

À QUI APPARTIENT LA TRADITION? / WHO OWNS THE TRADITION?

Actes du colloque / The Acts of the Symposium
À qui appartient la tradition? À quoi sert-elle?
La tradition entre culture, utilisateur et entrepreneur /
Who owns the tradition? What is its purpose?
Tradition between culture, user and contractor

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Cluj-Napoca 2014

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András VAJDA

THE ROLE OF WRITTEN TRADITION IN DUMBRĂVIOARA, MUREȘ COUNTY



INTRODUCTION

By the term of scripturality, István Hajnal refers to the social nature of writing, and to the use of writing in a special social context (Kosárkó 2000: 113). Important for our research is not the content, but the fact of writing and its motivation. „Culture is not material, but the cognitive system of material phenomenon.” – states Keszeg Vilmos (Keszeg 1996: 5.). What is important for us is not only the documents in their materiality, or their content and typological system, but the users’/producers’ opinions about writing and written documents and their approach. Therefore we are interested in the individual and singular writing habits of given persons practised in given situations, as well as the method how these habits explain (reinterpret) the settlement’s life.

The basis of our analysis is the complete survey of three popular archives from Dumbrăvioara (Mureș county, Romania), through which we try to present and understand the popular written culture (written tradition) of a local community. We investigate how writing organizes and transforms the collective and individual world of a local society. Our purpose is to separate different types of texts and the functions attached, to analyse their chronological turns and to present the occasions and habits of writing. The core of analysis are the records from three popular archives. We observe how through writing people and families are connected to each other and to institutions, as well as how writing reorganizes territories and everyday life of individuals.

We apply the following view-points in our research:

1. The written texts are examined in their materiality: size, form, colour and quality of material, the technique and instruments of their manufacture, visual signs of their use, their storage and instruments of storage.

2. We pursue the mapping of the written text typology/system, and the genres of popular literacy, namely the destination of various texts, their contents, formal and stylistic marks, formulas used.

3. We analyse the actual functions of writing and the synchronous processes of their use. On the one hand we study the maker, the location of making, and the rites connected to their making. On the other hand we examine the frequency, occasions and reasons of the usage of consciously preserved writings.

4. The research pays special attention to the historic principle. On a diachronic plain, we analyse the chronological changes in the intensity of use and the results of writing, the transmitting of writings and its roles between generations, the transformation of writings' functions.

We recline on the *biographical method* for a better understanding of the records' keepers and the users of written texts, and for a better understanding of mentality dynamics behind the users' actions, routines and rites. According to this method, various texts and the occasions demanding writing must be interpreted in their alteration, namely in the framework of biography – interwoven with turning points and events of one's destiny. At the same time, the paper draws attention on the following aspects: 1) changes in local culture can be connected to individuals, 2) in local cultures, every type of knowledge has its own specialist, and so does writing.

SYSTEMS OF WRITTEN TEXTS, THE POPULAR ARCHIVES

Every society holds data and information which are crucial in surviving, which allow its optimal functioning (Guar 1984: 14). Archives (libraries, records) are those media which systematize information, keep it in memory and use.

Irén Bányai extended the analysis of personal documents to all official documents kept a family (Bányai 1973: 161–171.). She underlined that private documents alone, without other documents of the issuing organs, carry insufficient information, therefore it is important for documents to be recorded in full. (Bányai 1973: 163.). „Documents exists not for themselves, but interlocked with next data series (Furet 2007: 306.). Bányai used the term popular archive for studying the ensemble of documents.

In Cluj, Keszeg Vilmos started a research on private documents and popular use of writing. The author pointed out the contexts, the local specialists, and the habits (rites) of writing. In one of his studies, he (Keszeg 1998: 598–628) undertakes a global assessment of the written texts of a peasant woman, drawing attention for the first time on the importance of examining the synchronic structure and functions of written culture. (Keszeg 1998: 590.)

ARCHIVES, RECORDS, COLLECTIONS

Michel Foucault, in *Archaeology of Knowledge* offers a radical extension of the concept 'archive'. He defines archive as a system, which controls the appearance and functioning of statements. Archives are not simply static records, they fluctuate and their functioning is influenced by the ruling authority discourses (Foucault 2001).

Derrida, in a discourse from 1944, speaks about the archive as the pledge of reproducing, fixing and remembrance of origin. On the other hand, the principles of collecting, classifying and conditioning are also attached to these significations (Derrida 2008).

Similarly to archives, libraries offer as well an answer to the theoretical question of how the systematisation of the written word can be possible, how the world of multiplying books can be surmounted (Chartier 1994: VII.). The library is a social creation too, for the construction of which some social needs and premises are altogether necessary. Its content and consistence is defined by the cultural and economical life of the establishing community (Jakó 1977: 284–285).

