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## **Kinship Terminology of the Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians**

### **Introduction**

Since the appearance of ethnographic and linguistic knowledge on the Moldavian Csángó-Hungarians, authors have been publishing terms of kinship as well.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the increasing amount of data<sup>2</sup>, no systematic description and analysis has appeared, except for one, published quite late, in the year 1980.

The pioneering work of Vilma Kósa-Szántó published the system of kinship terminology from the village of Fundu Răcăciuni, aiming to reveal the influence of urbanization on the very terminology (Kósa-Szántó 1980). Besides the Moldavian, she used kinship terminology data from Sfântu Gheorghe and Armășeni (Harghita County) to make important observations regarding the change of terminology and its modification by generation and location. In data collection and publication she followed the pattern presented by Tibor Bodrogi in a general study on Hungarian kinship terminology. Bodrogi's study has become an example for the whole Hungarian research, as seen in the later publications,<sup>3</sup> a leading pattern fulfilling the demands of general ethnological research in this matter at the same time, easing the comparative research, as proved by the analysis of Vilma Kósa-Szántó, too. Bodrogi's ideas might have had an important role in Kósa-Szántó's quest for a relation between the kinship terminology from Fundu Răcăciuni and a once supposed system of large family, though in the formation of her standpoints in the research she quotes Réka Lőrinczi and Károly Kós (Kósa-Szántó 1980: 154, 158).

Knowing about this study, but without using it on purpose during fieldwork, and encouraged by Professor Ferenc Pozsony, I started to do some research on the kinship terminology of the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians in Cleja, in the summer of 2001, where students from the Department of Hungarian Ethnography and Anthropology of the Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj Napoca were carrying out field work. They stayed at the "Hungarian House" in Cleja, and

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<sup>1</sup> Some examples: Szarvas 1874, Rokonföldi 1875.

<sup>2</sup> The richest linguistic material was published by Yrjö Wichmann from his collections dated 1907, but he did not mention the exact location for the terms, only the region (Wichmann 1936). He was followed by Ödön Balogh with a vast material from Ciugheș, but unfortunately the author did not take into consideration the research orientations of ethnography (Balogh 1942a, Balogh 1942b), and later on he was also lead exclusively by linguistic points of view in the reconsideration of his data (Balogh 1963).

<sup>3</sup> Bodrogi 1961. Vilma Kósa-Szántó used the English edition of Bodrogi's work along with other works of the same author (Kósa-Szántó 1980: 158). The inspiring role of Bodrogi's work in revealing the Hungarian kinship system was underscored also by László Szabó (1993: 53), who has published several outstanding articles on kinship terminology from different areas, completing Bodrogi's pattern with the terminology of artificial kinship relations (Szabó 1986: 61).

we did not see each other at all, except for one meeting and a party at the end of the fieldwork. Unlike them, for ten days, I stayed with a local family in a part of the village called Buda. The family included a middle aged father and mother, plus four children aged between 10 and 21. The wife's parents lived in Cleja as well, but in another part of the village. The husband's mother lived in the same house, but she had a separate entrance, and didn't have her meals together with the rest of the family. On the same plot there was the house of one of the husband's brothers. On the next plot lived another brother. So I was able to observe and record the practice and use of kinship attitudes and terminology in the case of a family with large local social relations, and that made the recording of terminologies referring to others easier as well. Plus I had the chance to attend a wedding, too, which proved to be an excellent occasion to observe the use of terminologies. Wondering on the streets of the village, I observed that the locals were really bilingual; they do not only know Hungarian and Romanian, but they change the used language sometimes within the same sentence. I had the same experience at Șomușca, too, where I stayed for a week in 2003 with the family of a middle aged man, living together with his mother and an extremely quick-witted son. Besides them, my informants were an 81-year old man and his family, a man of 62, and another of 46. Most of my material was provided by the mentioned persons, completed by a 51-year old woman from Pustiana and two elder (aged 73 and 80) women from Săbăoani whom I met in the course of fieldwork carried out in 2001. In the case of the latter, the work was quite difficult, because they could not understand all my questions formulated in Hungarian, so I needed the help of Ferenc Pozsony from time to time, who translated my questions to Romanian. Understanding their answers was not easy either, because their speech was very specific. The language change was illustrated by the fact that the grandchild of one of them did not speak a word in Hungarian. Thus the data from Pustiana and Săbăoani are suitable only for completing somehow the image constructed on the main location.

Being no linguist, I used a phonetic noting practice, without any other symbols. The location shall be signalled by the initials as follows: Cleja (C), Șomușca (S), Pustiana (P) and Săbăoani (Sa). For easier understanding, the data from different locations shall appear in a different row.

### **The Presentation of the Kinship Terminology Based on the Collected Material**

#### **General terms**

Family: *nyámság*

Relatives: *nyámok*. This term is used on all locations. Even at Săbăoani "the relatives came to see us".

*Nyám* (relatives): the brothers and sisters of my father and mother, their wives and husbands, their children and grandchildren.

