

Reviews

TURAI, Tünde (ed): *Hármas határok néprajzi értelmezésben [An ethnographic interpretation of tri-border areas]*. 2015, Budapest: MTA BTK Néprajztudományi Intézet, 294.

TURAI, Tünde – MÉSZÁROS, Csaba (eds): *Hármas határok néprajzi nézetben [An ethnographic interpretation of tri-border areas]*. 2015, Budapest: MTA BTK Néprajztudományi Intézet, 218.

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A much discussed topic of border research today is, on the one hand, the relationship between cultural, social, economic and political boundaries, and on the other hand, the relationship of all of these to specific locations, that is, the correlation between space – be it geographical, cultural or social – and place. Whether we consider borders to be geographic areas that are defined or linked with dynamically changing cultural phenomena, ethnographic and cultural anthropological research studies the local societies that use, form, transform and interact with borders, as well as border phenomena and border processes.

The volume of studies edited by Tünde Turai, “*An Ethnographic Interpretation of Tri-Border Areas*”, was published by the Institute of Ethnology at the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, as a culmination of a four-year project (2011–2015) funded by the HSRF.¹ The study examined the impact of changes in the two decades after the regime change upon the populations of settlements located in the tri-border region, and embarked upon exploring the cultural, economic and social dimension of their relationship. To this end, researchers of the Institute of Ethnology, as well as associates of other Hungarian and foreign scholarly networks, employed questionnaire-based studies in addition to ethnographic fieldwork, and visually documented, especially in the form of photographs and a documentary film, the everyday life of border zones. The latter provided a basis for another volume edited by Tünde Turai and Csaba Mészáros, “*An Ethnographic Perspective on Tri-Border Areas*”, which aims to interpret the tri-border situation from the perspective of visual anthropology.

The studies of wide-ranging topics included in the volume edited by Turai actually accomplish analyzing many aspects of the Hungarian tri-borders (Hungarian-Austrian-Slovenian, Hungarian-Romanian-Serbian and Hungarian-Romanian-Ukrainian) – with the exception of the tri-border regions encompassing Hungary’s northern neighbor (Hungarian-Slovakian-Ukrainian and Hungarian-Austrian-Slovakian). Presumably the researchers intend to investigate the tri-border areas concerning Slovakia as a continuation of the research – although at this point the reader may sense some deficiency without knowing their justification.

¹ The Hungarian Scientific Research Fund project’s title: *Examination of tri-borders in Hungary’s southwestern, southeastern and northeastern regions.*

The studies of the volume can be divided into two major thematic groups. The first theme – also the first chapter – provides insights into commonly used social science theories and practices in the contemporary international field of border research, one the one hand through discussions of ethnographic approaches to border research (Mészáros) and Hungarian migration processes (Balogh), and on the other hand by providing an international and a domestic example. The former examines the practice of everyday border-crossing and taking advantage of a borderland residence in the Tornio Valley located on the Finnish and Swedish border (Ruotsala). The latter discusses the historical development and spatial and geographical variations of the tri-border as a special type of border situation, as well as its associated political, social, economic, cultural and touristic aspects, drawing upon field experiences in Western Hungary (Gráfik).

The organizing principle of the rest of the papers, namely thirteen, is geographical location; that is, studies carried out in the same tri-border area were compiled into one chapter (Chapter 2: Hungarian-Austrian-Slovenian tri-border, Chapter 3: Hungarian-Romanian-Serbian tri-border, Chapter 4: Hungarian-Romanian-Ukrainian tri-border). This layout illustrates well the differences and similarities in the ways that people living on either side of the naturally different types of tri-borders use and exploit the borders, as well as how they live, narrate, and simultaneously interpret their border situation. For example, along the Hungarian-Austrian-Slovenian border located at the junction of three conservation areas, the branding of the tri-border can be observed, which is reflected not only in the naming of streets, clubs and restaurants, like for example in the case of Szentgotthárd, but the tri-border becomes a peculiar feature of the local population's local identity (Mészáros). Furthermore, this border region has in the past 25 years evolved from border regions simply existing side by side into border regions mutually cooperating (Bednárík). At the same time, the experience along the Hungarian-Romanian-Serbian tri-border is different: people on each side of the border give different responses about the border phenomenon: on the Romanian side the ideal of multiculturalism, on the Serbian side the issue of minority-majority, and on the Hungarian side an ethnocentric seclusion is dominant (Turai). Among the Serbian and Hungarian populations of the Serbian side researchers found that borderland does not equal culturally three-poled relations (Klamár), that is, individual and community cultural identity is not characterized by triple bonds, but rather by connection with the motherland (the Serbs establish links with the internal parts of Serbia, the Hungarians with the borderland settlements of Hungary).

