

Ethnography Studies at Hungarian Universities up to 1960 (A Festive Retrospective on the Occasion of the 90th Anniversary of the Foundation of the ELTE Institute of Ethnography)

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ABSTRACT

At the University of Pest at the end of the 18th century, it was Dániel Cornides (1732–1787) who explored Hungarian ancient religion, while András Dugonics (1740–1818) studied various aspects of Hungarian folk poetry (tales, idioms, proverbs) and folk customs in his lectures. Descriptive statistics, reports on the state of affairs in various regions and ethnic groups within the country documented the ethnographic character of these areas and groups in the first half of the 19th century. In the second half of the century, professors of Hungarian literature and language investigated and discussed these topics with a comparative European perspective at universities. Ethnographic and folklore-related knowledge was disseminated by excellent professors of classical philology and oriental studies. Professors of geography (János Hunfalvy, Lajos Lóczy) played a crucial role in providing information about faraway peoples and continents at the University of Budapest.

The first associate professor (*Privatdozent*) in ethnography was Antal Herrmann at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, now Romania) in 1898. He delivered his lectures in Kolozsvár until 1918, and between 1921 and 1926 in Szeged, where the University of Cluj was relocated. The first university department for ethnography and folklore studies was established at the University of Szeged, where Sándor Solymossy, a scholar of comparative folkloristics, became professor. At the University of Budapest, the first department for ethnography and folklore studies was founded for István Györffy, who primarily studied

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material culture and the people of the Great Hungarian Plain. His successors were Károly Viski (1942), then folklorist Gyula Ortutay (1946). In 1951, another department at the University of Budapest came into being for István Tálasi, who was a scholar of material culture studies and historical ethnography.

The head of the ethnography and folklore department of the Hungarian University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) was Károly Viski in 1940–1941, and Béla Gunda between 1943 and 1948. At the University of Debrecen, established in 1912, a number of associate professors gave ethnography and folklore lectures between 1925 and 1949 (István Ecsedi, Károly N. Bartha, Tibor Mendöl, Gábor Lükő), but an autonomous department was established only in 1949 and led by Béla Gunda until 1979. At the University of Szeged, Sándor Bálint was appointed professor of ethnography and folklore studies in 1949, but only after 1990 did it become possible to provide M.A. degrees in ethnography and folkloristics, which had been provided at the University of Budapest since 1950 and at the University of Debrecen since 1959. The study reviews the disciplinary history of ethnographic and folkloristic studies in Hungarian higher education from the beginning until 1960.

KEYWORDS

history of science, university history, higher education, department establishment, ethnography and folklore

HISTORY UP TO 1898

The first university departments of ethnography in Hungary were established relatively late, the first in Szeged in 1929, the next in Budapest in 1934.¹ However, ethnographic topics appeared much earlier in Hungarian scientific research and university education. According to an earlier hypothesis, János Erdélyi was probably the first to address ethnography (works of folklore) at the college level in his lectures on Hungarian literature at the Calvinist College in Sárospatak in the 1860s (KÓSA 1981:6). A later publication suggests that the lectures of professors teaching at the University of Pest² in the late 18th century had been folkloristic in nature. Dániel Cornides (1732–1787), a historian librarian and a scholar of ancient Hungarian religion (and not incidentally the researcher of the Hungarian origin of the carriage, called coach), was appointed professor of “auxiliary sciences of history” in 1784. His contemporary, András Dugonics (1740–1818), was a professor of mathematics, but he is much better known for his folklore research, since his literary works contain a large number of tales, parables, proverbs, and even folk customs (VOIGT 1987:271, 1995:92).

During the reform era and the first decades of positivism, disciplinary boundaries had not yet been established in either scientific research or university education. Ethnographic research existed on the boundaries of statistics and local historical studies of “antiquity,” as well as literature describing landscapes and people. Ethnography also moved university professors and distinguished members of the Learned Society, including János Garay, Elek Fényes, Ferenc Toldy, Pál Hunfalvy, Arnold Ipolyi, László Kőváry (PALÁDI-KOVÁCS 2016:26–62; see also:

¹The source of the photographs published in the study is PALÁDI-KOVÁCS, Attila (ed.) *Magyar néprajz* I. 1. *Táj, nép, történelem*. Budapest: Akadémiai.

²Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Budapest is the oldest university in the country. Its predecessor was founded in 1635 in Nagyszombat, moved to Buda in 1777 and then to Pest in 1784. From 1873, after the capital Budapest was formed by the unification of Pest, Buda and Óbuda, it was named the University of Budapest, and from 1921 it was named after Péter Pázmány, and since 1950 after the physicist Loránd Eötvös.