At Pustiana and Săbăoani the term *nemzet* (clan, kind) is used as well in the meaning of family: "your clan/kind wasn't good either" (P), "that's how his clan/kind is" (Sa).

**Direct line blood relations**

	<i>Reference (to)</i>	<i>Address (to)</i>
+3 man	dédiapó (C) (great-grandfather)	You, in Romanian tutoyer (C)
+3 woman	dédimámó, öregmámó, “Vironyi [Veron] mámó”, mámóka, mamu (C) (great-grandmother)	You, in Romanian tutoyer (C)
+2 man	apó, apóm, nagypapa (C) apóm (P) nagytát, nattát (Sa) (grandfather)	apó, nagypapa (grandfather), You in Romanian tutoyer (C) apó + You (P)
+2 woman	mámo, (C, S, Sa), mámóka, mamica, mámi, mamica, nagymámó, bunyika „I am their bunyika”(C) anyóm (P) nagymám (Sa) (grandmother)	the same as the reference mámika+You, in Romanian tutoyer (C) anyó (P) (grandmother)
+1 man	apám, lately táti (C) most recently tátika (C, S) édesapám (P) tát, táta (Sa) (father)	apám, táti+You, in Romanian tutoyer (C) tátikám+tutoyer (S) táte (P) (father)
+1 woman	mámi, mámika, mámóka, , mámika, mámóka (C), édesanyám (P) máma (Sa) (mother)	the same as the reference +You, in Romanian tutoyer (C) máme (P) (mother)
o generally	tesvér, testvér (C, S, P) (brother/sister)	
o boy, elder	bátyám (K) bátyám János, bácsim János (P)	You, lately tutoyer (K) You (P)

	ösém, <sup>4</sup> bagyi, bádé (Sz) (elder brother)	
o boy, younger	ecsém (C, P), öcsém (S) ösém (Sa) (younger brother)	tutoyer (C, S, P)
o girl, elder	néném (C, P), néném Tinka (P) lélé (Sa) (elder sister)	You, lately tutoyer (C, P)
o girl, younger	húgom (C, S, P, Sa), húgom Tinka (P) (younger sister)	tutoyer (C, S, P, Sa)
-1 boy	fiam (C, S, P, Sa) (my boy) My boy, Dzseni, elder „my youngest boy, middle, younger boy” (P) gyermek (C) (child)	tutoyer (C, S, P, Sa) tutoyer (P)
-1 girl	ljányom (C, Sa) leányom (C, S, P) (my girl)	tutoyer (C, Sa) tutoyer (C, S, P)
-2	onoka, onokám (C, S, P, Sa) (grandchild, my grandchild)	tutoyer (C, S, P, Sa)
-2 boy	nyepot (C, S), nyiput (Sa), nepocel (P) (grandson)	tutoyer (C, S, P, Sa)
-2 girl	nyepota (C, S), nepota (Sa), nepocika (P) (granddaughter)	tutoyer (C, S, P, Sa)

### ***Collateral blood relations***

	<i>Reference (to)</i>	<i>Address (to)</i>
+ 2 man	bácsim (P) (uncle)	You (P)
+2 woman	néném (P) (aunt)	You (P)

<sup>4</sup> Uncertain data. The 73-year old Aunt Veta, my informant, had nine brothers and sisters, she was the eldest one. She knew no term for elder brother. My other informant, Mári, gave me the terms *bagyi*, *bádé*, but they have been brooding over them. But using *öcsém* for elder brother was noted earlier on as well: “In have a brother (öccsöm), elder...” (Rubinyi 1901: 171).

+1 man	bácsi, bácsi János (Uncle, Uncle John), (if there are more, for signaling differences before big uncle, little uncle), mosul (C) bátyám, bácsim János (P) muszuj (Sa) (uncle)	before You, lately tutoyer (C)    You (P)
+1 woman	néni, nénike, matus (C), nagynéném, „nagynéném Erzsi” (P) matasze (Sa) (aunt)	before You, lately tutoyer (C)  You (P) tánti (Sa) (aunt)
0 children of the parents’ brothers/sisters		
a/ boy	vérje, véjtem, lately unokatestvér <sup>5</sup> (C, P),  vérem(S) viresz, víre (Sa) (cousin)	tutoyer (C, S) before You for the elder, tutoyer the younger today tutoyer both (P) fiam (my boy)+ tutoyer (Sa)
b/ girl	vérsár, <sup>6</sup> vérsárom, veresorám (C) verisora (S) unokatestvér (P)  vírizára (Sa) (cousin)	tutoyer (C) tutoyer (S) before You for the elder, tutoyer the younger, today tutoyer both (P) ljányom (my girl) (Sa)
0 the grandparents were brothers/sisters	harmadtestvér <sup>7</sup> (third brother/sister) (C)	

<sup>5</sup> I heard it at a wedding in Cleja. To my interest one of the bride’s brothers told me that they had been using it lately, since they had been working in Hungary.

<sup>6</sup> Earlier reports present the form *vésár* (Szarvas 1874: 3, Rokonföldi 1875: 142), occasionally *vesár* (Munkácsy 1881: 204) and *véser* (Márton 1972: 583).

