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# The Melancholy of Cultural Heritage<sup>1</sup>

## The Value Management of Local Communities

Cultural heritage, heritagisation processes, the concept of world heritage, hungarikums, and repositories of cultural values are increasingly discussed within the Hungarian language area. In our narrower region, the *Erdélyi Értékek Tára* [The Repository of Transylvanian Values] has begun its activity in 2015. This collection is maintained by the *Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság* (Kriza János Ethnographic Society), commissioned by the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture.<sup>2</sup> The initiators of the Repository of Transylvanian Values (also designated as “*Erdélyi Értéktár*” on various leaflets) mention among the objectives of this collection the strengthening of national consciousness and the preservation of national values, which should be collected, nurtured, and promoted. Reference is also made to the strict rules of the collection process, and the possibilities of research.<sup>3</sup>

Since my own researches and specific examples come from the area of Nagykároly (Carei), I studied the representation of this region within the Repository of Transylvanian Values. According to the online database, the local elite of the villages surrounding Nagykároly proposed that the Saint Anthony parish church from Kaplony (Căpleni), the Franciscan monastery, and the family crypt of the counts Károlyi, also from Kaplony, be included into the collection.<sup>4</sup> The Saint Anthony parish church from Kaplony was inaugurated in 1848.<sup>5</sup> The church was built according to the plans of architect Miklós Ybl (1814–1891) on the site of a former, presumably mediaeval church. The Franciscan monastery has existed ever since Franciscan monks settled down in Transylvania. They arrived here in 1711,

1 The present study was published in Hungarian in *Erdélyi Múzeum* 1 (2) 2017. pp. 80–90.

2 <http://www.kjnt.ro/ertektar/az-ertektarrol> (Last accessed: 29 December 2016.) The project was initiated by the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (*Romániai Magyar Demokrata Szövetség*, RMDSZ). The RMDSZ invited certain organisations to participate through their delegated representatives in the work of the Transylvanian Hungarian Value Collection Committee. See the announcement: <http://rmdsz.ro/sajtoszoba/hir/erdelyi-magyar-osszefogas-ertekeink-vedelmeben-az-rmdsz-kezdemenyezesere-megalapitottak-az-erdelyi-magyar-ertektar-bizottsagot>. The Transylvanian Hungarian Value Collection Committee was created on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2015. Its president is the executive vice-president responsible for cultural matters of the RMDSZ.

3 <http://www.kjnt.ro/ertektar/az-ertektarrol> (Last accessed: 29 December 2016.)

4 <http://www.kjnt.ro/ertektar/ertek/a-kaplonyi-paduai-szent-antal-templom-ferences-kolostor-es-a-karolyi-grofok-kriptaja-1> (Last accessed: 1 January 2017.)

5 <http://www.temple-tour.eu/hu/kaplony/49> (Last accessed: 1 January 2017.)

at the invitation of count Sándor Károlyi (1669–1743), who entrusted them with the care of the Swabians, a population he himself began to settle down in the emptied villages of the region, subsequent to this date.

The villages of the region are inhabited by the descendants of the Swabians settled down here by count Károlyi. They are Catholics and, with few exceptions, have been speaking Hungarian since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> The Hungarian population settled down in the area is of Reformed faith, and the small Romanian population is Orthodox. The region is inhabited by a limited number of Greek Catholics, too, who also speak Hungarian as their mother tongue.<sup>7</sup> The Swabian communities who live in these villages speak about their Swabian identity in spite of the language change, and there are numerous elements of Swabian origin in their culture. The national identity of this population presents a quite complex and interesting question. It is possible that many of them declare themselves Hungarians at official censuses, since they have come closer to Hungarian culture during the past century. Nevertheless, they are all conscious of their Swabian roots.<sup>8</sup>

Local culture has also got some specific elements that are quite visible from an outside perspective. These are mostly related to Swabian culture and to their Catholic faith. Brass bands for instance, look back upon long traditions in this region. The local brass band has been functioning in Kaplony since 1903; and similar ensembles are active in the surrounding villages as well.