MOHAY 2001:9). Following the repressive Bach era of the Austrian authorities (1850–1859) after the defeated Hungarian War of Independence (1848–1849), the departments of Hungarian language and literature established at universities in Pest provided learning that could be considered ethnographic primarily on folk poetry, which fit into the scope of literature. The titles and lecturers of the courses, including ethnography, that were offered in the seventy-five years between 1860 and 1934 can be found in surviving course catalogs (PAPP 1985:49–68). Ferenc Toldy (1805–1875), the first professor of the Department of Hungarian Language and Literature, sought the source of national poetry in folk tradition, in agreement with the poets Ferenc Kölcsey and János Arany. The lectures on Hungarian folk poetry given by his successor, Pál Gyulai (1826–1909) in 1888–1889 are documented in preserved manuscript notes taken by his students. It is well known that the *Collection of Hungarian Folk Poetry* was published by the Society (a literary society founded in 1836), the first three volumes of which, published between 1872 and 1882, were edited by László Arany and Pál Gyulai (KÓSA 2001:77).³

In later years, Zsolt Beöthy (1848–1922) and then Lajos Katona (1862–1910) gave lectures on folk poetry at the University of Budapest. Katona was involved in the establishment of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society (1889), and it was his program that launched the first issue of the still-operating journal *Ethnographia*, which he edited in 1891–1892. One of his main topics was the comparative analysis of folktales. He began lecturing on folklore at the University of Budapest in 1903 as *professor extraordinarius*, became a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1902, and became a full professor of Hungarian literary history in 1908. He was one of the most significant founders of modern Hungarian folkloristics and a European-minded personage (DIÓSZEGI 1980:102). It is worth mentioning that József Budenz (1836–1892), who became a full professor of comparative Ural-Altaic linguistics in 1872, also gave lectures on Finnish folk tales. Ethnological and folkloristic learning also figured in the university lectures of Zsigmond Simonyi (1853–1919), Ármin Vámbéry (1832–1913), Ignác Goldziher (1850–1921), Ágost Greguss (1825–1882), József Hampel (1849–1913), and Imre Henszlmann (1813–1888). Frigyes Riedl (1856–1921) is also known to have given lectures on folk ballads, perhaps thanks to his studies on János Arany's ballads.

In the field of classical philology, Alajos Heinrich can be mentioned first and foremost, who obtained a teaching degree in the subject areas of ancient geography and ethnography. Between 1880 and 1892, he gave numerous lectures on Roman myths and customs and even published on the ethnography of Libya (MOHAY 2001:12). Less known in the field of ethnography is the Indologist József Schmidt (1868–1933), a scholar of ancient Indian epics, who set Soma Braun at the University of Budapest on the path of studying Oriental fairy tales (PALÁDI-KOVÁCS 2018:87–88). Ethnography increasingly figured in the university curriculum of geographers. János Hunfalvy (1820–1888), the founding president of the Hungarian Geographical Society, considered ethnography to be a sister science to geography. In his fourth year of teaching at the university, he first offered a lecture called *Universal Ethnography* in four hours a week. He then taught five more semesters of ethnography. In these, he presented the lifeways, social organization, material culture, anthropological characteristics, major religious systems, etc., of “natural peoples.” A lithographed

³The text of Toldy's lectures has not survived, so it can only be inferred that he touched upon the subject of historical legends. The notes from Gyulai's lectures were published in print in 1978. *Gyulai Pál: A magyar népköltészetéről. Ballada, mese, népdal* [On Hungarian folk poetry. Ballad, fairy tale, folk song]. DÖMÖTÖR – KATONA – VOIGT eds. 1978:167–237. See also VOIGT 1995:94–95, 1998:7–8.

student note from the ethnography course held in the spring semester of the 1876–1877 academic year has survived, which was published in 1995 (SZABÓ 1980:175–176; HUNFALVY 1995:VII). Together with his brother, Pál Hunfalvy (1810–1891), he acknowledged the “decisive role of the mother tongue.” His older brother, the founding president of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society and author of *Ethnography of Hungary* (1876) and other fundamental ethnographic works, had requested a *venia legendi* (Lat. “permission to lecture”) at the University of Pest in 1850, but was rejected by Minister Thun. Ultimately, Pál Hunfalvy was never allowed to teach at the university because of his role in the War of Independence (PALÁDI-KOVÁCS 2011:56–59, 2016:197).

