennially in the future.

The folk dancers of the Vajdaság have shown great interest in the new type of folk-dance competition and rating system developed by the György Martin Association for Folk Dance. To encourage constant improvement, folk dancers are provided the opportunity to perform and be rated on stage, an event which was organized for the first time in 1997 by the Center for Folklore in cooperation with the Petőfi Sándor Hungarian Cultural Association of Újvidék (Novi Sad). We plan to make this a biennial event. Style workshops are regularly held for folk dancers in Temerin (Temerin), under the able direction of Imre Lukács, with guest performers from Hungary.

In studio sessions held on the Kátai farm in Kishegyes (Mali Idoš), a perfect setting to inspire creativity, we study the ornamental patterns of textiles from the region with the help of the professional embroiderers and embroidery instructors who collected these samples themselves, and, reinterpreting the patterns and motifs, create new artifacts embroidered with authentic ornamental folk motifs. In Doroszló (Doroslovo) in Southern Bácska, we have organized children’s camps for the preservation of folk traditions on six separate occasions so far, with great success. This is the only camp in the region that is held in an authentic folk environment, where campers from the entire territory of the Vajdaság can experience the spiritual and material legacy of peasant culture, and learn the unwritten rules and customs of closed communities, and about the region itself as one single community dedicated to the preservation of these traditions.

The conferences we have organized for leaders of folk dance groups and traditional ensembles have also met with a positive response. Two summer handicraft camps have been held under the direction of Attila Varga, with primarily focus on traditional handicrafts which researchers have found to have been firmly established in this region at one time, but which are just a memory today (e.g., the making of horse hair jewelry).

In 1995, we revived the Vajdaság Táncház Festival, a tradition interrupted by the 1991 war in Yugoslavia. Since then, it has been held under the direction of Tibor Vas in cooperation with the Móra Ferenc Cultural Association in several locations in Yugoslavia: Bácsstopolya (Bačka Topola), Feketics (Feketić), and Csóka (Čoka). Unfortunately, in the autumn of 1998, the fifth anniversary of the festival had to be canceled due to the renewed threat of war.
Thanks to the support of the Town Council of Szabadka (Subotica), we have received office space free of charge. It is here that the volunteers who run the Center carry out the organizational part of their work. Our major problem is that the association has no continuous source of financial support, and no paid employees. We finance each planned project mainly with support from abroad.

As we see it, cooperation with the mother country can be truly fruitful only if the Hungarian communities of the region are in the position to follow its fine example.

For Hungarians living outside the borders of Hungary, anything that the various cultural organizations do to foster and preserve our ethnic identity is of enormous significance. If the new generation is not content to simply learn to read and write Hungarian, if our youngsters aspire to express themselves in this language as native speakers, want to sing the traditional songs and dance the traditional dances, if they treat our cultural legacy with due respect, study it and pass it on, if they not only delight in a Hungarian stage performance but find the values expressed on stage to be a source of inspiration in their everyday lives, then we, the cultural organizations active today, have done our job. The Vajdaság Center for Hungarian Folklore, for one, is dedicated to carrying on in this spirit.

Rozália Raj (1950, Doroszló/Doroslovo, Yugoslavia), teacher of folk embroidery and folk dressmaking, Secretary of the Center for Hungarian Folklore (Vajdaság/Voivodina, Yugoslavia). István Nagy (1957, Magyarittabé/Novi Itebej, Yugoslavia), certified folk dance instructor. Artistic Director of the Center for Hungarian Folklore. Both have done complex research on folk songs, folk music, folk dance, folk art and folk religion in the Voivodina, and have produced ten video films on these subjects to date. Joint major works: Bajkúti Szûz Mária, könyörögj érettünk. A doroszlói kegyhely történetének összegyűjtött adatai [Our Lady of Bajkút, pray for us. Collected data on the history of the Doroszló shrine]. Tóthfalu: Logosz. 1993; Doroszlói népi textiliák [Folk textiles from Doroszló]. Tóthfalu: Logosz. 2000.

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
The Hungarian Culture Foundation was officially registered in 1993. The members of the Board of Trustees are: Sándor Csoóri, poet and president of the World Federation of Hungarians, chairman; László Dobos, writer, Felvidék (Upper Hungary); Albert Egyed, scholar of arts and letters; Ervin László, futurist, Italy; Aladár Lászlóffy, poet, Erdély (Transylvania); György Osváth, European Commission, Brussels; Edward Teller, nuclear physicist, USA; László Tökés, Reformed bishop, Erdély (Transylvania); and József Zelnik, ethnographer, and president of the Hungarian Cultural Alliance. The main goals of the Foundation, according to its articles of association, are to establish and maintain cultural contacts among Hungarian intellectuals on both sides of the borders of Hungary, organize regional meetings, and provide support for the establishment and maintenance of these contacts.

It was in 1994 that the Foundation first organized the “Vajdasági Napok” (Voivodina Days) at its headquarters in the Buda Castle. Here, the representatives of Hungarians living outside the country’s borders could present the traditions and samplings of the classic and contemporary cultural wealth of the Vajdaság. In 1995, the event was expanded to include a special focus on Beregszász (Berehovo, Ukraine), a city that was celebrating the 900th anniversary of its foundation that year.

In 1996, the year of the 1100th anniversary of the Hungarian Conquest, the organizers attached great importance to Hungarians separated by state borders being able to celebrate together in Budapest on St. Stephen’s Day, the feast of the founder of the Hungarian state, King Stephen I. That is how the first cultural festival for Hungarians living outside the borders of Hungary was born: “Where Regions Meet: Carpathian Basin Days ’96”. During the festival, which lasted several days, representatives of the Felvidék (Slovakia), Kárpátalja (Ukraine), Erdély (Transylvania, Romania), Vajdaság (Voivodina, Yugoslavia), Szlavónia (Slavonia, Croatia) and the Slovenian Muravidék all held independent events.

The festival was held at the headquarters of the Hungarian Culture Foundation (Budapest, 1st district, Szentháromság tér 6), and at the headquarters of the World Federation of Hungarians (Budapest, 5th district, Semmelweis u. 1-3). Some minor additions and changes notwithstanding, the basic format formulated for this occasion set the pattern for future events as well: for example, exhibitions and shows (ethnography and folk art, peasant wear, fine arts, photos, books, and films); lectures and discussions (in literature, sociology, culture, history, language, and education); and various folk culture events and folk art fairs (complete with folk songs, folk tales, folk dance, folk music, and folk custom demonstrations, as well as demonstrations by artisans and master craftsmen). The “Identity Club”, special forum for dealing with questions of national identity, language and culture of interest to Hungarians living outside Hungary in the Carpathian Basin, was set up at this time, and representatives of the different regions offered those attending the festival delicious baked goods and drinks based on the traditional recipes of their regions.

In 1997, the “Where Regions Meet: Carpathian Basin Days II” events were concentrated around Buda Castle. This cultural festival of all Central
Organizing such a series of events has required a great deal of effort on the part of the Foundation, the different regions, as well as all participants and contributors. Although the different events have not always been comparable in respect of content and standard, nor, owing mostly to objective difficulties, the representations of the out-of-country regions, every visitor has always been able to find the events most suited to his or her interests, and been able to form a fairly realistic, though not quite comprehensive, picture of the conditions under which Hungarians live in the Carpathian Basin today.

The greatest merit of the Hungarian Culture Foundation’s initiative has been formulated by the participants themselves: “The annual series of events organized every August as the ’Carpathian Basin Days’ of the ’Where Regions Meet’ program are vital for Hungarians living outside the borders of Hungary; it is our only opportunity to present our rich cultural heritage to each other and the outside world, and to celebrate St. Stephen’s Day.”

In 1990, still somewhat dazed by the 1989 “revolutions”, and overwhelmed by the swift advance of Western consumerism in Romania, I began to wonder how we could preserve for future generations something of that incredibly rich and diverse instrumental folk music tradition which flourished in Transylvania (Erdély) for over two centuries, and whose decline was dramatically accelerated when Romania’s artificial isolation came to an end. There are, of course, many other reasons for this decline, beyond the opening of the borders. Firstly, the generation that had still had the chance to learn this archaic material as it was handed down unaltered from father to son has all but vanished, and even those as yet among the living cannot pass on their knowledge to the next generation, such has been the socialist destruction of the rural way of life. Secondly, we are experiencing the beginning of a new era in pop music the world over, a change whose significance is comparable to the earlier shift from vocal to instrumental music. Now electronic instruments are replacing acoustic ones, and this process has already reached the villages. Naturally, this has meant not only the use of new instruments, but also the emergence of new music appropriate to these instruments; most of the old music is gradually being forgotten as a result. Thirdly, Transylvania is in the throes of a significant social change: the Jews and ethnic Germans have emigrated, the village farms are becoming impoverished, and industry has been fundamentally transformed. All these changes taken together warn us to take heed: as far as old instrumental folk music is concerned, we have certainly reached the “Final Hour”.

Recognizing this, I determined to start organizing the “Final Hour” collection project. The idea is not new. Audio recordings were made as early as the period between 1936 and 1944, under the direction of Béla Bartók, Oszkár Dincsér, Zoltán Kodály, and Gyula Ortutay. Under the auspices of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and later, Hungarian Radio and the Museum of Ethnography, previously selected informants were invited to Budapest to record in the studios of the Hungarian Radio. Several of these recordings were later published as the “Pátria” record series, named after the manufacturer. However, the war and the subsequent political changes put an end to these efforts. The “Final Hour” project has taken up where these illustrious pioneers left off, the “New Pátria” record series offering a selection of the enormous mass of material that we ourselves have collected in recent years.
For financial help, I turned to the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Museum of Ethnography, and the Ministry of Culture. In the Fonó ("Spinnery") Music Hall in Buda, I finally found a location suited for starting the project, and sufficient financial support. The Fonó Music Hall is a new, private cultural institution which functions as a non-profit organization. Here we set up a separate studio, where we digitally record the material collected first on a PC hard drive and then on CD in two copies, one of which remains at the Fonó Music Hall, while the other goes to the Institute of Musicology. At the same time as the audio recordings, we also make visual recordings of our “informants”, though only with a simple video camera (HI8). The protocol of the collection is computerized, and the material is currently being turned into a database.

The theoretical starting point of our work was the existence of a unitary instrumental folk-musical language in Transylvania, as is clear from the material collected so far. There are, we find, only minor differences in the instrumental music played by the Romanian, Hungarian, and Gypsy bands of any given village, and even these differences stem primarily from the differences in education. In the course of our own collecting, we took great care to gather musical material from all three of these ethnic groups, and systematically inquired about any possible German, Jewish, and Slovak material. The peaceful musical coexistence of the peoples of Transylvania can indeed serve as an example to a Europe set on the course to unification.

We recorded the new Transylvanian musical material in three major sessions, taking into consideration the agricultural work schedule of the village people. The first session was from September to Christmas of 1997; the second from January of 1998 to the end of May; and the third from September to Christmas of the same year. We invited forty-six folk groups to Budapest within the framework of the “Final Hour” project, and recorded approximately 650 hours of music in our studio. Having completed the Transylvanian part, we decided not to stop there but to go on to include Upper Hungary (Felvidék). The job of collecting material there lasted until February of 2000. Under the direction of Gergely Agócs, a young ethnographer from the region, we recorded twenty-four bands there, and ended up with approximately 200 hours of audio recordings of Hungarian, Slovak, Ruthenian, and Goral (a Polish people living along the Polish-Slovak border) music during this period. Our work has proved to be of interest not only to the scholarly community but also the general public, and the President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the head of the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage have both assured us of their personal interest and financial support. Thus encouraged, we decided to supplement our collection by gathering the musical material of the Great Plains (Alföld), i.e., “Lesser Hungary”, and so round out the collection “map” of the Carpathian Basin. We have dubbed this new phase the “Lesser Hungary” project for lack of a better term, for in fact we shall be collecting material from a region whose boundaries lie beyond the borders of the present-day Republic of Hungary, since the logic of ethnographic units was among the considerations ignored when the map was redrawn by the framers of the Treaty of Trianon. Thus it is that informants from four neighboring countries will be among those invited to contribute to our “Lesser Hungary” collection.
The mass of collected material is by no means intended to be a closed and inaccessible collection. Once we are done processing the material, we wish to open our collection to scholars to copy, study, and classify. Finances allowing, we plan to put the collection on the Internet. We also plan for copies of the collection to be returned to the places where it originated, i.e. Transylvania and Upper Hungary. In cooperation with Fonó Records, we have released a representative series of CDs—so far with one CD by each band—in our “New Pátria” series.

Once we have finished, we hope to be able to say, without exaggeration, that the instrumental folk music of the Carpathian Basin is the best documented in all Europe.

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László Kelemen (1960- ), composer, viola player. Leader and violist of the Ökrös Band, and responsible for all its musical arrangements. Head of the “Final Hour” project, editor of the “Új Pátria” [New Pátria] series. Main research interests: the collection, research and publication of Transylvanian instrumental folk music. Major works: the “Új Pátria” series (12 CDs to date); Szólószonáta hegedűre [Solo sonata for violin]. Budapest: Hungaroton. 1995.
When, as a young ethnographer, I first arrived in Szék (Sic, Romania) in the early 1970s in the course of several short field trips to various points in Transylvania (Erdély, more precisely, the Székelyföld), I was overcome by the strange feeling that the world of my textbooks was coming to life before my very eyes. What I had read in the classical ethnographic descriptions was still very much a living tradition there.

The town of Szék, hidden among the hills near Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca), revealed an old-new world to visitors from Budapest. This was a period in the late 1960s and early 1970s when you could once again travel to Transylvania without restrictions. The stranger from afar was received with distinct hospitality, and a wondrous openness and warm-heartedness in almost every house. Both the lovely women wrapped in embroidered shawls and the men in yellow straw hats greeted the stranger in the street as if they had been old acquaintances. And indeed, there was some sort of link between these villagers and the city-dwellers who had undertaken the long trip there, something other than the Hungarian language, something they never talked about: they shared a common project. While the city-dwellers busied themselves with the conscious preservation of folk traditions, the villagers were transmitting these traditions instinctively.

The young folk music scholars made audio recordings, the filmmaker brothers shot folk customs with a simple movie camera, others learned the folk dances, and the folklorist recorded popular superstitions and local legends with his cumbersome tape recorder. Long conversations were captured this way, and the songs of István Serestély, that magnificent singer, were immortalized in the crystal-clear tones of the archaic style of singing. His commentaries also shed light on certain elements of the traditional way of life. Later, we had the opportunity to enjoy the hospitality of his family when we returned with photographer Ferenc Csévenka on several occasions. The two of us accompanied the people to church, to the Easter services and to the service on St. Bartholomew’s Day. We admired the great variety of local peasant wear, and the vivid colors of their embroidery. On one occasion, for example, we witnessed women in preparation for a funeral painstakingly selecting shawls with the right colors of embroidered flowers, carefully avoiding the striking color combinations.

The táncház, a small dance hall, completely enthralled young researchers who visited it for the first time. It was there that one could really come to understand what it meant for young people to gather together to dance and sing, and simply enjoy themselves, and for young men to woo the young lasses. The táncház provided an excellent opportunity for young men to demonstrate their virility and strength as they competed to showed off their excellence at dancing, and a chance for the young women to test and prove their virtue. The táncház was where young people could learn the traditional norms of behavior, and prove that they could adhere to these norms; and at the same time, it provided an opportunity to give vent to the passions of youth. In brief, it was the place to learn how to be an adult, a place where one underwent a sort of protracted rite of passage.
In much the same way, the visit to Szék was a rite of passage for the young ethnographer that I then was, an initiation to real ethnographic field work. And when I wandered through the streets of the village together with a photographer friend of mine, and attended a funeral as well as other church services in this Calvinist village, the narrative material gathered gained a visual dimension. The photographs by Ferenc Cservenka are among the finest pieces of Hungarian ethnography, and, together with the photos of Péter Korniss, László Kunkovács, and Béla Kása, introduced a new style of ethnographic photography in those years of the “ethnophotographic movement”. The main point was to combine documentary authenticity with aestheticism of composition and intensity of imaging. It was these together which made their photos not just good, but beautiful.

The socio-political changes of recent years have changed things in Szék, too. This is made abundantly clear by the new, two-story houses recently built by some families. Peasant wear, with its uniform beauty, has disappeared: first the men, then gradually the women, and now even the young girls have abandoned these links to the past. The old customs, too, are on their way out: weddings are becoming more ceremonious, and are gradually turning into large-scale social events.

“Christenings” to celebrate the birth of babies have lately taken the form of something akin to small weddings. But funerals still bring together all the relatives in collective mourning, and even the particular part of the village where the deceased had lived. The most striking change in custom is what has happened to the táncház: instead of the separate dances formerly organized in the different parts of the village, today it is the disco in the village center that has become the meeting place for young people.

Thus, the pictures presented here, photographs of poetic beauty taken by Ferenc Cservenka in the 1970s, are historical documents now, capturing scenes and moments that will never again be. The recorded gestures, the folk wear, the shawls, and the dance movements are parts of the heritage of the rural past. They are cultural treasures worthy of being preserved.
Dancers

A young couple gives the guests from Budapest a sampling of traditional dances from Szék. The legényes, or bachelor’s dance is a test of a man’s talent for solo improvisation. The great fiddler István ("Kávész") Szabó provides the music.
“Church Goers”

Men gathering outside the church wall before Sunday services to talk while they wait for the church bell to summon them in.
Young men (facing page bottom), middle-aged family men (top), and older men sitting by the church wall.
Easter Sunday Morning

Leaving for church services. This devout Calvinist community considers it very important to pass on traditions. Women take the lead in this.
In Front of the Church

Women exchanging the latest gossip before church services.
The serious, attentive faces of a congregation taking in a sermon, calculated to strengthen their religious faith, which has kept the generations before them on the path of righteousness.
The funeral is a social event affecting not only relatives but also the whole community. Everyone wants to pay his or her last respects to the deceased. At the same time, it is also an opportunity to visit the graves of relatives and members of the immediate family.
Boys heading off to “water” the girls; this entails sprinkling (or dousing) them with pure water or cologne. This practice clearly harks back to some old fertility rite.

