BERNADETT CSURGÓ – CSONGOR JÁNOSI
– KATALIN JUHÁSZ – VLADAS SIRUTAVIČIUS –
CORNELIU PINTILESCU

Folklore Revivalism and Ethnography: Alternatives to Everyday Culture

This chapter presents folklore, the heritage of peasant culture, and ethnographic activities as a form of oppositional culture and counterculture during the period of socialism in Eastern Europe. This chapter is not, however, a study of how ethnography as an academic discipline constructed images of peasant traditions or folk culture as an expression or form of opposition to communist rule. Its goal, rather, is to explore how various social groups appropriated folklore and ethnography in order to carve out alternative cultural spaces of their own. The main purpose of this chapter is to show how ethnography, folklore activities, and the cultural heritage of the peasantry created the sense of a unified community and alternative modes of thought in the period of socialism, even if the application of folklore was multi-faceted in the socialist period and ethnographic studies and folk culture activities were mobilized to service the ideological needs of the state and state policies intended to enforce the cultural hegemony of the communist regimes in most socialist countries.

In nineteenth-century Eastern Europe, the peasants in the emerging nation states were viewed as the soul and identity of the nation, and folklore was regarded as the legitimate expression of peasant culture. National movement activists considered folklore and folk art important parts of modern national culture. The intelligentsia and intellectuals believed that products of peasant culture (songs, stories, sayings, dances, etc.) were an important part of the general national culture. National movement activists and leftist intellectuals (e.g. Béla Bartók in Hungary, Jurgis Dovydaitisin in Lithuania, etc.) in the late nineteenth century and also during the interwar period collected, published, and researched folk culture. Collecting, preserving, and analyzing the artifacts of the past played an important role in creating the emerging identities of nations.[1] This nation-based character of folk and peasant culture remained a palpable attitude in many countries of the Soviet bloc under socialism.

There were paradoxical interpretations of folk culture and related nationalism during the socialist era. Communism as a political ideal was strongly connected with internationalism, and indeed nationalism was officially and,

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1 Herzog, "'National in Form and Socialist in Content'?"; Silverman, "The Politics of Folklore in Bulgaria."

in the early phase of communism, also practically condemned as a bourgeois ideology. However, communist leaders elsewhere in the Soviet bloc realized that notions of national identity were things they could and needed to use. From the outset communist leaders started to support folk art with a focus on art traditions. They recognized that folk art was closely connected to the people they were addressing and from whom they hoped to derive their legitimacy. In addition, folk cultures were also considered important and were supported by the socialist governments in various ways. For instance, the regimes sponsored folklore festivals, folk schools, and ensembles and they also supported and oversaw ethnographic research.

Nevertheless, several aspects of traditional folk culture, including its religious, ethnic, and conservative characteristics, were incompatible with the goal of creating a unified socialist folk culture. Folklore movements and ethnographic activities focused on patterns of human creativity in rural life. These movements revealed the distinctiveness of the cultures of the villagers, their creative skills, their aesthetic sense, and other values which were often distinct or even distant from the culture of the working class. Significant interest and demand had arisen for folk arts and crafts, festivals, holidays, and folk song and dance in most of the countries of the Soviet bloc during the socialist era. These processes can be regarded as folklorism or revived folklore because in this context folklore existed outside of its source community, but it could return to its original settings. Hermann Bausinger[2] argues that for something to be folklorism, the artifacts of the folk culture in question must be shown outside of their original context with new functions and purposes, and he also talks about the case of revived folklore, when folklore reassumes its traditional functions in a new cultural context. Bausinger states that in such cases of "second existence folklore," it is difficult to distinguish between folklorism and folklore, as there are no firm boundaries.[3] In the following, some descriptions are offered of forms of folk culture which bore countercultural connotations and were excluded from the state supported socialist folk art and ethnography.

Countercultural folk art activities at times were based on everyday recreational characteristics of folk culture as an alternative form of cultural life and youth culture and as a channel for the expression of critical opinions. In this context, folklore exists outside of its "source community," and it is materialistic and popular.[4] The Hungarian folk revival movements, including the so-called "dance house" (táncház) movement and the Studio of Young Folk Artists (the so-called Nomadic Generation), which were formed at the end of the 1960s, demonstrate very well this aspect of folk art. The dance house movement was an urban grassroots youth revival movement that emerged in the

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2 Bausinger, *Folk Culture in a World of Technology*.
3 March, *The Tamburitza Tradition*.
4 Šmidchens, "Folklorism Revisited"; Bausinger, *Folk Culture in a World of Technology*.

1970s and 1980s in the period of late socialism in Hungary. It "provided alternatives to officially supported, mandatory youth activities and played a vital role in the everyday life of young people in socialist Hungary."[5] The dance house movement can be regarded as a subculture which was able to create a shared identity with an intrinsically oppositional stance.[6] Members of the younger generations living in urban settings and urban intellectuals integrated folk culture into the culture of modern city life. The dance house movement reinvented the institution of the village dance house in urban settings. "In the period of milder political suppression of late reform socialism, the dance house established strong communities of young people with similar tastes, values, sets of identities and critical ideas deviating from the official view."[7] Members of the Studio of Young Artists aimed to draw inspiration and influence from deeper spheres of folk culture, instead of the schematic folk art. Members of dance house movement and members of the Studio of Young Artists rediscovered the cultures of the Hungarian-speaking communities in Transylvania and other neighboring countries, and in these cultures they discovered a depository of Hungarian traditions. This grassroots discovery of minority Hungarians and their folk culture became highly awkward for the regimes on either side of the border. Cultural artifacts drawing on the traditions of suppressed minority Hungarians and the narratives of minority grievances in the neighboring countries were strong statements against the attitudes of the communist leadership toward Hungarian minority issues.[8] The hiker's movement in Lithuania and other tourism-based initiatives in the Baltic states had very similar characteristics. They were also so-called "back-to-the-roots" movements and organizations which aimed to rediscover their country's history and culture, including authentic folk culture. These kinds of activities were very popular among university students and young people.[9] Thus, in the socialist era, the "folklore movement was part of a wide stream of amateur culture, which it exceeded in many respects, and formed strongly not only the professional and personal lives of individuals, but also knowledge of folk culture in general."[10]

Folklore became part of the mission to recover national themes, and it had a significant effect on cultural and political discourse everywhere in the socialist countries with varying strength. Folk elements appeared in pop culture, e.g. in rock music. Folk rock was very popular in Hungary beginning in the 1970s. One of the most successful examples of the fusion of folk and rock elements is the Hungarian rock opera "Stephen, the King," the first perfor-

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5 Balogh and Fülemile, "Cultural Alternatives," 43.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid., 44.
8 Ibid.
9 Herzog, "'National in Form and Socialist in Content'?"
10 Pavlicová and Uhlíková, "Folklore Movement and Its Function in the Totalitarian Society," 31.

mance of which was held in 1983. It constitutes a rediscovery of national themes, and it had a significant effect on cultural and political discourse.[11]

