

HIADOR SZTRIPSKY, THE ETHNOGRAPHER

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Abstract: The study sums up the ethnographical achievements of Hiador Sztripszky (1876–1945), a now little-known Hungarian–Ruthenian ethnographer, bibliographer, linguist, literary historian and translator. The researcher, who had a thorough knowledge of the cultural history and ethnography/folkloristics of the Hungarians and the peoples living together with them, in particular of the Ruthenians and Romanians, did a great deal to study and make known the ethnocultural processes and influences. He also played a big role in collecting the material cultural heritage of the peoples of Transylvania for museums. After the Versailles Peace Treaty he was sent into early retirement as having been involved in the policy on the minorities, and in the last 25 years of his life he achieved substantial results mainly as a philologist in the study of the history and connections of the different ethnic groups and denominations. In addition to Sztripszky's work in ethnography, the study also discusses areas related to the latter problem.

Keywords: museum affairs (1900–1920), material ethnography, Ruthenians, Greek Catholic Church, Orthodoxy, peoples living together in the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin, policy on minorities

Hiador Sztripszky, Hungarian and Rusyn ethnographer, bibliographer, linguist, literary historian and translator was born on March 7, 1875 in the village of Selesztó in Bereg County (NE Hungary, today Ukraine).¹ His father, a priest of the Greek Catholic Church, was soon transferred to another post in the county: the family moved to the village of Ruszkóc.² It was there that Sztripszky completed primary school, he then went on to secondary school studies in the Ungvár Royal Catholic Academic Grammar School. After completing secondary school in 1893 he enrolled in the Faculty of Arts of the Budapest University, but he broke off his studies here and transferred to Kolozsvár, to the Franz Joseph University where he studied archaeology, ethnography and linguistics. He earned a diploma and then trained in teaching, and in 1909 he earned a PhD in the subject of ethnography.

¹ A number of our lexicons mistakenly give Munkács as Sztripszky's place of birth. See, e.g. *Magyar életrajzi lexikon* [Hungarian Biographic Lexicon] II. 804. Budapest, 1969; *Magyar néprajzi lexikon* [Hungarian Ethnographic Lexicon] V. 118. Budapest, 1982. More recently on the subject: UDVARI 1999: 1–30; UDVARI–VIGA 1999; VIGA 2000a: 132–144; VIGA 2000b: 121–128.

² Using the pen-name Ruszkóczi formed from the name of the village where he grew up, in 1900 Sztripszky published a serialised article titled *Válamit a mi néprajzunkról* [Something about our ethnography] in *Kelet* [East], a journal published in Ungvár.

He spent the winter semester of the 1896/97 academic year at the University of Lemberg (Lviv), where – among others – he attended lectures on history and literature by Mykhaylo Hrushevsky and Oleksandr Kolessa. He also got to know many prominent representatives of the Galician intelligentsia, including Ivan Franko, Ostap Rozdolsky, Ivan Verchratsky; he remained in contact with them later too.

The years in Kolozsvár (1897–1908) had a decisive influence on Sztripszky's professional development, shaping his way of seeing. This may be attributed both to the direct influence of a few scholars, and to the town's lively scholarly and cultural life in which the know-your-country, ethnographical, linguistic and local name collecting movements were very active.³ Sztripszky was closely linked to the Carpathian Association of Transylvania – through the person of Antal Herrmann (1851–1926), privat-docent in universal and Hungarian ethnology – and he gave lectures there on ethnology. Both as a teacher,⁴ as an office-bearer of the ethnography department of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania, and as editor of *Erdély népei* [Peoples of Transylvania], Antal Herrmann influenced the young researcher, shaping his attitude and scope of interest. He may also have played a role in Sztripszky's transfer to the Kolozsvár University, he may have also recommended the young man for the study tour to Lemberg since – as ethnographical editor of the series *Az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia írásban és képből* [The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in words and pictures] – he was in regular contact with the Polish and Ukrainian ethnographers in Galicia.