<sup>7</sup> This also proves to be the collateral limit of the family. Third level cousins are not considered as family and relatives any more. Of course, people still remind them sometimes, for example at Cleja someone used the term *onokám gyereke* (my grandchild’s son) for the grandchild of his brother.

-1 brother's/ sister's child	onoka, <sup>8</sup> onokám (C, S, P, Sa) ("grandchild")	name, tutoyer (C, S, P, Sa)
a/ boy	nyiput (Sa) (nephew)	
b/ girl	nepota (Sa) (niece)	
-1 cousin's child	onoka, nyepot (C, S), nyiput (Sa) ("grandchild", nephew)	tutoyer (C, S, Sa)

### **Collateral blood relatives' spouse**

	<i>Reference (to)</i>	<i>Address (to)</i>
+1 man's wife	ángyó (C, S, Sa) ángyi (P) ángya (Sa) ("sister-in-law")	ángyó, ángyi + You (C, S, P, Sa) You ángyi, Margit ángyi (P) ("sister-in-law")
+1 woman's husband	bácsi, bácsi János <sup>9</sup> (C, S) sógorbácsi (P) ("brother-in-law")	bácsi János, + You (C, S) You (P)
o sister's husband	lér (disappearing, C, Sa), sógor (C, S, P) szúgor (Sa) (brother-in-law)	before You for the elder, tutoyer the younger today tutoyer both (C, S, P, Sa)
o brother's wife	sógorasszony (C, S, P) „my younger brother's wife, My elder brother's wife” (P) kumnáta (Sa) (sister-in-law)	for elder keed (You), for younger te (you) (C, S, P)  for elder keed (You), for younger te (you) (Sa)
-1 man	vejem (C, S, P, Sa) (son-in-law)	name + tutoyer (C, S, P, Sa)

<sup>8</sup> When I asked about *vére* and *vérisóra* in Pustiana, people said that these meant the son and daughter of their brother or sister. The necessity of questioning and the difference in meaning between the villages make the data questionable.

<sup>9</sup> The Uncle+name term is used for elder male acquaintances, for example my informants used it for their 81-year old neighbour ("Uncle Márton"), who was no relative at all.

-1 woman	menyem (C, S, P, Sa), népecske <sup>10</sup> (C) (daughter-in-law)	name + tutoyer(C, S, P, Sa), „hej, de Kriszti” (C)
-1 nephew’s wife	onokám asszonya (C) „nyiputom nípe” (Sa) (“my nephew’s woman”)	tutoyer (C)
-1 niece’s husband	onokám embere (C) lérecske (Sa) (“my niece’s man”)	tutoyer (C) tutoyer (Sa)

**Own marital relatives***General terms***+1 the bridegroom’s parents**

father	öremapa (C), örömapa (S)
mother	öremanya (C), örömanya (S)

**the bride’s parents**

father	búsapa (C, S)
mother	búsanya (C, S)

**o the  
bridegroom**

nyirel (C, S, P), nyiril (Sa)
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**the bride**

nyirásza (C, S, P, Sa)
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*Marital relatives, husband speaking*

<i>Reference (to)</i>	<i>Address (to)</i>
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+ 1 man	táti, após (C) ipam (Sa) (father-in-law)	táti+You (C)
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<sup>10</sup> This term is used in this sense at Cleja, but few people know it.

+ 1 woman	mámi, mámika, anyós (C)napam (Sa) (mother-in-law)	mámo, You (C)
o spouse	asszony, (“I talked to the woman”), fejezné (rare) (C) asszony (P) núp (Sa) (wife, woman)	„hey, woman!” (C), tutoyer (C, P)
o wife’s brother	lér (former), sógor <sup>11</sup> (C, S, P) for younger te (you) (C, S, P).	for elder keed (You),
o wife’s sister	sógorasszony (regardless of age) (C, S, P)	tutoyer + name (C, S, P)

*Marital relatives, wife speaking*

	<i>Reference (to)</i>	<i>Address (to)</i>
+1 man	táti (C) apósom (P) ipam (Sa) (father-in-law)	táti, formerly apám + You (C) apóka + You (P)
+1 woman	anyósom (C, P) napam (Sa) (mother-in-law)	anyóka, You (P)
o spouse	ember (C, S, P, Sa) (“I talked to the man”) (C) „the man is mine, the devil is mine, the old man is mine” (P) (man, husband)	formerly keed (You), lately te (you) (C, S, P, Sa) („come here, man!”) (C) “Péter, bring me some water” (P)
o husband’s elder brother	apám Márton, apám Gyurka (C) (my father Márton/Gyurka) sógor (C, P), „sógorom János” (P) (brother-in-law)	apa+You (C) You (C, P)

<sup>11</sup> The terms *sógor*, *sógorasszony* are used today also for each other’s brothers’/sisters’ spouses, formerly not addressed to as a member of the family, with one exception: the wife of the wife’s brother was called and referred to as *nászecka* at Cleja.