Other types of folk-inspired pop music were seen as countercultural manifestations and were excluded from the official and state supported folk music in several countries during the socialist era. Wedding music in Bulgaria is one of the best example of this. Wedding music became a mass underground cultural phenomenon in Bulgaria in the 1970s. It was prohibited by the socialist government and it was labelled kitsch. One of its important characteristics is that it was mostly played by Roma musicians, who were regarded as a quintessential "other" by Bulgarians, thus wedding music was outside the authentic state-sponsored Bulgarian folk music and was excluded from official folk events and festivals during the socialist era.[12] The case of Newly Composed Folk Music (NCFM) in the 1970s in Yugoslavia is very similar. This music was also characterized by a combination of pop music and regional folk elements, and it was seen as an expression of opposition to the progressive modern Yugoslavia and as the realm of uncultured, uneducated, and generally backward people, so it was excluded from both the progressive Yugoslavian cultural scene and the allegedly authentic, state-supported Yugoslavian folk music.[13] It is important to emphasize that NCMF was the basis of so-called turbo-folk music, which was one of the most important cultural expressions of nationalist thinking and war propaganda in the 1990s in the post-Yugoslav successor states.[14] Not only the nationalist but also the commercial aspects of this folk-inspired pop music (e.g. wedding feast rock in Hungary, *svatbarska muzika* in Bulgaria) were important. This music was the first commercial success of rock music infused with rural popular music. It was a viable economic niche located in the realm of the free market in several countries of the socialist bloc in the 1980s.[15]

Many aspects of research on folk culture and ethnography enjoyed the support of the socialist states in most of the Eastern-European countries. Everyday life in small villages during the period of forced industrialization (for instance the everyday lives of miners) became the most important issue for new socialist folk research. Workers replaced peasants as the nation's main representatives in these new folk research endeavors. Nevertheless, several aspects of ethnographic research collided with Soviet ideology and so-called role models.[16] Several filters were used to create a proper image of the nation. However, ethnographic research was done with a proper archival system in all of the countries involved, which means that many hidden and offi-

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11 Feischmidt and Pulay, "Rocking the Nation."
12 Silverman, "Bulgarian Wedding Music Between Folk and Chalga."
13 Cvoro, *Turbo-Folk Music and Cultural Representations of National Identity in Former Yugoslavia.*
14 Feischmidt and Pulay, "Rocking the Nation."
15 Szelényi, *Városi Társadalmi Egyenlőtlenségek,* 79; Feischmidt and Pulay, "Rocking the Nation"; Silverman, "Bulgarian Wedding Music Between Folk and Chalga."
16 Pavlicová and Uhlíková, "Folklore Movement and Its Function in the Totalitarian Society."

cially discouraged parts of folk culture and the peasant heritage were collected and archived, even if they were not selected for publication in many cases. The case of ethnomusicological research in Kladensko (a coal mining region near Prague) by the Institute for Ethnography of the Czech Academy of Sciences demonstrates the possible political pressure which sought to manipulate the publication of research findings.[17] A comparison of the book on Kladensko published in 1959 with archival and research materials offers a very different picture. "A rich assortment of drinking, erotic, religious, and humorous songs was collected, but they were not deemed suitable for publication."[18] In most cases, the ethnographic research was not a form of conscious resistance or criticism of the regimes, but the topics, interests, and values created an alternative culture and mode of thinking which broke and even collided with the state ideology and identity. The folk music collection of László Lajtha[19] in Hungary provides insights into the private practices of alternative culture and opposition on the level of the private individual during socialist era. Lajtha's documents represent a pre-communist cultural heritage which had a kind of critical perspective on communist ideology. Several ethnographers in the socialist countries managed to maintain their autonomy in their research at the communist state institutions, and they conducted ethnographic research in many cases in contradiction with the official cultural policies. Ethnographic research at the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu in Romania, for instance Cornel Irimie's ethnographic research, illustrate this very well.

Alongside the artistic heritage of the peasantry, the notion of peasant origin and cultural bonds also created alternative cultural attitudes and forms of behavior that could have been interpreted as expressions of opposition. Artists and intellectuals could embody and also be regarded as representatives of pre-communists on the one hand and alternative and oppositional culture and values everywhere in the Socialist bloc on the other. The rural is represented as the lost and found community, lost and found traditions, lost and found beauty, etc. There was a strongly idyllic view of rural pastimes. The rural idyll is strongly connected to nostalgia. Rural places can be regarded as sites of memory. Nostalgia is an important emotion in society. Nostalgia in the social sciences revolves around three main topics: collective memory, a yearning for the past, and a yearning for identity. The scholar who introduced the concept of collective memory to Western discourses was Maurice Halbwachs,[20] who argued that collective memory is always socially constructed to explain the past in the present. The sociology of nostalgia is also rooted in the assumption that nostalgia is an individual experience, but its origins and

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17 Kratochvíl, "'Our Song!' Nationalism in Folk Music Research and Revival in Socialist Czechoslovakia."

18 Ibid., 402.

19 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Folk Music Collection of Lajtha, László", by Gabriella Vámos, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

20 Halbwachs and Coser, *On Collective Memory*.

implications are highly social. Davis[21] defines nostalgia as a longing for the past, and he sees nostalgia as a tactic used by people to hold on to a sense of identity. Gáspár Nagy, a deeply religious Catholic poet of peasant origins, was one of the first people to allude to the 1956 Revolution in his poems. His works were banned many times in Hungary, and he became a significant figure of the opposition by the 1980s. One also might think of Arsenie Platon, a Moldavian poet with a peasant background who criticized the ethnic discrimination of Moldavians and called for the overthrow of Soviet power. In his poems and short proclamations, he created a kind of art-based grassroots cultural opposition during the socialist era. Peasant heritage and behavior also became topics of focus in the social science discourses from the 1980's, especially in Hungary and Poland, from a more social than art-based point of view. Descendants of the former middle-class and wealthy peasant families were regarded as potential agents and the most important actors of the social transformation and the liquidation of the state socialist system. As Iván Szelényi stated in 1988, "The main hero of the Socialist Entrepreneurs is the Hungarian peasant and worker becoming petit bourgeois: those men of the street who, during the four decades of communism, have invented how to create a life-space for themselves in the iron hoop of redistributive economy and how they could break up the social and economic system of state socialism by undermining it slowly for decades—in the book I call this a 'quiet revolution coming from below'."[22]

To summarize, we can say that several aspects of folk culture and peasant heritage included the potential for alternative culture and thinking as well as expressions of cultural opposition. In this chapter, some countercultural forms and manifestations of folk and peasant culture during the socialist era were described, such as (1) folk art in recreational and youth culture, (2) folk in pop culture, (3) ethnographic research and archives on countercultural elements of folk culture and (4) peasant heritage in the values and behaviors of dissents and social transformation. In the following, the subchapters provide deeper insight into the different forms countercultural trends and movements and aspects of folk culture and ethnographic activities in the socialist countries. The first two subchapters examine the forms of folk art which inspired youth and recreational culture during the socialist era, such as the dance house movement in Hungary and the folk movements, especially tourist movements, in the Baltic states. The third subchapter presents the so-called underground ethnographic research in Romania.

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21 Davis, *Yearning for Yesterday*.
22 Szelényi, *Városi Társadalmi Egyenlőtlenségek*, 79.

"The Dance Movement, Nomadic Generations": Archives of the Hungarian Folk Music and Dance Revival Movement of the 1970s and 1980s

The "dance movement" which began in Hungary in 1972 was definitely a Hungarian phenomenon, but it was not a unique tendency in folklore trends. It belongs among the array of revival movements of the era (movements which could be found all over the world and which shared numerous characteristics).[23] The essence of the movement was the return to roots and peasant culture and the use of folk music and folk dance as leisure time activities that could help build a sense of community and a sense of identity amidst the circumstances of modern life.[24] On the cultural palette of socialist Hungary, the dance movement was located somewhere between the "tolerated" and "forbidden" categories of Kádár's cultural policies (various forms of culture and recreation were grouped according to the three T's under Kádár, "támogatott," "tűrt," and "tiltott," or supported, tolerated, and forbidden).[25]

From the outset, some of the prominent representatives of the movement strove to document the more important events and collect and preserve all the relevant materials on which they could get their hands. Some of these private archives eventually wound up as part of institutional holdings and are accessible to researchers, while some are still in private possession and are difficult for scholars or historians to use.