Far-away peoples and cultures were the interest of geographers who were also considered geographical explorers. Lajos Lóczy (1849–1920) took part in Count Béla Széchenyi’s expedition to East Asia in 1877–1880, the main contribution of which was his geographical and ethnographic observations. His book, published under the title *A khinai birodalom természeti viszonyainak és országainak leírása* [Descriptions of the natural environment and countries of the Chinese Empire] (Budapest, 1886) abounds in ethnographic descriptions. He was a full professor of geography at the University of Budapest between 1888 and 1908. Among his university students were future leading figures in ethnography and human geography, such as János Jankó, Zsigmond Bátky, István Ecsedi, Pál Teleki, and Gyula Prinz. Lóczy’s work inspired Jenő Cholnoky (1870–1950), who also studied the geography of China, and the eminent traveler, archaeologist, and historian Aurél Stein (1862–1943), whose life’s work is also noteworthy from an ethnographic point of view. Stein’s findings in Inner Asia gave the elderly Ottó Herman, for example, the idea for a specific interpretation of the Oriental parallels in Hungarian pastoral art (MOHAY 2001:12).

Aurél Török (1842–1912), professor of anthropology at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) and later at the University of Budapest, regularly gave lectures called *Ethnography of Asia*, *Ethnography of Primitive Peoples*, or simply *General Ethnography*. In these, ethnography, and especially the phenomena of lifeways and material culture, were presented and explained on an anthropological basis (VOIGT 1995:96–97). János Jankó (1868–1902), a student of both Lajos Lóczy and Aurél Török, was himself a skilled researcher of ethnography and anthropology, who studied the material culture and anthropological characteristics of the Ob-Ugrian peoples in the field in order to conduct a comparative study of the “ancient trades” of Hungarians. He was the first to advocate for the recognition of “material culture” at the university. In 1898, in a report sent from Tomsk to the Ministry of Culture, he also urged the establishment of a department of ethnography at the University of Budapest. In his argument, he pointed out that ethnographic collectors in Hungary are in fact enthusiastic amateurs, and if ethnographers are not trained at universities, the country’s old material culture will perish without professional documentation and competent preservation (PALÁDI-KOVÁCS 2016:271–272). Jankó was not given a department after all, which was partly due to his untimely death in 1902.

THE HABILITATION OF ANTAL HERRMANN, THE FIRST ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR (PRIVATDOZENT) OF ETHNOGRAPHY, IN 1898

Before the establishment of the departments of ethnography, Antal Herrmann (1851–1926), a teacher of German language and literature at the Pedagogium (teacher training college) in Buda, ethnographic contributor to the series *The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Words and Pictures* (1887–1901), editor of *Ethnologische Mitteilungen aus Ungarn* (1887–1907), and the *spiritus*

rector of the establishment of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society, was engaged in relevant teaching activities. His invitation was probably at the suggestion of Joseph Karl of Austria, who had been made an honorary doctor at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) in 1897, and who financially supported the publication of the aforementioned German-language journal and appreciated Herrmann's work in the field of *Gypsy Lore* (Romology) (VOIGT 1992:167–170).⁴ The Archduke himself was very much involved in the issue of the resettlement and integration of the Roma, even learning their language. He became Herrmann's collaborator on the development of a Romani grammar, which he also translated into German and published in 1902 as volume VII of *Ethnologische Mitteilungen* (GRAGGER 1926:188–189).

Born in Brasov, Herrmann gave ethnographic lectures at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) as an associate professor (Privatdozent) between 1898 and 1918, then continued his academic career at the University of Szeged⁵ as a “public full extraordinarius university professor” between 1920 and 1926. A list of his university courses, which contains a total of 93 items, shows a great variety of topics from 1898 to 1926. His almost three-decades-long work as a lecturer has spanned from folk poetry to ethnographic museum practice, from the ethnography of Transylvania and the Délvidék (Southern Regions) to ethnic minorities in Hungary (Armenians, Saxons), to sociological and ethno-psychological issues. It is also clear from the aforementioned list that the folklife and folklore of the Hungarian, and especially the Transylvanian Gypsies was a constant element of his repertoire (GAÁL 1999:11, 17–20).