The socio-cultural diversity of the tri-border regions (and each of their sides) is evident in the writings of the volume. It is exactly the specific local factors generated as functions of the social, cultural, economic, historical and political processes of a particular geographic location that determine how in various tri-border areas people relate to the presence of state borders, what socio-cultural practices they maintain and what narratives they produce in connection with them, and which ones they dissociate with. Let us entertain the following idea: would the systematic representation of the diversity of tri-border areas have provided added value if each tri-border study within a chapter had tackled the same issues, or would it have inevitably increased the number of repetitions without adding meaningful information to the ethnographic context itself?

Popular topics in ethnographic and anthropological border research include the socio-cultural phenomena and practices experienced in local societies that use and exploit state borders in different ways and forms – in fact, the observable movement of people, things,

ideas and objects at and near the border or in the borderland, whose central element is the crossing of political borders. One of the classic types of this is when people practice border-crossing as a way of life, such as transnational business professionals, nomads, traffickers or migrant workers. In this volume, examples of the latter are the employment practices of Hungarians from the Vojvodina region of Serbia in Hungary and their representational strategies (Papp), or the Roma families taking on seasonal work on the other side of the Austrian-Hungarian border and dealing in (often second-hand) trading and peddling (Kardos). Another form of transnational lifestyle is also common: those who sustain it live in the borderland zone of one country and commute on a daily or weekly basis to the neighboring country for work, taking advantage of the differences in the two countries' economic situation and of the nature of the borderland zone divided by state borders (Lovas Kiss). Cross-border informal economic strategies also exploit the economic disparities between neighboring countries, the details of which we can learn about in a study analyzing the fuel-, cigarette- and liquor-smuggling operations in Mátészalka in the Hungarian-Ukrainian border zone (Borbély). Another exciting related area is health tourism, within which it is primarily the issue of medical tourism that is examined in the Hungarian-Romanian-Ukrainian tri-border region (Szilágyi). In this context, women from Ukraine's Transcarpathia region and Romanian patients go to hospitals in Hungary for gynecological examination, prenatal care (to Vásárosnamény and Csenger), and to give birth to their child (in Fehérgyarmat, Mátészalka, Nyíregyháza, Debrecen and Budapest).

If the interpretation of the concept of the border constitutes state borders, then the key issue that emerges is the turning of state border-marking memorials and other border-marking objects and their associated remembrance practices, symbolic content, as well as border surveillance objects into heritage. Along the Hungarian-Slovenian state border, the ethnic Hungarian local societies, for example, after decades of separation, again and again tear down in a symbolic form the Iron Curtain, which to this day bears significance in remembrance (Mód).

The border can play a decisive role in many aspects of people's lives: in addition to the above, the border formulated as a social fact can be a structuring element of individual identity narratives as well. Among people living in the Serbian-Hungarian border zone – in contrast to the Hungarian-Austrian-Serbian borderland – no specific border identity evolved: the border separates rather than connects. Therefore, the interpretations of the border are very diverse; both on the Serbian and Hungarian side, the border's position in the social space is not as fixed as its specified coordinates in the objective physical space (Laszák). At the same time, in the Swabian settlements located around Nagykároly in Romania, one can observe socio-cultural phenomena that reinforce the uniting function of the border, such as the regular meeting of Swabian emigrants or the publication of a journal which even in its name (*Brücke/Bridges*) is aimed at bridging the boundaries (Marinka).

The responses to the phenomenon of the border (strategies, practices, narratives, semantic fields) can also differ from each other depending on how the locals interpret the geographical location of the settlement in the border zone. In the Makó experience, it is not the objective proximity of the city to the Romanian and Serbian border that determines border identity – “Why, is Makó considered a border town?” (Apjok) – but what kind of mutual – primarily bilateral – socio-cultural relations there are (“speaking each other's language, participating in each other's lives” – Apjok), or whether there are any at all

between the inhabitants of both sides of the border region. Since the people of Makó do not experience this sort of thing in everyday life, that is, the uniting role of the border is marginal; therefore they do not consider their own world and habitat to be a borderland zone. Here, then, is an exciting example of a place-making practice, more precisely “borderwork” (RUMFORD 2009:1–11),² through which the people of Makó strive to continually dismantle and overwrite the particularly borderland geographical embeddedness of their habitat.

With the decision to mount a traveling exhibition in the studied regions (in Satu Mare, Kanjiža, Nagykanizsa and Szeged), and organizing a workshop involving local professionals (in Satu Mare, Kanjiža, Szentgotthárd and Dobrovnik), the Institute of Ethnology proved once again that it follows practices common in international scholarship.³

On the one hand, the Institute of Ethnology built the cooperation with local professionals (e.g., from Szeged, Nagykanizsa, Subotica) into its research plan; on the other hand, it provided space for discussions during the traveling exhibition and workshops. Nonetheless, it could have been particularly interesting, and presumably informative, had a member of the research team devoted a separate study to the issue of cooperation, or perhaps if several people had volunteered to reflect in their studies upon the feedback received from local professionals during discussions in the workshops, or upon the exchange of ideas inspired by the photo exhibitions and workshops. At the same time, cooperation outside the academy is exciting and far from simple, and perhaps the already planned continuation of the research could accommodate discussions of the research results with the non-scholar members of the local communities; for example, to what extent do the locals consider the picture that cultural representations paint of them to be correct, relevant and acceptable?