This chapter offers a brief overview of the history of the Hungarian folk music and folk dance revival movement and its social and political background. It focuses in particular on the dance movement of the late socialist era (i.e. the 1970s and 1980s), and it provides descriptions of the most important archives created by the members of this movement.

"Folklorism" – The Dance House and Folk Art Movement

The discovery and deliberate *reinterpretation* of peasant culture and, within this, folklore (folk songs, folk music, folk dance) and the decorative arts and, furthermore, the elevation, as it were, of this culture to the status of "high" culture (culture of classes other than the peasantry) were part of a larger pro-

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23 Livingstone, "Music revivals."

24 The dance movement's acquisition of an institutional form was quite unique: the activities that were organized and the organization frameworks that were developed in order to further the preservation and revival of elements of folk dance, folk music, and folk arts which produced object works of art were remarkably successful. In 2010, the so-called "dance house" method was added to the UNESCO World Heritage registry of "the best practices of preservation" as "the Hungarian model of the transmission of intellectual and spiritual cultural heritage." Accessed March 14, 2016. http://www.unesco.hu/kultura/tanchaz-modszer-mint.

25 Klaniczay, *Ellenkultúra*, 10, 17–24.

cess that began in the nineteenth century. Sometimes, this culture bore the elements of a form of counterculture (as part of or a tool of an ideology belonging to a spiritual, cultural, or political trend that constituted a break from the mainstream) and sometimes it served the goals of the prevailing power. Within this, the notion of folklore as a distinctive kind of "mother tongue" gathered ever more currency beginning at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the turn of the century, the artists of Gödöllő, for instance, tried to incorporate peasant culture into their everyday lives in a "Tolstoyesque" manner, and at the same time, they elevated elements of folk culture into high culture in a Bartókesque fashion.[26] In the interwar period, István Györffy, who came to regard folk tradition as the foundation of national culture and education, formulated practical notions concerning the appropriation and use of folk culture.[27] Without going into excessive detail concerning the "folklorism" of the interwar period (which was motivated in part by social concerns and in part by national, patriotic visions and which touched almost every stratum of society), it is worth noting simply that almost all of the later folk revival movements and trends borrowed a great deal from Györffy.[28] After the communists seized power in 1948, the state cultural policy, which was based on the Soviet model, strove to do away with peasant culture, while at the same time the Folk Art Institute, an institution created in 1951 and based, again, on the Soviet model, assumed close supervision of every sphere of contemporary folk art. The purpose of the institution was "to inspire the folk to compose folk art in order to capture ever more clearly the new life and the socialist message" by "promoting the artistic guidance of the cultural mass movement."[29] The cultural regime also strove to reform the folk dance performed on stage in the spirit of "Moiseyevism": the typical choreographies were amalgamations of stylized, simplified motifs and rigid motions and theatrical contrivances that were entirely foreign to peasant culture. The unfavorable political-ideological context notwithstanding, the Folk Art Institute became a leading center for research on folk music and folk dance.[30] Indeed, as a kind of "countercultural" studio, it also provided something of a refuge for many "class enemies," including prominent personalities (including for instance Elemér Muharay and László Lajtha) who in the interwar period had

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26 Much as Bartók did with music (Lendvai, *Béla Bartók*; Schneider, *Bartók*), in their paintings and frescos István Zichy and Aladár Körösfői Kriesch (Szabó, *Zichy*) used elements of folklore in a manner that allowed them to preserve their distinctive original features and value while nonetheless appearing in an entirely new aesthetic quality in a non-peasant setting. Similarly, Mariska Undi did this with clothing design (Juhász, "Ot narodnogo kostyuma," 14–15).

27 Györffy, *Néphagyomány* és *nemzeti művelődés.*

28 László Diószegi, for instance, makes this contention in connection with the twentieth-century Hungarian dance movement (Diószegi, "Historic Moments."), as does American scholar Mary N. Taylor on the basis of research she did for several years in Hungary on the dance house movement (Taylor, "Does Folk Dancing Make Hungarians.")

29 Cited from the 1953 work plan.

30 Continuing the program outlined by Kodály and Győrffy.

been part of the so-called "Gyöngyösbokréta" or "Pearly Bouquet" movement and who, along with the young people who came to work alongside them (for instance György Martin and Ernő Pesovár), became some of the most influential figures of the scholarship on Hungarian folk music and folk art. They helped members of the generation of young choreographers who, beginning in the 1960s, started to search for new paths in the art of dance as they took part in amateur ensembles in progressive workshops that were maintained by trade unions and were less strictly controlled by the state.[31] At the end of the 1960s, a new era began in other fields of the folklore revival. In part because of the influence of two television contests, Nyílik a rózsa ("The rose opens") and, later, Röpülj páva ("Fly, peacock"), folk songs became popular among every social stratum, and parallel to this, in intellectual circles a vibrant discourse was underway concerning the role of folklore in modern culture.[32]

Following all these antecedents, in the early 1970s, at the initiative of urban young people, the so-called "dance house movement" began to flower. As Taylor observes, this movement "arose from the interaction of state socialist cultural policy, the activities of populist cultural managers, global trends in folk revival, and spontaneous youth movements."[33] The dance house movement offered new interpretations of the tradition of village dance occasions in an urban setting.[34] The first dance house, which was organized in 1972 originally as a private function, was made an open event in response to widespread interest, and dance instruction was even added. This was the spark which started the dance house movement as a phenomenon which spoke to the wider strata of Hungarian society. Village dances and village folk music became one of the new forms of urban entertainment and leisure-time activity. The members of the Studio of Young Folk Artists, who borrowed a phrase from oppositional poet Sándor Csoóri and dubbed themselves "the nomad generation" as an attempt to capture their lifestyle and their relationship to the regime) used peasant architectural and handicraft traditions in their ecological, landscape, and creative work.[35] The handicrafts, folk music, and folk

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31 Diószegi, "Historic Moments," 5–6.

32 Vargyas, "Akarjuk-e, hogy éljen a népdal?"

33 Taylor, "Does Folk Dancing Make Hungarians," 18–19. See Halmos, "The Táncház Movement"; Ronström, "Revival in Retrospect"; Taylor, "The Politics of Culture."

34 A very archaic dance and musical culture has survived in the city of Szék in Transylvania (Sic in Romanian), which lies to the north of the city of Cluj and the population of which is almost entirely Hungarian-speaking. The term "dance house" comes from Szék. It referred to regularly weekly dance occasions. This format was adopted in 1972 at the first dance house club evening that was organized by four amateur Budapest dance groups. The participants in the event danced the entire set of traditional dances in tradition form together with guests who had come from Szék ("just like back in Szék") and with the cooperation of the members of the recently formed Sebő band.