Antal Herrmann had many students at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj). His lectures have played a role primarily in stimulating interest in ethnography. Although he was not a founder of a school of thought, his students in Budapest included several renowned ethnographers (István Györfy, Károly Viski, Zsigmond Szendrey, János Banner), and others who became eminent scholars in other disciplines (Bálint Csúry, Lajos Kelemen, Gedeon Mészöly, János Seprődi, János Tulogdy, István Györfy botanist, Márton Roska). He had but a few students in Szeged, among whom Sándor Bálint and the poet, Attila József are particularly worth mentioning. From 1922, another associate professor (Privatdozent), his former student from Kolozsvár (Cluj), János Banner, also gave regular ethnographic lectures here (KÓS 1989:186; PALADI-KOVÁCS 1999:31, 36; GAÁL 1999:13; BÁLINT 1981:236).

In 1922, Sándor Solymossy (1864–1945) was the first to be qualified as a professor of ethnology at the University of Budapest. From the 1910s to the end of the 1930s, he was the leading figure in Hungarian folkloristics. He completed his studies at the University of Budapest, not at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj). Between 1894 and 1898 he was a teacher at the Business Academy in Pozsony (Bratislava), from 1900 at the Hungarian Royal Public Secondary Industrial School in Budapest, and later at the Public Teacher Training Institute. Between 1919 and 1931 he was editor of *Ethnographia*, and in 1919 he was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, becoming a full member in 1933. The focus of his work was on folk poetry (folktales, folk ballads) and folk beliefs, as well as the pre-Christian Hungarian belief system. He was a prominent figure in European comparative ethnography and a

⁴Herrmann also attributed the initiative for his habilitation to the Transylvanian Carpathian Association. See GAÁL 1999:7–8.

⁵After the partition of the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary, sanctioned by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, the University of Cluj moved to Szeged, where teaching started in the autumn of 1921. For more details see later.

developer of its methods (e.g., ethnographic mapping). He gave lectures at the University of Budapest on the genres of folk poetry (Hungarian folk song, folk tale, folk legend, the origins of poetry) as well as the dramatic customs of the Hungarian people (DIÓSZEGI 1981:466; PAPP 1985:73–74).

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST DEPARTMENT OF ETHNOGRAPHY IN HUNGARY (1929) AND THE ETHNOGRAPHY WORKSHOP IN SZEGED

In the three academic years following the death of Antal Herrmann, the ethnographic and archaeological courses of János Banner ensured the continuity of teaching at the University of Szeged. Ethnographic lectures were also given by geographer Károly Kogutowicz, anthropologist Lajos Bartucz, linguist Antal Horger, classical philologist Károly Marót, and professor of German Studies Henrik Schmidt (BARNA – JUHÁSZ – PUSZTAI eds. 2004:99, 121–122). The ideas of Kuno Klebelsberg (1875–1932), Minister of Religion and Public Education, regarding the development and profile of the four universities (Budapest, Szeged, Debrecen, Pécs) gradually changed over the years, partly in view of the difficult economic situation of the country.⁶ According to his plans, “natural sciences should be cultivated in Szeged, and Hungarian studies, Hungarian ethnography, anthropology, and related disciplines should be cultivated in the “true-born Hungarian” city of Debrecen (BARNA et al. 2004:14). Although the idea of establishing a department of ethnography first arose in connection with Debrecen, it was ultimately accomplished in Szeged. The reason for this—in addition to the university’s and Antal Herrmann’s history in Kolozsvár (Cluj)—can be found mainly in the reorganization of public teacher training. The public teacher training school for men called *Pedagogium* and the public teacher training school for women operating within the framework of the *Elisabeth School for Women* (Erzsébet Nőiskola) were attached to the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Szeged in 1928. As part of this merger, Sándor Solymossy, known for being a teacher at the Elisabeth School for Women, was transferred to the University of Szeged and appointed as full university professor, with his salary unchanged. The proposal was heartily supported by the committee of the Faculty of Humanities in Szeged, headed by Dean Károly Kogutowicz. The establishment of the department in Szeged in the 1929–1930 academic year was a turning point in the history of Hungarian universities and the discipline of ethnography (ORTUTAY 1939:183–187).