“Bújj, bújj, zöld ág...” (Slip through, burst forth, little green branch...), an ancient children’s game, often played by adolescent girls.
Children’s Games
In the *Tâncház*

The *tâncház* was a special institution in this village. It was an occasion for young people to meet and dance and gave the young men an opportunity to woo the young women. It facilitated the process of choosing a partner and provided a forum for boys and girls to socialize.
Young people grew up with traditions, and within them. Besides learning different dance styles, they also acquired the norms of social behavior.
Photographic Essay

Generations

The local Gypsy minority was a respected group within the village community, all the more so because they also provided the music in the táncház.

In the 1970s, everyone was still dressed in traditional peasant wear, and this also held true for the children. This little boy is observing the girls’ singing game.

Both this marriageable young girl and her grandmother were still dressed in the local peasant wear in the 1970s. The two of them together illustrate the transmission of cultural traditions.
Photographic Essay

Ferenc Cservenka (1945- ) ethno-photographer. One-man exhibitions of his work have been held at the Hungarian National Gallery (Budapest), at the University Gallery in Debrecen, and at several other locations. Was one of the first Hungarian photographers to regularly tour Transylvania in the 1970s.


For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
Located across the square from the Houses of Parliament in the old Supreme Court Building, one of the architectural highlights of Budapest, the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography has prided itself on its Hungarian collection since the turn of the century. The present Hungarian exhibition, opened in 1991 and refurbished for the museum’s 125th anniversary six years later, is a collection of artifacts dating from the late eighteenth century to the First World War: clothing, tools, implements, household utensils and personal belongings used by the peasantry of pre-Trianon Hungary at special moments, and in the course of their day-to-day lives. Perforce the items collected can give but a sampling of the rich storehouse of folk culture; but the curators have done their best to touch on its every aspect, and show how this traditional culture forms an organic part of the European cultural heritage.

The exhibition opens with a tableau of the ethnic, linguistic and religious distribution of the population of the Carpathian Basin. Transdanubia (Dunántúl), the Great Plain (Alföld), and Transylvania (Erdély)—the territories with a predominantly Magyar (i.e., ethnic-Hungarian) population—had been the hardest hit, we learn, by the hundred and fifty years of Ottoman occupation ending in the last year of the seventeenth century. The late-eighteenth-century population map represents the multi-ethnic composition that the country acquired as the result of large-scale repopulation programs and internal migration. Nearly half of Hungary’s fifteen million inhabitants, the statistical tables tell us, were non-Magyar at the end of the nineteenth century.

It is this kaleidoscope of cultures that is reflected in Room 1 of the exhibition, where the country’s major ethnic groups are represented in their “Sunday best”. The glass case on the right contains the peasant wear of the various Magyar regions of the country; the glass case on the left contains the festive clothing of the various non-Magyar ethnic groups. The colors, the patterns, the materials used all reflect the ethnic, regional and social differences that characterized peasant society in nineteenth-century Hungary. Most of the exhibits were first put on display at the “ethnographic village” set up in 1896 as part of the millennial celebrations, and have been in the museum’s possession since that time.

A nearly life-sized eighteenth-century “Suffering Christ” dressed in burlap receives the visitor at the entrance to Room 2: the statue, which comes from Northern Hungary and used to be carried in procession, underlines the primacy of place assumed by the Church among the institutions that regulated the life of the peasantry, and influenced folk culture. Other institutional frames—the manor, the village, the market town, and the industrial town—are, aptly, represented mostly in their capacity for dispensing “justice”, or more exactly, punishment: an imposing collection of stocks and shackles are a vivid reminder of the lord’s power over his serfs and tenants, and there is even a photograph of a man and a woman set in a pillory. But there are also guild chests, signs and seals—a testimony, among other things, to at least the possibility of mobility: from peasant, to journeyman, to craftsman.

Room 3, depicting the diverse ways that the peasantry made a living, is perhaps the single largest unit
of the exhibition. Facing each other on the two sides of the hall as we enter are the contrasting methods of agriculture that emerged as a matter of geographic and historical necessity: intensive agriculture, which had its origins in the farming methods of medieval Europe; and extensive agriculture and the seasonal migration of livestock and herdsman, which developed in the Great Plain in the wake of the destruction wrought by the Turkish wars. Some of the “tools of the trade” displayed here are brilliant in their simplicity: there is, for instance, a látófa, or lookout post dug into the ground in the middle of the prairie—a single post with asymmetrically-placed pegs for the herdsman to climb up on, and keep an eye on his straying cattle or sheep.

We also see some clothing and personal objects on exhibit: these, as much as the gear and implements, reflect the everyday circumstances and social position of the peasants who supported their families as farmers, herdsmen, trappers, beekeepers, and fishermen.

Processing the produce has always been a crucial element of subsistence farming. The rest of Room 3 deals with the three most important areas of home food processing: the processing of meat, milk and grain. It is evident from both the implements (churns and meat-salting tubs hewn of a single tree trunk, for instance) and the technology (e.g., a hand-turned stone mill) that the procedures used as late as the beginning of this century perpetuated a great many archaic elements. The display also gives an idea of the traditional diet of the Hungarian peasantry, its constants and social variations.

Rooms 4 and 5 present just the most typical of the wide range of handicrafts practiced in nearly every market town: woodcarving, carpentry, blacksmithing, pottery, textile weaving, posztó (broadcloth) weaving, szűr (frieze-coat) tailoring, and furriery. Perhaps the most distinctive of all the exhibits is the frieze-coat tailor’s workshop, with a finished cifraszűr hanging next to the workbench. The cifraszűr, a frieze overcoat bedecked with embroidered (or sewn-on) Hungarian motifs, was, for generations, worn by peasant men on festive occasions. To wear one in the late nineteenth century, however, was to make not just a fashion statement, but a political statement as well, for the folk motifs had made it a symbol of Hungarian national resistance.
Exhibitions

during the War of Independence of 1848-49, and it was, subsequently, banned by the Austrian government.

Frieze-coat tailors began to collect and draw cifraszûr motifs in their pattern books during their apprentice years already, and continued to do so throughout their journeyman years. Fairs were another place that even master craftsmen could find new inspiration, though most of the known cifraszûr pattern books show them to have limited themselves to the stylistically unified motifs of a particular region. With the growth of demand, these motifs—indeed, handicrafts in general—came to play a major role in the formation of popular taste, as the metamorphosis of peasant wear, and peasant home interiors (Rooms 7 and 8) well demonstrates.

The hall leading into Rooms 7 and 8 is busy with giant photos of fairs and market scenes. One can practically hear the jostling crowd, feel the hustle and bustle. Markets and fairs were where villagers met townsfolk: peasants sold their animals and surplus produce there, and procured from craftsmen and tradesmen whatever they could not make themselves. Fairs were also sources of entertainment (puppeteers were popular), news and information (though what really sold at the book stalls were lurid penny dreadfuls and booklets on the occult), and, in the final analysis, culture and education. National fairs in particular were an opportunity to see something of the world, and were widely advertised: a whole set of notices from the 1890s gives the place and date of the national fairs for the entire year.

The next two rooms present two antipodal peasant home interiors from roughly the mid-nineteenth century: a füstös ház (“smoky house”) from the Őrség, attesting to a lifestyle which had changed little from medieval times; and from the Sárköz, a tisztaszoba (“spick-and-span room”), the ostentatious core of the newfangled housing favored by the well-off peasantry. The füstös ház had no chimney: a large whitewashed brick stove (used both as an oven and a heat source) dominated the “kitchen corner” of the single room that generally comprised the house. The tisztaszoba, on the other hand, was predicated on the house having a chimney and two rooms, one for cooking and living in, the other for showing off one’s valuables, and for formal use on very special occasions.

The introduction of chimneys and the extra room was part of the steady rise in the peasantry’s standards of living from the late eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century. Village folks, too, could now afford to buy beautiful things to their taste, and to display these treasures as part of their home environment. Handicraftsmen in villages and market towns “mass produced” painted furniture, decorative glazed pottery, colorful woven fabrics, and embroidered frieze overcoats and sheepskin shepherds’ cloaks, and created distinctive regional styles in the process. These objects are generally considered to be “folk art”; some of the most beautiful of the earliest pieces are included among the treasures on display in Room 9.

“From Cradle to Grave” sums up the subject of the displays in Rooms 10, 11 and 12. The unit, organized to reflect the relative weight that the peasant value system ascribed to the various stages of life, gives marriage pride of place.
Exhibitions

Traditional peasant societies had communal norms regulating the life of the individual from the day he was born to the day he died. Appropriately enough, the exhibits dealing with childhood show how the child was trained to take the place—and do the jobs—traditionally assigned to people of his or her sex. Though there are some out-and-out toys in the display—rag dolls and corn-husk dolls, doll’s furniture, a baby rocker in the shape of a hobbyhorse, and a wonderfully functional baby stand—there are also some sobering child-size work implements, which, obviously, were not used for play: a child’s loom, for instance, and a child-size wooden pitchfork and shepherd’s crook. Clearly, the goal was for young people to learn every traditional work process and all the customs by the time they married, so that they might start out in life as full-fledged members of the village community.

For the peasantry, a wedding was the ultimate celebration: nothing was too good for the bride and groom, as the lavish display from Kalotaszeg, a region renowned for its folk art in the mid-nineteenth century already, well illustrates. Brides and their parents vied with each other in holding a wedding the neighbors would not soon forget. One special custom in Kalotaszeg calculated to insure just that was to take the bride’s entire trousseau—already on display inside the house—out into the yard or the street during the church ceremony. It was only after everyone had looked their fill that the trousseau was taken in procession, in carts bedecked for the occasion, over to the groom’s parents’ house.

Most of the exquisitely painted wooden church interior that forms the setting of the “marriage ceremony” in Room 11 was salvaged by the prominent art historian Dezső Malonyay at the beginning of this century. After years of careful restoration, it has finally been made available to the public here. The coffered ceiling from the Calvinist Church in Magyarókereke (Alunişu, Romania), completed, as one of the panels tells us, in 1746, forms a harmonious whole with the roughly contemporary painted choir and pulpit, masterpieces made by the Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) carpenters Lórinc Umling and János Gyalui Asztalos.

The last room of the unit deals with old age, and death. One did not necessarily precede the other, for child mortality was high among the peasantry in the period under consideration. Old people were accorded the respect they had earned through a lifetime of toil. Off-white homespun was the typical (summer) clothing of these last years of relative ease, and was even worn by old women in mourning. The elderly could be seen in “white mourning” in the villages as late as the 1920s.

The last room of the exhibition reflects the wealth of beliefs and practices associated, in traditional folk culture, with the feasts

A mummer dressed as a goat from the Hajdúság, early 20th century. Photo: Erzsébet Winter, Hungarian Museum of Ethnography.
Exhibitions of the Church calendar. We see a unique amalgam of Eastern and Western cultural influences in customs like *regölés* (boys and young men going from house to house the day after Christmas, wishing people well in exchange for small presents: originally, a kind of fertility rite); *állatalakoskodás* (mummers masked and dressed as horses, goats and storks, who performed primarily during the pre-Lenten festival season); the homespun Nativity plays of the Székelys of Andrásfalva (Műneuți, Romania); and the “Christmas table” (the practice of placing farming and other household implements, food, grains, hay and straw under the beautifully set Christmas table—another custom that harked back to pre-Christian vitality and fertility rites).

The Christmas cycle figures predominantly in the displays in Room 13, as indeed it did in the lives of the Hungarian peasantry of the period. Advent was the time of the *Bethlehemers*, who went from house to house performing, devoutly but with a comic touch, their local version of the Nativity story. The Székelys of Bukovina (an ethnic Magyar group who settled there in the second half of the eighteenth century) put on the most complete mystery plays: the clothes, props, and comic shepherds’ masks on display are all from Andrásfalva (Műneuți, Romania). There is also a rather unusual exhibit: a puppet theater with all the props for a nativity play.

The custom was, on Christmas Eve, to strew the freshly-cleaned floor with straw, lay the table with a beautiful Christmas tablecloth, and suspend a budding branch above it. The custom of giving presents is a rather recent development in the villages of Hungary; the highlight of the Christmas season, even at the close of the period, was to attend the church service on Christmas Day.

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The Szentendre Open-Air Museum of Ethnography

MIKLÓS CSERI (Szentendre)

Founded on February 1, 1967, the museum of folk culture in Szentendre is the second-largest ethnographic museum in Hungary. Initially, the outdoor complex was run as a department of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography. In 1972, however, it became an independent national institution, authorized to build its collection from all over the country.

The museum was founded with a view to presenting to the public the folk architecture, home interiors, occupations and lifestyles typical of the peasantry of Hungary’s villages and the craftsmen of its market towns, using only original samples for the exhibits, the buildings themselves being mid-eighteenth to mid-twentieth century structures relocated to the Szentendre site.

Long-term plans call for locating over 350 buildings on the museum site, grouped to represent nine different regions: the Felső-Tiszavidék; Upper Hungary (Felvidék); Northern Hungary; the Central-Tisza region; the Great Plain (Alföld); the Southern Dunántúl (Transdanubia); the Balaton-felvidék; the Western Transdanubia (Dunántúl); and the Kisalföld. Each of the nine sets of buildings will be arranged to reflect the traditional layout of the villages of that particular region: some representative peasant homes (the house, barn, tool shed, etc. arranged in the pattern typical of the region), a church, commercial buildings (general store, smithy, workshops), and communal facilities (school, fire station, communal well). To date, three of the planned building complexes have been completed—the Felső-Tiszavidék in 1974, the Kisalföld (1987), and Western Transdanubia (1993); the construction of the Great Plain market town is well on its way. An outdoor “Stations of the Cross”, a cemetery with traditional carved tombstones, and several mills and wineries help make the Szentendre complex a “living” museum of folk culture and social history.

As compared to its Scandinavian and Western European counterparts, the Szentendre Open-Air Museum of Ethnography is a rather recent institution. This very recency, on the other hand, has enabled its curators to avoid certain of the pitfalls that have beset some of the earlier museums of its kind, pitfalls having to do with the historical authenticity of the ethnographic samples, and the relocation and reconstruction of the selected buildings (the Szentendre museum uses only contemporary building techniques and materials).
Indeed, historical and ethnographic authenticity is the principal professional criterion behind everything that has gone into the building of the Szentendre outdoor museum complex. The first phase of the work was to identify the various types of dwellings found throughout the Hungarian-speaking parts of Eastern Europe, and register the regional variations, the building trends which started to unfold around the turn of the eighteenth century, and came into full flower a hundred years later. It is, essentially, the most typical regional variants of the village and market-town architecture of the nineteenth century and the fin-de-siècle that have been put on display in the Szentendre Open-Air Museum. The arrangement of the buildings reflects the settlement structure typical of the particular region, with the peasant dwellings being rebuilt not in isolation, but as they originally stood: as part of a coherent complex which included barns, work sheds, and other auxiliary structures. Each and every dwelling has been furnished with period furniture, tools, textiles, everyday objects and objects for festive occasions, according to the occupation, social status, religious affiliation, and ethnicity of the inhabitants. The museum, thus, is not just a collection of buildings, but a cross-section of life as it was lived at a particular time in a particular village or market town, the homes being furnished with the tools of the “owner’s” particular craft or trade, as well as with the customary utensils of the family’s day-to-day rituals (baking bread, doing the laundry, serving family meals, holding wakes, singing dirges, and so on).

The authenticity of the exhibition necessarily entails the use of authentic materials and building techniques. The selected buildings have been installed in the museum not in the condition in which they were found, but reconstructed in the form they had at a specified point of time, using the materials that were then in use. We have had to strip away the alterations and the parts that were tacked on, and have restored each building to its original size, form and structure. Termite-infested and disintegrating wooden structures have been replaced with beams of the same wood as was originally used, the units cut to the same size, finished the same way, and installed using the original technology.

Furnishings are another important component of historical and ethnographic authenticity. Unlike earlier open-air museums in Scandinavia and Western Europe, the Szentendre museum complex has every one of its buildings furnished. The furniture, the textiles (curtains, pillows, bedspreads, tablecloths), tools and household utensils, storage bins and baskets, doors, windows, stoves and even kindling wood all dress up the building, and make for a “lived-in” look. The furnishings always reflect primarily the ethnic and religious affiliation of the “householder”, his social standing, and occupation. The objects are grouped as they would be for some special family occasion, and identify the kind of cottage industry the family might be engaged in. The kitchens contain clues as to how food was prepared and how raw materials were processed—indeed, every artifact in the house is placed with a view to revealing something about how its inhabitants lived their day-to-day lives.

Authenticity characterizes also the layout of each of the completed representative village complexes. The settlement structure of the villages and market towns of Hungary was determined by a variety of historical, geographic, social and other factors. Every settlement, however, erected buildings to meet the community's various needs: there were sacral edifices (church, belfry, chapel, Stations of the Cross, shrines, synagogue, temple, etc.); educational facilities (school, kindergarten); and other communal facilities (town hall, parsonage, communal well, laundry, fire station, general store, pub, post office, etc.). Only by relocating these, too, to the Szentendre museum site can we give a true picture of the Hungarian village of the turn of the century.