Another important result of this tri-border research is the above-mentioned volume containing visual materials “*An Ethnographic Perspective on Tri-Border Areas*”, which aims to complement and further interpret the research findings in four thematic units: the question of trine, the concept of border, economic relations, and cultural remembrance. Each chapter presents in images the everyday border-crossing practices of people living along the border, as well as the identity-forming and expressing factors of the region. The essays, combined with the multilingual visual anthropological material (explanatory texts under the pictures in English and Hungarian, image titles also in Romanian, Serbian, Ukrainian and Slovenian) provide a very exciting image of the colorful life strategies and socio-cultural worldviews, and the characteristics of border formation in the southwestern, southeastern and northeastern Hungarian tri-border regions.

² RUMFORD, Chris: Introduction: Citizens and Borderwork in Europe. In RUMFORD, Chris (ed) *Citizens and Borderwork in Contemporary Europe*, 1–11. 2009, London – New York: Routledge.

³ In the international social science field, the concept of collaboration has been used very often – many times almost like a cliché – since the 1990s. Participation and collaboration can mean different types of cooperation. On the one hand, within the academy – various disciplines (interdisciplinarity), students and professionals, or two or more teaching researchers; on the other hand, outside the academy – scholars and non-scholar experts, for example, NGOs, local interest groups and policy makers (transdisciplinarity) (LAMPHERE 2004:432), as well as researchers and other members of the local society (those affected by the research). LAMPHERE, Louise: The Convergence of Applied, Practicing, and Public Anthropology in the 21st Century. 2004, *Human Organization* 63(4):431–443.

We have to agree with Balázs Balogh (the head of the tri-border research project) in that designating the socio-cultural context of the tri-border as the research topic demonstrates sensitivity toward the issue. Both volumes are highly recommended for professionals, university students and the readership of related disciplines as well.

GYIMESI, Emese – LÉNÁRT, András – TAKÁCS, Erzsébet (eds): *A test a társadalomban* [The body in society] 2015, Budapest: Hajnal István Kör – Társadalomtörténeti Egyesület. [Rendi társadalom – polgári társadalom 27], 435.

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The volume edited by Emese Gyimesi, András Lénárt and Erzsébet Takács is important to draw attention to because it discusses many aspects of the human body as a medium for expressing historical, cultural, biological, medical and political changes. In the last decades, the human body turned into one of the most important topics of Hungarian scientific studies; as a result of this, many publications came to light which were based on the theories of Norbert Elias, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault or Jacques Le Goff.

The volume published by The Hajnal István Circle – Hungarian Social History Association contains papers presented at the conference held in Sümeg on 22–24 August 2013 (organised by The Hajnal István Circle). The conference was an important meeting of researchers, students, museologists and librarians.

According to the subheadings, this bulky volume deals with six major themes: Body-texts – Body-pictures; Healthy body – Ill body; Sexuality in marriage and outside of it; Body politics: bureaucratic body control; Body politics: the body of the soldier and the prisoner; Habits, norms, beliefs regarding the living and the dead body. Due to the various themes of the 29 papers, the editors arranged them in chronological order within the chapters. Unfortunately the foreword is missing from the beginning of the volume, but I think it would have been a good choice to summarise the results of the conference.

The first major theme of the volume, *Body-texts – Body pictures*, includes six papers that provide information about how the human body was represented from the late Middle Ages until the middle of the 20th century. Gábor Klaniczay discusses in a broader context how the human body was used as a medium for expressing religious messages and metaphors in the late Middle Ages. Monika Imregh, who translated Marsilio Ficino's *De vita libritres*, examines the philosophical background of Ficino's astrological and magical approaches, and focuses on the meaning and function of spirits in the human body and in the universe. Franciska Dede tries to find answers about how Sigismund Justh (1863–1894), the young Hungarian aristocratic writer who suffered from tuberculosis, considered himself as his texts and how he appeared in photographs and paintings. She points out that Justh's illness deeply influenced his literary and social work. Béla Mester sheds light on the issue of the use of bodily metaphors in politics from a gender aspect in the 19th century Hungarian public sphere. The paper by Judit Takács and Gábor Csiszár

examines media representations of gender role transgressions published in *Az Est* [The Evening] before the Second World War, or rather between 1910 and 1930. They try to contribute to a better understanding of the social perceptions of gender variance and gender transgression in the above-mentioned period. In the last paper in this theme, Tibor Takács examines how different texts create the body of Miklós Bikszsa, murdered in December 1956 in the village of Gyón. Takács shows how that body can be supplied with different meanings depending on their different narrative perspectives.