7,7 %) are undated. These documents – except for one – are handwritten and for their majority they are private. The annual distribution of documents can be observed in the following chart:

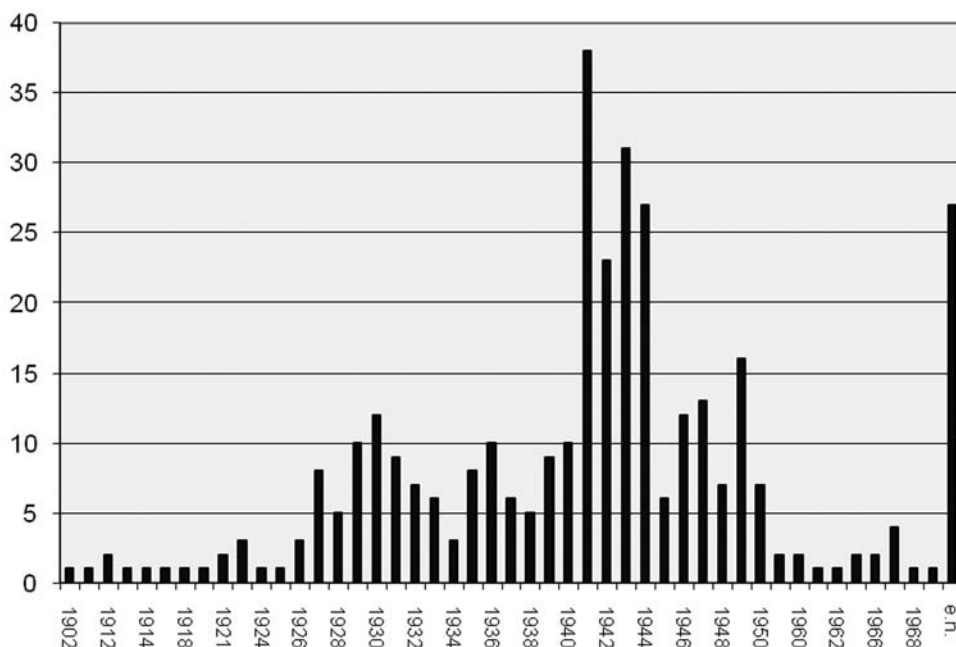


Fig. 2. Annual distribution of documents

Half of the archive (50,3 %) is in Romanian language, the other half in Hungarian. The majority of the Hungarian documents were written for private purposes: letters, poems for remembrance, economic annotations. Most of them (62 letters from the war, several short poems) were written by Mihály Mózes between 1941 and 1944, while he was a soldier. A very small part of the archive is bilingual.

The majority of documents (66 %) is printed, a third of them (30,3 %) is handwritten and a very small part, 3,1 % is typewritten. If we take a look at the official/private partition of documents, we can observe that the official documents are in majority. The private documents, except a few, were written in the time of WWII; preponderantly letters and short poems, several economic annotations. Except for the letters, the private documents are undated.

Official documents represent three-quarters (74,3 %) of the material. 4,5 % of these (17 pieces) are handwritten, 4 % (14 pieces) are recorded on the back side of typewritten papers. This typewritten paper originates from an older administrative period. However, it is important to mention that a large part of the official documents (26 %, 68 pieces) includes short annotations from a family member (the actual head of family). The annual division of the Mózes archive is summed up in the following table:

Year	a	B	C	D	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
1902	1		1				1		1		
1911	1		1				1	1		1	
1912	2		2		1	1			2		
1913	1		1		1				1		
1914	1		1		1				1		
1917	1		1		1				1		
1918	1		1		1				1		
1919	1	1			1				1		
1921	2	2			2				2		
1923	3	3			2	1			3		
1924	1	1			1				1		
1925	1	1				1			1		
1926	3	3			3				3		
1927	8	7	1		7		1	1	8		1
1928	5	5			4	1			5		2
1929	10	10			10				10		4
1930	12	11	1		10	2		1	12		2
1931	9	6	3		6	1	2	1	9		3
1932	7	7			7				7		3
1933	6	5	1		6				6		2
1934	3	3			3				3		1
1935	8	7	1		8				8		2
1936	10	10			10				10		3
1937	6	6			5	1		1	6		2
1938	5	4	1		5				5		
1939	9	5	4		8		1		8	1	3
1940	10	3	6	1	8		2	1	10		4
1941	38		38		14	1	23		15	23	5
1942	23		23		6		17		6	17	2
1943	31		31		21	1	9	1	22	9	6
1944	27		27		9		18		9	18	2
1945	6	3	2	1	4		2	1	6		

Year	a	B	C	D	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
1946	12	9	3		9		3	1	11	1	3
1947	13	13			13				13		8
1948	7	7			7				7		3
1949	16	16			13		3		16		4
1950	7	6	1		6	1			7		1
1959	2	1	1		2				2		
1960	2	1	1		2				2		
1961	1		1				1			1	
1962	1	1			1				1		1
1965	2	2			2				2		
1966	2	2			1		1		2		
1967	4	4			4				4		
1968	1	1			1						
1975	1	1			1				1		
w.d.	27	9	18		6		21	5	9	18	1
Total	350	176	172	2	233	11	106	14	261	89	68
%	50,3%	49,1%	0,6%	66,6%	3,1%	30,3%	4%	74,3%	25,7%	26%	7,7%

Table 1. Mózes family archive structure. Where: a) all documents, b) Romanian documents, c) Hungarian documents, d) bilingual documents, e) prints, f) typewritten documents, g) handwritten documents, h) using older documents, i) official documents, j) private documents, k) with backside notes

Most of the documents (38 %, 137 pieces) can be tied to Ráchel Mózes née Bende, these are mostly official and date back to 1930-49. The number of documents regarding another family member, Mihály Mózes, is also large (107 pieces, 30 %). The third in line regarding the number of documents is Ferenc Mózes: 44 pieces, 12,5 %, the first is a certificate of vaccination; the last is an autobiography in Romanian language from 1966. 12 % (42 pieces) of the whole are connected with other family members. In case of 22 documents we cannot identify the possessor. The owners are illustrated in the following chart.