o husband's younger brother	sógor (C, S, P), sógor Márton (S), sógorom István (P) (brother-in-law)	for elder keed (You), for younger te (you) (C, S, P)
o husband's elder sister	anyám Kati, anya, anyám Mária, anyám Luca (C) (mother Kati/Mária) sógorasszony (P) (sister-in-law)	anya (C) (mother)  for elder keed (You), for younger te (you) (C, S, P)
o husband's younger sister	sógorasszony (C, S, P) (sister-in-law)	name + tutoyer (C, S, P)

*The relation between the husband and wife's parents*

	<i>Reference (to)</i>	<i>Address (to)</i>
man	nász (C) kruszkule (Sa)	„nász Jancsi, come here!” between men tutoyer, between women You (C)
woman	nyoszolyó <sup>12</sup> kruszka (Sa)	You with both men and women (C)

**Godparents**

	<i>Reference (to)</i>	<i>Address (to)</i>
+1 man	nagykeresztapa, keresztapa (referring also to the godfather of the elder brother) <sup>13</sup> (C, S, P, Sa) (godfather)	You (C)
+1 woman	keresztanya (C, S, P, Sa) (godmother)	You (C, S)
o man	koma (C, S, P, Sa)	komám, You (C, S, P)

<sup>12</sup> It was also used for the mother-in-law of the brother/sister.

<sup>13</sup> Everybody had several godfathers and godmothers, but this is not the place for presenting this complex system. The term godfather still has a very strong meaning and prestige.

o woman	komaasszony (C, S, P, Sa)	komámasszony, You (P)
o godfather's a/ son	kereszt (C, S, P)	
b/ daughter	keresztke (C, S, P.)	
-1 boy	keresztfiám (C, S, P)	tutoyer (C, S, P)
-1 girl	keresztlányom (C, S, P)	tutoyer (C, S, P)
-1 son's crony	komecska (C)	tutoyer (C)

### Analysis

During the analysis of the presented material I shall focus on four topics – with the related and necessary depth and volume. These are the following:

1. Revealing the structural characteristics and their comparison to the kinship terminology of other Hungarian areas.
2. Revealing the kind of family system and familial institution system that the terminology reflects.
3. Enrolling all Hungarian terms showing regional or archaic specificities.
4. Enrolling all Romanian terms in the perspective of their temporal appearance in this system.

1. My starting point is that the presented data propose a changing kinship terminology of the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians nowadays, meaning the last few decades. This statement is a banality, of course, since the terminology has always been changing. It is enough to take a look at the history of the words included in the Hungarian kinship terminology, preferably in the three volumes of *A magyar nyelv történeti-etimológiai szótára* [Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language] (Budapest, 1967–1976), besides, revealing the change of kinship terminology following the linguistic periodization calls for a detailed documentation of the phenomenon (J. Lőrinczi 1980, Szabó 1980: 19–68).<sup>14</sup> Although the change that is perceived by ethnographic studies as the transformation of rural terminology into an urban one (Bodrogi 1961: 136–143, Szabó 1980: 19)<sup>15</sup> has its place within the changes touching the structure, and can be better

<sup>14</sup> Linguistic periodization has been questioned by Bodrogi 1984: 141.

<sup>15</sup> Also Kósa-Szántó belong to this enumeration (Kósa-Szántó 1980). György Szépe prefers the term standard instead of urban (Szépe 1972: 182).

documented than the previous ones. And exactly because of this we know that its course is not a uniform one through the Hungarian-language area, although there have been some general influence patterns starting with official, educated speech through the varied forms spread by the mass media.<sup>16</sup> In the case of the Moldavian Csángós all this becomes even more important due to their specific historical situation, resulting in the fact that all the mentioned influences have been reaching them within the Romanian state's frames. This circumstance has not excluded the contact with the Hungarian-language area, but the intensity of contacts has varied in time – it obviously grew after 1990 especially because of the workforce migration to Hungary and thanks to the means of mass communication, along with the restart of education in Hungarian in the Csángó villages.<sup>17</sup>

The terminology changes within the speech of the Moldavian Csángós reflect such changes of kinship relations which are related to the decrease of the differences between generations and of the prestige related to age and social condition. We can say that we are dealing with modernization, where things differ from a previous stage when differentiation depended more on status. In spite of all these changes we can state that the specificities of the terminology system's elder stratum correspond to the ones of Hungarian kinship terminology previous to the period of language renewal, before the turn to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup>

These specificities are the following.

The classification between gender and age, which appears in every kinship system in one or another form, is included in the system in such a way that the principle of age dominates. Gender differentiation succeeds within the reference terms in the relation between the ego and the elder generations, but it misses in the relation of the ego with the younger generations with the exception of his/her own children. Thus the children of the generations that follow the ego in the collateral line get the term *onoka* [grandchild]. But a specificity of the urban terminology has not appeared, possibly introducing the nephew and the niece in the system, although the cousin has appeared, but without any gender differentiation.