35 According to György Földes, the right-wing opposition which began to form in the 1970s used three key terms (market, democracy, nation). Of these terms, "nation" was also an important rallying cry for the new folk revival movement (Földes, *Hatalom és mozgalom*, 168–69).

dance movements, which shared many closely interwoven threads, offered an invigorating alternative to the socialist youth culture and leisure-time activities of the 1970s and 1980s, which were strictly monitored and saturated with ideology. "The vibrant sound of the newly discovered authentic music, the liberating feeling of improvisational movement, the joy of the creative activity and the social experience of the fellowship of like-minded young people all contributed to a critically minded young generation's expression of rebellious worldviews."[36] This folk art movement can be interpreted as one of the (nostalgic) countercultures of the period of Kádár socialism.[37] As Márczi argued:

This culture exerted a strong influence on a receptive group among the members of the younger generations of the 1970 and 1980s, an influence which even led to the emergence of new lifestyles. It was able to produce forms of culture that were expressive of identity, in contrast with the vapid slogans of socialist culture and the products of the entertainment industry. (…) It provided a genuine alternative to forms which had become rigid in power: the freedom of one's own existence, self-organization, and self-expression.[38]

Logically, the search for original traditions led members of these movements to the Hungarian-speaking communities beyond Hungary's borders, where the very circumstance of life as a national minority and the distinctive cultural trajectories of the neighboring countries added a good three or four decades to the life of traditional peasant culture. The pilgrimages to sources of living folk art beyond Hungary's borders also began to raise questions which until then had been muted at best concerning the condition in which the minorities communities lived. This was an "awkward" subject for the regime (one of many), which branded the dance house movement and the intellectual circles[39] associated with it with the label nationalist. In the eyes of the regime, which was founded on an ideology which it claimed was international, these expressions of sentiments of national attachment and cravings for national autonomy seemed ideologically dangerous. This may have been one of the reasons behind the campaigns of harassment which were launched by the authorities beginning in 1974. One of the common methods of exerting pressure adopted by the

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36 Fülemile, "Folk Art Heritage," 72. For more on the folk dance and music revival as one of the forms of cultural opposition see Balogh and Fülemile, "Cultural Alternatives."

37 See Klaniczay, *Ellenkultúra*.

38 Márczi, "Hová lett a Nomád nemzedék?"

39 From the outset, several members of the folkish-national opposition (officially, the opposition which was "attacking on the basis of a nationalist platform"), which as is widely known was the same group of people which came to form the core of the Hungarian Democratic Forum, had close ties to the members of the dance house movement and the nomad generation. They were regular participants in the dance houses and the folk art camps, often as invited presenters. They were also kept under close watch by the secret police and figured, for instance, in the one of the major cases led by the Ministry of Interior in which they were referred to by the codename "Subások," meaning "sheepskin-wearers," but also suggesting a kind of clandestine operation (since the phrase "suba alatt," or "under the sheepskin" in Hungarian refers to something done surreptitiously).

state was the use of undercover informants who were always present at the dance house events, including tours held by the dance ensembles in Hungary and abroad, as well as the (sometimes successful) attempts to recruit new agents, disciplinary proceedings, denunciations, rejections of applications for passports (justified with references to state interests), etc.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, the oppositional tone of the dance house and folk music movements and indeed their attachment to the emerging opposition became increasingly unequivocal. The first "national" rock opera, *István a király* (King Stephen of Hungary), which was composed and performed for the first time in 1983 as a cooperative endeavor among Hungarian folk musicians, folk dancers, and rock musicians, was a major success, as were some of the iconic pop songs of the time which had subversive implications, such as "Nem úgy van most, mint volt régen" (Things today are not as they used to be) and "Adjon Isten mind jobbat, ne csak mindig a rosszat" (Let God provide ever better, not always the bad), arrangements of two folk songs on a record released in 1986 by the group Muzsikás. For the "sharp-eared" audience of the time, which had grown accustomed to reading between the lines under socialism, the original texts of the folk songs acquired immediate political meaning and were interpreted as oppositional messages. At the end of the 1980s, folk musicians often took part in the various gatherings and demonstrations against the system, where the protesting crowds would sing along as the bands performed these and other patriotic songs (for instance the Kossuth-nóta, or Kossuth song, which was one of the most popular recruitment songs of the 1848–49 Revolution and War of Independence). During the campaigns before the free elections in 1990, a line from the popular folk song "Hidegen fújnak a szelek" (Cold winds are blowing) was used by the Alliance of Free Democrats as one of its main slogans: "Szabad élet szabad madár," or "free life free bird."

Institutional Archives, Private Collections[40]

The primary goal of the COURAGE project is to find and study archives which contain important information concerning forms of cultural opposition under socialism and make these archives more widely familiar to the larger public. In the case of the dance house movement and the so-called nomad generation, these archives include the private collections belonging to the more prominent representatives of the movement, the complete digitalized contents of *folkMAGazin* (a periodical which began publication in 1993), and the bequests of prominent individuals (Ferenc Kiss, Sándor Csoóri, László Nagy, Imre Makovecz, and others) who were in some way affiliated with the

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40 For more on the dance house and folk art movement and the interviews in its archives see Juhász, "Nomád nemzedék."

movement.[41] Since the organization and cataloguing of the latter are still underway, in this chapter, we present the three archives described below, which are highly significant as collections and relatively easily accessible: the Dance House Archive,[42] which was created by Béla Halmos (one of the founders of the dance house movement); the collection of Ferenc Bodor[43] concerning the dance house movement and the nomad generation; and the digitalized archive of *folkMAGazin*.

The Dance House Archive

Beginning in the early 1970s, Béla Halmos and his wife and fellow musician Katalin Gyenes began collecting newspaper clippings, placards, program booklets, photographs, etc. that were related to the dance house movement. In 1997, in connection with an exhibition organized to celebrate the 25-year jubilee of the dance house movement, he outlined that purpose of the Dance House Archive, which documents the history of the movement, as well as its various activities and tasks, the principles according to which it functions, the kinds of items it includes in its collection, and the main collection units. Even at the time, Halmos was already envisioning a digital collection which would be more space efficient, more easily accessible, and searchable, and he also addressed questions concerning copyright protections.[44]

In 1999, the Dance House Archive began to operate as a section of the Folk Art Division of the Hungarian Cultural Institute[45] (after the Hungarian Heritage House was founded in 2001 as its legal successor, it became a collection unit of the Lajtha László Folk Documentation Center). Because of the lack of human resources, the Archive was unable to pursue systematic collection work, but it nonetheless managed to make occasional acquisitions. Béla Halmos was able to complement the materials in the collection, which consisted primarily of photographs and documents, with several hundred hours of interviews which he systematically planned and held (the "Oral Archive").[46] In these interviews, members of the movement (the "dance housers") share their memories of the events, as do prominent figures of the intelligentsia and the art world. As they speak about their attachment to folk culture and the move-

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41 Ferenc Kiss' bequest was catalogued and digitally arranged by his son, Ferenc Kiss II, a folk musician and composer (Kiss, "Nomád nemzetség."). With the support of the state, a separate building has been set aside for the bequest of Imre Makovecz.

42 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Folk Dance House Archives", by Gabriella Vámos and Katalin Juhász, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018. (forthcoming)

43 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Nomad Dossiers", by Zoltán Pál, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

44 Halmos, "The Táncház Archive."

45 In the early years, the author of this sub-chapter, Katalin Juhász worked as part of the staff of the Dance House Archive.

46 The interviews held in the Oral Archive, which were done over the course of almost 15 years (1995–2009), come to a total of 434 cassette tapes of recorded material.

ment itself, most of them also touch on the ways in which the dance house movement was tied to cultural opposition. Following Halmos' death in 2014, his entire bequest was made part of the holdings of the Hungarian Heritage House, where under the leadership of Péter Árendás the staff of the Folklore Documentary Library and Archive is currently organizing and cataloguing it.[47] In connection with the work being done as part of the COURAGE project, it became clear that there is a serious need to add to the interview materials from new perspectives. The staff of the archive is now continuing work on the interviews from the new perspectives which have arisen.[48] After the renovations which are currently underway on the building have been completed (hopefully by early 2019), the complete material of the Dance House Archive will be available for research in the Hungarian Heritage House Library.