From a textual typology point of view the archive can be divided into two parts: official documents (or typewriting) and private documents. In reality these two categories are not very sharply divided; considering the time of formulation and the issuing organ or person we may notice the existence of several transition categories. These are local solutions to new, unknown situations in the process of rising bureaucracy, therefore the results of local tradition.

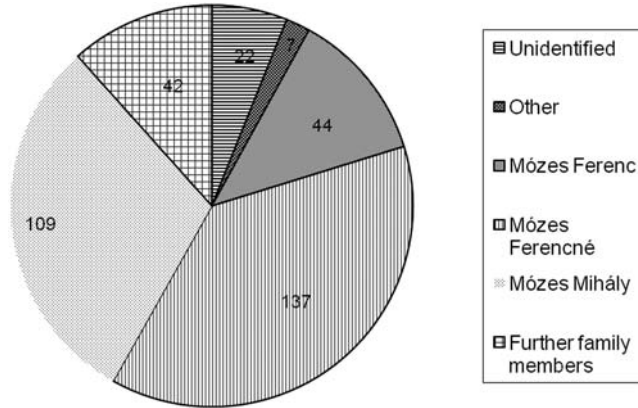


Fig. 3. Generations

2. THE ARCHIVE OF SZABÓ KÁDÁR FAMILY

The documents from the second archive comprise five generations with 26 family members. Besides the linear descendants, the documents contain 76 further names, who were related to the family, or had economic liaisons with family members. The multitude of names offers us a picture of how large that segment of society was which had contact with the family during their management of economic life, and at the same time presents the daily interrelations between local societies.

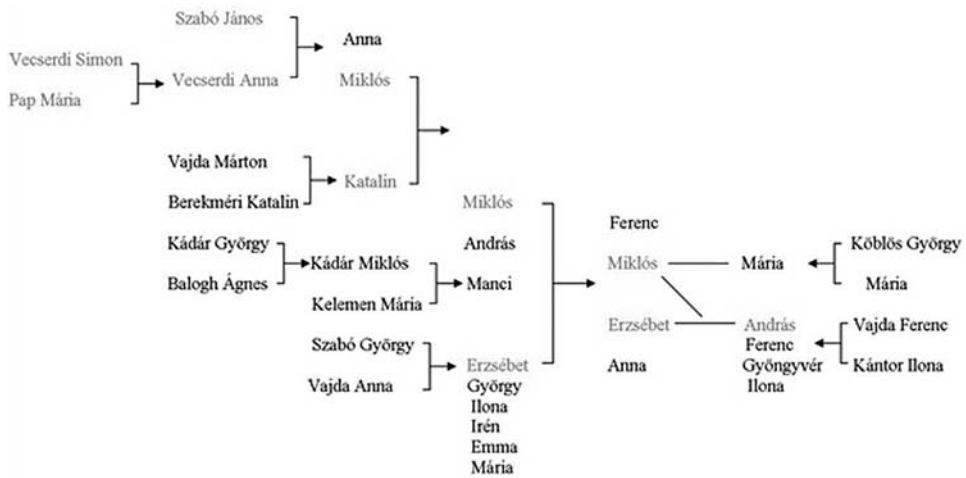


Fig. 4. The Szabó Kádár family lineage

The archive of the Szabó Kádárs has 656 pieces, mostly official documents, and covers 119 years. The earliest document is from 1878, the latest from 1997. In 107 (16,5 %) cases the documents are undated, these are mostly official papers (82 pieces), and approximately

a quarter of them (25 pieces) has a private character. The majority of the records (81 %) is in Romanian language, 18 % is Hungarian, a very small number, 7 pieces is bilingual. Documents in Romanian are, invariably, documents issued by official authorities. The most part of Hungarian documents are dated before the Trianon peace-treaty and between 1941 and 1945. Several documents are from the period of the Hungarian Autonomous Territory, Hungarian documents issued by the Reformed Church from Dumbrăvioara. The bilingual documents are also from the period of the Hungarian Autonomous Territory.

79,5 % of the archive is printed, 9,3 % typewritten, the rest of 11,2 % is handwritten. 61 pieces are typewritten, 11 of them is in Hungarian, 50 in Romanian. The majority of the Hungarian documents is mandatory writ, or certificates issued by the local authorities. The earliest Romanian documents are typewritten from the 1920s and are translations or abstracts of Romanian documents. Handwritten documents are in a relatively small number (73 pieces), mostly of official character. The earliest handwritten document – and also the first of the archive – is an application from 1878. Amongst the official documents there are certificates, receipts, petitions, notifications. Just a very small proportion of private handwritten documents are dated.