The priority of age and respect shown to the elders are reflected in the use of the term *keed* [You] addressing those older than the ego, in opposition with the informal term of *te* [you]. The validity of this principle is supported especially by the way brothers or sisters address each other, that is if the ego addresses an elder brother/sister, the terms related to parents, grandparents are used, while the younger ones are addressed with terms related to the generations following the ego; just like in the case of the rural kinship terminology from Hungary. The presented aspect is almost perfectly mirrored in the case

<sup>16</sup> Attention is drawn onto these factors by Szabó 1980: 59.

<sup>17</sup> Ferenc Pozsony offers an excellent summary of the history of the Moldavian Csángós (Pozsony 2005: 7–110, 191–212).

<sup>18</sup> My statement is based on Réka Lőrinczi's overlook on the words infiltrated into the kinship terminology in the "new Hungarian age", that is after 1772 (J. Lőrinczi 1980: 215–222).

of addressing the brothers/sisters of the spouse, with the exception that – according to my data – the husband will tutoyer all sisters of his wife, regardless of their age.

It is important to underscore in this context that the Dravidic-type<sup>19</sup> brother/sister-terminology is the one that lives among the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians, which is a Hungarian characteristic, meaning that there are separate terms for different sex and age, differently from the surrounding Indo-European nations' terminology where only sex and the related genus can be signalled with one word<sup>20</sup>, while age is paraphrased. This has enlightened the unification of social attitudes, enabling all brothers and sisters to be tutoyered, a fact that I discovered in the 1960s at Dunaszekcső within a German terminology with a very strong principle of age (Sárkány 1992).

Within blood relations *tutoyer* is spreading in the Moldavian Csángós, except for +2 generations, but it has not become general among marital relatives, not even in the case of +1 generations, it is used only at the level of the same generation. I have to mention that when my informants were talking about the forms of addressing in Romanian, they mentioned exclusively *tutoyer*. Thus in the emergence of more informal communication practices Hungarian vernacular patterns and Romanian habits prevail at the same time.

Nevertheless, there are some aspects of the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians' terminology that differ from the practices in Hungarian areas.

One of these is that terms of direct line blood relatives do not always appear with attributes regarding the collateral relatives. So the terms of the ego's brothers/sisters do not widen collaterally, contrary to the Hungarian system, where we find *bátyám–nagybátyám* [elder brother–uncle], *néném–nagyéném* [elder sister–aunt], *öcsém–unokaöcsém* [younger brother–cousin], *húgom–unokahúgom* [younger sister–cousin], so neatly illustrated by György Szépe (Szépe 1972: 190). However, their circle can be widened further, because the ego can have elder cousins as well (unokabátyám and unokanéném). Tibor Bodrogi formulated the possibility that this system might be rooted in the Obi-Ugrian kinship system, being one variant of it, within which paternal terminology was widened collaterally onto first relatives during the period of the disintegration of stem organization (Bodrogi 1977: 29–30). Only some remains of this presumably very ancient aspect can be found today within the kinship terminology of the Moldavian Csángós. On level +2 it could be found in Pustiana, being more accentuated on level +1 as well, while in Cleja also the terms of the elder brother were used for other men, but in the case of women it needed some explanation how *néném* [elder sister] was transformed into *néni* [aunt]. Réka J. Lőrinczi raises the possibility that the age difference can be signalled this way, considering *néni* of a recent evolution (J. Lőrinczi 1980: 76). But then during my fieldwork, people from Cleja mentioned as an archaic aspect that they used to differentiate elder or younger uncle, depending on whether their mother or father's brothers were elder or younger than their parents.

<sup>19</sup> A classification of George Peter Murdock on brother/sister terminology, just like it was first stated by Réka J. Lőrinczi (J. Lőrinczi 1980: 35).

<sup>20</sup> That is why it is called by Murdock „The European or Brother-Sister Type” (Murdock 1968: 367).

Another feature must be the appearance of Romanian terms within the mentioned collateral relations, being dominant on the level of cousins, while the Hungarian term is only a late appearance. The Romanian tally (*nyepot, nyepota*) have been known related to the children of the cousins as well, presenting differences in pronunciations, showing the differences in sex among the *onokák* [grandnephews, grandnieces], reflecting in the same time the mentality according to which the ego's second level blood relatives can be classified together.<sup>21</sup>

This variety and volatility is even more curious, because it seems that the Hungarian terms on collateral blood relatives live on wilfully. It does not mean that they do not change, because the term *lér* [brother-in-law] is disappearing, being replaced with *sógor*, a term of German origins, recorded in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, considered by Károly Mollay of internal evolution, and usually as an "urban" word (Mollay 1982: 502), infiltrated in the terminology with its whole family of words. The terms on the ego's own marital relatives also proved to be stable, although many Romanian words became well spread for the situation of the bride and bridegroom, and for the spouses of the collateral relatives at Săbăoani.