The last decades have given us some proficiency in relocating buildings earmarked for inclusion in the open-air museum. Ethnographers and architects do a great deal of rigorous research prior to the actual move, once a building has been selected in keeping with the museum's basic scientific program. It is in keeping with these research findings that the building is disassembled, its components are documented, and transported to the museum site. What we find in the course of taking apart the building is at the heart of the detailed blueprint on the basis of which the building will be reconstructed; it is also the grounds for planning its furnishing, and for projecting the cultural and/or educational uses to which the building and its immediate environment can be put. Only in the light of all this is the building reassembled at the appropriate location on the museum site, conserved, and furnished with restored and conserved artifacts, ready to receive visitors to the museum, the tangible witness to the culture and customs of a bygone age.

The Szentendre Open-Air Museum of Ethnography was reclassified as a research center in 1981. Eleven volumes of its scholarly yearbook, Ház és Ember [House and Man], have appeared to date. We have held a series of international conferences, and published the papers presented under the following titles (which, incidentally, have become veritable handbooks of folk architectural research): Népi építészet a Kárpát-medence északkeleti térségében [Folk Architecture in the Northern Carpathian Basin]. 1989; A Dél-Dunántúl népi építészete [The Folk Architecture of Southern Transdanubia]. 1991; A Kisalföld népi építészete [The Folk Architecture of the Kisalföld]. 1993; A Nyugat-Dunántúl népi építészete [The Folk Architecture of Western Transdanubia]. 1995; and A Balaton-felvidék népi építészete [The Folk Architecture of the Balaton-felvidék]. 1997. The museum also gives a regular accounting of the details of the work being done in its popular scholarly periodical, the TÉKA.
Exhibitions

In recent years, there has been growing focus on art and craft workshops and folklore programs complementary to the permanent exhibits. Every attempt is being made to present educational programs which every age group will enjoy.

Visitors to the Szentendre open-air museum will find brochures and guided tours available in three languages. No effort is spared to communicate, as clearly as possible, the wealth of knowledge and information that our exhibits represent.

We now have a restaurant, a pub, a general store and souvenir shops within the museum grounds. The parking lot has been enlarged, and the new entrance to the museum opens onto a spacious park, where there is ample room to rest a bit between doing “the rounds”. One needs at least six and a half hours to see the entire museum. Today, our visitors can enjoy the exhibits at their leisure, taking advantage of all the facilities that museum goes everywhere expect to have provided for their comfort and convenience.


For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer

"Beszéli a világ, hogy mi magyarok...” [“People say that we Hungarians...”] is the title of a collection of Hungarian historical legends published by the Society in cooperation with the ECTC (today European Folklore Institute), edited and with an introduction by Ildikó Landgraf. The competition that resulted in this volume called for a collection of historical legends and thus met a need that had been sorely felt for several decades. Here the reader is provided with a collection of essays that faithfully and uniquely represents the treasury of living Hungarian historical legends, since the volume was compiled on the basis of recent collections by country teachers, clergymen, and other enthusiastic scholars of local history. Thanks to the meticulous work of the collectors and the editor, the reader can also enjoy a glimpse beyond the borders of Hungary since the volume comprises Hungarian historical legends from the entire Carpathian Basin, and a substantial part of the material collected poured in from regions less familiar to folklore scholars.

A folk legend is defined as any of several types of narration of a concrete and real event, or of one believed to be real, presented in a poetic form, put in a standard form, and building on standard motifs. This volume offers the reader beautifully and elaborately formulated texts containing some of Hungary’s classic and familiar legends, popular stories connected with the Hungarian Conquest, King Ladislas, the Saint, King Matthias Corvinus, the Turkish and Tatar wars, the kuruc movements and Prince Francis Rákóczi II, the War of Independence of 1848-49, and the First World War, Franz Josef I, emperor of Austria and king of Hungary, and Prince Rudolf, the unfortunate heir to the crown who committed suicide, as well as legends related to the figures of famous outlaws. At the same time, as Ildikó Landgraf points out, the collection proves that it is becoming ever more difficult nowadays to collect

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
texts in the form of folk legends. Historical legends are being gradually overshadowed by other narrative genres: true stories, biographical stories, memoirs, and anecdotes. The book, therefore, also contains several amusing anecdotes as well as some less well-formulated stories, personal accounts which are interesting in terms of theme and motif. Stories include the one about how Halley's comet foretold the outbreak of the First World War to the people of Bezdzán (Bezdan, Yugoslavia), how the sunken rider appeared in Tornaalja (Tornal'a, Slovakia) in the Second World War, and how Nikita Khrushchev's half-brother reported himself to the police in Árdány (Ardan, Romania).

The two richest and most diverse chapters of the collection are those covering the so-called foundation legends and those explaining the origin of names. These folk legends are the most viable because they are locally bound, provide the community with an explanation for the origin of such important local natural formations as wells, mountains, cliffs, and caves, and record important events in the history of certain families or villages, as well as celebrating outstanding local personalities. The distribution and variation of such legends, as well as the transmission of the narrative elements that fulfil the formal requirements of a legend, are clearly in evidence in these stories, of which multiple versions have been collected here. The story of “The Sunken Village”, for example, is presented in seventeen different variations in the book. According to the legend, villagers fleeing from the Tatars into a church refused to allow in a mute girl who had arrived too late and who, in turn, prayed for the village or the church to sink. By the time the Tatars arrived, a miracle had taken place: the mute girl was able to speak, and her prayer had been answered. Where once the village had stood, there appeared a bottomless lake. Later, the lake dried out, and a swineherd's sow found the bell of the sunken church, which was so big that she could give birth to her piglets in it and so heavy that no bell tower in any other village could hold it.

Although the seventeen versions of the legend are very similar, one can discover some important differences on a closer reading. For example, there is no agreement as to whether it was out of love or revenge that the girl prayed for the church to sink. In one of the more elaborately detailed versions, we learn that the pregnant sow had disappeared for a hundred years before it was found with its piglets and the treasure of the sunken church bell. Certain loan motifs are only loosely connected with the crux of the story: in one of the versions the girl turns into a white swan. From other versions it becomes clear that the miraculous elements have been substituted for more realistic ones: instead of the girl being mute and then suddenly able to speak, the story presents her as being lame, thus explaining why she could not escape from the Tatars in time. Furthermore, the explanation that the villagers presumably went to church that day because it was Sunday appears to be in the interest of authenticity. One of the informants even managed to remember the name of the swineherd, and another contributed to the authenticity of the story by being prepared to show the spot where the church had once stood and even saying it could be photographed.

Numerous internationally known motifs and themes (sujets) are present in the Hungarian historical legends published by Ildikó Landgraf. The symbolic acquisition of possessions, the miraculous birth of a hero, the legend of the self-ringing bells, the story of the king in disguise, the motifs of the dry branch coming into leaf and the magic beard, and the appearance of Till Eulenspiegel's jokes in stories about Sándor Petőfi all indicate that Hungarian folklore is closely linked to European tradition. Throughout the centuries, international loan motifs have been organically integrated into the Hungarian historical consciousness and into its narratives.

The reader is challenged to join in all manner of intellectual games and make exciting comparisons when thumbing through the pages of this very rich and substantial collection, a volume that makes for delightful reading for the general public. At the same time, an editorial policy of philological accuracy, exact phonological notation, and the indication of dialectal
features also makes this publication a valuable source for scholars of ethnography. Ildikó Landgraf’s thorough introductory essay on the history of research in this field, replete with a survey of past attempts to arrange and interpret legends, serves to orient the reader in his or her further reading.

Hősök és vértanúk. Mondák és visszaemlékezések a szabadságharcról

While “Beszéli a világ...” [“People say...”] revives the entirety of Hungarian history before our eyes, the other collection entitled Hősök és vértanúk [Heroes and martyrs], edited by Ákos Dömötör, provides a sample of the epic stories and recollections of the War of Independence of 1848-49. On the occasion of the centenary of this war, there was a wide-ranging movement initiated to collect this sort of material. From the territory of Hungary alone, data was gathered from about 430 villages. The richness of the tradition connected with the War of Independence and its outstanding figures are clearly shown by the fact that there were approximately 1600 data entries and stories related to the person of Lajos Kossuth alone. The considerable holdings of this “centenary collection” of 1947-49 are stored in the Ethnological Archives of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, and it is from this collection of manuscripts that Ákos Dömötör has selected the as yet unpublished legends and recollections for this volume. The collection was extended, beyond pieces of folk poetry, to less formal stories, recollections, and other data, because ethnographers were forced to realize soon that among the variants originating in oral poetry there were many short, one-sentence utterances without any aesthetic value, but which were of special importance for understanding the process of transmission and variation. The dividing lines between genres are also rather unclear in this volume of recollections. Classic folk legends are mainly related to outstanding figures, such as Lajos Kossuth and Sándor Petőfi, the legendary poet of the War of Independence, or to Sándor Rózska, the famous outlaw leader of the time. It is worth comparing these stories with the earlier legendary tradition connected with King Matthias Corvinus, or the legends associated with the figure of Prince Francis Rákóczi II to see how many loan motifs and miracle stories familiar from other sources appear in all of them. Also in evidence are some less widely-known and established stories, albeit more realistic ones, for example, about the adventures of László Donáth, the infamous spy, and about how the cruel General Julius Haynau was punished for executing General János Damjanich.

What makes this volume truly unique is the fact that the majority of the texts were recorded in the period after the Second World War when the fledgling Hungarian democracy was being suppressed and gradually replaced by a Soviet-style dictatorship. The reader can well imagine how politics found its way into scholarly research. In numerous cases one can sense political timeliness behind the texts collected from oral sources or the intention of the collector or the informant to record ethnographic data that verify the “progres-
In her work on folk music called *Magyarország nagy vitézség* [O Valiant Hungary], Lujza Tari has made an attempt to present, as the subtitle of the volume indicates, mementos of the War of Independence in folk songs, and to examine "what people were singing in 1848-49." Besides traditional folk songs and instrumentals, new and fashionable songs learned in this period, plays about village life, tunes made popular by Gypsy musicians, songs of soldiers and the national guard, instrumental marches also spread throughout the country. Some of these songs were gradually forgotten in the course of time, others, after being altered to suit the tastes of the peasantry, were integrated into peasant musical culture. The book presents this musical diversity, giving the most eloquent testimony of how colorful and rich the musical repertory of 1848 was. The publication introduces twenty-four types of tunes and lists the variants to indicate the diversity of certain types. Probably the best-known type, the Kossuth song, is presented by Lujza Tari in four groupings of tunes in seventeen different variations, with more than thirty different stanzas and their variations.

The majority of the published material comes from earlier collections of folk music stored in the Folk Music Archives at the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and is further supplemented with sheet music from contemporary publications. With the publication of this material, the editor has mainly followed current guidelines for editing folk music sources, and has also made an effort to facilitate the use of the volume in schools and for other practical purposes. Musical notations based on tape recordings were always compared with older sheet music, relying first and foremost on the folk music collections of Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály, and their students, in order to provide the reader with the most authentic and accurate versions possible.

Thanks to some painstaking research, each and every tune type is preceded by a short cultural and historical survey in which the reader is informed of
the origin of the tunes and lyrics, the date they were first put to paper, and the contemporary references to them, as well as their subsequent popularity and currency.

These three books recently published by the Hungarian Ethnographic Society all testify to the richness of historical oral tradition and the diversity of Hungarian historical folklore. They also demonstrate how this oral tradition has changed in the past hundred and fifty years and how this heritage has become integrated into the common European cultural tradition.

Réka Kiss


The first museum in Székelyföld, ‘the land of the Székelys’, an area of Transylvania (Erdély), now part of Romania, was founded in 1879 out of a private collection donated by the widow of János Cserei. At its founding, the museum took upon itself the task of collecting and displaying museum pieces from the counties of Háromszék, Csík, and Udvarhely, as well as promoting the scholarly life of the region.

Its present-day monumental central building was designed in 1911–12 by the most charismatic Transylvanian architect of his age, the polymath Károly Koós. The institution took possession of this building in 1920. Its departments are: a library and archives, an archaeological and numismatic collection, as well as ethnography, fine arts, and geography sections. In 1929, the museum marked the fiftieth anniversary of its founding with the publication of a collection of essays. Since its foundation, numerous scholars of renown both in Hungarian circles and internationally have worked within its walls, creating in the land of the Székelys one of the most significant centers of research and learning in Transylvania. The museum has remained the most important among the scholarly workshops formed in Székelyföld even after the 1989 elections in Romania.

In 1968, the institution published a series of annuals entitled ALUTA with articles on archaeology, natural sciences, museum studies, and ethnography. The bilingual (Romanian–Hungarian) publication with its 18 issues is still the most important source for scholars of Transylvanian ethnography.

In 1995, the museum launched a new series of annuals entitled ACTA in cooperation with the Székely Museum in Csík. In doing so, the publishers expressed the character of their journal as follows: “ACTA is a series of museum annuals with a wide spectrum of topics, a ‘federative’ publication reflecting the polycentric nature of the region, which has set itself the task of regularly reporting on the scientific, historical, and ethnographic research being done in the historical southeastern border region and especially in Székelyföld” (Taken from an information leaflet on the ACTA museum annuals provided for contributing authors). The annual, continually published in two volumes since 1996, is divided into five thematic sections: (1) Natural Sciences; (2) Archaeology; (3) Documents; (4) Cultural History; and (5) The Museum (covering tradition-
al ethnography and related fields as well as museum studies). The latest issue in the series, ACTA 1997, vols. I and II, was published in 1998. The pieces of greatest interest to ethnographers were put in the second volume, in the Cultural History and Museum sections.

In his article entitled “A Letter Patent from the Year 1655 from George Rákóczy II to the Székelys of Orbaiszék”, Costin Fenesan (of the National Archives of the Romanian Interior Ministry) published a letter patent issued by George Rákóczy II to the Székelys who fought in his military campaign near Plojesti in 1655. The special merit of the work is that it provides additional data on what is entailed in conferring the noble rank of lófô székely, and at the same time it is also significant for its specific family history.

Kinga Tüdôs, “The Nineteenth-Century Records of the Reformed Church in Feltorja.” The records introduced are in the form of an 84-page manuscript which cover the period between 1801-1873, setting down the most important events of this Calvinist parish. It was written by local pastors, Antal Szabó (until 1833) and István Uzoni Zajzon. From an ethnographic point of view, we are provided with information on building methods and the use of boundaries, as well as on the order of church services. The presentation of church buildings destroyed by the earthquake of 1802 as well as the old inscriptions on them are also valuable data for local historians. The piece presents a chronological history of the parish in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Zoltán Székely and Anna Lénárt, “The Wondrous Travels of Elek Balykó.” A manuscript published in fragments, this is the autobiography of Elek Balykó (1810–1895) of Egerpatak (Aninoasa, Romania), and it is part of an early group of peasant autobiographies. This adventurer was a true “traveler and folk geographer” who traversed the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the first half of the 19th century. Due to his excellent observation skills, he provides a plethora of data on contemporary economic conditions, rural life, and middle class and peasant social relations. We also learn that prophecies, visions, and good and bad “omens” played an important role in the life of this folk author. He was, furthermore, a believer who came to know the art of magic near the end of his life. He also passed on valuable information on traditional healing practices. He recorded his memories in two parts, in 1878 and 1882, which he further supplemented with certain facts in the year 1895. His language is simple but entertaining, popular in style, and interspersed with humorous turns of phrase; all in all, it is a good read. From the present publication we cannot determine what prompted this fascinating figure to record his own life. The original title of the manuscript is “Memories of a Wandering Székely”, and its publishers do not claim to have edited the text.

Zoltán Vincze, “Old Gravestones of Torockó (Rimetea, Romania).” The gravestone inscriptions in the Birgej cemetery of the village of Torockó (Rimetea, Romania) faithfully reflect the social, economic, and cultural conditions of this mining town two to three hundred years ago. The pithy statements engraved in the stones greatly supplement the official documents toward an accurate mapping of the community’s family and social structure. The author presents the descriptions of eighteenth- to nineteenth-century tombstones, many of them also accompanied by photographs and drawings. In the appendix he provides an outline of the cemetery groundplan indicating and analyzing the signs and marks on the tombstones that refer to occupations. The special merit of the work is that it disseminates these documentary sources for the benefit of cultural and historical research before it is too late.

Vilmos Keszeg, “Bibliography of Aranyosszék, Torda (Tûrda, Romania), and Torockó (Rimetea, Romania) I.” The special value of this piece lies in the fact that it collects the published sources of this ethnographic region examined from many aspects. It is especially important because in the past, just like today, publications in the field have appeared in very different places, so both their dissemination and accessibility are rather limited. The bibliography primarily covers articles on history, folklore,
and ethnology, so it would be truly complete with the addition of information on pieces about literature and natural science. Beyond this, the publication is an important initiative that, in spite of the painstaking work it requires, ought to be used as a model for other areas, too.

Gyöző Zsigmond, “Place Names in Szentmihály (Sûnmihaui de Pădure, Romania) and Aranyospolyán (Poiana, Romania).” Not unlike the compilers of the previous works, the author of this article also leads us into an important area of research methodology. It is common knowledge that place names bear meaningful information on social and economic history from which conclusions can be drawn about conditions before the times of living memory.

Tünde Komáromi, “Casting Spells in Szentmihály (Sûnmihaui de Pădure, Romania), Aranyosszék County.” The author of the article describes a general phenomenon from a folklorist’s point of view, that of casting spells with an “evil eye”, focusing here on the village in the title.

Imre Harangozó, “A Székely Holy Man, László Bálint I of Oroszhegy (Dealu, Romania).” This paper has enriched the literature on this type of simple, devoted, Christian man, the Christian priest-magician (táltos), first put into the focus of religious ethnography through the research of Lajos Kálmány and later Sándor Bálint. The name of Oroszhegy (Delau, Romania) in the county of Udvarhelyszék has been added to the imaginary map of small and deeply devoted Catholic villages that nurture their own zealous seer-leaders in crisis situations.