Sándor Solymossy moved to Szeged with his wife and became involved in the scientific and cultural life of the city. In the academic years between 1930 and 1934, he gave lectures on three subjects per semester. These seminars were complemented by lectures on material culture by university professor Károly Cs. Sebestyén, an ethnographer at the Museum of Szeged, who joined the department in the 1932–1933 academic year. Sándor Solymossy’s lectures were also attended by many members of the *Szegedi Fiatalok Művészeti Kollégiuma* [Youth College of Arts at the University of Szeged] (for example, Gyula Ortutay, Gábor Tolnai, Miklós Radnóti, Dezső Baróti, Viola Tomori). Sándor Bálint was an unpaid intern at the Department of Ethnography between 1930 and 1933, and an unpaid teaching assistant between 1933 and 1934. He habilitated

⁶On June 16, 1921, the Hungarian National Assembly voted in favor of Act 1921: XXV, which “temporarily” relocated the Franz Joseph University of Cluj, having had lost its seat due to the Treaty of Trianon, to Szeged, and the Elisabeth University of Pozsony (Bratislava) to Pécs.

in 1934 and took over some of the lectures of Professor Solymossy, who retired in the fall of that year, with a strong emphasis on the Great Plain and “Szöged.”⁷ Sándor Bálint introduced topics like “The Religious Ethnography of the Great Plain,” “The Ethnography of Pilgrimages on the Great Plain,” and “Holidays on the Great Plain” into the teaching of ethnography (BARNÁ et al. 2004:122–124). Following the retirement of Sándor Solymossy, the professorship remained vacant for almost two decades, until 1947. However, Sándor Bálint and Károly Cs. Sebestyén gave regular ethnographic lectures in the 1930s and 1940s. Since the possibility of habilitation was still available at the University of Szeged, Gyula Ortutay, István Tálasi, Béla Gunda, Ágoston Pável, Kálmán Újszászy, and later László K. Kovács and Sándor Scheiber also obtained their teaching degrees at the University of Szeged in the early 1940s. Some of them regularly gave lectures, ethnographic practicums, and seminars in Szeged for several semesters.⁸ It is worth mentioning that the Franz Joseph University of Szeged, which was transferred back from Szeged to Kolozsvár (Cluj), was replaced by a new university in Szeged in 1940: Horthy Miklós University opened on November 11, 1940.

In 1947, Sándor Bálint was appointed professor at the Department of Ethnography in Szeged, a post he held until his unexpected retirement in 1965. His time as a professor and the following decades are rightly referred to by his departmental successors as “the years of being marginalized and tolerated.” After all, Sándor Bálint was placed on administrative leave between 1951 and 1956, and while lectures continued with the help of commissioned lecturers (primarily Tibor Bodrogi, György Domanovszky, and László Péter), the department continued to struggle. There was no academic major, and the department was only able to obtain an assistant professorship in 1964, which was filled by Imre Ferenczi. Ferenczi, who received his Candidate’s Degree in 1969 and excelled mainly in the research of historical folk tales and calendar customs, became the acting head of the one-man department as an associate professor in 1971, years after Sándor Bálint retired. The teaching of ethnography in Szeged was only renewed after the 1989 regime change, in 1991, and it began in the 1990s with the hiring of new senior instructors, the launch of the academic major, and eventually the accreditation of its own PhD program (KÓSA 1981:6–7; BARNÁ et al. 2004:28–40).

THE DEPARTMENT OF ETHNOGRAPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST (1934–)

Elemér Schwartz, who habilitated as a professor of dialectology and ethnography, turned up at the University of Budapest in 1922, the same time as Sándor Solymossy. From 1925 he gave regular lectures on German folklore, with special emphasis on German religious folklore. In 1925, the Hungarian Ethnographic Society initiated the establishment of a department of ethnology at the University of Budapest (now Eötvös Loránd University), and in 1927 the

⁷The typical vernacular form of the name of Szeged.

⁸Four of the aforementioned eminent ethnographers also taught as assistant professors at the Department of Ethnography in Pest in the academic years 1939–1940 and 1940–1941. Most of them also applied for the professorship vacated at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) in the 1942–1943 academic year by the departure of Károly Viski. (Northern Transylvania, together with Kolozsvár/ Cluj, was reannexed to Hungary for a short period of four years in 1940, following the Second Vienna Decision.)

Faculty of Humanities Council supported the idea. Jenő Cholnoky called it a downright shameful situation that the country's oldest continuously operating university does not yet have an "ethnography department." At the meeting of the Faculty Council on April 17, 1929, Sándor Domanovszky proposed István Györffy, who had obtained his teaching degree at the Faculty of Economics in the same year. "As a result of the efforts of the Faculty, the Ministry finally agreed to allow István Györffy and Zoltán Kodály to start giving lectures for 3 hours each per week from the 1930–1931 academic year" (PAPP 1985:55).