In the chapter titled *Healthy body – Ill body*, the papers give a comprehensive picture of the connection among beauty, health and sports throughout the centuries. Miklós Zeidler and Katalin Detre focus on the relationship between physical education and a healthy lifestyle. Zeidler sums up the reasons for the emergence of different sports in Hungary. He points out that in the late 19th century sports and physical education were very much a privilege of men living in major urban centers. In contrast, Detre shows how the art of movement became highly popular and began to be institutionalized. The art of movement had a critical attitude towards modernisation, and they looked for new paths, new values, new life-style patterns for women, too. The topic of the next four studies is health. József Hudi uses contemporary medical literature and archival sources from the 18th–19th centuries to seek a point of connection between the variola vera vaccination's spread in Hungary and making faces prettier. On an imaginary trip to the Transylvanian mountain villages called Szentegyházásfalva and Kápolnásfalva in 1850–1939, Levente Pakot focuses on the relationship between maternal health and the survival chances of infants. The study written by Szilvia Czingel analyses the changes in hygiene culture and conditions in Budapest between 1900 and 1945. She provides the reasons for the rapidly spreading practice of building bathrooms, and the expanding choices in toiletries (soaps, washing powders). Furthermore, the study focuses on the development of social values, norms, and mentality. In the last paper of this chapter, Péter Nagy sheds light on aspects of illnesses and accidents among the workers of the Rimamurány Salgótarján Ironworks in Ózd. His study is based on archival materials, newspaper articles, and oral interviews, sources that indicate that several factory workers suffered damage to their health because of bad working conditions.

Two authors in the next chapter of the volume – *Sexuality in marriage and outside of it* – show how sexuality and the human body may be brought before the court. Julianna Őrsi gives examples of the significance of physical features in choosing and leaving a mate. She also shows the legal backgrounds of divorces in the 19th century; parallel with this, the author warns that divorce procedures took long. On the other hand, Orsolya Völgyesi introduces an adultery and murder case in the 1820s in Zemplén – as it was seen by Ferenc Kazinczy. Kazinczy was able to explore every detail of the murder case since, as a magistrate, he was authorised to participate in the work of the justice court in the county of Zemplén. Divorce and sexuality as a problem also appear in Emese Gyimesi's study, who examines the marriage of Júlia Szendrey, the widow of the famous poet Sándor Petőfi, and Árpád Horváth. The author of the paper sums up that the problem was not just Júlia Szendrey's refusal of sexuality itself, but her husband's way of thinking and expressions of sexuality. The issue of marriage and sexuality are also the main parts of the next study, written by Gábor Szegedi. More precisely, his paper deals with marriage counselling and premarital medical examinations in Hungary from its early 20th-century origins until the early 1950s. The concept of marriage counselling and premarital medical

examination was an important bio-political regulatory endeavour in modern Hungary. In the last study of this chapter, Boldizsár Vörös examines the opinions on the use of nudity in Hungarian commercials in the 1970s and 1980s. His main question is: can nudity be used in commercials, and if so, how can it be done?

The fourth chapter comprises four papers. Two of them focus on abortion from a Hungarian perspective. Gábor Koloh analyses the fertility system in the Southern Transdanubian region of Hungary. His study is significant because it provides a micro-historical analysis of a case of a peasant woman from Piskó (Baranya County). The aim of Henrietta Trádler's study is to show the population policy in the communist era during the Hungarian Soviet Republic. She also considers the attitudes to abortion in the new political era, as well as the new working woman's idea, the image of the ideal communist mother. Similarly to Gábor Koloh, she uses the methods of micro-history when analysing Tádics Józsefné Magyarics Anna's case. Similarly to Béla Mester's study, Dávid Turbucz considers the human body as a political metaphor, which was used differently to express cultic interpretation. The last study of this chapter is by Rolf Müller. In the paper, he deals with issues of the historical research on torturing the body and death, and he is looking to answer the question of how the physical violence might be reconstructed from the written documents of the state security. He examines the Hungarian political police between 1945 and 1956.

Violence committed on another body is the main topic of the next chapter, *Body politics: the body of the soldier and the prisoner*. The papers give a comprehensive and comparative picture of body politics from the 15th century. Veronika Novák focuses mainly on 15th–16th-century France and – using local chronicles and diaries from the metropolis of the period, Paris – she shows that medieval and early modern execution rituals and torturing of bodies was generally considered as a symbolic language of the absolutistic power in development. The everyday practice of violence on human bodies was a form of conflict in the Hungarian Kingdom in the 17th century, too, as we find out from Péter Illik's study. He points out that after the fall of Buda (1541), the Ottoman presence became constant in the central region of the Hungarian Kingdom. Hungarians could be attacked anywhere and at any time in their own homeland. Péter Illik collects and analyses some of these acts of violence. The body as a captive also appears in the paper of Tamás Dobszay. His works tend to interpret the features of prison-sociology and prison-psychology using the notes of Ferenc Kazinczy. Kazinczy was in a special situation in prison because he was a political prisoner and, as a gentleman, he was provided with much better conditions throughout his incarceration compared to common folks. Those interested in the political effects upon the body could consider the military service's documents, too. Julianna Erika Héjja examines how the men were trying to become unsuitable for military service. Her narrow research area is Békés county between 1813 and 1831. She examines the criminal court's papers and shows that in many cases the judge had to punish the prisoners because of self-mutilation.