Encouraged by the prominent professor of history, Sándor Márki (1853–1925), Sztripszky wrote two articles presenting data on the history of Transylvania: the first, in 1908, was a contribution to the history of the Transylvanian Sabbatarians, the second throws light on the history of Hungarian words of command, with numerous data.⁵ The connection between the two men probably dates back earlier, and positivist data collection became one of the important features of Sztripszky's working method.

Special mention is to be made of the professional and human influence of Béla Pósta (1862–1919), professor of archaeology, on Sztripszky's life career. His studies on fishing in particular were to show that, for him, the continuity of archaeological finds in recent folk culture was a common feature, especially in the archaic techniques and implements. It is very interesting that it was precisely in the *Néprajzi Értesítő* [Ethnographical Gazette] that Pósta, recommending Sztripszky's latest fish-

³ See the articles in the journals *Erdély* [Transylvania] and *Erdélyi Múzeum* [Transylvanian Museum]. *Erdély*, a journal devoted to disseminating knowledge about the country was launched in 1892 – as the organ of the Erdélyi Kárpát Egyesület [Carpathian Association of Transylvania] – and had a number of supplements. The independent supplement titled *Erdély népei* [Peoples of Transylvania] first appeared in 1898. Both *Erdély* and *Erdély népei* more or less regularly also published pieces on place-names. *Erdélyi Múzeum* was the organ of the Museum Association of Transylvania. See VALENTINY–ENTZ 1942.

⁴ Herrmann qualified as a lecturer in ethnography at the University of Kolozsvár in 1898. Among others, he gave lectures on methods of ethnographical collecting, and the ethnography of the peoples of Transylvania, but his subjects also included “nationality” ethnographical questions. See HERRMANN 1897: 149–151; on the importance of Antal Herrmann: KÓS 1989: 176–188.

⁵ SZTRIPSKY 1908d: 567–568; SZTRIPSKY 1909a: 129–142, 203–217.

ing study, addressed a letter to the journal's circle and the ethnography profession, expressing his opinion on the "relationship" between ethnography and archaeology. "You are not unfamiliar with my view that leads me to prefer to call archaeology paleo-ethnology and I do not consider it possible for someone to penetrate into the soul of the objects belonging in the scope of archaeology without examining the field of ethnography and in a way the new approach to archaeology has wiped out the borderlines once drawn for the purpose of methodical classification between the relics of the prehistoric, the classical period and the middle and recent ages; in other words only comparative archaeology is now recognised and within it all the past and known cultures are viewed as phenomena of an integrally related and intertwined life entity; in this way the borderlines that separated archaeology and ethnography have also ceased to exist."⁶

Sztripszky was initiated into the practice of ethnographical fieldwork by János Jankó (1868–1902), whose influence can be recognised also in the articles on fishing, even if Sztripszky does not always accept his opinion. Sztripszky's attitude as an ethnographer-museologist was also shaped by Vilibáld Semayer (1868–1928), and probably also by a number of people working in the Department of Ethnography of the Hungarian National Museum, who trained him in the collection of ethnographical objects and provided him with various assignments. As Sztripszky's correspondence reveals, Ottó Herman (1835–1914) had a very strong influence on both the course of his private life and his approach as a researcher. As the young researcher wrote in a letter to HERMAN (1908): "I have long nourished the hope of following in the steps of the master and writing *The Book of Fishing in Transylvania*". Elsewhere, too, he referred to this specific intention to supplement Herman's material with data and observations from Transylvania and he mentions several times that the "little known Transylvania is a veritable storehouse of treasures awaiting discovery".⁷

The traditional folk life and material ethnography of Hiador Sztripszky's native land and of Transylvania on which he did systematic research provided the frame for the young researcher's interest, which he continuously filled in Kolozsvár with the results of the leading Hungarian ethnographers. However, thanks also to his knowledge of languages, his intellectual horizon soon expanded to include the literature of the Slavic peoples. He not only handled comparative data with ease but also reviewed the Slavic literature in journals of history and ethnography. His interest also grew beyond ethnography – and the history and archaeology already mentioned: in Kolozsvár he was instilled with an awareness of the importance of the data of folk

⁶ PÓSTA 1903: 153; on Pósta's activity, see KELEMEN 1911: 413–415; Béla Pósta's approach had a very broad impact on Hungarian museum affairs too. The course organised in Kolozsvár (1908) by the National Centre of Museums and Libraries was attended by a number of museologists from country towns: among others, by Andor Leszih from Miskolc, together with Ferenc Móra, now known mainly as a writer. It was clearly in this spirit that Móra, an archaeologist from Szeged, published an outstanding article on his finds from the period of the Great Migrations and early Hungarian cemeteries from the vicinity of Szeged, and on his "ethnographical" observations there. See MÓRA 1932: 54–68.