These changes ask for explanation, but for the time being there are no sources to help us in this matter. Vilma Kósa-Szántó raises the possibility that the changes, first of all the appearance of the Romanian terms besides the Hungarian ones enabled the signalling of age, with the aim of distinguishing between elder – younger (Kósa-Szántó 1980: 155). This could be supported by the opposition of elder uncle – younger uncle I have mentioned, matching in this system dominated by the principle of age, but I received no reference to age signalling especially in the case of the Romanian terms.

It is obvious that the change in the terms on collateral relatives reflects some withdrawal. Thus on the level of the ego's own generation the different terms for brothers/sisters and cousins draw clear limits – with the help of Romanian words. The question is if this withdrawal means a change in social organization or it can be explained by something else.

2. At this point we have to face the assumption that follows the whole work of Vilma Kósa-Szántó and to which I referred in the introduction. The assumption can be briefly summed up like this: in the beginning there was the big family, simplified to a tribal, then to a small family, and this is expressed by the change of the kinship terminology from "rural" to an "urban" one. The complex system – in her comparative research – is that of Fundu Răcăciuni, so we could presume that behind it once stood a big family life, but at the time of Kósa-Szántó's research (in the 1970s) the locals did not know about the fact

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<sup>21</sup> Gheorghită Geană explains this feature by a Roman influence, following Archie Bush, in whose opinion at the Romans legally the wife is the husband's daughter, but if the husband is the father for the wife and for the children in the same time, then his children are in the same position as the mother's brothers and sisters, that is why the terms are the same (Geană 1978: 83). The problem is, that such classifications can be found within many languages, including Hungarian, although they have no business with Latin.

that they might have been living in a big family system once, and the author candidly warns us on this aspect (Kósa-Szántó 1980: 147–149, 157). So what kind of familial structure does the kinship terminology of the Moldavian Csángós reflect and do its changes reflect the changes of that very structure?

First, we have to state that the proposition that all societies once lived in big families generally cannot be proved in the case of mankind. The basic family (small or nuclear family) is a universal phenomenon (Murdock 1949: 2);<sup>22</sup> it can be demonstrated in the case of seizing groups as well. Even if some have presumed that it might have been general in Europe, it has been presumed for an early period which cannot be reached with accurate information: in any case before the spread of Christianity (Goody 1983: 263, 278).

At the same time, we know from Berkner that there were regions in Europe where, as recently as the last century, one could identify multi-generation big families including several small families at the level of a certain generation, and regions with small families or with tribal families including only one family per generation. But not even these can be clearly revealed from the sources. He also draws our attention to the fact that in the case of landowning peasants, law and order directly determine family forms, more precisely the order of inheriting: the undivided inheritance leads to tribal family while the divided one leads to small or big family. In the case of families without any land, other means of survival and the migration possibilities determine family forms (Berkner 1972).

Regarding the Hungarian-language area, in the beginning ethnographic studies paid more attention to the big family than its spreading has ever justified it. Historical sources did not support its general presence at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but its spread was quoted as a possible answer to the problems of overpopulation (Faragó 1977: 140).<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately the quoted sources did not include Transylvania and Moldavia. As for the Romanian rural society I have found a merely short statement, according to which tribal family has been characteristic, although the author, Geană, does not provide any dates in her study (Geană 1978: 81).

Ferenc Pozsony was the first to sum up the data on the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians' family structure. According to him, the small families and the tribal families are typical. The newly married couple would move in with the husband's parents, but as soon as they could, they would build a house of their own. But they would still remain in close relations with the parents' family, cultivating their land together (Pozsony 2005: 179). The question is how long has it been that these relations that I can back up myself have been existing, in addition to the fact that – at least at Cleja – the youngest boy would stay with the parents. I have also known some variants that can be considered irregular ones. For example, the girl was the one to take her new husband to her parents' house for a short

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<sup>22</sup> He also mentions in the same place that from 197 studied societies only 47 have shown exclusively nuclear family.

<sup>23</sup> Based on non-homogeneous data, László Szabó already succeeded in delimitating the small family and big family areas from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Hungary (Szabó 1968).

period. It happened that the husband was Romanian. Instead of the reflection of these relations onto past conditions, let us see the kinship terminology.

Following Olderogge, Tibor Bodrogi states that the economic and social organization of the big family is reflected by such a terminology within which direct line relatives are strictly delimited from collateral relatives, but the collateral ones are classified together; furthermore, the elder are delimited by the younger by giving special kinship terms to the former (Bodrogi 1961: 143). If Bodrogi is right, then the modern Hungarian urban terminology would reflect big family forms, because related to blood relatives it corresponds to the given criteria. But big families rarely live in city apartments, and this was not presumed by Bodrogi either. However, if we take into consideration the collateral blood relatives' spouses, not even the terminology provided by Martos would correspond, because in this circle the elder persons are not signalled separately, except for the spouses of the husband's brothers/sisters. As a conclusion: the given criteria are not accurate.

In my judgement the only mark showing big family organization, more precisely paternal-local big family, is none other than the term from those of collateral relatives' spouses used by the wife to refer to the brothers of the husband, which is one or the other variant of the husband's term. In the terminology from Martos we can find for the husband *uram* [my man, my master], for his elder brother *örebbeik uram* [my elder man/master] and for his younger brother *kisebbik uram* [my younger man/master] – all of terms of reference and of addressing the persons (Bodrogi 1961: 141).