In the last chapter, titled *Habits, norms, beliefs regarding the living and the dead body*, we find three papers. Two of them address the written form of the dead body. Noémi Tünde Farkas focuses on the Hungarian-language funeral orations in Central Transylvania in the 18th–19th centuries. She analyses funeral orations, as well as handwritten and printed sermons, and she demonstrates that these were only the privilege of a narrow social class. In parallel with the social and cultural changes, the speeches from the 19th century are

more personal and contain more pieces of information about the dead body. The next paper brings to our attention the testamentary additions to the history of 17th–18th-century burial practices. Similarly to Gábor Koloh's paper, we are presented with Transdanubian cases. József Horváth analyses how the body appeared in the testaments and what factors we should consider in these burial practices. The last author of the volume is Tamás Bezsényi, who uses Vahan Cardashian's works to discuss how the Turkish were modernized in the late Ottoman period. Cardashian was an American lawyer and his main goal was to convince the international public, especially Americans, that the Turkish nation was not a backward one. He thought that modernizing the country lied in women and their clothing. It was a surprising idea in the beginning of the 20th century.

We should also consider that the authors of these studies worked with very diverse sources, thus exemplifying how the pictures, diaries, written letters, newspaper articles and archival sources could be used in historical research. This volume sheds light on the complex approaches to the human body, and thanks to the complexity of the theme of the conference, the papers are varied so the body is examined in its social contexts, providing space for the most diverse approaches.

Pócs, Éva (ed): *Test, lélek, szellemek és természetfeletti kommunikáció. Vallásetnológiai fogalmak tudományos megközelítésben* [Body, soul, spirits and supernatural communication. An interdisciplinary approach to religious ethnology concepts]. 2015, Budapest: Balassi Kiadó [Tanulmányok a transzcendensről VIII], 640.

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Twenty-three years have passed since the conference providing the basis of this book series, "Ecstasy, Dream, Vision," was organized by Éva Pócs in the spring of 1993 at the Institute of Ethnology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The four-day meeting was attended by 39 researchers: ethnographers, folklorists and anthropologists, along with literary historians, theologians, historians and psychologists. The papers arranged into this volume were published in 1998, but already in 1995 there was another conference titled "Spirit, Death, Afterlife."

Bringing the issues of spirit concepts and supernatural communication to the fore again is not in the least a nostalgic circling back to the topics of twenty years ago; it reveals a need for the refreshed synthesis of recent scientific findings. The 2012 event falls in line with conferences that have become international in the meantime: more than half of the 47 total participants were foreign researchers, and this two-thirds majority holds for the authors of this volume, too. Apparently the issues formulated in the Call for Papers sparked considerable interest in the international field as well. The Belief Narrative Network of the most important international organization of folk narrative research, the ISFNR (International Society for Folk Narrative Research), also joined the "East-West" Research Center on the Ethnology of Religion as co-organizer.

This edited volume of conference papers was published under the same title as the conference and follows its fourfold structure. Instead of reformulating Éva Pócs' introduction, I want to highlight two perspectives instead. 1. How does this collection fit into the latest domestic and international research findings? 2. What are the theoretical and methodological problems, which – like a Leitmotiv – pop up repeatedly in several papers?

1. The mythical creatures of European cultures or the almost intrusive presence of the demonic walking dead in today's popular media and vernacular-esoteric registers poses a challenge for representatives of objective scientific scholarship. Folklorists examine the narrative sets evolving around their configurations, literary historians analyze the interactions of elite and popular cultural narratives, religious historians and ethnologists explore the beliefs and potential cults associated with them, whereas historians and historical anthropologists strive to provide them with credibility through a detailed historical perspective. Three of the volume's authors examine the concept of werewolves. The Croatian Maja Pasarić and the Estonian Merili Metsvahi are also featured in *Werewolf Histories*, published in October 2015. The volume, edited by Willem de Blécourt, provides a critical review of the figure and associated beliefs of the European werewolf from ancient times to the present day. Maria Tausiet and Laszlo Kürti analyze the vampire characters of popular literature and movies. Francesca Matteoni provides a comprehensive picture of the blood-sucking familiar spirits of witches based on witch-hunt documents from early modern England. The historian Lizanne Henderson's paper presents the taxonomy of fairies and angels in the Neoplatonically inspired work of a 17th century Scottish minister. The Scottish witch-hunt expert Julian Goodare – among others – led the research group dealing with this topic for years. His current article details the cult of a nature spirit based on 16th–17th century Scottish witch trials and other contemporary sources. Daniel Bárth's study discusses communication with “unclean spirits.”