The Bequest of Ferenc Bodor: "Nomad Dossiers"

Historian Ferenc Bodor, who was born in Budapest of parents from Háromszék (once a county in Transylvania, now it lies in the counties of Covasna and Braşov), served as the librarian of the Hungarian College of the Applied Arts and the later as the director of the Tölgyfa Gallery (Oak Tree Gallery). He was familiar among members of the dance house movement as "the stormy rag-leg of the dance houses and the parties at private residences, the expert on artistic monuments in Slovakia and Transylvania, an excellent patriot whom the communist secret police keeps under close observation and harasses, both on this side of the border and on the far side, because of his roots, his work in the preservation of spiritual values and objects of value, and his beard, which in the eyes of the regime is unruly."[49] After Bodor's death, the materials in his bequest, which were thematically rich, ended up in the holdings of various public collections. In 1996, the People's Artistic and Public Education Informational and Methodological Center (which grew out of the Studio of Young Folk Artists and which later became the Public Education Informational Institute and then the Foundation for Cultural Innovation and which was housed in what was once the so-called Silk-Winding building in Óbuda) received the collection on the subject of "Nomad newspapers and photographs," which consisted of 18 boxes of newspaper articles, small prints, and photographs. The Center was linked to Bodor by many threads. Under the direction of József Zelnik, this studio unified the youth folk art movement which emerged in Hungary in the 1960s (Zelnik was also the person who managed to prevail on Hungaroton to issue the first dance house phonographic records). Bodor

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47 See the detailed introduction by Péter Árendás on the website of the Hungarian Heritage House. Accessed March 14, 2017. http://www.hagyomanyokhaza.hu/fdk/hagyatekok/.

48 Barbara Szecsődi, one of the members of the staff at the archive, is one of the people preparing the new interviews.

49 Zelnik, "Szent lődörgő."

erected a monument to this era as one of the participants in and organizers of the movement with the emblematic volume of documents entitled *Nomád nemzedék* (Nomad Generation), which he edited and which was published by the studio, and which in the meantime has become almost legendary.[50] The library of the Foundation for Cultural Innovation has become famous in Hungary as a "green library." Alongside the materials in its holdings on ecological issues, it also collects documents and literature concerning the nomad generation.[51]

The folkMAGazin Digital Archive

Alongside the two collections presented above, *folkMAGazin*, the periodical launched by the movement in 1994, is also a major source. The issues which were published over the course of the past almost 25 years can be consulted today as a kind of database that sheds light on the shifts in the movement "from inside." The various documents (interviews, opinion pieces, debates) offer information directly from the "dance housers" themselves about both the events and the social, political, and cultural milieu in which folklorism emerged and evolved. The digitalized version of *folkMAGazin* has also been issued on a CD-ROM which contains all the issues published from 1994 until the end of 2016, including the special issues.[52] All the issues of the periodical are also available online.[53] *folkMAGazin* nicely complements the materials in the Dance House Archive and the Bodor bequest. It also provides useful reference points which will help readers and researchers orient themselves when looking into the collections.

Summary

The dance house movement which was launched in Hungary in 1972 was a distinctive Hungarian folklorism phenomenon which can be seen both as an organic continuation of antecedents in Hungary and part the international youth and folklore movements which were taking place in the late 1960s. The archives presented here contain not simply the materials or "mementos" of the first decades of the cultural life of the nomad generation and the dance house movement. They are also, if perhaps indirectly, value documents of an

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50 Bodor, *Nomád nemzedék*.
51 The complete registry of the bequest and some of the digitalized materials are also available online. Accessed September 17, 2017. http://www.kia.hu/konyvtar/bodor/bodor.htm. The video recordings of the interviews done for the five-part documentary film *Nomád nemzedék* (Nomad Generation), directed by Márton Ledniczky, are also held here as part of the bequest. Excerpts from the interviews were published in the periodical Ökotáj (Eco-Landscape), edited by Bodor.
52 *FolkMAGazin*. CD-ROM.
53 Accessed September 17, 2017. http://www.folkmagazin.hu/index.php/olvasoterem

era which present the cultural life of the last two decades of the Kádár era from a distinctive, even everyday perspective. Research on the materials in these archives will yield innumerable fascinating insights. With the appropriate source criticism and the inclusion of other sources, once the proper preparatory work has been done, a comprehensive scholarly work on the history of the dance house movement could be written which would nicely complement and counterbalance the volumes of news reports and memoirs and the highly readable but nonetheless one-sided historical works written primarily by journalists.

Folk Movements in Lithuania during the Soviet Period

Several factors influenced the attitudes of the Soviet government and its policies on ethnography and folk culture in the Baltic states during the soviet period. Nevertheless, the Soviet government did not consider *folk culture* or various ethnographic activities dangerous to the regime *per se.* According to the Soviet government, it was important to protect the folk movement from "external," i.e. "bourgeois nationalist" attempts to politicize it and turn it into a way of fighting the political system.

Folk movements became particularly intense in the Soviet Baltic republics after Stalin's death during the so-called de-Stalinization or political liberalization ("thaw") period. Several important "trends" can be distinguished in the folk movements from this period. The first was practically controlled by the government and "party organs," despite formally having "social organization status." These organs included ethnographic societies,[54] which had their own publications, and a republic-wide organizational structure. The government supported the activities of ethnographic societies. However, sometimes their activities drew some criticism. A collection of articles compiled by ethnographers who were well-known in Lithuania (Stravinskas, Dundulienė, and famous geographer and traveler Česlovas Kudaba) about Gervėčiai (a settlement that was incorporated into the Belarusian SSR, even though the absolute majority of its inhabitants were Lithuanians) became the focus of this sort of criticism. According to party bosses, the collection of articles was "drenched" in the "idealization of the pre-socialist way of life of Lithuanians who lived Gervėčiai." This episode would suggest that even "official" ethnographic activities were quite closely monitored and controlled by the government.

In the 1960s, new types of folk movements emerged in all three Soviet Baltic republics, which despite having begun "from below," i.e. at the initiative of separate individuals or groups, were ultimately accepted by the government and won active support. In Lithuania, self-organized ethnographic

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54 The chairman of the society was usually a deputy of the Minister of Culture.

ensembles first became established in Vilnius.[55] Amateur folk dance and song ensembles were also popular in Estonia and Latvia. In Estonia, they were established within various institutions: culture and folk culture centers, higher education institutions, museums, etc. In addition to these types of folklore movements, which were rather easily "integrated" into the official Soviet culture and were even considered representations of that culture, there were other forms of folk movements that balanced on the "edge" of Soviet legality. They comprised another "trend" in folk movements.