We do not find any similarities in the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians. According to the material collected in Cleja, in the past the wife addressed or referred to the husband's elder brothers by terms used for the husband's parents. This corresponds to Vilma Kósa-Szántó's data from Fundu Răcăciuni; this author even mentions that the husband's elder sister's husband was addressed as father, while the husband's elder brother's wife as mother + first name (Kósa-Szántó 1980: 153–154). Thus relatives are addressed with the same respectful terms even though it is unlikely that they live within the same multi-generation family, because it is very rarely that the wife brings the husband into her own family where her brothers would also stay with their families. This leads us to consider the father and mother-type addressing terms more as the signs of an exceptional respect than as the conclusion of common living. Respect – as I have mentioned before – is truly the elder's due.

Therefore I am arguing that not even the ancient strata of the terminology would prove the previous existence of the big family. But they do not exclude the possibility of a close coexistence, of a frequent communication in a society with a hierarchy structure based on age. The simplification of the terminology on the spouse's brothers/sisters, the disappearance of age signalling together with the terms brother- and sister-in-law points into the direction I have mentioned under point 1 regarding modernization, although the same change is more protracted in the forms of addressing.

As there have not been any big families, the system shows no signs of the existence of institutionalised family groups at the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians either. Anyway, it is worth reconsidering the term *nemzet* [nation/clan] from those on kinship. Not in

the meaning or referring to *nemzetség* [clan/family] as in the Szekler villages (Kós 1972: 238–252, Fél 1958), because my informants did not refer to such aspects, but to the fact that it might have expressed the differences in rank and appreciation inherited or obtained by a certain family, thus the use of it was not at all general, as I noticed. This can only be clarified by further research.

If the family system has not changed and institutionalised groups have not disintegrated, then we have to think about other factors of social structure which delimited the terms of collateral blood relations from the starting point given by Hungarian brother/sister-terminology.

3. The published terminology includes very few Hungarian words that are not generally spread and used over the whole Hungarian-language area.

The most outstanding one is *lér* and its derivate, *léreckske* that probably was taken over from the Latin *levir*, collected by myself in Săbăoani and Cleja, demonstrated also by Vilma Kósa-Szántó in the village of Fundu Răcăciuni. The origin of this term has become a topic of debate, presented in details by Ferenc Pozsony (Pozsony 2005: 21–22). Its rare appearance (Moldavia, Croatia) does not provide enough support to discover if it had once been in use all over the Hungarian-language area. The presumption of Réka J. Lőrinczi that it could be related to the custom of *leviratus* is completely unjustified, because it is not really possible for an ego to step into the place of the sister's husband (J. Lőrinczi 1980: 88–94). The term *lér* is being repressed by the brother-in-law, a simplifying, equalizing term.

We can also mention *nép* and *népecske*, considered by Réka J. Lőrinczi a “modern Hungarian age” Moldavian evolution (J. Lőrinczi 1980: 218), but it is vanishing today.

I never came across the term *harmadtestvér* [third brother/sister] anywhere else. The version *harmadunoka* [third grandchild], usually the terms reflecting family distance in steps/levels are dated back to the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries by the same author (J. Lőrinczi 1980: 213). Only one of my informants mentioned it, so it seems that it is withdrawing from use.

Besides the disappearing Hungarian terms there is also a new one that I have already mentioned, and that is the *unokatestvér* [cousin].

4. Many Romanian terms have infiltrated into the system. Besides the simple words of the child's language referring to the parents (*tátá*, *mámi*, *mámó*, etc.), where not really the word, but its pronunciation shows a Romanian character, we should turn our attention to the following words, with the first date of appearance known to myself: *nyám* (1901), *bunyika* (1901), *bagyi* (1877), *lélé* (1972), *lélike* (1972), *mosul/muszuj* (1874), *matus/matasze* (1902), *nyepot*, *nyepota* (1874), *vérem/vérje/viresz* (1874), *vésár* (1874), *verisora/viriszára* (1874), *nyirel* (1874), *nyírásza* (1874), *kruszkule* (1936), *kruszká* (1936), *kumnáta* (1972).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The sources: Szarvas 1874, Rubinyi 1901, Wichmann 1936 (with data collected in 1907), Márton 1972 (including data collected between 1949 and 1962), Márton–Péntek–Vöö 1977.



Taking into consideration that Wichmann's book, published in 1936, means in fact data collected in 1907, we can say that most of the Romanian terms from the Moldavian Csángó Hungarians' kinship terminology had been recorded before WWI. The exceptions are *lélé*, *lélike*, *kumnáta*, words that I have heard only at Săbăoani, recorded in the same location between 1949 and 1962 for *The Atlas of the Moldavian Csángó Dialect*.

Besides the terms enumerated above the terms *nászecska* and *komecska* resulted from a Hungarian word through Romanian word-formation, terms that I have not encountered in other publications.

