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On the Road: Between Nations, Identities, and Cultures

The past 150 years have witnessed numerous migrations: individuals and populations, spurred by political, social, and economic events or lifepath changes, who abandon their homelands either temporarily, for extended periods, or even permanently. Affecting millions, human migration is not something limited to the past, but a phenomenon of considerable relevance to the present day. Geographically speaking, such movements fall into two distinct categories: those occurring within a single country, and those involving the crossing of national borders. An understanding of what people experience during departure, time spent on the road, and arrival, with consideration given to the distinction between voluntary and forced migration, can help us in several ways: to grasp phenomena such as the transferal and preservation of values; to comprehend which processes and practices work to integrate or isolate those affected; to confer perspective, whether on source and destination groups, or on the responses to the various situations encountered in new locations. To understand this multi-faceted phenomenon requires a multidisciplinary approach, toward which ethnographic and anthropological research findings may offer their own measure of support.

The 2nd Finnish-Hungarian-Estonian Ethnological Symposium¹ – an event organised by the Hungarian Ethnographical Society, Budapest Museum of Ethnography, and János Kriza Ethnographic Society, held 9-13 May 2017 in Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca), Romania – chose as its focus the topics of migratory processes – broadly defined to include such phenomena as emigration, immigration, resettlement, and work abroad – and the individuals and communities that participate in them, studied in various contexts and time frames from both the ethnographic and anthropological perspectives. The papers published for the conference

1 The 1st Finnish-Hungarian-Estonian Symposium, held in Turku in 2013, treated the topic of *Landscape, Place, Locality, and Space*. (Its material is currently under publication: Lillbroända-Annala–Mäki–Siivonen eds. 2019). Attended by ethnographers, ethnologists, and anthropologists, the symposium was the successor of a ten-part series of Finnish-Hungarian conferences taking place between 1984 and 2009, with material routinely published in the form of volumes of studies: Lehtinen ed. 1985, Paládi-Kovács–Szarvas eds. 1987, Yliaho ed. 1992, Szarvas ed. 1993, Korhonen ed. 1995, Kodolányi ed. 1999, Korhonen–Ruotsala–Uusitalo eds. 2003, Cseri–Fejős–Szarvas eds. 2004, Korkiakangas–Lappi–Niskanen eds. 2008, Bata–Szarvas eds. 2010.

offer interpretive responses to the issues surrounding migration, historical and contemporary, and/or use case studies to elucidate its various stages, participants, and effects. The issues in question include the following: What factors prompt groups and individuals to take to the road? What challenges do they face both while on the road, and upon arrival? What traditions and objects do migrants take with them from their homelands, and what new meaning is imparted to such things in the process? And of particular importance, regarding how communities joined and communities left behind are portrayed: How do phenomena associated with globalisation affect the future lives of migrants and the communities from which they originated? How do local minorities with a historic past, as opposed to more recent settlers, shape the day-to-day lives and traditions of the communities they join? What factors might compel migrant groups and individuals to return home? How do various forms of maintaining contact with those left behind, or with others who have taken to the road (mail, Internet, personal visits), and ways of maintaining communal memory (family, local) function? What forms do cooperation between destination and migrant communities take? In what ways can individual and group identity be maintained within a new community? How are local landscapes, traditions, and knowledge shaped by migratory processes? At the local level, is it the demonstrable differences or rather the similarities that have the greatest effect in these processes?

The volume to follow is a collection of studies born from a subset of the lectures of the international conference, ordered into coherent thematic sections. Chapter 1 (*Departures and Arrivals*) includes two case studies that discuss changes experienced over the previous few decades. One of these is Helena Ruotsala's *Mobility over the Border. Departures and Arrivals in the Tornio Valley between 1945 and 2017*, which examines the migratory processes, border-crossing strategies, and ebb and flow of borders both symbolic, and real, experienced in the Finnish-Swedish Tornio Valley since the end of World War II. The creation of the border between the two countries constitutes one of a set of historic events that, while not actually interrupting existing family and work ties, did require the development of new strategies and practices on the part of both populations, i.e. changes in community border use which the study tracks over the period in question. The second study in the chapter, *The Social Integration of Refugees from the 1956 Hungarian Revolution in the United States (Experiences of Ethnographic Field Research)*, presents the findings of a field research project by Balázs Balogh regarding the community of Hungarian refugees who settled in the Eastern and Midwestern regions of the United States following the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Balogh's study outlines the history of this group of people, exploring the questions of how Hungarian migration manifested in the geographical area under scrutiny, how Hungarian refugees and their families reached U.S. shores, and how they lived once they got there. The cases studied for the project focus on the topics of relations with American society, and successes and failures experienced during the integration process.