In the early 1950s, tourist clubs and so-called travelers' clubs started forming in the three Soviet Baltic republics. The government supported the emergence of these kinds of clubs in a variety of ways. University students became actively involved in this "tourist movement" at the end of the 1950s.[56] The official aim of the tourism clubs was "to rear the young builders of socialism," to strengthen them physically, and to nurture young people as loyal defenders of the USSR. As the tourism movement became increasingly developed and the student body became even more involved, its aims also started to change. In Lithuania, a hikers' (*žygeiviai*) movement formed under the banner of tourism-travelers clubs. Its objective was to become better acquainted with the country's history and culture, to study the nation's customs and traditions, and to look after monuments important to the nation's history. Hikers' congresses celebrated various pagan festivals, especially the *Rasos*, or Summer Solstice festival, during which various rituals were performed.[57]

Folk movements also formed in Estonia and Latvia in the late 1960s. They were similar to the Lithuanian hikers' movements in terms of their objectives and character. In Estonia, an example of this kind of folk movement was the "back-to-our-roots" type of organization, which searched for "authentic" folk culture, unaffected by modernity or Soviet influence.[58] A similar movement existed in Latvia among the youth and university student body.[59] Neither in Estonia nor in Latvia were folk movements that had arisen "from below" as widespread or organized as in Lithuania.

In Lithuania, the hikers' movement gained momentum and grew in 1968–1971. It was even tolerated by the government for some time. This kind of government policy probably depended on several circumstances: first, a certain *inertia of political liberalization*, which was determined by the de-Stalin-

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55 Šmidhens, "A Baltic Music: The Folklore Movement," 120–21.

56 In Lithuania, the first tourist clubs started forming in 1952–53. The LSSR Tourism Federation was founded in 1953. It encouraged mass sports-tourism. In 1962, it was reorganized to become the Lithuanian Republican Board of Tourism and Excursions. The Vilnius University Tourism Club was founded in 1958, and the Vilnius City Tourism Club was founded in 1961. At roughly the same time, tourism clubs started forming in other cities of the LSSR. They were often under the patronage of local professional union committees.

57 Ramanauskaitė, *Subkultūra: fenomenas ir modernumas,* 55.

58 Hercog, "National in Form and Socialist in Content," 132–34.

59 Šmidhens, "A Baltic Music: The Folklore Movement," 132.

ization policies. On the other hand, toleration of the movement could have been due to the cultivation of pagan traditions in the hikers' movement. We could say that the government considered "paganism" a counterweight to the traditional Lithuanian religion, Catholicism, and thus expected to draw young people away from the influence of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the circumstance that in effect, the attitudes of government, party, and security officials towards this kind of self-organized movement was cautious and suspicious. It was believed that its members could easily become "politicized" under the effects of "bourgeois nationalist ideology" and thus the movement could become a suitable medium for the spread of anti-Soviet attitudes and ideas.

Indeed, the hikers' movement did start gradually to "overstep" the "boundaries" of legal ethnographic activities that were tolerated by the government. We know of at least several hikers' events that had more than just a "purely" ethnographic character, such as the tidying up of the birthplaces of the pilots Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas, who died under tragic and mysterious circumstances.[60] In May 1969 at Dariškės, the birthplace of Steponas Darius, around 800 hikers used their hands to build a 3 meter-high grave. Near the grave they erected an altar hewn from rock and a 4 meter-high oak pillar lowered to the ground with the inscription "1933–1969" (the author was the art institute student Žulys). They also tended Lithuanian army volunteer graves and hill-forts, etc. Some hiking clubs (such as the Kaunas city Polytechnical Institute's club *Ąžuolas*, which evolved out of the *Eiklios kojos* tourism club) also had their own "informal" oath. In which members were urged physically and mentally to prepare for the struggle for their homeland's freedom. One of the more memorable hiking events took place on May 1, 1968 in Perloja, where over one-hundred hikers with flaming torches in their hands surrounded the monument to the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Vytautas. Another well-known event was a hike during which the participants took photographs of crosses carved by Vincas Svirskis (1835–1916), one of the most famous nineteenth-century cross carvers, and also collected items about him. In 1969, hikers visited the location of the Battle of Durbe (near Liepaja in Latvia).[61]

Hikers tried to coordinate their activities. A hikers' congress took place in 1969 during which a kind of "code of honor" (a charter) was introduced.[62] A

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60 Pilots S. Darius and S. Girėnas departed from New York in 1933 in the small airplane *Lituanica* for Kaunas. Having successfully completed most of their route, the pilots were unexpectedly involved in a tragic accident under suspicious circumstances and died before reaching Kaunas. In the interwar Republic of Lithuania, they were posthumously given state awards and various memorials were erected. For a long time, the pilots and their flight were ignored in official Soviet Lithuanian culture. An exhibition on their lives was opened at the State History Museum only in the post-Stalinist period in 1958 in Kaunas.

61 "Lietuvos žygeivių judėjimo ištakos ir istorija."

62 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Gediminas Ilgūnas Collection", by Vladas Sirutavičius, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

third hikers' congress was held in April 1970 in Poškai (Šalčininkai district, in the Dieveniškės region in eastern Lithuania). Its aim was to help keep the Lithuanian language, culture, etc. alive in the region, which was dominated by Poles and Belarusians. Around one-hundred hikers from various higher education institutions in Lithuania participated in the gathering. Generally speaking, support for "Lithuanian-ness" in the neighboring Soviet republics, primarily in Belarus and the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation, became one of the main goals of these hikers. In 1970, hikers from Vilnius University and the Kaunas Polytechnic Institute visited "Lithuanian islands"[63] in the territory of Belarus. In addition to collecting ethnographic material (which was later passed on to the Institute of the Lithuanian Language and Literature), they also distributed Lithuanian books and materials from the Lithuanian press. During the same hike, they also visited a monument in Červonka (in Latvia, near Daugpils) erected in memory of Lithuanian volunteers who died fighting the Bolsheviks.[64]

In roughly 1971, the hikers' movement started to face greater restrictions. According to the movement's leaders themselves, this kind of response from the government could have been provoked by certain events which had a "clearly political" character,[65] such as commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the Lithuanian writer and philosopher Vydūnas on Rambynas Hill, paying respect to and maintaining the graves of Lithuanian volunteer soldiers in Červonka, or the "visiting of Lithuanian islands" in Belarus.[66] We should also note that some members of the hikers' movement maintained close ties with the dissident movement, spreading prohibited, anti-Soviet literature, engaged in self-publication, and cooperating with the Catholic Church chronicles (such activities were clearly political in character and were persecuted by the government).

A good illustration of the evolution of the hikers' movement's that influenced changes in the government's attitude towards the movement was the Vilnius University's *Ramuva* club. It was founded in roughly 1969. Until then, various ethnographic clubs had been established at the university, but around 1969, it was decided that they should all be combined into one group. The initiator of this move was the philologist Jonas Trinkūnas (1939–2014). The university's party committee approved of the initiative and *Ramuva*'s activities. An Ethnographic Research Board was established at the university the aim of which was to unite and "supervise" the folk movement. Incidentally, Česlovas Kudaba was appointed chair of the Research Board. He was known as an organizer of various ethnographic research expeditions. This develop-

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63 Settlements in neighboring Soviet republics in which a majority of the population was Lithuanian were often called "islands." This term is even used today by Lithuanian linguists and ethnographers.
64 "Lietuvos žygeivių judėjimo ištakos ir istorija."
65 Matulevičienė, "Algirdo Patacko pogrindis, virtęs pastoge."
66 "Lietuvos žygeivių judėjimo ištakos ir istorija."

ment was testimony to the university administration's (primarily rector Jonas Kubilius') favorable view of the folk movement.[67] In this way, the *Ramuva* folk and hikers' movement was legalized, and its activities were legitimized. The university administration's favorable attitude may have been driven not only by the goal of keeping the movement within the boundaries of legality and stopping it from becoming politicized, but also by the personality of Jonas Trinkūnas himself. *Ramuva* started to intensively organize research expeditions, during which folk culture was collected and recorded. Pagan festivals were also celebrated. Before long, similar clubs started forming in other institutions of higher education in Lithuania.