The Catholic residents of the region are religious, and church patronal festivals count as important events in the lives of these villages. Several such festivals are held in the area in a single year. For example, four festivals are held each year in Kaplony, of which the two summer festivals, the indulgence in honour of Saint Anthony of Padua from 13<sup>th</sup> of June, and the great festival of the Franciscans, the Portiuncula Indulgence of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, are more prominent. The church festival held in March is also a minor indulgence festival, since the more recent church of the village was dedicated to Saint Joseph, and Saint Francis Day in October is celebrated, too. Family members living farther abroad visit their localities of origin on the days of the more important church festivals, the “*kirbáj*”<sup>9</sup> as these are called locally. Family members that had immigrated to Germany can be frequently seen on summer church festivals. The Catholic population of the village, as well as visiting family members and guests jointly participate at the morning mass on the day of the church festival, and a common family lunch is held at home, almost resembling a smaller wedding lunch with several courses. Some religious institutions represent an important part of religious life. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there had been villages with more than ten functioning religious associations, some of which still exist (Szikszai 2013a, 2013b).

6 Swabians originally spoke German.

7 The ethnic and religious composition of Szatmár (Satu Mare) County’s settlements: <http://nepszamlalas.adatbank.transindex.ro/?pg=telepuleslista&megye=6> (Last accessed: 1 January 2017.)

8 The adequate representation of the individual national minorities’ culture remains a further task for national value repositories.

9 Probably from the German word “*Kirchweihfest*” [‘church inauguration festival’].



Certain gastronomic elements of the region also originate from Swabian culture. Potatoes, flour, and farinaceous foods (e.g. noodles and strudels) play an important role in their diet, which is rich in fat and flesh. Farmers produce their own wine and local communities make considerable efforts in order to create larger publicity for their Swabian gastronomy, considered by them to be traditional. Although pig slaughters still represent widespread family events in this region, and strudels are a well enjoyed everyday dish, the local population tries to present these separated from their everyday context. More recently, they announced in the press that a “traditional Swabian pig slaughter” will be held, and a strudel festival is also organised annually. Sometimes the local political class is involved in organising some of the events, e.g. butcher competitions. These happenings could be located at the crossroads between village fairs, folk festivals, and touristic events. They bring along a festival feeling for the local population and attract visitors mainly from the narrower region, which could be regarded as tourists. However, with the exception of the village festivals, rural tourism cannot be viewed as a serious opportunity as the number of rural boarding houses and other possibilities of accommodation are quite scarce, practically even negligible.

I listed above the objectified and the more spectacular cultural elements, such as the ones related to gastronomy, or some external manifestations of religious practices associated with the masses, like the religious festivals and indulgences. These could even be included on a list dedicated to presenting the values of the area, since they are visibly characteristic for the narrower region, are spectacular in nature and familiar to many people.

## **The Swabian Mentality: Work as a Value**

In the summer of 2016 I went on several walks in a village near Nagykároly, during which I took photographs. I was accompanied by one of my informants, with whom I talked about the life of the village. During one of our walks we were looking at people's houses, and my informant talked about the everyday life of the people who lived there. Then we arrived at a small park and our discussion turned into a little story.

It has to be said that before arriving at this little park, we had been talking about how this village community regarded work, and considered respect for work as a paramount value. In their vision all members of a community must work hard for the well-being of their family and the community, and they had true respect for the people whom they considered to be hard workers. Every family tried to express this also outwardly, presenting the yards of their houses as neat and well-arranged as possible. Their yards were orderly, with blooming ornamental flowers everywhere, both in the yard around the house and in hanging pots, and the grass was neatly trimmed and cared for. People also swept the street outside their house and weeded regularly. When I visited there, my hosts kept track of the task of weeding out the grassy area in front of their house during the days leading up to the church festival.

They knew that if they omitted to complete it, this would send a bad signal, and in would considerably reduce the prestige of the family.