István Györffy (1884–1939), who attended the universities of Kolozsvár (Cluj) and Budapest, obtained a doctorate in humanities in Kolozsvár (Cluj) in 1910 and a teaching degree in history and geography at the University of Budapest in 1911. In 1932, he was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and in 1933, the University of Budapest appointed him professor of Hungarian ethnography. He was appointed full university professor on July 18, 1934. The ministry transferred the professorship vacated in Szeged by the retirement of Sándor Solymossy to Budapest, thereby establishing the department of ethnography in the capital. (The retired Solymossy regularly gave lectures on folklore at the University of Budapest between 1934 and 1940, as its own lecturer.) From October 1934, Györffy's first trainee and later teaching assistant was Béla Gunda, who was followed by László K. Kovács from 1935, Árpád Lajos from 1937, and László Vargha from 1938 (PAPP 1985:57–60).

István Györffy's lectures and practicums attracted a large number of students and significantly broadened the scope of ethnography (mainly in the fields of ethnohistory, settlement history, cultural history, and sociography). In the series called *Ethnographic Booklets*, launched by the department in 1935, Györffy published exclusively the works and treatises of his students. The Center for Region and Ethnographic Research (Táj- és Népkutató Központ) was established in 1938 based on the departments of Pál Teleki, Zoltán Magyar, and Györffy, but was soon closed due to an exhibition critical of the large landed estate system. However, at the beginning of the following year, under the leadership of Györffy and with a slight name change, it was reorganized as the National Institute for Region and Ethnographic Research and operated successfully until 1944 (after Györffy's untimely death, work continued under the direction of geographer László Kádár). Györffy was also actively involved in the Institute of Hungarian Research at the Faculty of Humanities in Budapest, where the data collection for the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas and the New Collection of Hungarian Folklore series of publications enjoyed significant support. Together with his colleagues, Györffy planned to establish the Bolyai College, to help poor students in rural areas. After his unexpected death, his students named the college after István Györffy instead of Bolyai. This institution was the seed and starting point of the left-wing network of People's Colleges (NÉKOSZ), that helped young talented students of peasant origin.

For two years after Györffy's death, commissioned lecturers ensured the continuity of teaching. In 1939–1940 the lectures were given by Sándor Bálint and László K. Kovács, and in 1940–1941 by Gyula Ortutay and Béla Gunda. From the fall of 1941 to the fall of 1945, Károly Viski (1883–1945), invited from the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj), was the appointed professor of the department. Viski took over Györffy's doctoral students and he himself trained many excellent ethnographers (for example, Károly Kós, László Vajda, János Kodolányi Jr., Mária Kresz, Ágnes Kovács, Márta Belényesy, Károly Gaál). In 1946, Gyula Ortutay was appointed to the once again vacant position of department chair. In addition to the genres of folk poetry, he focused ethnographic teaching and research on societies in flux, the transformation of the peasant

way of life, and the impact of internal migration (e.g., the cultural acculturation of the Szeklers of Bukovina). During his tenure as Minister of Religion and Public Education (1947–1950), he reestablished the Department of Ethnography in Szeged, which had been closed since 1934, by appointing Sándor Bálint as a professor in 1947. In 1949, with the appointment of Béla Gunda, he established the Department of Ethnography at the University of Debrecen, while at the same time he signed the resolution to dissolve the Institute of Ethnology, which was part of the East European Institute of Sciences. Of its staff, he transferred István Tálasi, Linda Dégh, László K. Kovács, and Márta Belényesy to the University Institute of Ethnography in Budapest, also securing a university position for Imre Katona, who had been teaching at a high school until then.

The first university reform in 1949 made it possible to launch an ethnography program at the University of Budapest. In 1951, a second academic department was founded for István Tálasi, who until then had been “departmental teacher,” as the Department of Material Culture. The name of the original department under Ortutay’s leadership was changed to the Department of Folklore. In the 1950s, new lecturers were added to both departments: Jenő Barabás (in 1952), Tamás Hoffmann (1952, 1957), and Tekla Dömötör (1953). The Institute of Ethnography, which had grown in size, could rely on the researchers of the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest for giving lectures on the ethnography of the peoples of the world and general ethnology, as well as for leading museum practicums and fieldwork. In the 1950s, under the leadership of Professor Tálasi, the detailed topics for the academic subjects were developed, and notes for the course materials were reproduced in multiple copies.