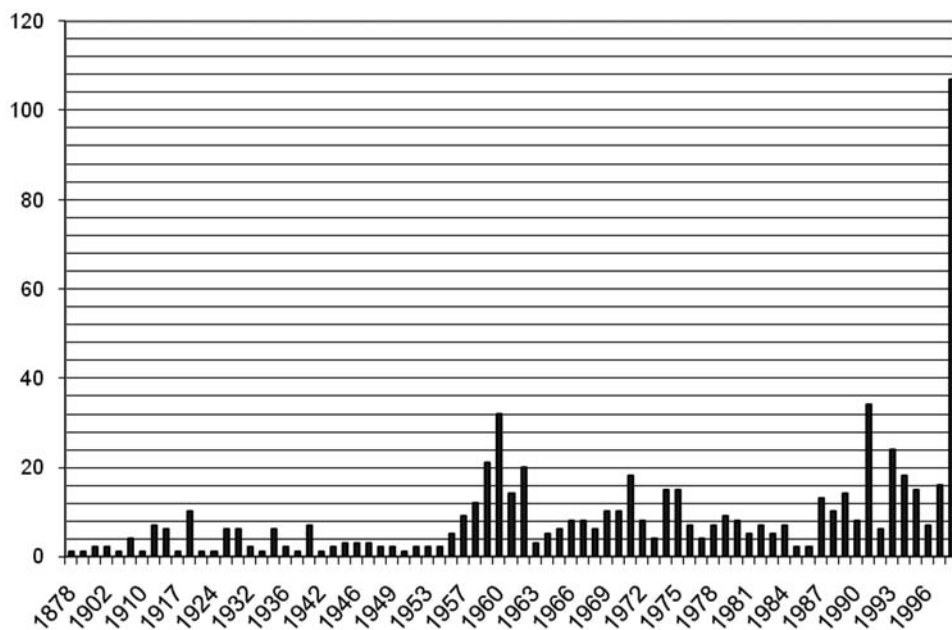


Fig. 5. Annual distribution of documents

Turning to the opposition of official and private categories, we may notice the disproportions in distribution: 95,5 % of the records are related to/issued by an official organ and just 4,5 % have a private character. The small number of private documents in this family archive can be explained with a special rapport to writing. In this family we detect respect for written texts, and the use of writing has an administrative character, as a communicational channel for interrelations with authorities, a guarantee for seriousness and efficiency.

531 pieces from the official documents are in Romanian, 88 are in Hungarian and 7 bilingual. 522 are printed, 61 typewritten, 43 handwritten. 6,5 % of official documents contain annotations on backsides, some of them made by family members, and some are abstracts of Hungarian papers in Romanian – these were made by authorities and are authenticated with seal.

All of the private documents date to the period of WWII. The author of 6 of them is a sibling or a friend of the family; other 24 papers are notes mainly for remembering things. The earliest private note with preservation function is made by Miklós Szabó Kádár in the period of collectivization, when he was forced to give up his arable land to enrol into collective farming. The annual division of the Szabó Kádár archive's structure is summed up in the following table:

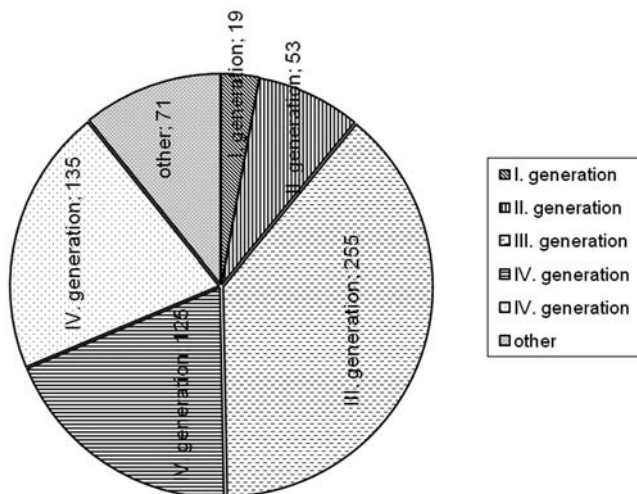
Year	a	B	c	D	e	f	g	H	i	j	k
1878	1		1				1		1		
1882	1		1		1				1		
1892	2		2		2				2		1
1902	2		2		2				2		
1905	1		1		1				1		1
1909	4		4		1	3			4		
1910	1		1			1			1		
1911	7		7		6	1			7		3
1913	6		6		5	1			6		1
1917	1		1		1				1		
1920	10	7	3		3	7		7	10		
1922	1		1			1			1		
1924	1	1			1				1		1
1926	6	6			2	4			6		
1929	6	6			2	4		4	6		1
1932	2	2				2			2		
1933	1	1				1			1		
1935	6	6			2	2	2		6		1
1936	2	2				2		1	2		
1938	1	1			1				1		
1941	7		7		6	1			7		1
1942	1		1		1				1		
1944	2		2		2				2		
1945	3	2		1	2	1			3		1
1946	3	3			3				3		
1947	3	3				3			3		
1948	2	2			2				2		
1949	2	2			2				2		
1950	1		1		1				1		

Year	a	B	c	D	e	f	g	H	i	j	k
1951	2		2				2		2		1
1953	2	2			1		1		2		
1955	2	2			2				2		
1956	5	4		1	3	2			5		
1957	9	5	4		6		3		9		2
1958	12	10	2		11	1			12		2
1959	21	18	3		19		2		21		1
1960	32	20	9	3	26	1	5		32		6
1961	14	12	2		12		2		14		1
1962	20	19	1		20				20		1
1963	3	2	1		1		2		3		
1964	5	5			5				5		1
1965	6	3	3		2	1	2	1	6		
1966	8	8			6		2	1	8		1
1967	8	8			6	1	1		8		
1968	6	5	1		5		1		6		
1969	10	9	1		9		1		10		
1970	10	10			10				10		
1971	18	11	7		17		1		17	1	
1972	8	7	1		7		1		7	1	0
1973	4	4			4				4		
1974	15	15			13	2			15		3
1975	15	15			14	1			15		
1976	7	7			5	2			7		
1977	4	4			3	1			4		1
1978	7	5	2		7				5	2	
1979	9	9			9				9		
1980	8	8			6	2			8		
1981	5	5			5				5		1
1982	7	7			5	1	1		7		
1983	5	5			4		1		5		
1984	7	7			5	2			7		
1985	2	1	1		1		1		2		1
1986	2	2			2				2		
1987	13	13			13				13		1
1988	10	10			8		2		10		
1989	14	14			12	1	1		14		
1990	8	6	2		8				8		
1991	34	32	2		28	6			34		2