The little park I mentioned above was laid out in a village with such a worker mentality. As we arrived there, we walked around the park. The park itself was an oblong shaped space, enclosed by hedges and protected from the outside by a fence. Only one entrance gate was left on the fence by the builders of this small park. During my visit, the gate was tied to the fence with a thick wire. This could be explained by the fact that the lock on the gate might have had broken, yet the caretakers of the park did not want to leave the gate open. Inside the fence, the oblong-shaped space was completely sown with grass, and one could observe that the grass was carefully mown. A narrow sidewalk ran around the park, and there were a few benches as well. The benches were all identical, and I remarked that none of them had a backrest. In other words, even if someone had wanted to sit down on these benches, s/he could not have laid back to rest on them. Most of the benches had low trees or bushes growing beside them. It could be clearly seen that the bushes are part of the design, but they were planted too close to the benches, partially covering them as a result of their growth, thus precluding the possibility of several people sitting on the same bench. The gate tied to the fence with the wire, the uncomfortable benches, and the bushes grown on the benches – all suggested that the park was rarely used. I asked my companion about the reason for the locked park gate. Although the lock was merely a wire wound around the edge of the gate and the fence, I did not understand the reason for closing the entrance of the park in the first place. My informant told me that it was probably in order to protect the area from dogs. Now that they created this neat little park, it should not be destroyed by the stray dogs of the village. I also asked my companion if many villagers visited there, and if there was someone at all using this park. My companion answered negatively, also explaining to me that it would not be proper to sit there. What would people think of someone sitting around on a bench during a workday? My informant also invoked the example of a neighbouring village, where people indeed sat around on street benches. Such a gesture would be deeply reprehensible here. The neighbouring village invoked by my informant did not have a Swabian majority population like this one, but was mostly inhabited by Hungarians of Székely origin, being the only such village in this region. That village had benches in front of the houses, just like in the proper Székely villages, and people sometimes did indeed sit down on them to have conversations with each other. My informant, also a follower of the Swabian work ethic, viewed this attitude as reprehensible. They would never sit around on benches, said my informant, since this would mean that they are not doing their jobs, or in other words, they are lazy. Villages with a Swabian majority population do not have benches in front of the houses. Benches can only be seen in parks, but even here, they only serve decorative purposes, and the villagers are careful not to be seen sitting on them. The importance of work is also present in everyday discourse according to my informant, who remarked that when two people meet, they soon start telling how much work each of them has to do, and then rapidly say goodbye to each other. If someone talked for a longer time,



this would have sent a bad message, implying that the person in question was not sufficiently industrious.

Yet the leaders of the locality considered it important to build a park. However, its function here is different from what it would be elsewhere. While in the case of other communities, people take possession of, and use these spaces to stroll with their children, meet each other and talk, one cannot find these functions here. The park fulfils a role of prestige in the village, following the logic that if everyone has a park then they should also have one. The park is neatly taken care of, since if it was not, that would cast a negative light on the community. Thus, the little park is a good example for the way in which the top-down organisation of the community is not always clearly aware of the mentality and the real needs. Discussing this topic revealed very clearly the values considered important by the community and the behaviour and practices regarded reprehensible.

## **The Challenges of Heritagisation to Local Communities**

Scholarly literature (Sonkoly 2000: 47, Erdősi–Sonkoly 2005: 77) and the repositories of cultural values both offer adequate information about what can be regarded as cultural heritage. The definition of the paradigm and its spreading in Europe, particularly in Hungary during the recent years was summarised by Gábor Sonkoly (Sonkoly 2000, Erdősi–Sonkoly 2005). The same author also discussed the effects of tourism, strengthened along the lines of heritagisation, on local communities (Sonkoly 2009a), the changes of the concept of cultural heritage, its expansion by the UNESCO, and the concept of the historical urban landscape (Sonkoly 2009b).