However, before long the favorable attitude towards *Ramuva* started turning negative. This started to become apparent in 1971 and strengthened after 1972. It would be difficult to say what prompted the changes that led to the persecution of the most active hikers. One can presume that after the self-immolation of Romas Kalanta in 1972[68] and mass protests in Kaunas, the government and the KGB began to pay more attention to the folk hikers' movement. The members of the group were increasingly viewed as potential promoters of anti-Soviet ideas, and the movement itself was seen as a social-cultural seedbed for the formation of various anti-state and anti-Soviet dissident groups. Archival material confirms these assumptions. After the detection of an "anti-Soviet group" in Kaunas (it consisted of five individuals, several of whom were members of a Kaunas hiking movement), its organizers were found to have links with the leader of *Ramuva* in Vilnius, Jonas Trinkūnas. (The criminal case also mentioned the researcher, traveler, writer, and hiking movement activist Gediminas Ilgūnas). Trinkūnas came within range of the KGB because he tried to *collect documentary material about the self-immolation of Kalanta in 1972 and the protests that followed*. It was also discovered that Trinkūnas was rewriting anti-Soviet literature and the papers of US émigré Lithuanian historians. (Nevertheless, a criminal case was not brought against Jonas Trinkūnas, as there was insufficient evidence of his guilt). The leader of *Ramuva* was ousted from the party (he was a candidate) and dismissed from Vilnius University; he was offered no other academic positions in Soviet Lithuania.

So, one could say that after the mass youth protests and demonstrations in Kaunas in 1972, the government's attitude towards the hikers' and folk movement in general became "stricter," and repressive measures were taken against some members who had become involved in dissident activities. On the other hand, security and party organs were finally convinced that the self-organized youth movements that developed "from below" soon became overtly politicized and fell under the influence of "bourgeois nationalists."

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67 Mačeikus, "Vilniaus universiteto kraštotyrininkų Ramuvos komplekslsinės ekspedicijos," 198.
68 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Romas Kalanta collection", by Saulius Grybkauskas, 2018. Accessed: September 20, 2018. (forthcoming)

Nevertheless, *Ramuva* was not disbanded, and the organization was allowed to continue its activities. The main aim of the organization was to conduct ethnographic expeditions and collect artifacts of folk culture. In the period between 1975 and 1991, 17 expeditions were organized in which 100 or more individuals participated.[69]

Underground Ethnography and Cultural Policies in Ceauşescu's Romania

The cultural policies of the communist regime in Romania concerning folklore had distinctive peculiarities in comparison with the policies in other countries in the Eastern Bloc due to the turn towards national communism that took place in the 1960s and the "mini-cultural revolution" launched by Ceauşescu through the so-called July 1971 Theses.[70] Consequently, the communist regime transformed folklore into a vehicle of national propaganda.[71] The use of folklore within the nationalist discourse, however, was not an invention of the Ceuşescu's regime. The cultural scene in interwar Romania was dominated by debates between those labelled by the historian Keith Hitchins "traditionalists," who promoted what they considered to be indigenous cultural values and rejected foreign influences, and the so called "Europeanists," who argued that Western cultural influences should not be perceived as negative.[72] In this debate, peasant culture was perceived by the "traditionalists" as a main source of the "authentic" Romanian cultural values. This intellectual tradition was suppressed in the late 1940s and 1950s, when folklore became secondary and came to play an ornamental role within the official discourse.

In the 1960s, the turn by the Romanian communist regime towards nationalism led to a better position for those conducting research on or collecting folklore within the state cultural institutions. Folklore in its official version was promoted as a quintessence of national identity, and it was displayed in its many and various forms, such as music and dance performances during mass manifestations in Ceauşescu's Romania. These performances, which became increasingly frequent in the late 1970s and 1980s, were in fact conceived in order to meet the taste and expectations of the nomenklatura and represented a kitsch version of folklore. Those conducting research on folklore and collecting or displaying it in museums obtained a privileged status in what Katherine Verdery called the "mechanisms of bureaucratic allocation." According to Verdery, this was a system through which the state bureaucracy

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69 Mačeikus, Venantas. "Vilniaus universiteto kraštotyrininkų Ramuvos kompleksinės ekspedicijos," 199.

70 Shafir, *Romania, Politics,* 92; Petrescu, "Building the Nation."

71 Vasile, *Viața intelectuală,* 75–77.

72 Hitchins, *Rumania,* 292–98.

controlled the cultural actors through a process of distributing resources in which "competition and bargaining" played a significant role.[73] In the late 1960s and 1970s, research institutes and faculty departments specialized in folklore, and many ethnographic museums were created all over the country. Most of the leading intellectual figures co-opted through these cultural policies were intellectually formed during the interwar period. Consequently, their approach to folklore was not easy to adjust to what the state institutions expected of them. Many of them participated in the interwar period in the research programs launched by Dimitrie Gusti, a Romanian sociologist considered the founder of the school of sociology at the University of Bucharest, who after World War II was purged from the academia.

One of the disciples of Gusti was the sociologist and ethnologist Cornel Irimie, who in 1963 established the Museum of Folk Technics (*Muzeul Tehnicii Populare*) in Sibiu. The collections of the Museum of Folk Technics, which later became ASTRA Museum, illustrate the contradictory relationship between folklore and the state institutions in Ceaușescu's Romania. Enjoying academic prestige, Irimie was able to negotiate with the communist authorities and secure a significant degree of autonomy for the ethnographic research conducted by the employees of the museum.[74] Thus, he and his team of researchers were able to conduct field research on topics that were in contradiction with the cultural policies of the communist regime, such as religious customs and beliefs, labelled by the state propaganda as "religious prejudices."[75] Irimie and his team also collected also religious artifacts, such as orthodox icons and triptychs. The findings of the field research and the artifacts collected are held today in the collections of the ASTRA Museum, including for instance the Cornel Irimie Collection.[76]

Irimie's non-conformist approach to folklore and the international collaborative endeavors he developed explain in part why the Securitate kept him under close observation. Although many of his findings could not be made public at the time due to censorship, valuable data and religious artifacts which today are considered part of Romanian national heritage were rescued. The "underground" ethnographic research conducted by Irimie and his colleagues illustrates the contradictory relationship between those dealing with folklore and the state authorities. Although some aspects of their ethnographic research were in contradiction with the official cultural policies, the state institutions tolerated them because the regime was interested in co-opting the folklore specialists.

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73 Verdery, *National Ideology*, 89–94.
74 Interview with Lucian Nicolae Robu, April 27, 2017.
75 Archives of the ASTRA Museum, Collection Cornel Irimie, file no. 145.
76 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Cornel Irimie Collection at ASTRA Museum Sibiu", by Corneliu Pintilescu and Cristina Petrescu, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/12937

This contradiction is also palpable in the case of the Ethnographic Research in the Dobrogea Ad-Hoc Collection.[77] This collection has a very complex character due to the variety of the topics researched and the artifacts collected by the employees of the Museum of Folk Technics, who conducted ethnographic field research in Dobruja, a multiethnic region in the southeastern part of Romania and northern Bulgaria. It contains statistics on the population of the villages, descriptions of their economic life, maps, field research notes, drafts of scientific papers, files with information about the pre-industrial artifacts rescued, and photos of traditional dwellings, churches, triptychs, and churchyards. The items of the collection are the result of two different campaigns. The first was carried out by Hedwig Ulrike Ruşdea, a specialist in pre-industrial mills from the ASTRA Museum, and her colleagues. She and her team managed in the 1960s and 1970s to conduct research and rescue several windmills which were almost destroyed by the agricultural modernization drive that followed the completion of the collectivization process in the region in 1957. Ruşdea not only managed to rescue these pre-industrial artifacts, which were later reassembled in the open-air permanent exhibition, but also collected valuable data about these items and the rural societies that produced them.[78] A second part of the collection is the result of the field research conducted from 1976 to 1984 by the employees of the museum in the villages that were demolished by the construction of the Danube–Black Sea Canal. The results of the ethnographic field research in Dobruja illustrate how the modernization drive destroyed the cultural heritage of the villages, and they also contain an implicit criticism of this process. However, as in the case of the Cornel Irimie Collection, the employees of the museum would not have been able to conduct field research in Dobruja had the communist authorities not turned a blind eye to their activities.