Year	a	B	c	D	e	f	g	H	i	j	k
1992	6	4	2		6				6		
1993	24	23	1		23	1			24		3
1994	18	16	2		17	1			18		
1995	15	12	2	1	9		6		15		
1996	7	4	3		7				7		1
1997	16	14	2		15	1			16		
w.d.	107	85	21	1	76		31	3	82	25	2
Total	656	531	118	7	522	61	73	16	627	29	42

Table 2. Szabó-Kádár family archive's structure. Where: a. all documents, b. Romanian documents, c. Hungarian documents, d. bilingual documents, e. prints, f. typewritten documents, g. handwritten documents, h. using older documents, i. official documents, j. private documents, k. with backside notes

The majority of documents (183, aprox. 28 %) are related to Miklós Szabó Kádár. Except for 4, all are official papers, dated 1938–1976. The second largest quantity is related to András Vajda: 100 pieces dated 1960–1997, with an intensive frequency after 1978, when Vajda married Erzsébet Szabó Kádár. In a significant number of documents, 72 pieces, appears the name of Erzsébet Szabó, especially after the death of her husband. These are all official documents written in Romanian, just as those related to Miklós Szabó Kádár jr. (70 pieces, between 1955 and 1997). The name Mária Köblös appears on 65 documents, postal coupons, for child support money transfer. Miklós Szabó appears in 40 official documents, the first is a contract from 1911, the last his death certificate from 1945, with a map to his tomb, issued by the compound in Feldioara.



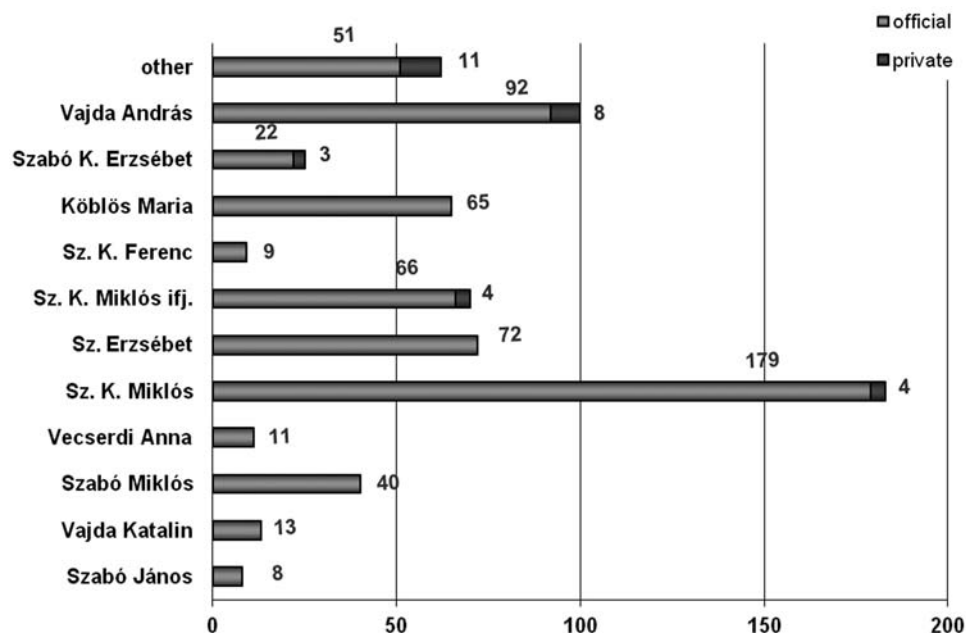


Fig. 6-7. Generations&individuals

If we investigate the records by generations, we may notice that the first generation (János Szabó & Anna Vecserdi), which established the archive, appears in only few (19 pieces) documents. 8 % of documents belong to the second generation (Miklós Szabó & Katalin Vajda). The majority of the documents (39 %, 255 pieces) belong to the third generation (Miklós Szabó Kádár & his wife, Erzsébet Szabó); the interval is the longest, 56 years. From the fourth generation we can mention two families, two children of the third generation, both of them stayed at the family house: first, there is Miklós Szabó Kádár jr. with 135 pieces and second, Erzsébet Szabó Kádár with 125 pieces. In fact, the documents regarding Miklós Szabó Kádár jr. were kept by his mother and later by his sister.

3. THE ARCHIVE OF THE BEREKMÉRI FAMILY

The archive of the Berekméris is different from two points of view, compared with the previous family. The most eminent feature is the total lack of official documents. The first dated text, an annotation on a hymn-book, is from 1898, the last text is from 2010. The date of most annotations and documents is uncertain. On the one hand, the majority of documents are not properly dated, on the other hand in many cases later annotations and corrections made by later generations also appear. All of the records are in Hungarian.