Beyond its connection to current research trends, the novelty of the tome lies in the ethnographies describing and analyzing the contemporary forms of religiousness. Building on their research in Moldova, Laura Iancu and Vilmos Tánzos unveil the details of a particular village community's or a single individual's religious worldviews. Elizabeth Warner did fieldwork in the Vologda and Archangelsk Regions of northern Russia between 1999 and 2010, where, similarly to Moldova, the community is dynamically transforming yet includes safeguarded archaisms. In her article she processes this material, and summarizes the ideas of death, afterlife and soul. Ilaria Micheli also uses her own experiences in the field to analyze the notions of possession in two West African tribes from the perspective of anthropological linguistics. Regarding its subject, it is undoubtedly the writing of Judit Farkas that offers the freshest information: she examines the concepts of soul and body among the inhabitants of the Krishna-village in Somogyvámos.

2. Moving on to the volume's methodological and theoretical intersections, one of the key issues is the compilation of the terminology and a taxonomy based on it, and with it the criticism and reconfiguration of previous classifications. Many apply the methodological tools of comparative linguistics and religious studies, mostly authors of descriptive studies. Of these, the most successful is arguably Anna Tóth's piece, which systematizes the vengeful spirits of ancient Greek religion. Vilmos Voigt's study addresses Ivar Paulson's classification system of Eurasian soul-perceptions, more precisely his doubts about its applicability if used for the reconstruction of the early

forms of Hungarian soul beliefs. Analyzing contemporary data about the visionary cult built around the seely whites, Julian Goodare concludes that the previous taxonomy describing early modern Scottish cosmology is inaccurate.

In connection with the belief systems and mythological reconstructions described with the help of archival and historical sources, the question of authenticity arises: what is the historical reality to which they can be related? Have such systems ever existed, or were they created by the classifying approaches of researchers? Willem de Blécourt attempts to answer these questions by presenting notions regarding the so-called double through two 20th century Dutch myth collections. Gordana Galić-Kakkonen expresses similar doubts regarding a late medieval literary travel diary when she questions whether medieval readers perceived the distinction between reality and fiction similarly to readers today. Nonetheless, several of the authors in the volume do indeed interpret their own data within the reconstructed mythological systems, be they historical or the results of contemporary research. In this regard, the most conclusive is Mirjam Mencej's study on circular movement as a universal trance technique. The dilemma of the knowability of reality mediated through narrative also comes up. C. W. von Sydow imagined the structural-morphological development of the legend as an evolutionary process from *dite* to *fabulat*. How faithfully are the original experiences conveyed in texts collected in folklore archives? Kaarina Koski's study based on 19th–20th century Finnish legends illustrates well that texts deemed unmanageable and chaotic by earlier research, when placed in the proper historical perspective, can provide valuable data about the interplay between folk ideas and Lutheran teachings that coexist in the same community. Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj utilizes Finnish archival texts in a recently collected interpretation of dream narratives.

A fundamental objective of the conference series serving as the basis for this volume was to connect Hungarian research with international scholarship. In terms of her oeuvre to date, the organizer Éva Pócs is exemplary. Her research project funded by the European Research Council proves that even by international standards she produces extremely valuable and important work. The English translation of the book is also made possible under this project.

Shaman 24 (1-2) (2016)

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The International Society for Academic Research on Shamanism dedicated the entire 24th volume (with two issues) of the journal "Shaman" to honour professor Vilmos Voigt, a leading Hungarian scholar on Eurasian shamanism. Vilmos Voigt, in addition to being an outstanding researcher of comparative religious studies, is the author of more than one hundred articles on shamanism and closely related topics. He is also currently a member of the editorial board of the journal.

Until his retirement, Voigt Vilmos lectured at the Department of Folklore Studies on the

Faculty of Humanities at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. For nearly three decades (since 1979), he was the chair of the department and the head of the Institute of Ethnography at the university. In 2010, he became Professor Emeritus. Despite his retirement, he continues to be active in publishing articles, attending conferences and lecturing.

The articles in the current volume of *Shaman*, in honour of the 75-year-old Vilmos Voigt, reflect on his diversified research interest. Among many other topics, he is a renowned expert on Siberian shamanic practices, the philology of folklore texts, the phenomenology of religion, the literature of Finno-Ugric peoples and semiotics. The fifteen articles cover a wide range of research topics encompassing a large spatial and temporal framework. The reader is invited on an exciting journey starting from 10th century Norse mythology to contemporary voodoo practices in Togo. Despite this extensive scope in terms of temporal and geographical frame, the majority of the articles focus on 20th century shamanic practices and indigenous worldviews in Northern-Eurasia, illustrating why Siberia has always occupied an eminent position in academic discourses on shamanism.

Research work on shamanism usually faces two interrelated epistemological problems. Firstly, is the methodology of religious studies and anthropological fieldwork appropriate for providing outsiders with insight on such a subtle phenomenon as religious experience? Can ethnographic descriptions based on a rationalist academic discourse be thick enough to allow outsiders/non-believers to give a precise account on ecstasy, trance or on the meaning of rituals? Secondly, are academic discourse and its objectivist view on religious practices suited to transmit the essence of shamanic experience?