The European introduction, history, and transformation of the concept was also summarised by several authors (Sonkoly 2000, 2009; Erdősi–Sonkoly 2005; Paládi-Kovács 2016). The most often cited definition of cultural heritage in scholarly literature is formulated like this: “The handling and processing of heritage follows the same principle regardless of the size and the organisation of the community. Cultural heritage is the set of objects or immaterial ideas expressed through objects, which hold significant meaning for the community. The community collects, inventories, analyzes, exhibits, preserves, restores, and, if needed, decrypts these objects, understands the hidden codes, and draws its conclusions. During this process, the original content is enriched with something new, namely the interpretation of the people who have taken possession of it. Thus, heritage is associated with memory. Both are parts of identity, which have to be sought after, reclaimed, preserved, or rediscovered. In this sense, heritage does not only serve as a mapping out of the available assets, but also describes and defines the self-identities of the bequeather and the heir, who often are not even aware of this fact.” (Sonkoly 2000: 47.) Therefore, one can see that, while initially the concept included only the elements of the material environment, immaterial values were later also added to its interpretation.

In the previous quarter of a century, several local initiatives were undertaken across Transylvania in order to pass over the knowledge stemming from popular culture to a generation which never had the chance to encounter it in its own environment. This objective was served by the folk dance houses and camps with handicrafts, as well as folk dance courses, the network of the so-called Hungarian houses organising cultural events, the regional houses and village museums, etc. The institutions of cultural heritage attempt to gain recognition for local characteristics beyond these local initiatives, both for material and cultural products. Although it seems that the specific community is the one that decides about its values, in practice it only makes suggestions, while the choice whether a certain cultural phenomenon represents a value or not is delegated to a group of outsiders (i.e. international, national, or regional committees).

The *Erdélyi Értéktár* [Repository of Transylvanian Values] mentions in its guidelines as possible candidates for inclusion the elements of architectural and natural heritage, local gastronomy, the lives of famous people, the activity of communities dedicated to the preservation of traditions, local customs, adding that anything else besides the above can be included in the repository if the community so chooses.<sup>10</sup> Evidently, when discussing the repositories of values created by the local communities, one must also take into consideration the situation of the Transylvanian Hungarian minority: in contrast to similar Hungarian institutions, the Repository of Transylvanian Values does not offer any kind of legal protection, for instance, to historical monuments, elements of cultural heritage on the list, and it is completely independent from national institutions such as the state organisations dedicated to the protection of monuments.

Studying the value lists hitherto compiled, it is visible that they are constructed fragmentarily, somewhat at random, and are in no way representative. There are certain important topics for which only one locality is listed – e.g. the case of Transylvanian wine culture.<sup>11</sup> The advantage of this method should be that the elements included on the list are proposed by the local communities, presumably aware of the proposed items' details and importance. Practice, however, indicates that this requirement is not completely fulfilled either, since local communities lack the necessary specialists that could determine what they propose and the reasons for their proposals.

Since the proponents are not necessarily professionally knowledgeable about local culture, but local or regional leaders of the community, their selection and proposal of items deemed important to the community is made accordingly. The leaders elected to direct the affairs of the local communities evidently attempt to make use of the institutionalised systems of cultural heritage, expecting that the inclusion of cultural values on the lists convey larger notoriety, along with touristic and therefore economic advantages to their respective localities. In cases in which the proponents are not specialists of the particular topics, or members of the local

10 The leaflet of the *Erdélyi Értéktár* [Repository of Transylvanian Values], [http://www.kjnt.ro/ertektar/resources/documents/EE-szorolap\\_2.pdf](http://www.kjnt.ro/ertektar/resources/documents/EE-szorolap_2.pdf). (Last accessed: 3 January 2017.)

11 <http://www.kjnt.ro/ertektar/cimke/bor> (Last accessed: 1 January 2017.)



community, they will naturally propose for inclusion into the cultural value collection elements about which some kind of regional knowledge already exists, and which refer to specificities about which a consensus had already been established: in other words, elements characteristically present within local public consciousness, e.g. the careers of local celebrities or inventors, elements of material culture exemplified through museological instruments such as folk art and costumes and elements of architectural and environmental culture for which some degree of tourist interest could be experienced earlier, like castles, churches, etc. Thus, we reencounter on these lists the items hitherto considered as attractions, which could be presented in the framework of village museums.