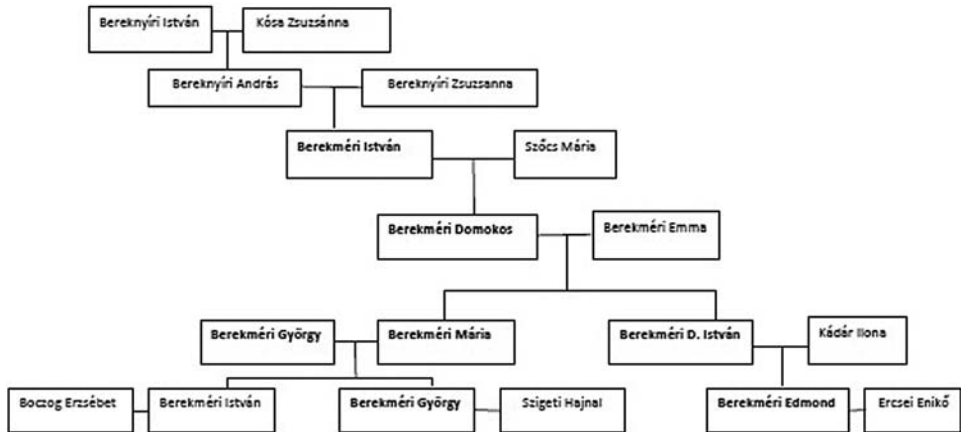


Fig. 8. *The Berekméri family lineage*

1. Almost all of the documents are private. These can be classified in three groups: a) annotations, marginal notes in books b) texts collected in booklets c) texts written on detached leafs of different size and quality, in case of earlier documents and prints.

a) The majority of annotations in books are made in religious books. They mostly perpetuate family events, but we find religious and historical reflections, too. Notes about the circumstances of purchase (time, person who bought) are also frequent, and appear in the secular books, too. 12 books were marked with notes by the four generations of the family. Four of the books were bought by István Andrásé Berekméri, two by his son, Domokos Berekméri, three by grandchild Mária Berekméri, two received from the local reformed pastor. Four of the books contain annotations concerning family events. The two earliest are started by István Andrásé Berekméri, one by Domokos Berekméri and one by Mária Berekméri. Mária Berekméri started the new family chronicle on the pages of a Bible from 1990. In two books we find an overall picture of the tragic events from WWII, written by István Andrásé Berekméri. The family chronicles mention 90 names, of which 64 are family members, 24 are related to the family in some way (godparents or members of local administrative body). Nine books contain the name of the owner; in 8 cases the time of purchase is also indicated. Two religious books contain an obituary – published in local newspapers – the first is for the death of Domokos Berekméri, the second for György Berekméri, both written by Mária Berekméri, the owner of the books. Other annotations (on owner, purchase, as well as poems) are made in books, on the inner cover or other pages. The signatures of family members are very frequent on different pages. Edmond Berekméri, son of István Berekméri D., signed a cookbook for 42 times, Domokos Berekméri, his grandfather, 5 times. In 11 cases, the date also appears besides the signature, and once the location is marked, too.

b) The family kept 10 handwritten booklets; we know of other two, now lost. Two of the eight are written by István Andrásé Berekméri, four by Mária Berekméri, and two by her husband György Berekméri, one by Domokos Berekméri, one is owned by István Berekméri D., but the texts were put down by his wife, Ilona Kádár. The earliest booklet is from 1914/1915–1918, it contained the poems written by István Andrásé Berekméri, in WWI.

Some of these poems have been published lately. Three other booklets contain songs, two memory poems, and three poems written by a family member. One booklet contains an autobiography; one is a description of arable fields returned to original owners after 1991.

Gen.	Author/owner	Tilte/content	Genre	Time of origin
I.	Berekméri István A.	Szomorú idők emléke ²	Poems	1914–1918
I.	Berekméri István A.	Minden poklokon keresztül. Egy letűnt élet küzdelmei ³	Autobiography	1943–1949
II.	Berekméri Domokos	[Poem booklet]	Poems	1941–1944
III.	Berekméri Mária	[Memory booklet]	Memory poems	1943–1952
III.	Berekméri Mária	[Song booklet]	Songs	1949
III.	Berekméri Mária	[Song booklet]	Songs	1991
III.	Berekméri Mária	[Song booklet]	Songs	?
III.	Berekméri György	[Memory booklet]	Memory poems, songs	1950–1951, 1962
III.	Berekméri György	[Allocated acreage]	–	1991–1992
III.	Berekméri István D.	[compound booklet]	Poems, valedictories	1990'

Table 3. Time of origin of the 10 booklets by generations.

c) Texts on detached leafs can be classified in several categories: letters from war written on postcards (42 pieces), poems (or fragments), lyrics, public speeches, short notes.

2. Compared with the previously presented archives, in Berekméri's there are just a few official documents. From the first generation we have a certificate issued by Márton Gál, the president of the local cooperative of production and consumption in 1920 and 6 further certificates of origin needed because of the second Jewish law (1939/IV art.). The birth certificates were issued in 1944 and 1942, for István Andrásé Berekméri. The official documents and prints are all in Hungarian and were issued by employees of local authorities, secondary school teachers, pastors of the local reformed church and the president of the local cooperative.