Vilmos Voigt's oeuvre and the articles published in this recent volume of *Shaman* address and answer these two interrelated questions in a classic manner. Although the epistemological problems raised above cannot be easily resolved and settled reassuringly (if they can be at all), anthropologists, folklorists and philologists can endow us with the rich social, economic, cultural and linguistic contexts of shamanic practices and worldview. These contexts may not directly explain what religious experience is, but they do illuminate the embeddedness of religious/shamanic practices.

An excellent example of this approach is György Kara's contribution to this present volume. While interpreting an Ekhirit Buryat shamanist song, an invocation recorded in 1932, the author adds to the article 110 endnotes on fifteen pages in order to help readers "recall the spirit of an early twentieth century Buryat shamanist invocation" (p. 27.). In a very similar manner, Clive Tolley offers a meticulous study on the possibly related notions of *Vétt* (lid, shield) and *Vitt* (charm) in old Norse and its relation to the Scottish *Wecht* (winnowing drum) and Saami shaman drums, shedding light on the possible links between various Nordic cultures. While giving several possible answers to the question raised, the author creatively combines a "panoply of uncertainties" and provides the reader with lots of tiny details on Norse philology. In a similar manner, Virág Dyekiss also relies on a philological approach when analysing Nganasan prose narratives on historical shamans.

The articles in the journal do not merely raise philological questions relying on the analysis of texts. Art Leete and Juha Pentikäinen (working with written sources) follow a diachronic approach by scrutinizing the reliability of dissimilar (academic, fictional, archival, oral) sources on shamanism. Based on fieldwork in addition to historical context, a number of authors describe the highly varying social background of today's shamanic and neoshamanic practices (Montgomery, Subramaniam and Edo, Valk, Wettstein,

Yamada). Maurizio Ali's article, using a delicate personal tone, cites and reflects on excerpts from his fieldwork diary, drawing the reader's attention to the complexity of transferring personal experiences on shamanic rituals to academic discourses.

NAGYNÉ BATÁRI, Zsuzsanna: *Tájegység születik: Szabadtéri kiállítások rendezésének kérdései az Észak-magyarországi falu tájegység esettanulmánya alapján* [An exhibition is born. Questions of preparing open air exhibitions based on the case study of the Northern Hungarian village regional unit]. 2014, Szentendre: Skanzen, 459.

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This volume is an introduction to open air museology at the beginning of the 21st century, based on a case study on the preparation of the Northern Hungarian Village regional unit, opened in 2010, and to date the newest unit of the Hungarian Open Air Museum. Zsuzsanna Batári, curator of this regional unit, discusses various theoretical and methodological questions specific to contemporary open air museology based on this case study, guiding us through all stages of planning and the actual realization of the exhibition in question.

In the opening chapters, Batári outlines the changing environment and expectations that open air museums face. At the core of these lie the notion of the anthropologized museum. It is no longer sufficient to present rural architecture and interiors; museologists must now apply various methods to 'make them come alive'. Interactivity, sustainability and edutainment are a few of the keywords that new museology has to address. After the introduction, the preparation of the exhibition is discussed in six chapters, starting from the drawing of the concept, and finishing with interpretive methods complementing the finished exhibition.

The first chapter discusses the drawing (and redrawing) of the concept of a regional unit. It includes a detailed description of all the buildings and other elements of settlement that comprise the North Hungarian regional unit (the manor, cave dwellings, a common yard with three dwellings, a gentry yard, a small chapel etc.), also touching upon elements from the original concept which had been omitted in the meantime. The next chapter focuses on the detailed preparation of the concept of a regional unit. It reflects on the possibilities and difficulties of selecting houses and outbuildings in the 21st century. This chapter also touches upon the criteria of authenticity and the possibility of creating an authentic copy or reconstruction if the original building cannot be moved for some reason.

The third chapter deals with various methods and sources of ethnographic research needed for planning an exhibition. The author emphasizes the considerable change this process has undergone during the past decades and the vast amount of new sources available for research, including digital databases of ethnographic articles and archive photographs. The subsequent chapter focuses on different aspects of collecting objects for the museum. Methods of collection have also changed, but the most interesting segments reflect on specific practical and theoretical issues. One example could be the

special efforts needed to acquire vulnerable materials such as textiles or paper from a certain period. The other is more closely connected to the concept of the anthropologized museum: how can objects be used to visualize everyday life or folk customs?

The fifth chapter deals with questions related to creating interiors. Here, Batári describes the relatively new method of modelling the interiors beforehand in the Ethnographical Study Collection. This allows more time for the professionals working on the exhibition to discuss and prepare the interior before moving it to the house it belongs to. The last and longest chapter discusses methods of interpretation and the cultural translation of the exhibition for visitors, which is crucial to the operation of the museum as well as in terms of the experience and information gained those who visit. The most significant innovation of the North Hungarian Village regional unit has been incorporating interpretive tools in the exhibition from the very beginning of the preparation phase. Multimedia content and other innovative technical solutions play a considerable part, but equally important is the role of ‘interpreters’, who help visitors get involved instead of remaining passive viewers.