DEPARTMENTS ESTABLISHED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KOLOZSVÁR (CLUJ) (1940–1948) AND THE UNIVERSITY OF DEBRECEN (1949–)

After the Second Vienna Decision and the re-annexation of Northern Transylvania, Károly Viski was appointed professor in the ethnography department at the newly reorganized Hungarian university in Kolozsvár (Cluj). A native of Transylvania and a student of Antal Herrmann at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj), Viski obtained a teaching degree in Hungarian and Latin and worked as a high school teacher for many years before joining the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest. As a teacher in Nagyszalonta, he studied János Arany and the language of the people of Szalonta, and during his tenure at the museum (between 1920 and 1935) he became the leading researcher of folk art and the *spiritus rector* of the four-volume synthesis called *The Ethnography of the Magyars*. His appointment as professor at the newly established Department of Ethnography in Kolozsvár (Cluj) was made with the full support of the Hungarian scientific community (PALÁDI-KOVÁCS 2018:69, 73). In the end, he only taught in Kolozsvár (Cluj) for less than one academic year, as in 1941 he was invited to fill the position of department chair at the University of Budapest that had been vacant for two years.

Following Viski’s departure, the department chair position in Kolozsvár (Cluj) was filled through an open competition, and the Faculty Council had to consider seven applications.⁹ Béla

⁹Excerpt from the minutes of the Faculty of Humanities, Languages, and History of the Franz Joseph University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) of April 8, 1943 (evaluation of the applications of Béla Gunda, Ákos Szendrey, Sándor Bálint, Károly Bartha, Gábor Lükő, László Kovács, István Tálasi). *KESZEG* 2010:205–287.

Gunda was chosen for the post, who thus became “professor extraordinarius” at the Franz Joseph University between 1943 and 1948. Gunda’s work as a teacher was characterized by immense activity. In addition to humanities students, his lectures were attended by students of law, economics, geography, and even Calvinist and Orthodox theology, including Romanian students. He sought cooperation with Romanian ethnographers (Romulus Vuia, Tancred Bănăteanu). He requested articles from them and published them in the publication series launched by the department (*Transylvanian Ethnographic Studies, Miscellanae Ethnographia*). He was assisted by Ferenc Rezső Haáz (1883–1958), a teacher with a degree from the College of Fine Arts who later became an ethnographic museologist, and he hired Károly Kós Jr., who had returned to Kolozsvár (Cluj), as his teaching assistant. Among his numerous students in Kolozsvár (Cluj), the most notable were Árpád Antal, József Faragó, Olga Nagy, Gábor Sándor, and Lajos Vincze. In 1947–1948, he spent a few months in Stockholm as a visiting professor, and by the time he returned to Kolozsvár (Cluj), the Romanian authorities had terminated his employment and expelled him from the country. In September 1948, he and his family returned to Hungary, jobless (PALADI-KOVÁCS 2018:164–166).

After the closure of the Hungarian Ethnography Department in Kolozsvár (Cluj), in the 1950s and 1960s, lectures on ethnographic and folkloristic topics related to Hungarian linguistics and literature were given at the institution by ethnographers Dr. Károly Kós and József Faragó, and by professors of linguistics and literature (Attila T. Szabó, Gyula Márton, Árpád Antal).

The history of Béla Gunda’s appointment and the founding of the Institute of Ethnography was published by Zoltán Ujváry in a well-documented study (UJVÁRY 1999:19–35). By decree of the Minister of Religion and Public Education – Gyula Ortutay – dated February 23, 1949, Gunda was transferred to the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Debrecen. At the regular meeting of the Faculty Council held on March 28, before the agenda, Dean Géza Bárczi warmly welcomed him as one of the newly appointed university professors. At the extraordinary meeting of May 13, following a proposal by László Kádár, the Faculty decided to request the Ministry to appoint Béla Gunda as a *full professor*, as the minister had previously authorized the establishment of the Institute of Ethnography at the Faculty under the leadership of Béla Gunda as a “public professor extraordinarius” (UJVÁRY 1999:25–26).

Nevertheless, ethnography had been taught at the Tisza István University of Debrecen, founded in 1912, even before the arrival of Béla Gunda and the founding of the Institute of Ethnography. István Ecsedi (1885–1936) obtained a teaching degree at the University of Debrecen in 1925 in the “Geography and Ethnography of Hungary.” From the 1925–1926 academic year until 1935, he offered a lecture every semester, which was mainly attended by first and second year geography students (BALOGH 1985:41–43). As for his employment, Ecsedi was first a teacher at the Calvinist teacher training college, then the head of the ethnography department of the City Museum of Debrecen, and from 1929 he was the first director of the newly founded Déri Museum. Tibor Mendöl (1905–1966), who was a teaching assistant and then assistant professor at the University of Debrecen between 1927 and 1940, also contributed greatly to the expansion of the ethnographic knowledge (human geography, settlement geography) of geography students.¹⁰

Károly N. Bartha (1886–1956) came to Debrecen from Transylvania and became a teacher at the teacher training college (1918–1950), then in 1937 an assistant professor at the University of

¹⁰Except for the Sorbonne scholarship years between 1930 and 1935. FILEP 1980:558; DANKÓ 1999:36.