We shall also mention that the use of the terms uncle and aunt so that they precede the person's first name (for example *Uncle Martin*) is obviously contrary to the Hungarian word order, but it corresponds to the Romanian one.

We can conclude from all these that such a powerful appearance of Romanian terms in the Hungarian kinship terminology that has led to a version of terms of collateral blood relatives different from the Hungarian rural terminology down to its principles probably happened already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and no major changes have happened in the system since. This does not mean that the number or percentage of the Moldavian Csángó Hungarian population using the Hungarian kinship terminology has not been decreasing, but that the system itself has not become "more Romanian", on the contrary, as we could see, it allows the intrusion of new Hungarian terms, such as *unokatestvér*.

At this point it is worth returning to the question formulated at the end of point 1, namely, What social organization changes have led to a way of expressing collateral relations that differ from the Hungarian rural terminology?

As we have seen, the family structure has not changed, there have been no disappearing family institutions, but numerous Romanian words have infiltrated into the terminology, which compared to the Hungarian structure conceptually distanced the collateral relations from the circle of brothers/sisters. We do not know when this happened, but we know that the essential transformation of the system ended like a hundred years ago. We can conclude from this that it has been the result of a long period of coexistence, during which the population of the Moldavian Csángó Hungarian settlements has changed, resulting in the widening of the social field, the frequency of communication with Romanians, surely because these two processes have manifested themselves within a reciprocal strengthening. However, the facts force us to be very careful regarding a possible standpoint related to the starting stages of this process. It seems an attractive solution to date this back to a period when there was an increase in the number of the population and in the rate of loss of Hungarian language, that is from 1859 to nowadays.<sup>25</sup> If we do this, how can we explain the fact that these changes happened mostly before 1900 and for what reason did the intrusion of Romanian terms stop afterwards? How is it possible that in this period the Hungarian urban terms had replaced the archaic ones regarding marital relatives, without changing the "rural" character of the system? We will

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<sup>25</sup> This might be based on the data presented by Ferenc Pozsony starting with 1859 (Pozsony 2005: 141–157).

not be able to answer these questions until we know much more details of the Hungarian-Romanian coexistence in the previous periods as well, in order to clarify the real period limits of cultural fixation.

There are some constellations of words where the survival of the Hungarian terminology is understandable. They include the terms on godparents, which live on even in the use of the persons who have already given up Hungarian language use, talking to each other exclusively in Romanian, as I could notice at the wedding from Cleja. Presumably the opposition of Roman Catholic and Orthodox religion is the answer, with a major role in the formation of identity that I have been convinced about myself. This does not mean that there is no borrowing of customs or the assimilation of the godfather's functions. At the wedding the godfather escorting the bride has a major role in both the Hungarian and the Romanian case, and a leading role in the initiation process (cf. Geană 1982: 81).

### Further Tasks

There are some phenomena that I have not dealt with. One of them is the terminology related to stepparents, which I have not collected during my fieldwork. Another one is discovering the limits, the delimitation of the family/relatives. My data do not reach beyond +3 generation, but this does not mean that is the limit, although the knowledge of my informants ended there. Rubinyi published some terms from the Northern Csángó region in 1901 – *elő* [fore] and *ős* [old/ancient] – reaching beyond the mentioned limit, but he did not shed enough light on their meaning (Rubinyi 1901: 170–171).

However, Péter Trunchi, in a short and far from complete kinship terminology publication, states about a person that he offered a solution to the reaching of +4 generation by annexing another *di* before the *didi apóka* [great-grandfather] and *didi mámóka* [great-grandmother] (Trunchi 2004a: 15).

Péter Trunchi did not specify the location of his collection, but his address and place of work is in Fundu Răcăciuni, so probably most of his data comes from that village. Therefore his short and incomplete study might be of a great importance, because the location is the same as in the case of Vilma Kósa-Szántó. His material suggests that for some relations, especially between close family members, more variants are alive than in the publication of Vilma Kósa-Szántó. The same goes for Cleja, too. This stands for further research, because with a more profound fieldwork, collecting the biggest number of variants possible, we might discover that there are plenty undiscovered, even in places that once were locations for serious fieldwork. And even more in locations without any research. We shall believe Péter Trunchi, when he says: “kinship terms differ completely compared even to the next village” (Trunchi 2004b: 15). The presented material also reflects that there are important differences between the kinship terminology of the Northern and Southern Csángó regions, if in nothing else, in the proportion of the infiltrated Romanian terms. The analysis of this aspect reaches beyond the limits of the present study, because my material from Săbăoani is far from being complete, and this task requires linguistic professionalism as well.

Regarding fieldwork, an urgent task must be the recording of the changes that will occur even in a so slowly transforming phenomenon constellation as well.

During my analysis I have left some of the questions open even after the presentation of the terminology. Answering them would require the reconsideration of the historic sources and further organized fieldwork, if possible.

Be it said in my favour that with my collected material and with my thoughts I did not want to put an end to something, but to encourage revealing the Moldavian Csángó Hungarian kinship terminology.

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