From this perspective, the documentation accompanying the proposals represents an equally important factor. The texts of the proposals and the descriptions necessary for the inclusion in the collections of cultural values are compiled on the basis of accessible publications and the proponents' personal knowledge. In most cases, the descriptions reference local knowledge and published works of local history, with their significant part being written by amateur local historians. Over the past 25 years, professional scholarly communities were neither sufficiently interested in the critical evaluation, nor in the correction of their possible mistakes, and it is also unlikely that the committees of the value collections will have the required capacity to do this. Thus, data compilations referencing unchecked local historical sources will remain applicable in this field. As a consequence, occasionally neither the information used is up-to-date nor do the accessible publications supply adequately documented data about the items to be included on the value lists.

All this, of course, does not detract from the value of the proposed cultural elements, since according to the definition, a value is what any specific community considers to be a value. However, we also have to discover the birth of a new kind of discourse within this process. In Jan Assmann's words, it is never the past as such that is retained by memory, but only what is reconstructed from the past by the given community (Assmann 1999: 41). The commemorative community constructs a narrative for itself, emphasising its specific character and difference from other groups. In this sense, these local historical works are closer to the establishment of collective memory as defined by Assmann (Assmann 1999: 43). The local discourses manifesting themselves in local historical works speak of the way in which the local intellectuals would like to see the past of their community, which they can point out in the present, while the cultural value repositories, on their turn, strengthen these discourses.

## The Challenges of Heritagisation for Scientific Thinking

The heritagisation process within the Hungarian language area brought about changes not only in the life of the communities but also in ethnography as a scientific discipline. For instance, the *Erdélyi Értéktár* [Repository of Transylvanian Values] does not only envisage the presentation of cultural values, but also the

active intervention into the functioning of culture, i.e. the care, support, and protection of values.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, it is worth to separate the implementation of heritagisation from the perspective of public life and the organisation of the community on the one hand, and the application of the concept from a scientific point of view on the other. Recently, we could witness how the ethnographers who participated in community organising also undertook to play an active role in heritagisation. In some cases, ethnographic researchers themselves became active managers of the cultural heritagisation process, since they also played an active part in recommending the elements of the value collection and as members of the judging committee. This participation is a welcomed one, since they are the ones most familiar with Transylvanian culture, and if such synthetic surveys are created, it is best for the process to be managed by specialists.

Some specialists have dubbed the participation of ethnographic researchers in the heritagisation process as *applied ethnography*. Attila Paládi-Kovács discussed this phenomenon in 2016 in the following way: “The time has come for studies in ‘applied’ ethnography, that is to say, for making use with joint forces of the ‘knowledge’ accumulated within the scholarly literature, museum collections, and archives.” (Paládi-Kovács 2016: 17.) A similar process is discussed in the study of János Bali, in which he presented the ethnographers’ work in the municipality of Átány and the way in which the researchers subsequently prepared a development plan *as researchers* and thus transcended their original function, assuming the role of community organisers who influence the life of the community (Bali 2016: 155–156).

The introduction of the concept of “applied ethnography” probably represents one of the most important responses of specialist thinking to the questions of heritagisation. Although the topic of applied anthropology and applied ethnography had also been raised earlier, their practical applicability never seemed as obvious as today.

Other researchers even expect from the value collections to help in separating folk tradition viewed by them as authentic from the “inauthentic” folk tradition found in the world of the Internet, considered to be kitsch, junk, copy, or counterfeit (Vajda 2016: 48). Ethnographic researchers are still very much attached to the idea that (popular) culture has authentic and less authentic layers, and they view themselves as authenticators (Vajda 2016: 49). However, this separation only functions within the scientific discourse, since they themselves experience that the social dynamic withstands this separation, and real world phenomena continually escape their normative frameworks.

Not only the local communities themselves but also ethnography has to deal with the changes occurring in the lives of the communities. Larger changes can evidently occur in the case of the inclusion of certain items on more significant, national or international lists of cultural values. It was suggested as early as 1996

12 <http://www.kjnt.ro/ertektar/az-ertektarrol> (Last accessed: 29 December 2016.)





that the principle of sustainable development should be considered when adding to the number of cultural heritage sites, since environmental damages could be observed in cases when the specific site included on the list of cultural values was not prepared to accept large numbers of tourists (Sonkoly 2000: 55). The inclusion of certain proposals on more important lists irreversibly changes the world of local communities, as research also indicated in the case of Hollókő in Hungary (Sonkoly 2009a: 414). However, not only the environmental and the built heritage can suffer damages as a result of this process. These prioritised sites naturally attract large masses of people, and as a result, the locality adapts to supporting mass tourism, which changes the economy, the value system, the social structure, the mentality, etc. of the community, i.e. all that was originally deemed to be important and worth to be protected.