In Chapter 2, *Historical Perspectives and Examples*, case studies of a historic nature feature alongside pieces intended to illustrate the range of problematics under investigation as part of a research process. In *The Effects of Alcohol Trade among the Samoyeds and Ob-Ugrians in the Russian North and Western Siberia*, for example, Art Leete examines the effects of the 19th-century alcohol trade on changing perceptions of the peoples inhabiting Northern Russian and Western Siberia, using examples taken from relevant ethnographic and travel accounts. In his analysis of the source material, the author identifies the contours of several processes: how alcohol altered both the terrain, and indigenous life; how researchers used alcohol as a barter item for participation in interviews; and how, in the wake of trade, alcohol came to be incorporated into the ritual lives of various ethnic groups. A second study, *Migration and Social Mobility in Kézdivásárhely (Târgu Secuiesc) at the Turn of the 20th Century* by Attila Dimény, analyses mobility in a turn-of-the-century Transylvanian town based on data derived from civil wedding registers. The findings, obtained from an analysis of where individuals lived and how their social situations changed, permitted the author to demonstrate how social mobility in the age in question related primarily to the life courses of craftspeople and – to a lesser extent – participants in local commercial life. This is followed by a number of studies examining economic and social mobility in relation to border changes following the collapse of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire as they affected Hungary and Romania in the period after World War I and II. Emese-Gyöngyvér Veres's *Migration of the Brassó (Braşov) County Csángó: Impact of Politics, War and Economy*, for example, examines the case of the Brassó County Csángó, with specific reference to the topic of labour migration and its effects, including a discussion of the homecoming process and resulting changes. A study by Krisztina Csibi, for its part, deals with an under-researched period in the history of the Bukovina Székely people (*Consequences of the Resettlement of the Bukovina Székelys between 1941 and 1944*), examining primarily how a previously closed community managed, over the course of successive resettlements, to preserve its identity and incorporate changes into its day-to-day life. Also focused on the question of preserving identity amidst change was Erika Vass's *Migration Processes and Transformation of Identity in Hunyad (Hunedoara) County*, which examined the influx of Hungarian guest workers, a portion of whom never returned home, resulting from a surge in mining activities in a predominantly Romanian-populated county. In summarising her field experiences, Vass sketches out the advantages and disadvantages associated with workers' departures and arrivals, and with their new life situation. Finally, in the chapter's concluding paper, Ákos Nagy writes on both the forces influencing local and national identities, and the migrational responses to them (*Romanian Collectivisation and Rural Migration in Four Hungarian Minority Settlements*), additionally exploring the processes that developed after the political events of 1989. The paper places particular emphasis on the alternate type of lifepath that arose in the municipality of Jobbágytelek (Sâmbriaş), which was exempted from collectivisation.

Chapter 3, *Contemporary Perspectives: Migration and Identity*, offers an array of four case studies focused on contemporary circumstances, presented from three different viewpoints. The first, a study written by Albert Zsolt Jakab and Lehel Peti (*Migration and Ethnicity: The Czechs of Banat (Romania)*), analyses the causes behind the migration of Czechs from Romania to the Czech Republic and associated issues of ethnicity. In it, the authors compare the discourse surrounding locality and ethnicity among members of the current, largely elderly population of the villages with that of both emigrants, and the Czech tourists who “discovered” the Czech villages in Romania following the 1989 change of political systems. The collapse of villagers’ capacity to earn a living due to isolation and economic decline in the post-1989 period, along with existential angst at the perceived impossibility of maintaining community life, is found to pervade attitudes toward locality on the part of both the remaining local population, and emigrants, who use their country homes only during summer holidays or when maintaining kinship ties. At the same time, the study finds tourist activity on the part of Czechs from the motherland to have contributed to a re-valuation of local Czech ethnicity. A second paper, Töhötöm Á. Szabó’s *Managers, Workers, and Day Labourers. Mobility Patterns, Migration, and Renegotiated Social Positions in a Roma Community*, explores the process of bargaining that has shaped social developments and other changes in an internally divided Transylvanian Roma community, where tensions related to classification and recognition policy afflict the discourse both between Roma and non-Roma, and among different Roma groups. This is followed by Lilla Szabó’s *Community, Memory, Returning. Home Attracting Strategies of the Transylvanian Hungarian Cultural Festivals*, which discusses the increasing popularity of festivals as a leisure time activity throughout Transylvania, noting that such events combine quality cultural programmes with both tourism, and – their primary organisational objective – community building. Finally, in the chapter’s concluding study, András Vajda’s *Migration and Digital Literacy: The Role of Digital Devices in Guest Workers’ Communication With Home* analyses a triad of topics related to the use of digital tools and technologies in a Transylvanian rural community, including how they spread, how the technological environment surrounding communication has changed as a result of transborder migration, and what impact these phenomena have had in the areas of relations between family members (i.e. young people living far from home and the older generation left behind), routines and communication device usage habits, and modes of relating to the devices in question.