János Szőcs, “Old Folk Minstrels (regöök) of Csík (Ciucani, Romania).” Based on his own research in archives and the scholarly literature, the author of this article successfully disproves the opinion held so far that the art of regölés, a popular mid-winter custom of folk minstrelsy, was unknown in the Csík Basin. Based on his archival sources from the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries, János Szőcs proves the existence of this magical heathen fertility rite of the Székely people and presumes that it was common.

Irén Farkas, “Dyed Carpets (festékes) from Csík in the Székely Museum at Csík (Ciucani, Romania).” One of the most characteristic objects of folk art in any Székely house in Csík is the dyed Székely carpet known as festékes. Its motifs and the techniques employed to produce it exist in a number of different linguistic areas. The uniqueness of this carpet lies in the choice and distribution of dyes, as well as in the peculiar harmony of decorative patterns. It is a special merit of the paper that it classifies and presents the decorative elements of this type of carpet using the collection of the Székely Museum in Csík.

In summary, I think it is safe to say that although this series of museum annuals undertakes the representation of several disciplines in one collective work, it has developed into the most prestigious forum for ethnographic literature in Székelyföld.

Gábor Dániel Ozsváth

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
At the end of the 20th century, we have witnessed and experienced a great many coexisting value systems, the transformation of the family model, a rapid change in the division of labor between the sexes, and a sudden re-evaluation of gender role expectations. In the last century, radical changes have taken place first and foremost in the private lives and social roles of women, this being one of the reasons why research in the field of Women’s Studies has gradually gained ground in the social sciences.

In the past several years, this topic has been brought to the foreground in Hungary as well. In 1996, literary scholars, art historians, and sociologists held a fruitful conference at the Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest. The proceedings of the conference were published in Debrecen in 1997 under the title Szerep és alkotás. Női szerepek az alkotóművészetben (Roles and Creativity: Women’s Roles in the Creative Arts).

In April 1997, the Department of Folklore of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society held an academic conference on Women in Popular Culture and in Folklore, where papers were presented not only by ethnographers and folklorists but also by literary scholars, psychologists, and historians. And of the 48 papers presented, 25 were published as a collection of essays. (The conference program as well as a list providing background information on the authors can be found at the end of the volume.) This conference was organized and the volume edited by folklorist Imola Küllős. The publication of the book was made possible through the financial support of the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs, Secretariat for Women’s Issues.

The gender division in traditional societies and the sharp distinction between gender roles make excellent research topics. Also widely known is the fact that cultural products, art forms, and modes and forms of expression are tied to men in a different way than they are to women. The historicity and the ethnic and regional differentiations among these phenomena as well as the systematic study of the social changes that have occurred may provide new and significant scholarly insights from the perspective of women.

Since the 1980s, Hungarian ethnography has achieved remarkable results, especially in the fields of female sexuality and the religious life and religiosity of women as well as in the socio-ethnographic study of women’s everyday tasks and fields of activity. The conference and collection of essays entitled Women in Popular Culture and in Folklore represent a significant step forward in the study of ethnography and folklore because they build on the findings of earlier, mutually independent research projects, open new horizons in gender studies, and provide new challenges for scholars in the field as well as for scholars of cultural history in general. The interdisciplinary approach to traditional women’s roles has been divided into three major areas by the editor of the volume.

The essays in the first chapter, also using a certain historical perspective, deal with women’s roles both in the smaller community of the family and in the larger society. Court documents from 18th-19th-century Great Plain (Alföld) communities, for example, demonstrate the incredible defencelessness and ignorance in sexual matters on the parts of contemporary women. Another essay explores the manifold duties of a typical women’s job, that of the midwife, and the complex social semantics involved. Balázs Gémes presents folklore texts never before published (curses and prayers uttered during childbirth) and analyses the system of moral values and the adaptation strategies of two Transdanubian Gypsy communities. Two further essays examine how rural culture has reacted to the historical and social changes of the past century. The questions explored here are how the Transylvanian village of Csíkszentdomokos (Săndominic, Romania) abandoned its endogamous marriage system and what roles women played, or were allowed to play, in the village associations of Ócsa (Pest County) formed between the two world wars.

Chapter two, called Folklore, Literature, Art, contains eleven essays. Imre Katona’s study focus-
es on gender relations in various genres of Hungarian popular poetry in general, while two young folklorists manage to prove through an analysis of a specific genre, the mourners’ song (comparing mourners’ songs for the dead with those for the bride at her wedding), that this genre is about women and is performed almost exclusively by women. Imola Küllős addresses an exciting topic in her analysis of the male-dominated system of moral values and social norms reflected in 16th-18th-century popular poetry and folklore (in poems mocking women, women’s songs of complaint, songs of warning and instruction for wedding feasts, and poems offering marital advice). According to literary historian Margit Sárdi, the subjective lyric poetry of aristocratic women poets of the 17th-18th centuries demonstrates the daring transformation of social, linguistic, and poetic conventions in contrast to the more conventional male poets of the age. A special area in the process of folklorization, the writing of keepsake albums, will certainly arouse great interest. This began as a custom among intellectual men, but turned into a women’s activity during the 19th century, and has by today become primarily a custom among girls. All three essays written on the topic of women and the arts prove to be topical and thought-provoking. György E. Szőnyi introduces the social context of the exchange of gender roles (cross-dressing) in English Renaissance drama. Éva Szacsvay analyses the meaning of siren depictions in 17th-century Calvinist churches and comes to the conclusion that the siren is a biblical symbol, the prostitute of the Book of Revelation. Lujza Tari’s essay, for the first time in Hungarian ethnomusicology, provides a brief history of women brought up in traditional Hungarian rural society in terms of their familiarity with and use of musical instruments.

The third chapter of this collection of essays paints a colorful picture of specific women’s roles from the perspectives of psychology, mythology, and popular belief. It is highly instructive to read László Séra’s survey of psychological research projects examining the differences between the two biological sexes in their abilities to orientate spatially or the study on the goddess Hera, the archetypal Wife, by Ágnes Szombati. Two folklore studies delve into prohibitions, taboos, and superstitious customs associated with the clean and unclean “conditions of women”. As a glimpse into cultures distant in time and space, the end of the chapter is devoted to the roles and types of women characteristic of Old Testament Hebrew society, those of ancient India, and those of the black African Bambara nation and also covers the manner in which these are depicted in the folklore of these peoples.

This collection of essays with its graphics and black-and-white photos not only represents great scholarship but is also pleasing to the eye. It is an important contribution to the international body of research on the social and historical development of women’s culture and status, all the more because its English-language introduction and table of contents provide information on the content of the volume for non-Hungarian readers as well. The authors and editor hope that this book will also promote women’s studies among scholars of Hungarian cultural and social history.

Unfortunately, this publication is not being distributed through regular bookstores; it is, however, available at the main office of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society (Hungarian Museum of Ethnography, 1055 Budapest, Kossuth tér 12).

Márta Fügedi
The Hungarian Museum of Ethnography has received considerable financial support in the form of an award from the National Cultural Fund of Hungary to shoot a film that would introduce to young people in a classroom setting certain areas of folk art and some of its outstanding works. Under the able direction of János Tari and with a script by pottery expert István Csupor, the film was created within a very limited time using current as well as archival footage. A film such as this has been sorely needed to provide young people the opportunity to learn about this ancient and well-established handicraft which once produced the millions of earthenware vessels used in peasant households and even supplying urban homes at the same time.

This documentary on the potter’s craft may be watched in sequence or in separate segments. The filmmakers divided the film into three basic units and planned for each unit to run approximately 20 minutes, taking into consideration that school classes last 45 minutes; thus, they can best be used in educational institutions. The film consists of three parts. The first part introduces the potter’s craft as well as the process of making earthenware; the second one explains how pottery reaches consumers and the way it is used; and the third part presents the major centers of pottery-making through their most characteristic artifacts. Fittingly, the following titles were given to the three parts of the film by its creators: (1) The Practice of Pottery-Making; (2) The Use of Earthenware; and (3) Centers of Pottery-Making. By mixing footage shot in present-day workshops with archival material, the makers of the film were attempting to impress upon their audience that pottery-making should not merely be considered some quaint and lovely handicraft from the distant past: it is also a craft that is still practiced today, albeit in a different form, and still provides a living for many.

The first film deals with the potter’s craft itself, from clay mining through the use of the potter’s wheel to firing and selling the pots, using both recent film shots and ethnographic archival footage. It introduces the three major branches of pottery-making through its practitioners: the potters, producing pots and pans of fire-proof clay; the jug-makers, using what they call ‘jug earth’ with its high ferric oxide content making it porous and reddish when fired; and finally the dish-makers, working their lime-laden ‘dish earth’. The film starts out with the raw material, with clay mining, outlining both of the known methods: the deeper digging for clay as well as the more or less surface mining method. The film also presents the way clay is stored at home, the way it is readied, i.e., piled up on the clay bench, sliced, treaded, and pugged, and finally formed into clumps of various sizes; it also provides us with a general introduction to the potter’s workshop. The first workshop presented in detail is that of a potter who produces pots and pans for cooking and baking. In this segment of the film we observe the whole work process, the method of making certain common types of earthenware, and
the making of handles and certain elements of characteristic decorative styles. Selected by the filmmakers for this segment was a potter from the Órség region of western Hungary who insists on his traditional working methods; the makers of the film also made use of some parts of a 1970 film by Domokos Moldován entitled Hungarian Potters.

In the case of the other two branches of pottery, the stress was laid rather on the differences, i.e., on the working processes that differ from those of the potters and the differences in the forms of the objects made. Thus, in the case of the jug-makers, we are shown the art of making jugs with a narrow orifice, or, as they call them, ‘pulled-up pieces’, while in the case of the dish-makers, we are introduced to the main points of producing their ‘spread-out pieces’. We also learn about the typical division of labor in a potter’s workshop, e.g., about what they call ‘mottling’, i.e., various methods of decorating earthenware made on the potter’s wheel.

The process of drying and then firing earthenware is presented partly through new film footage, partly by using archival photographs. The first film ends with the firing of earthenware pottery.

The second film starts with the firing of glazed artifacts and then depicts the way the final product is marketed and sold (by salesmen wandering from village to village with their carts or from stands at fairs). This second film emphasizes the diversity of earthenware. It introduces all the different forms of pottery from the potter’s workshops, also referring to their function as well as placement and way of usage. It not only lays stress on the differences in form but also presents them in connection with the different ways they are used.

The viewer will find the different forms of pottery very interesting in themselves, even without having any background knowledge of the potter’s craft. In the filmmakers’ experience, the use of certain objects is better remembered by viewers through visual input than in the form of oral or written information. Thus, the film, in addition to its clear and simple narration, provides a visual experience through its pictorial representations and information—and not only for school children.

Besides providing an overview of the potter’s craft and the tricks of his trade, the third part of the film concentrates on introducing the major centers of pottery-making in geographical order, from the western border of Hungary eastward to Transylvania (Erdély). Discussing particular centers, the film presents the characteristic earthenware vessels generally produced there (clearly based on the amazingly rich collection of folk art pottery at the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography) as well as certain outstanding and unique works by master potters. The presentation of pottery-making centers and potters’ villages in the film is enriched by archival shots and photographs that attempt to bring the viewer into the potters’ milieu, in the midst of the work being done there, to experience the everyday lives and the very faces of the potters. This film is meant not only to enrich the picture young people have of the craft of pottery, but it can also be put to good use in teaching folk art within an art history course.

István Csupor and János Tari

This CD is meant to demonstrate the intensity of the composer Béla Bartók’s involvement with folk music, as we, the members of the Muzsikás Band, see it. Undoubtedly one of the most seminal of the influences to shape the music of the twentieth century, Bartók, we are personally convinced, harked back to the traditional world of folk motifs, harmonies and rhythms even—as Zoltán Kodály put it—in some of his “most audaciously experimental works”.

A hundred years ago, when Bartók was starting out on his musical career, folk culture was light-years removed from the middle class to which he himself belonged. “The unbelievably rich treasure trove of folk music was entirely unknown in so-called ‘cultured’ urban circles”, Bartók wrote. “They did not as much as suspect the existence of this kind of music.”

There are many anecdotes about how Bartók discovered folk music for himself. On one account, it was in 1904, when he heard a Transylvanian servant girl sing an old folk song; he liked it so well that he felt he simply had to learn more about authentic folk music.

Soon, he and Zoltán Kodály, his friend, set off to collect folk music in the countryside, initially jotting down the tunes as they were sung, then using a phonograph to record the singers. The result was a collection of many thousands of tunes, and the birth of a new science: folk music studies.

Trekking through the countryside on dirt roads with a phonograph in tow was no small physical exertion. Bartók, however, had nothing but fond memories of these trips: “People who believe that collecting folk songs was a terribly tiring job involving a great sacrifice of comfort and convenience are mistaken. As far as I am concerned, I can only say that the time I spent doing it was the happiest part of my life. I would not trade it for anything on earth.”

Bartók collected folk songs in virtually every Hungarian-speaking region of the Carpathian Basin, and learned a great deal about folk dance and instrumental music, too, on his travels. His experience of the fruitful coexistence of the various archaic folk cultures of Transylvania (Erdély) was likely to have helped to crystallize his own personal creed: “The real guiding principle of my life... is the ideal of all peoples coming to live as brothers... all the wars and hostility notwithstanding. I have tried to put my music at the service of this ideal to the best of my ability; that is why I willingly embrace every influence, whatever its source: Slovak, Romanian, Arab or any other.”

In 1919, Bartók felt that folk music collectors were all but losing the race against time. But the folk tradition turned out to be much more resilient. Bartók and Kodály’s successors were still making valuable finds decades later, and gradually, all this accumulated material was systematically studied and catalogued.

The study of folk dance received a new impetus in the 1950s when portable cameras and tape
recorders came into popular use. Under the guidance of György Martin, a new generation enthusiastically undertook the task of “mapping” the Hungarian-speaking regions’ dance traditions, and discovered, in the process, an enormous amount of till then unknown dance music in some of the archaic Hungarian regions, principally Transylvania (Erdély), where Zoltán Kallós did some outstanding work.

The 1970s saw a new wave of folk revival sweep over Hungary, with much of the interest focused on folk dance and folk music. The new generation wanted to experience the folk tradition in its original, unadulterated form. We, the members of the Muzsikás Band, began our own studies at this time, going on collecting trips into the countryside, our principal aim being to learn the instrumental techniques of the village folk musicians. Dancers, too, sought out the still functioning village dance groups, and learned the traditional steps.

We were all caught up in the magic of the folk tradition. Something akin to a new sense of community evolved in the clubs and cultural centres where we and the dancers passed on what we had learned to people who took as great a pleasure in learning it. It was the beginning of what would grow into the táncház movement.

There was a demand for folk music outside the clubs as well; we gave concerts, made records, and soon the Muzsikás Band found itself giving concerts the world over.

On one occasion, we were invited to play in New York at the Bard College Music Festival, where the theme, that year, was Bartók’s music. Although the audience knew Bartók’s music well, most of them were hearing Hungarian folk music for the first time ever. It was then that we decided to make a record which would demonstrate Bartók’s ties to folk music. Almost every tune we play in the Muzsikás Bartók Album was originally collected by Bartók himself, and can be found, in some variation, in his works.

Just how this folk influence on Bartók’s music “works” is illustrated in the Album in the case of three of his Forty-Four Duos for Two Violins, performed here by the band’s own Mihály Sipos, and the Romanian-born British violin virtuoso, Alexander Balanescu. For purposes of comparison, we have given in full the songs that served as the inspiration: Bartók’s original phonograph recordings, somewhat scratchy, to be sure, but capable, for all that, of bringing to life the singers of yore and the sound that so captivated Bartók. Alexander Balanescu, an old friend of ours who has been playing the Duos for years, had this to say about the experience: “Now that I am playing with the Muzsikás Band, I feel that something important is happening to me. I am ever more aware of just how much the cultural background, the place where I have my roots, means to me.”

The songs are sung by Márta Sebestyén, who has been with the band from practically the very beginning, and has a superb knowledge of archaic folk singing styles. With a rare sensitivity and authenticity, she reproduces the songs as Bartók heard them in the villages, and recorded them with his phonograph.

An extra touch of verisimilitude is added to the dance music by Zoltán Farkas and choreographer Ildikó Tóth, who join us in some of the numbers—you can hear them stepping and stomping at times.

The entire CD is a quest for the answer to the question: What was it in folk music that attracted Bartók like a magnet? Perhaps the same thing that we find irresistible.

The Muzsikás Band
August 20 of the year 2000 will mark the fourteenth occasion that the Folk Art Society will be holding the Festival of Trades and Crafts in the Castle District of Buda. What was it—we might take a moment to wonder—that impelled the Society, and more specifically, László Péterfy, its president in 1987, to organize the first such event?

It was, above all, the need for renewal. In the 1970s already, various steps were taken, particularly by young folk artisans, to breathe new life into folk crafts, which were, by then, no more than the highly commercialized production of “folkish” artifacts, stylized objects reminiscent of the everyday implements of village life made purely for purposes of home decoration. A woodcarver, for instance, would be given prefab boxes: he had no part in choosing the wood, nor the shape and form of the box. His only job was to carve traditional motifs on the empty surfaces, and to make the decorative elements dominate. Non-functional versions of long-obsolete household implements were mass produced: laundry paddles for washing and “ironing”, dippers of all sizes, and so on, and all these so-called works of folk art ended up in the glass display cases of living rooms, or among the “treasures” displayed on kitchen walls.

In 1973, the Studio of Young Folk Artists was formed, an association of young people eager to revive every aspect of traditional folk culture, and professionals ready to contribute to such a revival. This was the time that the táncház movement got off the ground, and folk music groups began to spring up.