Former scientific analyses and synopses voiced concerns for the object of ethnographic research as a result of the heritagisation process. These studies stated that, in the case of the localities accepted to certain lists of heritage sites, the cultural elements lost their “original social functions” and were theatralised. Thus, these authors ask the question of what should happen to cultural practices “originally considered to be worthy of protection” in these circumstances, and whether the “folksy practices brought onto the stage” can at all represent the subject of ethnography (Sonkoly 2009a: 414). Although museologists count upon the changes of cultural practices and consequently also acquire the corresponding objects, the question remains how all this is to be interpreted by ethnography: “Taking new social practices in consideration, the museologist acquires handicraft products which do not correspond to the requirements of authenticity in the traditional sense, but nevertheless faithfully reflect contemporary practices. It is an open question how the ethnographic researcher who most acutely experiences the effects of the cultural heritage paradigm will interpret the changes in his or her research object, presented above.” (Sonkoly 2009a: 417.)

These dilemmas refer to processes that have preoccupied researchers even before the spread of the concept of heritagisation. Over the past decades, we could witness the process whereby certain folk customs were brought onto the stage also in Transylvania. Thus, one could see folk customs, spinning bees (*fonó*), and nativity plays presented on the theatre stage, and even Transylvanian festivals of nativity plays (*betlehemes*) were organised for the public in the first half of the 1990s. It is also known that certain localities were even willing to change the traditional date of certain events for the sake of the tourists, such as in the case of the *Farsangtemetés* [Burial of the Carnival] celebration in Torockó (Rimetea). Several folk customs, once traditional, were theatralised and have turned into spectacles. This phenomenon cannot be regarded as a new one and exclusively associated with cultural heritagisation, although the latter can evidently play a role in such processes.

However, concerns would only be justified if we associated attributes such as “original”, “traditional”, “ancestral”, “archaic” or at least “traditional” with the object of ethnographic analysis, or in other words, if the research topic only consisted in

elements which preserve their social function considered to be the original one, and the functions with a changed meaning content did not suit preservation or analysis.

Although this approach has still got followers today, its exclusive value was questioned quite long ago. If ethnographic analysis intends to interpret the dynamics and functioning of the respective current culture and to understand it along all external influences, then we cannot speak of any dilemma. In such a case, the object of ethnographic analysis is not only something that is considered ancient by a certain committee, but the constantly changing society itself, for the study of which ethnography has got both the necessary methods and the conceptual apparatus.

How long the items included on the list should remain there in specific cases, and whether they should be kept on the list if by it they can lose their significance, is a question which presents itself also from another perspective. In his synthetic study, Attila Paládi-Kovács asked what happened with certain items declared to represent cultural heritage, if their significance was diminished. According to the author, these items should be removed from the lists in such cases (Paládi-Kovács 2016: 15). Now, this approach is much more suited to deal with social dynamics. Ethnographers are mostly conscious that they are facing a cultural practice in constant change, and thus they also have to suppose that some heritagised elements first produce changes within the specific community and then, over time, they can lose their significance, wane or even disappear. This is precisely the reason why the research perspective differs from the heritagisation viewpoint, and is concentrated upon community organisation: the researcher is aware of the fact that the cultural practice is worth to be studied in its process, while heritagisation is interested in preparing a snapshot of culture, or freezing an image of cultural dynamics and constructing a discourse around it.