3. Although it is not a subject of this research, we must mention the photo archive of the family (112 photos), there is a significant number of images, with notes and/or dates written on them.

From the point of view of production and preservation, the generations of the family have different habits. Regarding the volume of document production, there emerges the activity of István Andrásé Berekméri (founder of the archive) and Mária Berekméri (third generation, grandchild): their activity is intensive, uniform and continuous. They are those who noted down the family chronicle, and handwritten booklets are linked to them, too.

2 Memories of sorrowful times

3 Through all Hells. Struggles of a life long gone

István Berekméri D's activity as a writer is also uniform and similarly intense, but he, from the 1990s, focuses especially on local history.

WRITING, DOCUMENTS, FUNCTIONS

When new services and institutions appear, people tend to give more attention to documents issued by these (invoices, accounts, vouchers), because they are unfamiliar with the structure and function, staff and norms of the organ, and they are suspicious about efficiency and trustworthiness. Keeping, recording the documents issued by the organ is helping unlock this situation and interiorizing, familiarizing with the unfamiliar.

The studied documents have marks of intensive usage. In many cases the backside is marked by a family member with annotations. This practice is borrowed from official documents: in the first half of the 20th century in property cases and legal actions, as part of the legal procedure, the lawyer or notary noted down the close up or further actions. These proceedings were adapted for private use and built in local popular practice.

A part of the annotations contain the Hungarian name of Romanian documents. Besides this, the annotations include the information about: a. years of payment, b. date, c. type of tax, d. paid sum of money, e. remainder sum of money, f. name of payer or annotator g. calculations, h. other information.

These notes have memorial or preservation functions. From a structural and functional point of view they are related to the farmer's diary. The engine of creation, usage and preservation must be sought in the economic life: a need of transparent and verifiable organization. The keeping of documents and the making of annotations are rites which can be interpreted as an act of book-keeping (Guar 1984: 15).

The purpose of keeping several documents is to remember and facilitate the edition of familiar history (compile documents into a narrative) and confirm these narratives.

The economic life created another type of text, the annotations made in booklet or calendar. The context of book-keeping is measuring, monitoring the financial situation of the family, payment of taxes and dues, and the planning of processes of economic life. The motivation is the need of transparency.

The husband is entitled to note down information. After his death or the weakening of his intellectual strength this task is taken over by his wife, she completes this task until the children establish their own families and take over the household management.

The gesture of preservation is understandable in case of property documents, in case of invoices and other warrants the question is more complex. For the rural population, tax payment could be a real burden. They could manage with this obligation only in instalments and with delays. The disbursement of taxes meant penalties, therefore it was important for the family financials to control and register the remainder. Keeping the invoices had a warning/reminder purpose. A motive for keeping the bills was hope that the owner could gain some benefits afterwards: for example in the 1990s, when the Hungarian government decided to pay compensation to those persons who were imprisoned after WWII in the Soviet Union, the certifying documents (certifying the war prisoner status, and the time imprisoned) were very important.

In time of WWII the poems, texts written on postcards had a feedback function, linking the individual to the great communicational network, and to dissolve the communicational gap between the soldier and his family (Novotny 1987: 111) easing the life on the front lines.

These texts have a subsidiary context too; they have roles in editing the familial history and mythology. Another part of private documents are linked to the turning points of life and possess a biographic function.

New forms of documents allow the configuration of new collective forms and vice versa: configuration of a new social structure results in new document types and changes in local set in the use of writing: in time of war the postcards created a letter-community; in times of socialist collectivization the enrolment declaration appeared; the certificate of property circulated after 1991.

Keeping documents in large numbers is a compensational, balancing technique (Marquard 2001). In this role, while it does not stop time, it backs it up still; even if it does not strengthen the familial connections and lineage, it offers visibility. The popular archive piles up documents of (past) fulfilments, instead of planning (future), hereby tries to balance the tensions between present and future.

The intensive act of piling up the documents is in some cases the tool of forgetting, suppression. Society, which cannot or may not forget, establishes archives, museums, monuments, and institutes for actuation and control. With the institutionalization of recollection and safekeeping, it takes off the burden of remembrance from individuals, and this directly facilitates forgetting.

Written sources found in the familial space become the incorporation of genealogical remembrance. Because the documents are suitable for the long term preservation of past events, the chronological point zero of familial memory is pushed backwards. Families get into personal relations with a segment of past they did not witness. The archive leads from the enchantment of remembrance to readings.

We can catch a glimpse of a family's everyday life through the records. In lack of a generally accepted narrative base, the family archives the past, hereby visualizing the changes in social strata: first a slower, then after the 1950s a quicker change, with its engines and dimensions.

If we take a look at the genre and content of the documents, we notice that the year 1945 is a turning point. Before that year we observe the predominance of contracts and inheritance documents, afterwards the number of invoices and other payment credentials increases spectacularly. This can be explained by several economic, political, or social reasons, interconnected and having joint impact. In the first half of the century institutionalization in the local rural society was on a low level, the tax-collector and the notary were members of the community, therefore trustworthy. After 1945, following secularization and chunk of arable land, the development of farms slowed down, the trade of arable land, meadows and forests came to an end, so the transaction documents were no longer useful. Reforms adopted in administration distanced the majority of local leaders from the system, to make place for Romanian-speaking strangers; so the trust in administrative employees diminished. From the point of view of language use, it is clear that after such demarcations and administrative changes mixed language documents became frequent. This practice can be observed in 1950s and 1960s too, but its intensity was gradually reduced.