In the volume’s closing chapter, *Special Approaches: Biology and Museum*, a pair of case studies depart from the reliance on ethnographic-anthropological fieldwork exhibited by the papers presented in previous chapters. In the first of these, Pekka Leimu’s *Modified History and Genetics for Visitors: Turku and Russian Tourists*, the author discusses his findings regarding the veracity of a claim put forward in an article published in 2004 that Russian soldiers accommodated in Turku in 1809 (at the beginning of Russia’s rule of Finland) had left

behind descendants of blood type B. This is rounded out by Edina Földessy's *The Lives of Migrants With and Through Their Objects*, which introduces the reader to a range of exhibitions, research projects, and publications on the topic of migration from the history of the Museum of Ethnography. At the focal point of Földessy's paper is a reflective analysis of six projects – all conducted between 2011 and 2014 – that explore the concept of identity through the material culture of immigrants living in Budapest.

The studies presented herein offer compelling evidence for the relevance of the conference's themes to the investigation of topics of contemporary, as well as historical import. Projects that employed a historical perspective or based their discussions on historical sources (Leete, Dimény, Veres, Csibi, Vass, Nagy), for example, demonstrate how changes in domicile, whether temporary or permanent, stem in most cases from human need or, less often, from forced resettlement or some other inevitability: that behind migration lie motives related to the improvement of individual quality of life (economic opportunity, social prestige, cultural needs, etc.) (see Hatton–Williamson 1992, 2008). Those representing micro-historical case studies conducted in areas that have both received, and produced migration (Finland, the United States, Hungary, and Romania as per Balogh, Ruotsala, Leimu, T. Á. Szabó, Földessy, and Vajda) bring an understanding of the migratory processes experienced in both the modern world, and family histories, and explain various changes in our relationships to them. Finally, studies dealing with a subset of these practices – including ethnic migration (see Horváth 2012: 199) and certain aspects of contemporary tourism (Jakab, Peti, L. Szabó) – illustrate the potential of migration as a means for expressing and living one's national identity, or generating experiences of exoticism, and “time travel”.

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Úton országok, identitások, kultúrák között

Az elmúlt másfél évszázadban számos politikai, társadalmi és gazdasági esemény, egyéni életútbeli változás milliókat késztetett arra, hogy hosszabb-rövidebb időre vagy végleg elhagyja szülőföldjét. A migráció földrajzát tekintve külön figyelmet érdemel az országon belüli és az országhatárok átlépésével történő elvándorlás. Az önkéntes és a kikényszerített elvándorlás közti különbségtételt is szem előtt tartva az (el)indulás, az utazás közbeni lét és a megérkezés olyan jelenségek megragadására is lehetőséget kínál, mint az értékek továbbadása és őrzése, integrációs és izolációs folyamatok és gyakorlatok megértése. Emellett a kibocsájtó és befogadó lokális csoportok olvasatát, az új helyzetre adott válaszát is magában hordozza. A sokrétű jelenség megértéséhez interdiszciplináris megközelítés szükséges, ehhez a néprajztudomány és az antropológia eredményei is segítséget nyújthatnak.

La drum între țări, identități și culturi diferite

În ultimul secol și jumătate numeroase evenimente politice, sociale și economice, totodată schimbări la nivelul cursului vieții individuale au îndemnat milioane de persoane să-și părăsească – temporar sau definitiv – locul de baștină. În privința geografiei migrației trebuie să delimităm migrația din cadrul unei țări și cea transfrontalieră. Ținând cont și de diferența dintre migrația voluntară și cea forțată, experiența pornirii la drum, al călătoriei și a sosirii la destinație oferă posibilitatea de a concretiza fenomene ca păstrarea și transmiterea valorilor, înțelegerea fenomenelor și practicilor de integrare și izolare. Pe lângă acestea include și atitudinea grupurilor emitente și cele de recepție, respectiv și răspunsul acestora la noile situații. Pentru a înțelege aceste fenomene complexe, avem nevoie de o abordare complexă, interdisciplinară, la care își aduc aportul și rezultatele etnografiei și a antropologiei.

On the Road: Between Nations, Identities, and Cultures

The past 150 years have seen numerous political, social, and economic events, along with changes to the life paths of populations and individuals, that have prompted people to leave their homelands, whether temporarily, for an extended period, or even permanently. Affecting millions, human migration is a phenomenon that continues to the present day. From a geographic standpoint, a distinction must be made between internal migration and migration that involves the crossing of national borders. An understanding of what people experience during departure, travel, and arrival, with consideration given to the distinction between voluntary and forced migration, can help us grasp phenomena such as the transferral and preservation of values, comprehend which processes and practices work to integrate or isolate, and grant a perspective on both source, and destination groups and the responses to the situations encountered in new locations. To understand this multi-faceted phenomenon requires a multidisciplinary approach, for which ethnographic and anthropological research findings may offer assistance.