In 1982, the Studio of Young Folk Artists gave way to the newly-formed Folk Art Society, and it was the Society which was the moving spirit behind the first Festival of Trades and Crafts held in 1987.

The very date the Festival is held ties in with some age-old traditions. Mid-August marks the end of the wheat harvest, the most important of the agriculturalists summer tasks. Farmers take a moment’s rest, and have their priests bless the crop that will provide the nation’s bread for the coming year. Craftsmen, dancers and singers join the parade of farmers bearing harvest wreaths on August 20, an event which...
culminates in the blessing of the new bread in the Mátyás templom (Matthias Church) square.

Those displaying their wares at the Festival of Trades and Crafts—over five hundred exhibitors, members of Folk Art Societies all over the country—fall into one of two groups. The one is the group of artisans and tradesmen: furniture makers, potters, coopers, blacksmiths, dyers and weavers, people who make their living at traditional crafts that go back hundreds, nay, thousands of years. Designers, craftsmen, market researchers and businessmen all rolled into one, these people need to be both artisans and entrepreneurs. The other is the group of artisans who draw their inspiration from folk tradition (in respect of approach, sense of proportion, as well as the technologies and materials used), but are not themselves members of a village community. Some of them create folk artifacts for their own pleasure, or to please a loved one; others—and these are the folk artists—produce, by dint of sheer talent, articles that take as much skill and time as the artifacts produced by master craftsmen.

What the two groups have in common is the new orientation which envisions folk craftsmanship as both traditional and innovative, and, in the final analysis, an organic part of everyday life. In the past twenty-five years or so, more and more artisans have come to realize that it is time to restore the unity of aesthetic form and function, and that Hungarian folk art has never been just purely decorative. They have come to recognize that functional “designs” like the kutyagerinc (literally, hound’s backbone), which herdsmen used to hold their cast-iron cauldrons over the fire, or baby rattles composed of identical elements, adumbrated, in some sense, the fitted parts that would form the basis of assembly-line technology. There has also been a growing awareness of the incomparable practical and aesthetic advantages that natural materials—a carved wooden bowl, a hemp rug, a hand-made wooden toy—have over say, plastic. There is the warmth and beauty of the natural materials, but more than that, the bowl, the rug, and the toy all bear the traces of human effort, and speak of the world of archaic structures and forms.

Artisans young and old who identify with the new folk art revival will explore various facets of the boundless world of forms. They will look for the form latent in a piece of wood or other organic material, and do no more than help it to surface; alternatively, they will impose upon the material their own studied design. They will do crafts than anyone can learn; and they will execute works requiring consummate skill and expertise. They will give form to things, and they will create things; they will make everyday objects, and they will make works of art.

The Festival of Trades and Crafts provides visitors with an opportunity to purchase artifacts that are carefully-crafted, beautiful, and useful. (This is the occasion when the titles “Master Craftsman of the Year”, and “Junior Master Craftsman of the Year” are awarded.) But more importantly, perhaps, the Festival gives people a chance to view first hand how a rug, a barrel, or a wooden bowl is made, how clay turns into a pot, and how iron yields to the blacksmith’s blows. Our hope is that at least some of our visitors will feel inclined to try their hand at the easier work processes.

Children especially will be catered to. In 1999, like in previous years, there were special children’s workshops on the terrace of the palace. In tents set...
In the past thirteen years, the Festival of Trades and Crafts has become Budapest’s St. Stephen’s Day Fair. The harvest procession of farmers and craftsmen to the Matthias Church, the blessing of bread baked of the fresh harvest of wheat, the carnival mood, the display and sale of arts and crafts have added up to a new tradition which attracts over 100,000 participants each year. The Festival has indeed become one of the most significant events of Hungary’s living folk culture.

As the organizer of the event, the Association of Folk Art Societies is proud to build on this heritage. Our aim is to be traditionists who are in tune with the latest trends, and are equal to the challenges of the twenty-first century. But we have taken to heart Zoltán Kodály’s admonition: “Culture is not something that can be inherited. The culture of the forefathers soon evaporates if each new generation does not make it its own.”

As two activists in the field of traditional music in Scotland, we greatly looked forward to finding out more about the Hungarian approach to the development of traditional music and dance. We knew something of the work of the táncház movement and of the folk music school, mainly through visits to Edinburgh by Hungarian musicians, and welcomed the opportunity to see something of the work at first hand, through visits to the annual Táncház Festival, the school itself and a táncház venue.

A last minute need to change venue meant the Nineteenth Táncház Festival had to take place in the cheerless and uncomfortable surroundings of the Hungexpo site. To their credit, however, the organisers had done their utmost to make the venue welcoming and appropriate to the music and dance taking place over the weekend. Three large halls and a smaller one were in use, craft stalls made the link between music, dance and a wider folk life, and thousands of people, most of them as far as we could tell in their twenties or younger, circulated throughout the area.

As we arrived a dance workshop was in full swing. The form these workshops took is worth commenting on. The music was provided by a succession of traditional bands, many from Transylvania (Erdély), playing in continuous segments of around 20 minutes. They did not stop and start at the behest of the workshop leader. The leader would explain steps and figures with the aid of a radio mike and demonstrate; and, once satisfied with the progress of the dancers, would pick up at an appropriate place in the flow of the music, like a surfer catching a wave. This method seems to us to have the great merit of thoroughly immersing the dancers in the music, getting the authentic rhythms right into their heads and bodies.

Elsewhere singers and bands performed short presentations, in a mix of traditional and revivalist musicians. We suspect that these definitions may soon start to lose their meaning as some of the so-called revivalists begin themselves to become source musicians for a younger generation. An indication of the lengthening shadow of the revival was the Jánosi Ensemble’s celebration of their 25th year, which included almost everyone who had played with the group over that period, joined for the occasion by visiting musicians from a high school in Norway.

An indication of the heights the revival of traditional music in Hungary has reached came in the gala concerts, large scale affairs with the cream of the country’s musicians and singers performing in a variety of combinations, followed by some stunning dance displays. We also attended a late night dance, where young musicians followed the example of their village mentors, playing long sets while the dancers tried out the figures and steps they had learned earlier that day. There was also an element here of connections with other cultures as guitars and the ubiquitous African percussion made their presence felt. There was, however, an irruption of an ancient cultural form as some rough actors brought in their play, echoing characters and situations familiar to us from the “mummers’ plays”, known in Scotland as The Galoshen. Here the eternal battle is fought between good and evil, against a backdrop of the eternal verities of change, death and renewal. We did not understand a word, but could still marvel at the familiarity of what we were seeing.
The links made between the táncház movement and traditional communities have helped to make possible the kind of virtuosic display presented in the gala concerts. Another important factor is the dedication and clarity of vision of the teachers of Hungarian traditional music. We were privileged to get a glimpse of some of what goes on behind the doors of the Óbudai Népzenei Iskola (Óbuda Folk Music School), sitting in on classes in fiddle, hurdy gurdy and contra.

There is no direct equivalent of this project in Scotland. In any place tuition in traditional instruments will revolve around either individual teachers, or classes of varying sizes, or concentrated activities in the form of courses or festivals which may only take place once a year. In some cases there will be traditional music taught in schools, but in all cases opportunities for learning traditional music will depend on where you live and the availability of suitable teachers. There is no systematic approach to provision.

The Traditional Music School in Budapest has 300 students of all ages, paying modest tuition rates, 16 tutors and four full-time staff, allowing for small classes and a low student to tutor ratio. One or two of the classes we attended had a mix of abilities and experience, with the less experienced or practised students being pulled along by both the tutor and the other students. It was interesting for us to see that tutors seemed to handle the dilemma of teaching mixed abilities by pitching the lesson toward the more able or committed musicians in the class.

There is a commitment to rigorous teaching, and a requirement that students get the sounds exactly—no approximations! Stan experienced this at first hand when he volunteered to sit in on a session with a young band taking a refresher lesson with a master musician. Although adept on the tin whistle, he found his teacher exacting, and gained a real insight into the standards expected.

Earlier we touched on the process by which revivalist musicians could be seen as source musicians for a younger generation. It is only fair to comment that this is a state of affairs that causes some uneasiness among the more mature revivalist musicians, who will often prefer that students and younger musicians turn to the original sources for their models and inspiration. This attitude is fundamental at the Budapest school, where students are continually encouraged to return to the source, and are helped to do so by a comprehensive collection of recordings and videos. We were particularly impressed by the large photo reproductions hanging on the walls of the teaching rooms, a constant reminder of where the music came from, and some of the great characters who made it.
We were able to witness evidence of the School’s commitment to outreach work when we accompanied the school head, Tamás Kiss, on a trip to Gödöllő, a short distance from the capital. Here he gave, over two sessions, a presentation on “1,000 Years of Hungarian Music” to around 300 children under 10. The children joined in songs and were able to see and hear, perhaps for the first time in some cases, a range of instruments and musical styles.

While in Gödöllő we chanced on a dance practice by a group of young people, the oldest of whom would have been about 16. Two things caught our attention here. Although the session was supervised by an experienced dance teacher, the bulk of the teaching was being carried out by an older girl. The other significant feature for us was the large number of boys taking part, and showing real commitment to the work. This is something that would be fairly difficult to find in folk dance in Scotland. The style known as Highland Dancing, for example, is now almost exclusively done by girls, although originally, due to its athleticism and context (e.g. the Sword Dance), it would have been the preserve of young men.

Our other significant visit was to the Fonó Budai Zeneház (Fonó Music Hall) in Budapest, a project housed in a building donated by a music loving industrialist, and subsidised by the state. The range of activity within Fonó was impressive: a performance space offering a mixed programme, including plenty of táncház activity, a bar and social area, a CD and bookshop (where we were able to buy a collection of Scottish field recordings from the 1950s, which we had never seen at home). There was also, curiously for us, an archery range, where young people, looking back perhaps to their Magyar past, could hone their skills in a way their ancestors might well have recognised.

We found much in Hungary to inspire us and take back to Scotland to inform our own future practice, but two main strands of our Hungarian experience are particularly important, as we work to gain increased recognition for the traditional arts in a country which has just regained its own government for the first time in 300 years. First is the attention that the state pays to the music, which it seems to be able to fund without robbing Peter to pay Paul. This may be because traditional Hungarian music is such a well spring for Hungarian music of every genre, and so is valued for the nourishment it can offer musical culture at every level.

Second, we were struck by the number of young people involved. We could sense a genuine love for the music and dance, which goes far beyond affection or fashion. Sociability is a strong factor in this, but so too perhaps is an instinctive awareness that a connection to the past, and the roots of their culture offers a bulwark against cultural imperialism, from whatever quarter it encroaches. Of course, we all have to live in the world as it is, and as we find it, but that task is perhaps made easier if carried out on a firm foundation of cultural identity.

David Francis is the former Artistic Director of Edinburgh Folk Festival. Stan Reeves is Development Officer with the Adult Learning Project in Edinburgh, which has a well established and growing Scots Music programme. Both are musicians with a strong interest in dance music.
Exhibitions

The Folk Culture of Hungary (A Permanent Exhibition)

First Floor
(See the study by Attila Selmeci Kovács on pages 68-72)

Fancy Frieze-Coats (“Cifraszûr”)
June 23-September 24, 2000

Ground Floor

The cifraszûr or fancy frieze-coat is one of the best-known pieces of ethnic men’s wear. Considered to be a typically Hungarian piece of clothing, the cifraszûr is a prized item of the Textile Collection of the Museum of Ethnography, which, with the 150-odd fancy frieze-coats in its possession, boasts the largest such collection in the country. About 30 representative pieces of this collection are being exhibited. The szûr or frieze-coat was a felt overcoat of Oriental tailoring, worn over the shoulders like a cloak; the sleeves were left to hang at the sides. It was typical herdsmen’s and peasants’ wear; no “gentleman” would ever wear one. Frieze-coats began to be decorated in the nineteenth century, first only with a blue edging, and then with a more and more elaborate embroidery. Stylized versions of brightly-colored flowers, singly or in bunches—tailors spoke of “flowering” the coats, rather than “embroidering” them—were the typical motifs of these “fancy” (cifra) frieze-coats, which were called “cifraszûr”. Frieze-coats were sewn and embroidered by specialized local artisans, the frieze-coat tailors. Embroidering frieze-coats was a man’s job, except in the Hajdúság region, where women would be employed to do the embroidery when the tailors had so many orders they could not do everything on each szûr themselves. The rich variety of floral motifs, the harmony of patterns and colors are a tribute to the aesthetic sense of the Hungarian peasantry. Always a garment for special occasions, the fancy frieze-coat became a symbol of national pride in the second half of the nineteenth century, when wearing it meant identification with Hungary’s struggle for self-determination. Cifraszûr, the catalogue published by the Museum of Ethnography to coincide with the exhibition, is available on location.

Living Folk Art
May 26-October 1, 2000

Second Floor

The year 2000 marks the thirteenth occasion that the Museum is hosting the National Folk Art Exhibition. The last similar event took place in 1996. The Museum of Ethnography and the Hungarian Institute for Culture (1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8) have worked jointly on the displays, which have been endorsed by the Association of Folk Art Societies. The Hungarian Cultural Institute published its call for exhibits last April, and, in keeping with what is now a traditional procedure, the objects displayed here are the ones judged best at the various juried county exhibitions. They come from the workshops of woodcarvers, joiners, embroiderers, weavers, frieze weavers, lace-makers and potters, as well as egg painters and jewelers. The everyday objects range from those made of wicker, sedge and straw, to cast-iron tools and entire room furnishings. Interior design is an integral part of the exhibition, as indeed it is of our day-to-day lives. The interiors, generally a medley of textiles, ceramics, and wood and metal objects, are usually the work of individual artists, but several of the “sets” to be seen have been designed by teams of two or more.

Folk artists young and old have contributed their masterpieces, and the exhibits reflect a corresponding diversity of artistic approaches and styles. For though all the artists—like their art—are rooted in tradition, they are constantly experimenting with new techniques, new forms, colors and materials in the effort to find forms of artistic expression attractive and familiar to the man in the street of today. The various craft workshops held at the museum throughout the exhibition also reflect the stylistic and regional diversity of folk art. The illustrated exhibition catalogue highlights the prize-winning exhibits.
Millennial Exhibition: Pictures of Time  
December 31, 2000-December 31, 2001

This exhibition, planned to take up the whole of the museum, is meant to illustrate mankind’s attitude and relationship to time. The apropos is the millennial celebrations, a special case of the significance that man ascribes to the passage of time. The exhibits will illustrate the anthropological and ethnographic roots of this ascription, and show “time” to be a historical “product”, a concept whose meaning is always culture-relative. “Pictures of Time” is planned to be not just a museum exhibition in the traditional sense, but an opportunity for self-reflection in the widest sense, and a complex cultural event worthy of the extraordinary year 2000.

The very opening ceremony is likely to make for a memorable turn of the millennium. Scheduled to start at 11 p.m. on the night of December 31, 2000, it will be an event in which those attending will themselves become performers in the ritual celebration of a turning point which cultures the world over regard as all the more special for being unreproducible. The opening ceremony will be filmed and—having been made timeless—will itself become one of the objects exhibited.

Calendar of Events For the Year 2000

Carnival Merriment
March 4

The carnival season (farsang), a time of pre-Lenten merrymaking, starts with Epiphany (January 6) and ends on Ash Wednesday. The Sunday and Monday immediately preceding Ash Wednesday mark the peak of the revelry, when pantomimes are put on by mummers, fertility spells are cast, and village youngsters go from door to door to wish their neighbors a year of peace and plenty. It is this village farsang of yore that is brought to life at the museum, as authentic folk groups from Hungary and abroad conjure up the old traditions.

Easter Egg Fair
April 8-9 and April 15-16

The dyed and decorated Easter eggs popular particularly in Eastern Europe were originally made to be given as presents; today, they serve primarily an ornamental purpose, as works of art. These two weekends at the museum feature the Easter egg as a work of art. Using a variety of traditional techniques—“writing” with molten candle wax on the eggshell before dying it, so that the “written” pattern stands out in eggshell color; “scratching” a pattern onto the dyed eggshell; and “shoeing” the eggs: decorating them with beads and small metallic cutouts using the tiniest of nails—the masters of these crafts create Easter eggs in the sight of all, and offer the finished works for sale. Visitors are free to try some of the techniques under the supervisions of the experts.

Setting Up a Maypole With the Pupils of the Óbuda Folk Music School
April 30

The Maypole, traditionally set up on May Day, is the symbol of nature’s rebirth. Bedecked with ribbons, flowers and pretzels, the Maypole is set up by the young men of the village in front of young marriageable girls’ houses, and stays there until Pentecost, when it is removed amidst much festive dancing and singing (májusfa-kitáncolás). The folk traditions associated with May Day are enacted at the museum on this day; there will also be folk singing, and instrumental folk music, both solo and orchestral.

Film and Multimedia Festival of the World’s Museums F@Imp.2000 Avicom
November 22-25

AVICOM, the audio-visual association of ICOM, the world organization of museums within UNESCO, is holding its world festival in Budapest under the name F@IMP.2000. The museum will be transformed into a ver-
itable cyber-museum, as twenty-five computers will offer
visitors the chance to make live contact with the world's
museums, as well as to test multimedia museum programs
and Internet pages, and view films on museography.

Winter Festivals

These year-end events present elements taken from the folk
traditions of the Christmas cycle, practices which are little
known today. There will be presentations of Hungarian
and ethnic folk customs, games for children, handicraft
playhouses, fortune-telling, quizzes, and so on.

Exhibition of Advent Wreaths
November 10, 11 and 12
The exhibition will present floral
compositions for Advent and
Christmas by Hungary's
leading flower arrangers. There will be demonstra-
tions of how to make
Advent wreaths and
Christmas decorations
on all three days.