Archives are imprints of different mentalities. Through them, we can read not only the economic practices, but also the variations related to the past and the documents drawn up in the past. In the Berekméri-archive there are mostly private documents, with representative purposes, as opposed to the Szabó Kádár archives, where the official documents with practical purposes are predominant. Therefore it is not a coincidence that the community

recourses to the first family's knowledge in ritual highlight, and the second family's knowledge in legal and practical cases.

The coming into being of popular archives are the result of the continuous change of institutions and socio-economic circumstances, while the storage of documents can be explained as an attempt to domesticate bureaucracy. Then again, the archive makes visible how administration moves into everyday life. Social norms are administered, shaped through writing. Thus, writing organizes the society, it has a rationalizing effect.

Popular archives are prints of the institutionalization of power structures, and of local and individual socio-economical and political changes. They offer us a glimpse of how the basic functional unit of the society – family –, and the individual representing the family fight their battles with society, as well as also the local and individual adaptations of this battle. They reveal how changing political and economical situations frame new types of documents, which, in their turn, issue new behaviours and attitudes in the community

In local society, the adaptation to the requirements of bureaucracy shapes up ways of behaviours, approaches, and social attitudes. The safekeeping or destruction of the documents, their copying or the annotations on the backsides can be explained with the capability of adaptation; it is a measure for the social judgement of writing.

Popular archives change under the constant effect of two forces. On the one hand there is a centripetal force, put in motion by generational changes. The appearance of new generations brings along the disintegration of records, divide into generations. On the other hand there is a centrifugal force, which is activated by marriage and inheritance. These are the circumstances when documents belonging to different families or generations link together and form a new system. The Berekméri-archive from the studied archives are fritting away continuously, whereas the Szabó Kádár and Mózes archives are characterized by unifications.

The archives have their own time-cadence. This can be perceived in 1. density of documents per year, 2. proportion of private/official documents, 3. contents of documents. The periodical changing of aggregation (of documents) shows the degree of dynamism of relations that the individual maintains with society or government. The distribution of private/official documents, namely the larger proportion of official documents is the measure of quick and powerful conformation (pressure) to social norms. The large number of official documents is living in present with regards to future; the private documents (especially autobiographies, family chronicles, poems) are proofs of an intense retrospect to the past, the construction of an image/prestige, namely the means and forms of living in a slow present. The former indicate progressive time, the latter steady time.

The temporal rhythm of archives is influenced by the fact that texts are not moving regularly between generation members. Some of them stick in, some of them are lost in the hands of a generation, some of them are quickly moving between generations: the autobiography of B. I. A. moved through four generations in 50 years, while his family chronicle moved through only three.

In addition: The relation between the archive and time (historical time) is more complex. The archive visualizes the present and actions which take place in the present, but are future oriented, but as it preserves as well, the transformation of the present into past also occurs. The archive is linked to historical time in two senses: visualization and creation. It is an instrument which offers stock to prognosis, and it is a print of earlier plans and achievements.

Individual archives are blueprints of different mentalities. They show the different habits regarding production and storage, usage and preservation. From the point of view of production and usage the archive can be repetitive and progressive, cold and hot, exclusive and inclusive. In the field of text preservation there are three basic attitudes: the keeper (collector), the selector and the discarder. The first has a minimal role in the selection aspect regarding storage and organization. By selective attitude I mean the conscious and uniform selection of texts. The discarding attitude means that the individual discards the texts or most of the texts out of personal conviction. There are several attitudes linked to writing as an act; accordingly, there are three writer roles. These are: the poet, the clerk and the historian. The poet writes to indulge the demand of the community or in the hope of personal fame. The clerk serves the community by managing administrative issues. The historian collects and creates his private or community history. The first and the last writer attitudes often mix, interlock, creating a kind of a hybrid. Different writer habits create differently structured family archives.

The analyzed archives can be divided into two categories, labelled from the point of view of dynamics of usage repetitive and progressive. The Berekméri-archive is characterized mostly by a dense and repetitive note of family events. In this case the repetition, duplication and variation is a „structural necessity” (Assmann, 1999: 98), a very important rite in dealing with the family and family past, and an expression of belonging to the family and assuming community with the family. At the same time it is a symbolic battle for possessing the family past. The progressive archive can be characterized as a continuous collection of documents, so as a constant progressive broadening, as it tries to fully document every little change in family and economic life. The documents are in large number, but the family don't peg away at them. In the repetitive archive, there are predominantly private documents, while the progressive archive contains mostly official documents. The first is characterized by variation and strong ritualization, the last by large collection of texts, a cumulative and informative function.

The production quota of texts shows an age-dependent tendency. The growth of production can be due to the development or change of the institutional system, or changes in the economical, social, political life. Text production is not uniform in an individual's life either. At major turning points in life text production grows. Texts in private habitat can be of two types depending on the medium of creation: official and private writings.

The number of texts entering an individual's environment is defined by processes which operate the administration of life in the family and the settlement.

In the community the bequeathing of texts goes on the male line from generation to generation. The vast majority of texts is inherited and kept by the family member who stays in the family house. In extreme situations one generation can be skipped in the inheritance. The giving-receiving during the inheritance also creates a certain selectivity.

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