The goal of the author was to demonstrate the toolkit and the work process of open air museology today, focusing on innovative, up-to-date methods. Thanks to the practical approach, numerous illustrations and minute descriptions, this volume published by the Hungarian Open Air Museum is not only a case study, but can also be used as a handbook of open air museology in the beginning of the 21st century.

DANGLOVÁ, Oľga: *Modrotlač na Slovensku – Blueprint in Slovakia*. 2014, Bratislava: ÚĽUV, 375.

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Sixty years have passed since, following several preliminary studies, the first major survey of the topic of the currently reviewed book was published, written by Jozef Vydra (*Ludová modrotlač na Slovensku - Indigo blue print in Slovak folk art*. 1954, Bratislava: Tvar). The first major Hungarian monograph on this subject also came out in the period between the release of these two Slovak publications (DOMONKOS, Ottó: *A magyarországi kékfestés* [Blue-dyeing in Hungary]. 1981, Budapest: Corvina). Among other works, Domonkos referenced the German-language edition of Vydra’s book. After all, in relation to historical Hungary, most of the early blue-dyeing guilds were located in the territory of what is today Slovakia.

Danglová’s work on blue-dyeing is best presented compared against the above-mentioned earlier publications, so as to examine what it provides in excess of the other works.

The main chapters of the volume discussed are: The history of printed textiles, Dyers’ guilds, Dye workshops, Blueprint trade after extinction of the dye-workshops, Blueprint technology, The printing forms, Blueprint in folk dresses and Interior, and Motives.

The first six chapters outline the history of the handicraft. The seventh chapter will pique the interest of ethnography in the strict sense of the term. The eighth and last

chapter, which constitutes nearly one-third of the book, will be especially interesting to textile designers. Its main subsections are: Geometric motives, Plant motives, Animal motives, Motives referring to objects, and Anthropomorphic motives.

The parts on the history of the handicraft, which are based on Vydra's work, supplement the series of preserved relics from as early as the 17th century, then follows the evolution of the topic at hand by revealing the changes it went through in the six decades between 1954 and 2014. The author then presents the techniques, colors, tools and chemical recipes. Vydra's book only included the traditional hand tools; Danglová discusses machine prints, too. In Slovak areas, multi-colored blue-dyed fabrics are popular: multiple shades of blue side by side, blue combined with yellow, blue with green and yellow, blue with red. They also used orange-and-white and yellow-and-white. – Domonkos found that Vydra's book fell short in utilizing the blue-dyeing resources of Slovakia, and in failing to address the broader issues of the industry. He made up for this lack in his own book: in his characteristic manner, he thoroughly discussed the relics, regulations and operations of the various guilds, as well as the capitalist factories. He also mentions that there are overlaps in the motifs in weaving, embroidery and blue-dye. The Slovak authors did not address this. Domonkos was able to do observation and ethnographic collecting in many functioning blue-dye workshops. In Danglova's time this was less possible, so she mainly enriches our knowledge base of the subject through a meticulous exploration of museum collections.

Rich illustrations of excellent quality provide information about the role of blue-dyed fabrics in clothing and home decorations. Among women's folk costumes, the most widespread blue-dyed products were aprons with large patterns and skirts with small patterns, but also vests and a variety of kerchiefs – for the head, for the shoulders, for the hands (handkerchief), and occasionally overcoats. These played a significant role during major celebrations as well. In contrast with the typical Slovak folk costume, these overcoats are common in the more bourgeois Transdanubian and Hungarian peasant attire. It is worth noting that the old-fashioned form and structure of Slovak women's dresses, which combined blue-dye with canvas, broadcloth and leather, shows kinship with the attire of some of the archaic Hungarian regions in Transylvania. In Vydra's time, the workshops still in operation mostly followed traditions, as the notion of "new folk art, living folk art" has not yet emerged. In Otto Domonkos' time, this already played a major role in Hungary: he gives a series of examples from the 1960s, but mainly from the 1970s, of the redesigns accommodating the urban needs of the era. Ol'ga Danglová similarly includes such newer works of folk art and homecraft. In the narrower scope of blue-dyed home textiles, both Slovak authors mention only bedding – sheets, duvet covers, pillowcases – while Domonkos provides a rich material of Transdanubian and Plains tablecloths as well. Seemingly, this category was lacking in Slovak areas.

In the section titled *Motives referring to objects*, we can even find the Hungarian national coat of arms. 18th century compositions are included in the section called *Anthropomorphic motives*, largely adapted from Vydra's publication.

From the point of view of the text-to-image ratio, the three comprehensive works create a series that can be considered degrees of progression towards the ideal. Vydra provides many figures within the text, but the picture plates that are individually lined up after the end of the text constitute more than two-thirds of the book. In Domonkos' book

the picture plates lined up at the end occupy only half of the volume, making it easier to search them. The most useful solution is what we find in Danglová's new book: from start to finish, all minor and major figures have been placed where they logically belong.