St Lucy’s Day
Superstitions
December 10
Of the numerous supersti-
tions and magical rites that
attach to the feast of St. Lucy,
several will be introduced at the
museum with the help of some spe-
cial guests. The day-long program will
include “techniques” for foretelling the
weather and crop yields, as well as fortune-
telling, with special reference to affairs of the heart. There
will be St. Lucy’s Day mummers, and examples of *lucádás* (children going from door to door, wishing fertility upon
the couple, and getting presents in return). Woodworkers
will show how to make a *lucaszék* (St. Lucy’s Chair), a
chair traditionally made of various types of wood every
evening from the feast of St. Lucy to Christmas Eve, and
which, when ready, allowed anyone who stood up on it to
see the witches in the room. There will also be a folk craft
fair, a good opportunity to do some Christmas shopping.

Tenth International Meeting of Nativity Players
December 16-17.
In bygone days, Nativity players went from house to house
and told the story of the birth of the Christ Child. It is this
tradition that is being revived by Hungarian groups from
abroad, and ethnic folk players from Hungary who will
each put on their own local Nativity plays. There will also
be craft workshops all weekend, and a folk craft fair.

Christmas Fair
December 10, 16 and 17
On all three of these days, the museum will be one vast
folk craft fair, where the artisans and crafts-
men will hold workshops for all those
interested, particularly the children,
who will have a chance to make
some of the gifts that they
want to give for Christmas.
Christmas trees designed
and decorated by folk
artists will also be on dis-
play on all floors of the
museum.

For information, contact:
Néprajzi Múzeum (Hungarian Museum of Ethnography)
Budapest, 5th district, Kossuth Lajos tér 12.
Phone/Fax: (36 1) 312-4878, (36 1) 332-6340
E-mail: info@hem.hu
Website: www.hem.hu

Opening hours:
March to November: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.;
December to February: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
Domestic Animals’ Day
April 2

In 1996, the museum set up its “Nagykunság farmstead”, an example of one of the typical settlement types of the Great Plain (Alföld): an isolated, self-sufficient farm with a house and farm buildings. The farmstead reconstructed at the Szentendre site aims to introduce the visitor to the standard nineteenth-century tanya, complete with some traditional Hungarian breeds of sheep, cattle, goat, pig and other farm animals, which have given way to more “productive” (but less hardy) breeds in today’s modern farming. Visitors to the tanya on Domestic Animals’ Day can follow the “farmer” and his “family” about as they do their daily chores: feeding the animals, cleaning the stables, milking the cows, goats and sheep, and putting them out to pasture. There will also be demonstrations of work processes using animal power: plowing, carting, and milling.

Palm Sunday—Rites of Spring
April 16

Lent, the period of forty days preceding Easter, is a time of spiritual, and literal, “spring cleaning”. Holy Week—the week starting with Palm Sunday—is a week of housecleaning, of tidying up the yard, and of banishing the last signs of winter. Demonstrations will be given of a variety of spring chores—how to fill cracks with mud, how to whitewash walls, and how to prune trees.

Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter) recalls Jesus’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the hosannaing crowds strewed his path with palm branches. In Hungary, willow branches are used to represent the palm; it is bunches of willows that are blessed in church, and then taken home as a token of God’s blessing upon the house. Several other folk customs are also associated with Palm Sunday. This is the day that the young men and girls of the village, bearing greening and flowering branches, hold their zöldágjárás ("green bough promenade"), singing and dancing through the streets in celebration of spring. Another practice is the kiszehajtás, when young girls carry a straw dummy representing winter through the streets, and then either throw it into the stream, or burn it in the end.

Easter Sunday, Easter Monday
April 23-24

On this, one of the greatest of Christian holidays, visitors to the museum can relive the folk traditions of Easter. On both days, there will be stalls and stalls of decorated Easter eggs; visitors can buy them, and/or try their hand at making ones like them under the guidance of the artists there. Easter Monday, the traditional day for locsolkodás (literally, “watering, sprinkling”: the male practice of sprinkling water—and more recently, perfume—on the ladies, young and old, lest they “wither”), will feature a natural cosmetics fair. There will also be a folk arts and crafts fair (with opportunities to see the craftsmen at work) on both days.
St. Florian’s Day
April 29
St. Florian (a Roman soldier, and one of the earliest of the Christian martyrs) is credited with lending a protective hand against fire (tradition has it that he once put out roaring flames with the power of his prayers). His efficacy against fire made him the patron saint of guilds of brewers, potters, blacksmiths, bakers, and chimney sweeps all over the country. To the mid-twentieth century, May 4 was the traditional day for firemen’s competitions in Hungary held in honor of St. Florian. After the fires were put out, the local Firemen’s Band would give concerts, the firemen would parade in their dress uniforms, and the day would close with the Firemen’s Ball. After decades of hiatus, it was the Szentendre Open-Air Museum that revived these traditions in the mid-1980s.

Arts Day for Children
May 1
The exhibition of the prize-winning works of the History as Children See It art contest will be opening on this day. The winning troupes of the “Barn Theater” program will also be putting on their skits. And there will be plenty of opportunity for children of all ages to express their creativity with a variety of materials and through various folk art techniques.

Village Olympics
May 14
The large playing field around the late-third-century Villa Rustica, a Roman ruin inside the museum grounds, will be the location of the first Hungarian village Olympics. Children between the ages of 8 and 12 from all over the country can participate in the folk equivalents of the various “antique” tests of strength and skill. There will be “wheelbarrowing” (the “wheelbarrow” racing on his/her hands, with the partner holding up both of his/her legs running behind the “wheelbarrow”); “horseback riding” (one partner being the “horse”, and the “rider” sitting up on his/her shoulders); “pentathlon” (consisting of stone throwing, long jumping, stick throwing, running, and wrestling); tug-of-war, and running meets of every kind. Activities will go from dawn to dusk.

“Young Hands at Old Trades”—World Museum Day
May 18
This year, the museum will be hosting the students of the Pályakezdő Fiatalok Alapítványa Kézműves és Szolgáltató Szakkollégium. Opened in 1990, the school is open to young people who plan to make their living at traditional arts and crafts. The students have a real knack for sharing their skills with the museum’s visitors, who will be able to see first-hand what it takes to be a woodworker, a saddler, a potter, a basket weaver, a straw weaver, a gingerbread baker, a cloth weaver, an embroiderer, a dipped-paper maker, and a frieze weaver. The museum staff, too, will be on hand to meet with visitors on this World Museum Day.

Children’s Day: the Opening of the Seesaw Playground
May 28
Children’s Day will be the first day that the young visitors to the museum will be able to take possession of the vast new play park inside the grounds. The park is sectioned off into six areas by age group and activity, with palisades and bushes between them. There is a sand box, a play barn, a wooden castle with ramparts, a stone and clay quarry, a wooden stage, a “witch’s oven”, a turret, and an obstacle course; and there are wooden-tub slides, and log and root climbing frames.

Crafts and Craft Shops
July and August:
To cater to the holiday makers, we have planned a series of workshops due to run between July 5 and August 25, inclusive. Every Wednesday and Friday, visitors can try their hand at some different craft, as specified in the detailed program posted at the museum gates.

Feast of King St. Stephen: The Day of Millers, Bakers, and Bread
August 20
August 20, the feast of Hungary’s first Christian king, is a very special day for the Szentendre Open-Air Museum in the year 2000. In commemoration of the one thousandth anniversary of the foundation of the Hungarian state, we
have finally finished the installation of one of the most fascinating of our exhibits: the windmill from Dusnok in the Great Plain (Alföld). The day will start with a Mass in honor of St. Stephen, and the blessing of the new-baked bread. Then, visitors will have a chance to see the new mill in action, as it grinds the wheat. Bread will be baked in the various "regional" bakeries and kitchens of the museum complex, and visitors will be able to sample the baked goods as they come fresh from the ovens.

The day’s special guests will be the Muharay Elemér Hagyományőrző Egyesület from Bag, who will give visitors a glimpse of their village’s post-harvest festivities. Crafts for the day will focus on specifically harvest-centered objects: the potters will show how to make a harvest jug (a double-walled jug that keeps the water cool), and the straw weavers how to make a harvest wreath.

“Wine Festival”
September 9-10

The Wine Festival, jointly organized by the Association of Folk Art Societies, the Szentendre Open-Air Museum, and the Hungarian Viticulture Foundation, has been a part of the Budapest International Wine and Champagne Festival since 1997.

The two-day festival will be centered on the vineyards and wine cellars of the museum’s own “mini” Western Dunántúl and Kisalföld, a milieu that conjures up the peasant world of the mid-nineteenth century. Hungary’s minority ethnic groups will have pride of place at the Wine Festival of the year 2000.

The Opening of the Bakony and Balaton-felvidék “Region”; The Folk Art of Veszprém County
September 22

The opening of the museum’s own Bakony forest and Balaton-felvidék “region” is the last significant event of the National Millennial Program. It is also marks the festive conclusion of the “Europe, a Common Heritage” Campaign.

The temporary exhibition of folk art from Veszprém County in the house, farm buildings and stables relocated from Szentgál opens the same day. The objects on display come from the Laczkó Dezső Museum, from our own collection, and from private collections. Of special interest are the works of art carved by herdsmen of bone, horn, and wood; and the colorful “good” textiles, some of them elaborately embroidered, and many of them having outlived generations, carefully packed away as they were in lavender-scented chests. Contemporary folk art will be given its due in the exhibited works of the Veszprém Handicrafts Workshop and the Veszprém County Folk Art Society.

Veszprém Days
September 23-24

Everyone with an interest in folk culture in Veszprém County—museums, educational institutions, “friends” of castles and monuments, the Balaton-felvidék National Park, folk groups and societies, tourist bureaus, wine cellars and restaurants—will contribute their best efforts and exhibits to this two-day festival.

Healing Herbs and Leaves: Folk Remedies and Folk Herbalists in Hungary through the Ages
October 8

Every year since 1997, the Szentendre Open-Air Museum has been holding a day of folk healing and ethno-botany under the title Healing Herbs and Leaves. The focus is always on different aspects of folk medicine. This millennial year, Dr. Péter Babulka, the permanent director of the program, is offering a historical overview of the evolution of folk medicine in Hungary over the past thousand years.

End-of-Season Bagpiper Meet
October 29

The season will close with an event in keeping with the sounds and spirit of the traditional autumn herding of livestock into sheltered winter quarters, and the merrymaking that followed upon the herdsmen’s year-end accounting. The restaurant on the museum grounds will be offering a menu featuring the freshly-slaughtered fattened pig, and drinks enough to moisten the lips of all the bagpiper contestants.

Szentendrei Szabadtéri Néprajzi Múzeum
(Szentendre Open-Air Museum of Ethnography)
Szentendre, Sztaravodai út
Phone: (36 26) 502-500, (36 26) 502-501, (36 26) 312-304
Fax: (36 26) 310-183
E-mail: sznm@sznm.hu
Website: www.sznm.hu
Opening hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every day from April 1 to October 31.
National Festivals

**Újévköszöntő Néptáncantológia**
(Dancing in the New Year:
A Medley of Folk Dances. Performed by children, adults and authentic folk groups)

**Venue:**
Erkel Színház, Budapest
(8th district, Köztársaság tér 30).

**Date:**
February 12–13, 2000

**For information, contact:**
Ms Éva Héra, Muharay Elemér Népmûvészeti Szövetség
1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8.
Phone: (36 1) 201-4492;
Fax: (36 1) 201-5164

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**Országos Nemzetiségi Fesztivál**
(National Ethnic Festival)

**Venue:**
Ráckeve (Pest County)

**Date:**
April 30, 2000

**For information, contact:**
Mr Gábor Budai
Ács Károly Művelôdési Központ
2300 Ráckeve, Kossuth Lajos u. 51.
Phone: (36 24) 385-220

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**Magyarországi Német Tánc-
halálalkozó és Kirakodóvásár**
(German Hungarian Táncház Festival and Fair)

**Venue:**
Pécs (Baranya County)

**Date:**
June 9–13, 2000

**For information, contact:**
Magyarországi Német
Néptâncaghymányok Ápolása
Alapítvány
Mr Helmut Heil
7621 Pécs, Szent István tér 8–10.
Phone: (36 72) 332-688;
Fax: (36 72) 310-041

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**Hagyományőrzô Együttesek**
**Országos Találkozója**
(National Festival of Authentic Folk Groups)

**Venue:**
Bag (Pest County)

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**Országos Nemzetiségi Fesztivál**
(National Ethnic Festival)

**Venue:**
Ráckeve (Pest County)

**Date:**
April 30, 2000

**For information, contact:**
Mr Gábor Budai
Ács Károly Művelôdési Központ
2300 Ráckeve, Kossuth Lajos u. 51.
Phone: (36 24) 385-220

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**Vass Lajos Kárpáti-Medencei**
**Népzenei Találkozó 2000**
(Lajos Vass Carpathian Basin Folk Music Festival)

**Venue:**
Erkel Színház, Budapest
(8th district, Köztársaság tér 30).

**Date:**
May 1, 2000

**For information, contact:**
Ms Rozália Kóka, Vass Lajos Népzenei Szövetség
1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8.
Phone/Fax: (36 1) 201-5164

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**Pécsváradi Leányvásár**
(Pécsvárad Fair of Fair:
Traditional “Bride Market”)

**Venue:**
Pécsvárad (Baranya County)

**Date:**
September 30–October 1, 2000

**For information, contact:**
Fülep Lajos Mûvelôdési Központ
7720 Pécsvárad, Kossuth u. 31.
Phone: (36 72) 465-123

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**Szekszárdi Néptáncfesztivál**
(Szekszárd Folk Dance Festival)

**Venue:**
Szekszárd (Tolna County)
DATE: November 18-19, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mrs Júlia Kapási, Babits Mihály Művelődési Ház 7100 Szekszárd, Mártírok tere 10.
Phone: (36 74) 316-722

**V. Kelet-Magyarországi Felnőtt Néptáncantológia**
(Fifth Eastern Hungarian Folk Dance Festival for Adults)
VENUE: Sátoraljaújhely (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County)
DATE: November 25, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr Csaba Horváth, Kossuth Lajos Művelődési Központ 3980 Sátoraljaújhely, Táncsics tér 3.
Phone: (36 47) 321-727, 321-443

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**International Festivals**

**VIII. Finnugor Folklorfesztivál**
(Eighth Finno-Ugric Folklore Festival)
VENUE: Székesfehérvár (Fejér County)
DATE: June 20-26, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr László Felföldi, Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Zenetudományi Intézet 1014 Budapest, Táncsics M. u. 7.
Phone: (36 1) 356-6858 or (36 1) 375-9011

**VI. Nemzetközi Vándor Cigánytánc Fesztivál**
(Sixth International Nomadic Gypsy Dance Festival)
VENUE: Sátoraljaújhely (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County)
DATE: July 19-23, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr Tibor Lakatos, Hagyományőrző Cigány Egyesület 3980 Sátoraljaújhely, Köztársaság u. 29.
Phone: (36 47) 321-211

**X. Nemzetközi Néptánc- és Népzenei Fesztivál, Kézműves Vásár és Bemutató**
(Tenth International Folk Festival and Craft Fair)
VENUE: Győr (Győr-Sopron-Moson County)
DATE: July 1-2, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr János Kakuk, Bartók Béla Megyei Művelődési Központ 9022 Győr, Czuczor G. u. 17.
Phone: (36 96) 326-522; Fax: (36 96) 326-731

**“Arany Kagyló” Nemzetközi Folklorfesztivál**
(“Golden Shell” Siófok International Folklore Festival)
VENUE: Siófok (Somogy County)
DATE: July 4-9, 2000
For information, contact: Mr Péter Neisz, Városi Polgármesteri Hivatal 8600 Siófok, Fő tér 1.
Phone: (36 84) 311-020; Fax: (36 84) 311-3156

**Európa Fesztivál 2000. Szegedi Nemzetközi Néptáncfesztivál**
(“Europe Festival 2000”, Szeged International Folk Dance Festival)
VENUE: Szeged (Csöngrád County)
DATE: July 20–30, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr János Simoncsics or Ms Erika Kolonics, Bartók Béla Művelődési Központ 6720 Szeged, Vörösmarty u. 3.
Phone/Fax: (36 62) 426-008

**V. Nemzetközi Nógrádi Folklorfesztivál**
(Fifth Nógrád International Folklore Festival)
VENUE: Salgótarján (Nógrád County)
DATE: July 26-31, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mrs Ruzsenka Baránek, Nógrád Megyei Közművelődési és Turisztikai Intézet 3100 Salgótarján, Ruhagyár u. 9.
Phone: (36 32) 432-101; Fax: (36 32) 432-099

**Csángó Fesztivál. Az Európai Kisebbségek Fesztiválja**
(Csángó Festival: A Festival of European Minorities)
VENUE: Jászberény (Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County)
DATE: July 31-August 6, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr Gábor Szûcs, Folklór Kulturális Alapítvány 5100 Jászberény, Víz u. 1.
Phone/Fax: (36 57) 411-294