If the ethnographic collections created within the state cultural institutions such those presented above reflects the limits of the autonomy that ethnographers could enjoy in Ceauşescu's Romania, the collections created by private persons in the same period, most of them amateurs, illustrate a different relationship with the communist regime. The two collections created by the members of the Hungarian minority in Romania and selected for analysis here offer insights into the complex relationship between folklore, nationalist propaganda, and the regime's aim of creating a culturally homogenized society.

The Bethlen Foundation Collection[79] was created by the Romanian Hungarian countess Anikó Bethlen, currently a retired person living in Târgu Mureș/Marosvásárhely. The collection contains objects created by different

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77 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Ethnographic Research in Dobrogea Ad-Hoc Collection at ASTRA Museum Sibiu", by Corneliu Pintilescu, 2017. Accessed: October 08, 2018, doi: 10.24389/383397
78 Archives of the ASTRA Museum in Sibiu, Collection: Hedwig Ruşdea, file no. 139.
79 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Bethlen Foundation Collection", by Csongor Jánosi, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

ethnic groups living in Transylvania, and it epitomizes the multicultural character of this region. Most of the items in the collection come from the Transylvanian Saxons (a German speaking population), who were allowed by the communist authorities to emigrate to the Federal Republic of Germany in exchange for significant amounts of Western currency paid by the West German state. The Transylvanian Saxons who emigrated were allowed to take with them only a strictly limited among of luggage (determined by weight). In this context, as they prepared to leave the country (for good, as far as they knew at the time), many Transylvanian Saxon families passed valuable artifacts on to members of the nearby Roma communities through purchases or exchanges. Anikó Bethlen, who due to medical reasons traveled to Western Europe often at the time, observed these practices and came to the conclusion that this phenomenon would lead to the cultural impoverishment of her native region due to the gradual disappearance of the material traces of the diverse Transylvanian cultures. She decided to collect as many cultural artifacts as possible in order to insure their preservation in situ and rescue valuable works. A substantial part of the 3,000 pieces of the collection dates back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and includes objects produced by craftsmen, so this collection is one with significant cultural value. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Securitate kept Anikó Bethlen's activity under surveillance and warned her twice not to conduct "hostile activity against the regime."[80] However, the secret police monitored her ties to people in the West more than they did her work as a collector. Countess Bethlen never enjoyed any state support whatsoever in her solitary endeavor, but she skillfully exploited the informal tolerance of the authorities.

The second collection created by a member of the Hungarian minority in Romania discussed here was initiated by Zoltán Kallós, a Transylvanian Hungarian ethnographer and folk music collector. The Zoltán Kallós Ethnographic Collection[81] represents the largest private ethnographic collection in Romania. It contains Hungarian, Romanian, Transylvanian Saxon, and Csángó ethnographic artifacts (almost 6,000 items), photos (approx. 6,000 items), and a folk music collection (14,000 pieces). The latter is the most comprehensive collection of its type in the Carpathian Basin. Some of the objects collected were inherited by Kallós from his relatives. Other items were added to the collection as a result of his lifelong efforts. Kallós collected the ethnographically important artifacts through unorganized initiatives. This ethnographic collection represents one of the most successful individual attempts to salvage the Transylvanian ethnographic cultural heritage.

From late 1950s up to the late 1980s, Kallós worked together with specialists from the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and

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80 ACNSAS, FI 0264646/1-7; FI 82862/4; FR 229601/4; FR 310575/2–4.
81 COURAGE Registry, s.v. "Zoltán Kallós Ethnographic Private Collection", by Csongor Jánosi, 2018. Accessed: October 08, 2018.

collected folk music from Transylvanian villages. From the mid-1970s, Kallós' collaboration with the experts from Hungary was extended to the so-called dance house movement, the former becoming one of the advisors behind this movement in Transylvania. The dance house movement was a form of cultural opposition in Hungary and among Romanian Hungarians. It promoted authentic folklore by organizing performances of folk dances in organized groups. The role assumed by Kallós in this respect consisted of providing the pieces that were played or sung in the dance house, not only in Transylvania but in Hungary as well.[82] Thus, Kallós was involved in cross border cultural transfers between Romania and Hungary in a period in which Ceauşescu's regime promoted cultural isolation. Furthermore, the activity of collecting folklore in Romania was under the control of the state institutions, and all fieldwork in this area required special authorization from the local county directorate of culture. Those who ignored this regulation were punished by a fine.

Fearing searches and confiscation of the items he had collected, Kallós entrusted his collection of materials to the Archives of the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The recorded materials were smuggled to Hungary by his colleagues, friends, and acquaintances, who undertook the mission to take the written tunes and tapes across the border. Thus, Kallós' initiatives in the practice of collecting folklore and his willingness simply to ignore the communist authorities' claim to control over it were open acts of cultural opposition. During the communist period, Kallós conducted his ethnographic work outside the state institutional framework and did not benefit from state financial support for his research. On the contrary, his activity was monitored by the Securitate, and he was subjected to criminal proceedings after having purchased an object in an unsuccessful effort to prove him guilty of fraud and trafficking.[83] He was convicted three times by Romanian courts of law for common-law offences, and his sources—folk singers—were continuously harassed.[84]

In Ceauşescu's Romania, folklore became one of the main vehicles for nationalist propaganda. Significant efforts and resources were invested to coopt people who were conducting research or collecting folklore. This interest of the regime in folklore created a two-edged relationship between those dealing with folklore and the communist authorities. On the one hand, the regime supported an official version of folklore and promoted specific practices of displaying in order to fuel nationalist discourses. On the other, those studying, collecting, and displaying folklore were well-positioned to negotiate their autonomy with the communist authorities. The employees of the ethnographic museums, such as the Museum of Folk Technics in Sibiu, were tolerated by the state institutions when they approached topics in contradiction

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82 Interview with Gyöngyi Balázs-Bécsi, September 27, 2017.

83 ACNSAS, FI 375159/1–2.

84 ACNSAS, FP 051484, 2–46; ÁBTL 1.11.4. 2nd series. Romania. T-2/1975/1, 6–7.

with the official cultural policies and were allowed to collect items such as religious artifacts, which were unsuitable for an ethnographic collection belonging to a state institution.

In addition to these collections created by employees of the state, private individuals who were passionate about folklore collected impressive ethnographic collections outside the cultural state institutional framework. This was in contradiction with the official policies, which tried to keep the collecting of folklore under the control of the state institutions. As the two collections created by members of the Hungarian minority illustrate, people who sought to collect folklore among the national minorities also opposed the official cultural policies of the Ceauşescu regime, which promoted a dissimulated cultural homogenization.

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