Researchers are also aware that the mentality and value system of certain local communities can sometimes be grasped through such minor narratives as the one recounted above. As we have seen, the respect for work is a value, which defines both the celebrations as well as the everyday life of the Swabian communities. The story I told offers, of course, a random example, and one could find several others similar to it. All these narratives tell us that a culture has got elements, which materialise less often and are less spectacular, but give us the full picture along with the spectacular elements. These less materialised elements of culture will occupy less space on the World Heritage List and other similar lists. Evidently, there will always be objects that look good behind the glass of the museum showcase, and events that move large crowds or can even be brought to the stage or magnified to festival dimensions with the possibility of drawing the attention of the larger public to them. However, all these could not exist without those non-material elements, which do not have a form that could be exhibited in a museum or a spectacular scenario that would move the masses, yet they constitute some of the organising elements of Swabian culture.



The approach of heritagisation differs from that of ethnography both in its interest area, and the choice of its topic. The study on Hollókő offers an illustrative example in this sense, as its author discusses the lack of ethnographic surveys and monographs on the village from the period before its inclusion on the World Heritage List. He also observes that while the documents on heritage protection state that Hollókő “is a locality preserving traditional cultural and social practices”, ethnographic literature does not confirm this fact; that is to say, no adequate ethnographic monographs were prepared before its inclusion on the World Heritage List (Sonkoly 2009a: 415). We have, of course, two different approaches here. While heritage protection acts with the objective to include all material and spiritual values in the proper value collections, ethnographic researchers usually do not chose their research topics and areas this way. Synthetic overviews on an entire region within a certain topic are rare (e.g. Furu 2015). In most cases, the choice of the research topic and the site follows the individual interest of the researchers. This selective criterion does not mean, however, that unresearched areas or issues could not be significant. The fact that ethnographic literature does not have any monographs on a certain locality only provides us information about the interest of the researchers, and not about the significance of the research topic. Thus, cultural heritagisation will continue to strive for including on its lists the elements of heritage it considers important from every region, and it will always only partially find adequately compiled ethnographic literature to serve this endeavour.

In this approach, heritagisation can even represent an important pursuit. However, for the time being, it only touches upon the surface of culture. One cannot expect that all the knowledge explored by an ethnographic researcher with the instruments of microhistory and anthropology will be included in the scope of heritagisation – e.g. the everyday practices of popular religiosity (Szikszai 2013a), private devotion and its cultural and material set of instruments (Szikszai 2013b), narrated, written (Szikszai 2016) or photographed (Szikszai 2015) biographical knowledge, to only include here some examples related to the aforementioned Swabian community. Thus, everything which belongs to the rather less monumental and festive part of culture is left out.

I believe that heritagisation can primarily be a temporarily useful paradigm from the perspective of community organisers. However, specialists conducting scientific research have to employ a wider perspective, deal with the elements left out from the lists and, not the least, consider the future effect of heritagisation processes on the lives of the specific communities.

As far as the scientific application of the paradigm is concerned, in 2009, certain analyses predicted that ethnographers will be the ones primarily affected by heritagisation, and the representatives of ethnography will be forced to reconsider the basics of their scientific field (Sonkoly 2009b: 208). Since then, the heritagisation paradigm has also reached Transylvania. Although the compiling of regional value repositories has already begun and the initiative of including the pilgrimage feast of Csíksomlyó (Șumuleu Ciuc) on the UNESCO list also raised the awareness of the Transylvanian media about the concept of cultural heritage, the impact of these

initiatives on public life, economy, and tourism is hitherto barely measurable. But even if the breakthrough happened, I do not think that the rethinking of the basics of ethnography as a scientific discipline will be needed. Some ethnographic researchers will continue to take on roles within the process of heritagisation as professional advisors or program coordinators, and scientific research will be able to measure the changes and carry out the adequate analyses with its set of instruments, methodology, and concept system,

The purpose of the information included in value collections is to bring certain aspects of culture into the spotlight. In fact, the process of heritagisation selects certain fragments of culture and provides them with a new designation (as “patrimony” or “cultural heritage”) and finally marvels at them as if these objects designated as significant, or the immaterial entities expressed through them, were not parts of culture with which they have always coexisted. Thus, value collections will offer snapshots of a community that once lived, and as such, they themselves become the objects of melancholy.

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