

*„Hungary, I Love You This Way!” Variations of a Beer Commercial as Narratives of Group Identity*

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Over the past few decades, the Internet has become an important medium for interpersonal communication. Questions of online communication and online communities are studied by scholars of various disciplines worldwide. Folklorists have also noted the role of Internet in the preservation, transmission, and even creation of narratives, with special attention to certain genres, such as contemporary legends, belief narratives, or jokes. A significant number of narratives born in a mass media environment however do not fit into the categories of the traditional genre system of folklore. In my paper I propose that these narratives can also bear folkloristic characteristics, and accordingly can be examined from a folkloristic point of view. I examine this question on a curious example: Hungarian narratives of group identity, based on the common schema drawn from a beer commercial. The commercial – an enumeration of stereotypical attributes of Hungarians – was itself based on a Canadian advertisement from 2000. The Hungarian version was first shown on television in February 2009, and provoked numerous responses and parodies in a short time. With the help of the Internet, these adaptations found their way to a wide audience, provoking further adaptations. By analyzing the stable form and varying content of these “narratives of group identity”, we can illustrate, what an enormous part Internet plays in the creation, transmission, and preservation of “folk” narratives. This case study also gives an opportunity to discuss some important methodological questions of the study of *internet folklore*.