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>For Information, Contact</th>
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<tr>
<td>XIII. <em>Kis-Dunai Nemzetközi Folklorfesztival</em> (Thirteenth Kis-Duna International Folklore Festival)</td>
<td>Ráckeve (Pest County)</td>
<td>August 12-22, 2000</td>
<td>Mr Gábor Budai, Ács Károly Művelődési Központ 2300 Ráckeve, Kossuth Lajos u. 51. Phone: (36 24) 385-220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX. <em>Nemzetközi Folklórnapok</em> (Twentieth International Folklore Days at Sárvár)</td>
<td>Sárvár (Vas County)</td>
<td>August 15-20, 2000</td>
<td>Mr István Kondora, Művelődési Központ 9600 Sárvár, Várkerület 1. Phone: (36 95) 320-063; Fax: (36 95) 323-425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Királyi Napok&quot; <em>Nemzetközi Néptáncafesztivál</em> (&quot;Royal Days&quot; International Folk Dance Festival)</td>
<td>Szentendre (Budapest)</td>
<td>August 15-20, 2000</td>
<td>Mr József Szigetvári, Magyarok Öröksége Alapítvány 2440 Szentendre, Május 1 tér 5. Phone/Fax: (36 23) 358-973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. <em>&quot;Gyöngy&quot; Nemzetközi Néptáncafesztivál</em> (Forth Gyöngyös International Folk Dance Festival)</td>
<td>Gyöngyös (Heves County)</td>
<td>August 13-20, 2000</td>
<td>Ms Erzsébet Szilágyi, Mátra Művelődési Központ 3221 Gyöngyös, Barátok tér 3. Phone: (36 37) 312-281, 312-282; Fax: (36 37) 312-283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A koronázás 1000 éve. <em>Millenniumi Néptáncafesztivál</em> (The Thousand Years of the Hungarian Crown: Millennial Folk Dance Festival)</td>
<td>Gyula (Békés County)</td>
<td>August 17-21, 2000</td>
<td>Mr Sándor Szatmári, Erkel Ferenc Általános Művelődési Központ 5700 Gyula, Béke stg. 35. Phone: (36 66) 463-544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. <em>Szent István Napi Néptánctalálkozó</em> (Second Saint Stephen's Day International Folk Dance Festival)</td>
<td>Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania)</td>
<td>August 17-21, 2000</td>
<td>Mr László Pillich, Heltai Alapítvány 3400 Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca), Clinicilor 18, Romania Phone: (40 64) 190096; Fax: (40 64) 190011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpok-Adria X. <em>Nemzetközi Nyári Fesztivál</em> (From the Alps to the Adriatic: Tenth International Summer Festival)</td>
<td>Zalaegerszeg (Zala County)</td>
<td>August 18-20, 2000</td>
<td>Mr Gyula Borosán, Megyei Művelődési és Ifjúsági Központ 8900 Zalaegerszeg, Kisfaludy u. 7-11. Phone: (36 92) 314-580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. <em>Nyíregyházi Nemzetközi Néptáncafesztivál</em> (Third Nyíregyháza International Folk Dance Festival)</td>
<td>Nyíregyháza (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County)</td>
<td>August 18-26, 2000</td>
<td>Ms Mária Bradács, Vasutas Művelődési Ház 4400 Nyíregyháza, Toldy u. 23. Phone: (36 30) 206-9232</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mr György Demarcsek, Nyírség Táncégyesület 4400 Nyíregyháza, Honvéd u. 41. Phone: (36 30) 938-9879</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### IV. Mezőségi Népzene- és Néptáncalákozó
(Forth Mezőség Folk Festival)

**Venue:**
Szamosújvár (Gherla, Romania)

**Date:**
October 2000

For information, contact:
Mr Attila Balázs Bécsi,
Téka Művelődési Alapítvány,
Archívum Kulturális Alapítvány
3475, Gherla, str. Mihai Viteazul, nr 39, Romania
Phone: (40 64) 24 36 98

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### XI. Pécsi Folknapok. Nemzetközi Népzenei Fesztivál
(Eleventh Pécs International Folk Music Festival)

**Venue:**
Pécs (Baranya County)

**Date:**
November 10-11, 2000

For information, contact:
Mr Antal Vizi, Pécsi Kulturális Központ
7621 Pécs, Színház tér 2.
Phone: (36 72) 310-783

or
Mr Miklós Vinter,
JPTE Művészeti Kar
7624 Pécs, Damjanich János u. 30.
Phone: (36 72) 501-539

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### Children's Festivals

**“Aprók Bálja” (XIX. Országos Táncalákozó és Kirakodóvásár)**
(Little Ones' Ball at the National Táncház Festival)

**Venue:**
Budapest, Budapesti Nemzetközi Vásár
(Budapest International Fairgrounds)

**Date:**
April 1, 2000

For information, contact:
Örökség Gyermek Népművészeti Egyesület
1074 Budapest, Akácfa u 32.
Phone: (36 1) 322-2893

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**“Katica” Nemzetközi Gyermek Néptáncfesztivál**
(“Katica” International Children's Folk Dance Festival)

**Venue:**
Mosonmagyaróvár (Győr-Sopron-Moson County)
The Folk Scene in 2000—Practical Information

Exhibitions

IV. Országos Népi Szobrászati Kiállítás
(Forth National Exhibition of Folk Sculpture)

VENUE:
Pesti Vigadó Galéria, Budapest
(5th district, Vigadó tér 2.)

DATE:
April 15-May 3, 2000

VENUE:
Dunaföldvári Faragó Galéria,
Dunaföldvár (Tolna County)

DATE:
May 13-October 15, 2000

VI. Országos Népi Mesterségek Művészete Pályázat
(Sixth National Juried Exhibition of Folk Trades and Crafts)

VENUE:
Kecskemét (Bács-Kiskun County),
Népi Iparművészeti Múzeum (6000 Kecskemét. Serfőző u. 19.)

DATE:
June 9-September 2000

For information, contact:
Ms Timea Major, Népi Iparművészeti Titkárság
1011 Budapest, Szilágyi Dezső tér 6.
Phone: (36 1) 201-8734

or
Népi Iparművészeti Múzeum
6000 Kecskemét. Serfőző u. 19.
Phone: (36 76) 327-203

VIII. Alföldi Fazekas Triennálé
(Eighth Triennial Pottery Exhibition of Ceramics)

VENUE:
Mezőtúr

DATE:
August 12-September 15, 2000

For information, contact:
Ms Timea Major, Népi Iparművészeti
Titkárság
1011 Budapest, Szilágyi Dezső tér 6.
Phone: (36 1) 201-8734

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
XIX. Országos Táncház-találkozó és Kirakodóvásár  
(Nineteenth National Táncház Festival and Folk Fair)  

**Venue:**  
Budapesti Nemzetközi Vásár,  
(Budapest International Fairgrounds)  

**Date:**  
April 1-2, 2000  

**For Information, Contact:**  
Mr István Berán, Táncház Egyesület  
1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8.  
Phone: (36 1) 214-3521  
or  
Ms Gabriella Igártó, Népművészeti Egyesületek Szövetsége  
1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8.  
Phone/Fax: (36 1) 214-3523

Húsvétolás a népi hagyományok jegyében  
(Easter in Folk Tradition)  

**Venue:**  
Opusztaszer (Csongrád County)  

**Date:**  
April 23-24, 2000  

**For Information, Contact:**  
Ms Ágnes B. Nagy, Nemzeti Történeti Emlékpark  
6767 Ópusztaszer, Szoborkert 68.  
Phone: (36 62) 275-133

Hagyományőrzés 2000-ben. Jeles Napok a Vasi Múzeumfaluban  
(Traditionalism in the Year 2000: Traditional Holidays in the Vas Open-Air Ethnographic Museum)  

**Venue:**  
Szombathely (Vas County)  

**Date:**  
April 24-June 12, 2000  

**For Information, Contact:**  
Ms Ildikó Szommer, Vas Megyei Múzeumok Igazgatósága  
9700 Szombathely, Kifaludy u. 9.  
Phone: (36 94) 313-736,  
(36 94) 312-554

Other Events

**VII. Országos Textiles Konferencia**  
(Seventh National Textile Conference)  

**Venue:**  
Békéscsaba (Békés County)  

**Date:**  
March 10-12, 2000  

**For Information, Contact:**  
Mrs Miklós Pál, Békés Megyei Művelődési Központ  
5600 Békéscsaba, Luther u. 6.  
Phone: (26 66) 442-122;  
Fax: (36 66) 445-765

**Népművészet ifjú mesterei pályázat díjnyertes alkotásai**  
(Exhibition of Award Winning Works by Young Master Craftsmen)  

**Venue:**  
Budapest  

**Date:**  
August 18-September 13, 2000  

**For Information, Contact:**  
Ms Katalin Beszprémy, Magyar Művelődési Intézet  
1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8.  
Phone: (36 1) 201-4492;  
Fax: (36 1) 201-5164

**Hagyományok 2000-ben. Jeles Napok a Vasi Múzeumfaluban**  
(Traditionalism in the Year 2000: Traditional Holidays in the Vas Open-Air Ethnographic Museum)  

**Venue:**  
Szombathely (Vas County)  

**Date:**  
April 24-June 12, 2000  

**For Information, Contact:**  
Ms Ildikó Szommer, Vas Megyei Múzeumok Igazgatósága  
9700 Szombathely, Kifaludy u. 9.  
Phone: (36 94) 313-736,  
(36 94) 312-554

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
The Folk Scene in 2000—Practical Information

**Ezer esztendeje annak...**  
**Országos Pünkösdi Népművészeti Ünnepségek a Millennium Jegyében**  
(Whitsuntide Folk Festivities for a New Millennium)

**VENUE:**  
Feszty Árpád Művelôdési Park,  
Martos (Martovce, Slovakia)

**DATE:**  
June 9-11, 2000

**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
Mr István Katona, CSEMADOK Vecsey Lajos Szervezet  
94 661 Martos/Martovce 68.  
Phone: (421-818) 84158  
Fax: (421-818) 84115

**Pünkösdlélés – A népi hagyományok jegyében**  
(Whitsuntide in Folk Tradition)

**VENUE:**  
Öpusztaszer (Csongrád County)

**DATE:**  
June 11-12, 2000

**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
Ms Ágnes B. Nagy, Nemzeti Történeti Emlékpark  
6767 Öpusztaszer, Szoborkert 68.  
Phone: (36 62) 275-133

**Szentivánéji mulatság**  
(Midsummer’s Night Merrymaking)

**VENUE:**  
Kaloa/Érsekkert (Bács-Kiskun County)

**DATE:**  
June 23, 2000

**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
Mrs István Asperján, Művelôdési Központ  
6300 Kaloa, Szent István út 2-4.  
Phone: (36 78) 462-200

**Hunniális: történémi hagyományainkat őrzô ünnepség, vásári sokadalom**  
("Hunnial": Celebration of Hungary’s Historical Tradition and Renaissance Fair)

**VENUE:**  
Öpusztaszer (Csongrád County)

**DATE:**  
June 24, 2000

**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
Ms Ágnes B. Nagy, Nemzeti Történeti Emlékpark  
6767 Öpusztaszer, Szoborkert 68.  
Phone: (36 62) 275-133

**Ezer Székely Leány Találkozó**  
("A Thousand Székely Girls” Festival)

**VENUE:**  
Csiksomlyó (Şumuleu, Romania)

**DATE:**  
July 2, 2000

**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
Mr Károly Boros and Tibor Sinka  
Phone: (40 66) 112-361

**Mesterségek Ünnepe**  
(Festival of Trades and Crafts)

**VENUE:**  
Buda Castle Hill, Budapest

**DATE:**  
August 16-20, 2000

**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
Ms Gabriella Igyártó, Népmûvészeti Egyesületek Szövetsége  
1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8.  
Phone/Fax: (36 1) 214-3523

**Paprikaszüret 2000**  
(Paprika Harvest Festival 2000)

**VENUE:**  
Kaloa (Bács-Kiskun County)

**DATE:**  
September 23, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Mrs István Asperján, Művelődési Központ
6300 Kalocsa, Szent István út 2-4.
Phone: (36 78) 462-200

“A Bor Napja” Hegyaljai Szüreti Vigasság és Gasztronómiai Bemutató
(Wine Festival and Food Fair)
VENUE:
Sátoraljaújhely (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County)
DATE:
September 28-30, 2000

FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Mr Csaba Horváth, Kossuth Lajos Művelődési Központ
3980 Sátoraljaújhely, Táncsics tér 3.
Phone: (36 47) 321-727, (36 47)321-443

V. Mezőségi Népzene és Néptáncfesztivál
(Fifth Mezőség Folk Festival)
VENUE:
Vice (Vâlcea, Romania)
DATE:
September 30

FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Mr Mihály András
Phone: (40 66) 171 362

Erdélyi Prímások IV. Találkozója
(IV. Festival of Transylvanian Fiddlers)
VENUE:
Csíkszereda (Miercurea-Ciuc, Romania)
DATE:
November 25-26, 2000

FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Mr Mihály András
or Mr Tibor Sinka
Phone: (40 66) 171 362

Millenniumi Sokadalom: A Kárpát-medence népművészetének, hagyományainak, mesterségeinek ünnepe
(Celebrating the New Millennium: Folk Crafts and Traditions of the Carpathian Basin)
VENUE:
Diósgyőr (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County)
DATE:
June 23-25, 2000

VENUE:
Gyula (Békés county)
DATE:
June 30-July 1-2, 2000

VENUE:
Pécs (Baranya County)
DATE:
July 7-9, 2000

VENUE:
Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania)
DATE:
July 14-16, 2000

VENUE:
Komárom-Tata (Komárom-Esztergom County)
DATE:
July 21-23, 2000

VENUE:
Marosvásárhely (Tirgu-Mureș, Romania)
DATE:
July 28-30, 2000

VENUE:
Budapest (Heroes' Square)
DATE:
August 17-20, 2000

FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Mr Antal Stoller, Honvéd Együttes
1087 Budapest, Kerepesi út 29/b
Phone: (36 1) 210-000, (36 1) 333-9583

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT ALL THESE EVENTS PLEASE CONTACT:
Ms Éva Héra
Folklorfesztiválok Magyarországi Szövetsége
1011 Budapest, Corvin tér 8.
Hungary
Phone: (36 1) 201-4492; Fax: (36 1) 201-5164

E-MAIL:
folkfest@mail.datanet.hu
Hungarian Folk Dance and Folk Music Camps in Hungary and Romania

IX. Nemzetközi Gyimesi Népzene- és Néptánctábor
(Ninth Gyimes Folk Music and Folk Dance Camp)
VENUE: Gyimesközéplok (Lunca de Jos, Romania)
DATE: July 23-29, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr Mihály András and Zoltán Szalay, Hargita Állami Székely Népi Együttes Csíkszereda (Miercurea-Ciuc) 4100, Szabadság tér 16/49, Romania
Phone: (40 66) 071 362

III. Maros-Küküllô-menti Népzene- és Néptánctábor
(Third Maros-Küküllô Folk Music and Folk Dance Camp)
VENUE: Magyarlapád (Lopadea Nouă, Romania)
DATE: July 9-16, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Ms Ildikó Németh, Etnikai Kulturális Alapítvány 3331, Lopadea Nouă, nr 8, jud. Alba-Romania
Phone: (40 94) 800 533; Fax: (40 64) 198 813

Harangodi Hagyományőrzô Tábor
(Harangod Traditionalist Folk Summer Camp)
VENUE: Nagykálló/Harangod (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Hungary), 5100 Jászberény, Víz u. 1.
Phone/Fax: (36 57) 411-294

X. Kalotaszegi Népzene- és Néptánctábor
(Tenth Kalotaszeg Folk Music and Folk Dance Camp)
VENUE: Kalotaszentkirály (Sinçraiu, Romania)
DATE: July 12–20 and 22–30, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr Gyula Stock II. Rákóczi Ferenc Mûvelôdési Központ 4320 Nagykálló, Bâtori u. 1.
Phone: (36 42) 263-141

X. Nemzetközi Táncház- és Zenésztábor
(Nineteenth Jászberény International Táncháza and Folk Music Camp)
VENUE: Jászberény (Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, Hungary)
DATE: August 14-20, 2000
FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT: Mr Helmut Heil, Magyarországi Német Néptánhagyományok Ápolása Alapítvány Pécs, Szent István tér 8-10, Hungary, H-7621
Phone: (36 72) 332-688; Fax: (36 72) 310-041

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
Where You’ll Find a Táncház

On Tuesdays

*Children’s Táncház with the Muzsikás Band*

From September to the end of May, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

**Instructors:**
Piroska Várkonyi and Ernő Bakonyi

At the Fővárosi Művelődési Ház

**Address:**
Budapest, 11th district, Fehérvári út 47.
Phone: (36 1) 203-3868

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On Wednesdays

*“Táncház a Fonóban”: Hungarian Táncház with the Ökrös, Tükros and the Berko bands, and with guest performers*

8:00 p.m. on

At the Fonó Budai Zeneház

**Address:**
Budapest, 11th district, Sztregova u. 3.
Phone: (36 1) 206-5300

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*“Guzsalyas”: Gyimes and Moldavian Táncház with the Tatros Band*

From September to June 28, 8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

**Instructor:**
Attila Fülöp

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On Thursdays

*Moldavian Táncház with the Csürentő Band*

From September to mid-June, on every second Thursday, 7:00 p.m. on

At the Fővárosi Művelődési Ház (Municipal Cultural Center)

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On Fridays

*Hungarian Táncház with the Üsztürü Band*

From the end of September to the end of May, 6:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. on

**Instructors:**
László Csatai, “Csidu” and Orsolya Strack

At the Ferencvárosi Művelődési Központ

**Address:**
Budapest, 9th district, Haller u. 27.
Phone: (36 1) 216-1300

---

“Ghymes Klub” (World Music Club)

On the first Thursday of the month, 8:00 p.m. on

At the Fonó Budai Zeneház

**Address:**
Budapest, 11th district, Sztregova u. 3.
Phone: (36 1) 206-5300

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Hungarian Heritage Volume 1 2000

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
INSTRUCTORS:
Eszter Haránt and László Lukács
At the Erdei Ferenc Művelődési Központ

ADDRESS:
Kecskeméti, Déak Ferenc tér 1.
Phone: (36 76) 484-594

Hungarian Táncház with the Gajdós Band
One Friday of a month,
7:00 p.m. on

INSTRUCTORS:
Csaba Barsi and Tekla Várkonyi
At the Ifjúsági Ház

ADDRESS:
Eger, Széchenyi út 16.
Phone: (36 36) 410-094

Moldavian Csángó Táncház with the Zurgó Band
On the first Friday of the month,
8:00 p.m. on

INSTRUCTORS:
Csaba Barsi and Tekla Várkonyi
At the Ifjúsági Ház

ADDRESS:
Eger, Széchenyi út 16.
Phone: (36 36) 410-094

On Saturdays
Hungarian Táncház with the Kalamajka Band
From September to mid-May
“Aprók tánca”
(Children’s Táncház),
5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
INSTRUCTOR:
Éva Fábián
Folk dance instruction for adults:
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

INSTRUCTORS:
Júlia Redő and Mihály Pál
“Össznépi vigadalom”
(“Fun for All”),
11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.