Debrecen. While there, he was mainly associated with the school of Bálint Csűry, who founded the Hungarian Ethnolinguistic Research Institute at the university in 1938. Bartha primarily studied holiday customs, children's games, and handicrafts. He organized the ethnographic collection work of the students of the teacher training college, and was one of the authors of the ethnographic synthesis of the 1930s, Volume IV of *Ethnography of the Magyars* (DIÓSZEGI 1977:231). It is also necessary to mention Gábor Lükő (1909–2001), who became a university professor in 1946 and gave lectures at the Institute of Social Psychology. He was previously an ethnographer at the Déri Museum in Debrecen (NN 1980:475; see also BARNÁ 1979:6) whose work ranged from the Moldavian Csángós, through the pastoral art of the Hortobágy, to Finno-Ugric comparative ethnographic research and ethnopsychology.

In the first years after the establishment of the department in Debrecen, Béla Gunda gave all the ethnographic lectures, as well as organized fieldwork and field trips. In 1951, Benjámín Nagy joined as an assistant professor, followed in 1952 by Gyula Varga and József Szabadfalvi as academic researchers. For various reasons, Benjámín Nagy left the institute in 1954 and Gyula Varga in 1955 (DANKÓ 1999:47–48). That is when Zoltán Ujváry joined the department as a teaching assistant, and in 1979, he was appointed first an associate professor and then a university professor, continuing to lead the department and editing its publication series. A decisive turning point in the teaching of ethnography in Debrecen came in 1957, when ethnography as an academic major was introduced, and the graduates' diplomas included their major as *ethnography*. This has fundamentally changed the academic status of the department and the major. In 1959 the first volume of the departmental yearbook, *Műveltség és Hagyomány* (Culture and Tradition) was published, which in 1979, edited by Zoltán Ujváry under a new title (*Ethnographica et Folkloristica Carpathica*), became one of the most important publication forums of Hungarian ethnography.

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Fig. 1. Antal Hermann



Fig. 2. Sándor Solymossy

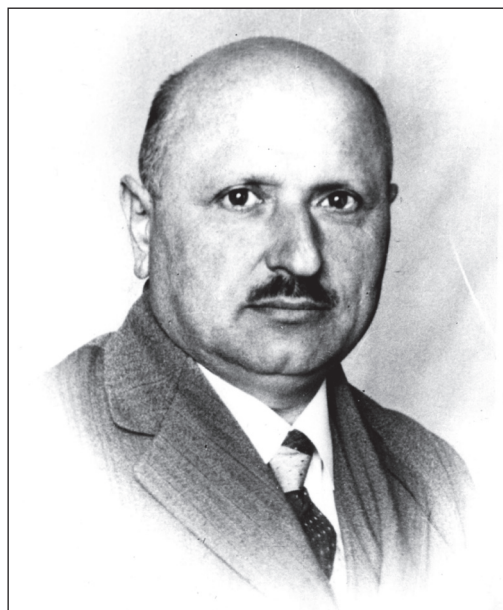


Fig. 3. István Györfy



Fig. 4. Károly Viski

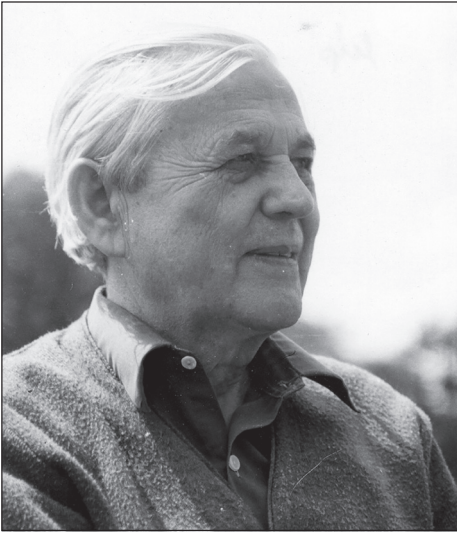


Fig. 5. Sándor Bálint



Fig. 6. Gyula Ortutay



Fig. 7. István Tálasi



Fig. 8. Béla Gunda

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