



Foreword

Cultural heritage is a timely and heavily debated concept in humanities and social sciences. Ethnographers, ethnologists, and anthropologists are increasingly concerned with this emerging concept, since it not only reconfigures the ways of thinking within their disciplines, but also reorganizes their entire field of investigation, i.e. culture itself. The present volume of the Department of Hungarian Ethnography and Anthropology, Babeş–Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, answers to this challenge by raising questions related to the emergence of cultural heritage, the mechanisms of heritagisation, and its relations with politics and the market. Beyond presenting and analysing several issues related to cultural heritage and heritagisation, our volume has a more specific scope, also reflected in its title: namely, to focus on cultural heritage in minority conditions and to reflect upon local and national cultural politics, and on the politics of ethnicity.

The concept of cultural heritage is a global one, while its interpretations might be, and indeed are, very specific, depending on the national or local contexts and also on the background of the scholars dealing with this concept. The studies included in our volume clearly demonstrate this fact, as the authors mediate between the global framework of cultural heritage and their local examples for the various topics. These topics include the forms of (local) historical memory, the culture of remembrance; the use of the Internet as a new medium for presenting the culture and, at the same time, as a new form of popular culture; critiques brought to the concept and practice of cultural heritage through local examples; the politics of ethnic identities in different contexts (religious life, migration, danced rituals). Through this wide range of approaches, this volume offers an insight into the cultural life of the Hungarian ethnic minority from Transylvania (Romania) and into the methods and preferred research topics of the Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca school of ethnology.

The late Norwegian anthropologist Marianne Gullestad once observed in an interview that “anthropologists from small language communities have constantly to carry two heavy backpacks”.¹ As Hungarian ethnologists from Romania, Transylvania, we are well aware of what she meant and always struggle with this tension: on the one hand, trying to ground our findings in the national contexts, while, on the other hand, seeking to relate to the international frameworks of our chosen discipline. The present volume is a proof of these attempts through which we aim to analyse specific local examples in the framework of international methods and approaches.

We are, however, very much aware of the special, and sometimes untranslatable, aspects of our work, as it is never that simple to convert these texts into English. This task is not just about translating words and sentences, but about transposing ideas, particular ways of thinking, and cultural contexts. Thus, while trying to

1 Overcoming the division between anthropology “at home” and “abroad”. Marianne Gullestad in conversation with Marianne Lien and Marit Melhuus. Online: <https://www.easaonline.org/downloads/Gullestadeasa.pdf> Last accessed: 5 February 2018.

keep the texts as readable as possible and not to burden them with superfluous editors' and translators' notes, we supplied additional background information where necessary. At the same time, we also intended to avoid repetition and to preserve the internal coherence of the individual papers.

It is important to briefly offer here some information on the historical, cultural, and political contexts of the articles. The region is called Transylvania (Hungarian: Erdély, Romanian: Ardeal or Transilvania, German: Siebenbürgen). It is now part of Romania, but up until the end of World War I was part of, or closely connected to, the Hungarian Kingdom, and later, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Transylvania was populated by Hungarian, Romanian, German (Lutheran Saxon and Roman Catholic Swabian), and Roma communities. Jews and Armenians lived mainly in towns. Smaller communities of different other ethnic groups (Ukrainians, Slovaks, Czechs, Serbs, etc.) were also to be found here. Ethnic Germans moved to Germany in several waves after World War II, but their cultural heritage (mainly their built heritage) is still an important part of the Transylvanian cultural landscape. Szeklers or Székelys, referred to in several articles of this volume, are a Hungarian subgroup living in the Szekler or Székely Land, the present-day Harghita, Covasna, and partly Mureș Counties, in the easternmost area of Transylvania. The Székely Land was traditionally divided in five seats (HUN: székek, RO: scaune), and while these administrative units were reorganized several times during the 19th and 20th centuries, they are still often referred to in everyday life and in the scientific literature, mainly in historiography and ethnology.

We faced some problems when giving the names of settlements. For the authors themselves, it was quite natural to use Hungarian toponyms, but in order for our readers to be able to more easily locate the settlements, we included the Romanian toponyms as well. The French and German titles are not translated in the references of the articles, but the interested reader can find the translations of the Hungarian and Romanian titles.

The project of publishing this book, with its more than one-and-a-half-year gestation, was quite time-consuming. Although it was not an easy process, we benefited from the generous help of many colleagues. First of all, we owe thanks to the authors of this volume for their availability and patience. We are also grateful for the excellent communication and collaboration with the translator and the language reviewer of the book; with the president of the Kriza János Ethnographic Society, Albert Zsolt Jakab, and with the head of Intervention Press, Peter Ian Crawford; as well as with the director and staff of the printing-house. Cristiana Papahagi from the Faculty of Letters of Babeș-Bolyai University and Marc Roscoe Loustau from the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA, contributed with useful suggestions. Finally, we are indebted to Anca Suciú at the administrative and economic department of BBU for managing the financial issues related to the editing and publishing of this volume.

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