Southern Slavic Táncház with the Kolo Band
From September to May
At the Művelődési Ház

ADDRESS:
Tököl, Kossuth L. u. 66.
Phone: (36 24) 479-284,
(36 20) 941-4575

“Rila”: Balkan Táncház
with the Martenyica Band
On the last Friday of the month,
8:00 p.m. on
At the Fonó Budai Zeneház

ADDRESS:
Budapest, 11th district,
Sztregova u. 3.
Phone: (36 1) 206-5300

At the Belvárosi Ifjúsági Ház
ADDRESS:
Budapest, 5th district,
Molnár u. 9.
Phone: (36 1) 317-5928/ext. 11.

Hungarian Táncház
From September to early June, on
every second Saturday
“Aprók tánca” (Children’s Táncház),
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Táncház for adults:
7:00 to 11:00 p.m.
At the “Táncház”
ADDRESS:
Székesfehérvár, Malom u. 6.
Phone: (36 22) 312-795

Hungarian Táncház with the Öröngős Band
From mid-August to mid-May, a
Saturday a month, 8:00 p.m. on
At the Kiskunhalasi Művelődési Központ (Közösségek Háza)
ADDRESS:
Kiskunhalas, Bokányi Dezső u. 8.
Phone: (36 30) 903-5128

Hungarian Children’s Táncház
with the Kolompos Band
From September to mid-June, every
second Saturday,
5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
INSTRUCTOR:
Levente Szántai
At the Békásmegyeri Közösségi Ház
ADDRESS:
Budapest, 3rd district, Csobánka tér 5.
Phone: (36 1) 243-2433

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
### Hungarian Children’s Táncház with the Hegedûs Band
From October to the end of May, every second Saturday, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
At the Szórakaténusz Játékmûzeum és Mûhely
**Address:**
Kecskemét, Gáspár A. u. 11.
Phone: (36 76) 481-469

### Greek Táncház with the Maskarades Band
From October to mid-June (closed in January), every second Saturday, 6:00 to 10:00 p.m.
At the Csokonai Mûvelôdési Központ
**Address:**
Budapest, 15th district, Eötvös u. 64-66.
Phone: (36 1) 307-6191

### On Sundays
#### Hungarian Táncház with the Méta Band
From September to the end of May, 7:00 to 12:00 p.m.
Children’s Táncház from 5:00 p.m. on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Instructor:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hungarian Children’s Táncház with the Mezô Band</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoltán Palkovics</td>
<td>From September to mid-May, 10:00 to noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the Józsefvárosi Klub</td>
<td>At the Cserepesház</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Address:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budapest, 8th district, Somogyi Béla u. 13.</td>
<td>Budapest, 14th district, Vezér u. 28/b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: (36 1) 318-7930</td>
<td>Phone: (36 1) 363-2656</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Hungarian Táncház with Folk Musicians of Pécs and guest bands</strong></th>
<th><strong>Greek Táncház with the Sirtos Band</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From September to mid-June, every second Sunday, 7:00 to 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Aprók tánca” (Children’s Táncház), 5:00 p.m. on</td>
<td>At the Almássy téri Szabadidô Központ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the Vasutas Mûvelôdési Ház</td>
<td><strong>Address:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pécs, Dr. Váradi Antal u. 7/2.</td>
<td>Budapest, 7th district, Almássy tér 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: (36 72) 310-037</td>
<td>Phone: (36 1) 352-1572, 342-0312</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For place names and regions, see the maps and the Gazetteer
Alföld, Nagy-Alföld (Great Hungarian Plain): a flat, fertile steppeland broken up with floodplain groves and swamps in the central part of the Carpathian Basin. The part of the plain between the Danube and the Tisza rivers is generally distinguished from the region east of the Tisza, called the Tiszántúl (qq.v.). Population density and the composition of the region’s population have varied greatly over the centuries, and have been as much influenced by changes in its physical geography (due to irrigation and swamp drainage projects, for instance) as the vicissitudes of history. The Alföld is suited for grain farming and animal husbandry (with the tanya, an isolated farmstead, as the typical settlement type), as well as market gardening (fruit, grapes, root crops and leafy vegetables, onions, peppers, and tobacco are all grown).

Bakony: the region in the central Dunántúl (qq.v.) named for the largest mountain range north of Lake Balaton. A closed, contiguous stretch, it was a piece of untouched nature until the late nineteenth century. Its population has preserved many archaic customs and mores to this day. Extensive animal husbandry is the typical form of agriculture, and the woods are good for berrying. In times past, the region was famed for its glass blowers, and its precision-instrument makers.

Balaton-felvidék: the rolling uplands on the northern shore of Lake Balaton, including the south-facing slopes of the Bakony Mountains overlooking the lake. The area has always been densely populated by a peasantry originally belonging to the lesser nobility, and boasts a highly developed folk culture. One of the country’s historical wine-growing regions, it has a thriving wine industry.

Bukovina: formerly a part of the Habsburg Empire, today a part of Romania, it once had a sizeable Hungarian population in the five villages—Fogadjisten, Istensegíts, Hadikfalva, Andrásfalva, and Józseffalva—settled by the few thousand Székelys who fled there from Transylvania in 1763-64 to avoid being drafted as border guards. In later centuries, the Székelys left Bukovina in successive waves of emigration, and settled in various places: along the Lower Danube (aldunai székelyek), in Bácska, in southwestern Hungary, in various parts of Transylvania, and in the United States and Canada. All these group are still referred to as “Bukovina Székelys”.

Csallóköz: a distinct region of the Kisalföld (qq.v.), the largest island of the Danube lying on the northwestern borders of Hungary. It has a predominantly Hungarian-speaking population; after the First World War, it became a part of what was then Czechoslovakia; today, it is a part of Slovakia. Characterized by state-of-the-art agricultural methods (in market gardening, wheat growing, and animal husbandry alike), and a peasantry who made the most of the proximity of the markets of Vienna and Bratislava, the region was known for its highly-developed middle-class peasant culture.

Dunántúl (Transdanubia): a major geographical region in the western half of Hungary lying to the south and west of the Danube, between the eastern reaches of the Alps and the Mura and Dráva rivers. Extraordinarily varied topographically, it is the most densely populated part of Hungary. The ethnic composition of the population reflects the population movements that have been a part of the region’s checkered history. Its folk culture mirrors both an open-minded receptivity to the latest and the best, and
a strong sense of tradition. Some of Hungary’s chief cultural, religious and administrative centers have evolved in the Dunántúl, and are the nuclei of prosperous cities.

**Erdély (Transylvania):** a historic region in the southeastern part of the Carpathian Basin in what is today Romania, bounded by the Carpathian Mountains on the north and east, the Transylvanian Alps on the south, and the Bihor Mountains on the west. More and more of the region came to be inhabited by Magyars from the tenth century on; subsequently, Germans (Saxons) and Romanians also settled there. Transylvania was an independent administrative unit (a principality) several times throughout its history; it was a part of Hungary at various times, and, in the aftermath of the Second World War, has finally become a part of Romania. Its complex ethnic composition had made it a point of intersection of various folk cultures (Hungarian, Romanian, and German), as well as composite of diverse socio-economic formations (demesne villages, free rural communities enjoying various prerogatives, and free towns). As the periphery of Hungarian folk culture, Transylvania has preserved—in its material culture, folk motifs, folk tales, language and customs—a great many archaisms that are telling vestiges of its former role as the point where the East (the Balkans) met the West.

**Fekete-Körös völgy:** the valley of the Fekete-Körös River in the western half of Transylvania, stretching to the Alföld. The region’s Hungarian population, though decimated by the Ottoman wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, survived as an ethnic enclave, and preserved intact its archaic folk culture and dialect.

**Felső-Tiszavidék:** a region in the upper reaches of the Tisza River in northwestern Hungary, considered as unique for its distinctive form of folk architecture.

**Felvidék (Upper Hungary; formerly called Felső, or Felsőmagyarország):** the mountainous northern part of historical Hungary, i.e., the northernmost part of the Hungarian-speaking regions of the Carpathian Basin. It was only in the late nineteenth century that the term “Felvidék” came to be a synonym for “Felső” and “Felsőmagyarország”. Since Hungary’s dismemberment in 1920 by the Treaty of Trianon, the term “Felvidék” has come to refer only to the Hungarian and Slovak-inhabited parts of Upper Hungary that now belong to Slovakia, as well as to the part of the Kisalföld that now lies in Slovakia.

**Göcsej:** a forested region of deep valleys and gorges in Western Hungary, in the southwestern part of Zala County. Originally a military frontier zone, its later population was dominantly of the middle and lesser nobility. Poor in farm land, the region has preserved some uniquely archaic methods of agriculture: burning the brush to clear the land, the cultivation of some prehistoric grains (millet and buckwheat), and a form of viticulture that is no longer practiced in any other part of Europe.

**Hajdúság:** a historical/ethnographic region in the central Tiszántúl (qq.v.), originally the district encompassing the six “old hajdú towns”; more broadly, from 1876 to 1950, Hajdú County with Debrecen as its center. The hajdús, originally armed “cowherds” who protected the Hungarian livestock exported on foot from marauding Turks and other armed bands, served as mercenaries during the century and a half of Ottoman occupation. István Bocskay settled the hajdús—who contracted, in perpetuity, to fight for him in times of war—on his own lands, and bestowed on them a “collective nobility”, i.e., exemption from all feudal dues and services. The hajdús settlements extended in a semi-circle from southern Bihar to the mouth of the Sajó and Hernád rivers; there were also certain hajdú-type settlements in the Dunántúl and Transylvania. The hajdús liberties, though never officially recognized, were respected in practice until they supported Francis II Rákóczi against the Habsburgs. Reduced to serfdom at the beginning of the eighteenth century, many hajdú communities continued, for generations, to petition the courts for the recognition of their old liberties. Some of the “old hajdú towns” founded by Bocskay’s troops finally won back their right to self-government, and, in 1790, were recognized as the “Hajdúkerület”, an autonomous administrative unit independent of the county system.

**Hetés:** an area of eleven villages between two streams neighboring Göcsej in southwestern Zala County, in Western Hungary.
Kalotaszeg: a historical/ethnographic region of forty Hungarian-speaking Calvinist villages to the west of Kolozsvár/Cluj in Transylvania. The peasants of the villages are mostly farmers, with some people employed in logging, beef-cattle raising, and handicrafts. The region is famous for its rich and varied folk art (architecture, peasant wear, embroidery and woodcarving). It was the vogue of Kalotaszeg folk art that opened the door to the discovery of Hungarian folk art as such in the 1880s. The embroidery of Kalotaszeg was famed throughout Europe, and Kalotaszeg folk art as a whole had considerable influence on Hungarian Art Nouveau applied arts, architecture, and graphics, as well as the art of the Gödöllő School.

Kárpátalja: political and administrative region of the Ukraine, the region between the Tisza and the Carpathian Mountains. Some of the conquering Magyars traversed this region to cross into the Carpathian Basin (through the Verecke Pass). In the past, the locals burned the brush to clear the land, and practiced transhumance; more recently, the lumber industry and mining in this region has contributed substantially to the national economy. The traditional wine-growing regions of the Kárpátalja have played a major role in the development of Hungarian folk culture in the region.

Kisalföld: a major geographical region in the Danube Basin in northwestern Hungary, consisting partly of the loessial floodplain of the Danube and Rába rivers and their tributaries, and partly of drier, terraced plains. One of the principal areas of settlement of the Magyars of the time of the Conquest, it was the gateway to the Carpathian Basin, thanks to the communications lines along the Danube, and a main center of transit trade, a great facilitator of urbanization. There were times when its folk culture was among the most developed in the country: the peasant home interiors of the region, for instance, showed an outstanding sophistication. It is a region rich in folk tradition and material relics, has retained some archaic elements of social organization, and has been in the vanguard of folk cultural development since the Late Middle Ages.

Kiskunság: a major region between Danube and the Tisza, lying between the southern outskirts of Budapest and Szeged, named after the Cumans who settled here. Consisting of a series of market towns of the szálláskertes settlement type (the farms and farm buildings were on strips of land surrounding the settlement proper, or even farther off), it had a population typically engaged in extensive animal husbandry; in more recent centuries, there has been a switch to more intensive forms of agriculture such as market gardening, and to farming on tanyas, or farmsteads. Culturally speaking, the Kiskunság peasantry has always been on a par with the middle class.

Lendva-vidék: a part of the Muravidék in northeastern Slovenia, it is the group of Hungarian-speaking villages and communities centered on the town of Alsó-Lendva (Lendava). A post-Trianon term, it was introduced by the local Hungarian population for purposes of self-identification.

Matyóföld: three neighboring settlements—Mezőkövesd, Tard and Szentistván—bounded by the Sajó and the Tisza in the western half of Borsod County. The inhabitants, the Matyós, Roman Catholics in a sea of largely Calvinist neighboring communities, became a distinctive ethnographic group only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They made their living working rented lands at some distance from the settlements proper, and later, took on seasonal work as agricultural laborers far from home. Strongly traditionalist communities, the Matyós evolved their embroidery and celebrated Matyó peasant wear in the course of the nineteenth century.

Moldva (Moldavia): a region at the foot of the Eastern Carpathians, the last transitional home of the conquering Magyars on their way to the Carpathian Basin. Later, it became the Cumans’ temporary home, later still a Romanian voivodeship and then principality. Today, it is a part of Romania. The Csángós, or Moldavian Magyars, comprise its Hungarian-speaking population. The Csángó community has retained a great many archaic cultural features, but its language and lifestyle (e.g., peasant wear) has been much influenced by its (Orthodox) Romanian neighbors.
Muravidék: a region in the northeastern tip of Slovenia, stretching left of the Mura River to the Hungarian border, and home of the Muravidék Magyars. Its sub-regions include the Lendva-vidék (qq.v.), and the parts of Hetés (qq.v.) and the Őrség (qq.v.) which today belong to Slovenia.

Nagykunság: a region of the Tiszántúl (qq.v.) along the central Tisza, named after the Cumans (kunok, in Hungarian). The rolling loess plains of the region were excellent for extensive animal husbandry. Its prosperous peasant middle class gave preference to the tanya settlement structure, to the cultivation of wheat and corn (maize), and gradually, to more and more intensive forms of raising livestock.

Őrség (Marches): a historical/ethnographic region in Western Hungary, at the source of the Zala River. An area of table-lands carved up by water-courses, it is rich in precipitation, and has some wonderful evergreen forests. Formerly a military frontier zone (as its name indicates), its population enjoyed administrative autonomy from the start. Typical of the Őrség is the szeres settlement type (small, self-contained communities—szerek—built on hilltops). The region's Subalpine climate has had a decisive influence on agricultural practices, which include burning the brush to clear the land, the intensive use of natural fertilizers, and cattle raising. The Őrség has always played a major role as food supplier to Austria, and was one of the first regions to have a prosperous middle class.

Sárköz: a low-lying, marshy flood-plain of the lower Danube located in the Dunántúl, south of Szekszárd. Along the old river trade route between Buda and Belgrade, it has always been a highly developed region. After the swamps were drained, the fishing and pákász villages (pákászkodás: making a living off the fens by fishing, trapping amphibious rodents and waterfowl, and gathering (medicinal) plants, eggs and feathers) switched to wheat farming and viticulture. The grapes grown in the region are among the country's best. The peasantry of the Sárköz prospered and kept pace with the middle class, cultivating, at the same time, its celebrated folk art and peasant wear.

Szekelyföld: the region inhabited by the Székelys in the northeastern corner of Transylvania, Romania (periodically, it has enjoyed autonomy throughout its long history, as a part of Hungary at times, and at times of Romania). The administrative unit of the Székelyföld is the szék, which was the local equivalent of the “county”, but free of all feudal obligations. Topographically, the Székelyföld falls into various sub-regions: there are river valleys, alluvial plains, mountain ranges and basins. Farming and animal husbandry are the main forms of making a living, but handicrafts also play an important part. Lying on the outer limit of the Hungarian-speaking part of the Carpathian Basin, the Székelyföld has a folk culture rich in archaic elements, and folk poetry, carved wooden buildings, and peasant wear which are in the authentic Hungarian folk tradition.

Szlavónia (Slavonia): lying to the east of Zagreb between the Dráva and Száva rivers, the region today is a part of Croatia. It had been an autonomous unit within the Kingdom of Hungary, and then a military frontier zone. Land was once plentiful, and led to a great deal of population mobility. The present Hungarian-speaking population lives scattered throughout the region, and as a contiguous settlement in four villages on the right bank of the Danube.

Tiszántúl (Transtisza): a major region of Hungary in the eastern part of the Alföld (qq.v.), bounded by the Tisza, the Maros and the Transylvanian Alps. Its troubled history has resulted in a great deal of population movement; it has been a major area of immigration and emigration, with the settlements generally located in the higher-lying areas along the river banks.

Vajdaság (Voivodina): a region of historical Hungary; today, an autonomous province of Yugoslavia, and the area where most of Yugoslavia’s Hungarian population now lives.