⁷ On the correspondence between Sztripszky and Herman: UDVARI-VIGA 1999: 1299–1314. See also SZTRIPSKY 1902a: 12; SZTRIPSKY 1903a: 163.

language and their study, philological and bibliographical skills and respect for the activity of museologists. He strove to transplant all this into his research on the Rusyns of Máramaros and the history, religious history and folk life of the Greek Catholics, and the cultural problem of the peoples living together in the Carpathian Basin runs through his work as a defining element.

Gradually, but at a very early age, he joined in the institutional system of ethnography and scholarship. According to one of our sources in 1901, according to another in 1904 he became a member of the Museum Association of Transylvania, recommended by the secretary of the association, Professor Lajos Szádeczky.⁸ In 1903 he became a member of the Hungarian Ethnographical Society, in 1911 he was elected a member of the society's board.⁹

With the support of his professors in Kolozsvár, Sztripszky had already gained employment with the Carpathian Association of Transylvania while still a university student, and as an assistant to János Jankó he joined in the work of shaping the association's ethnographical collection. Although he submitted applications each year, between 1903 and 1909 he did not obtain a permanent museum appointment. He acquired training as a teacher, between 1906 and 1909 he gave lessons in Russian at the University of Kolozsvár, in the status of a private-docent. In 1909 he was appointed assistant inspector of schools in Máramarossziget, although his ideas on plans for a county museum there may have played a role in this. Between 1910 and 1918 he was a member of the staff of the Department of Ethnography of the Hungarian National Museum (see the chapter on his activity as a museologist). From 1916 for close to two years he also edited the journal *Ukrania*. In the autumn of 1918, after the bourgeois revolution he took over the Department of Minorities in the Ministry of Religion and Education, resigning from his museum post. During the Republic of Soviets he worked in the Rusyn people's commissariat (ministry). After the downfall of the communist regime he was employed in the Ministry of Nationalities, then in 1921 – because of his activity during the revolutionary period – he was first placed in reserve status and soon after was pensioned (at the age of 47). Even so, following the Versailles Peace Treaty and the disintegration of historical Hungary, he chose to live in Hungary. His pension was modest, and in order to make ends meet, he acted as an official interpreter in Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and Slovakian. He no longer did any substantial ethnographic activity, but he was extremely successful in the 1920–30s as a philologist and bibliographer. According to the *Tolnai új világlexikon* [Tolnai New Universal Encyclopaedia] he also served as a contributor to the series.¹⁰ After the Vienna Award returning Subcarpathia to Hungary he played an active part in the work of the Department of Rusyn Language and Litera-

⁸ SZÁDECZKY 1904: 152–160; Az Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület [The Museum Association of Transylvania]. *Erdélyi Múzeum XVIII* (1901), 294; *Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület évkönyve 1912. évre* [Yearbook of the Museum Association of Transylvania for 1912]. Ed. Pál ERDÉLYI. Kolozsvár, 1913: 112.

⁹ *Ethnographia XIV* (1903), 504.

¹⁰ Vol. XVI. 258. Budapest, 1929.

ture of the Subcarpathian Scholarly Society, and regularly published writings in its periodicals, mainly in the columns of *Literaturna Negyilja* and *Zorja/Hajnal*.

He died on March 9, 1946 at the age of 72.

RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF MATERIAL ETHNOGRAPHY

The first stage of Sztripszky's work was determined by his research in the field of material ethnography. This can also be explained by his activity in collecting objects: not having a permanent museum position, the various institutions commissioned him mainly to collect objects. But he was also influenced in this direction by his interest in archaic objects and techniques, as he put it in 1902: "The most characteristic as regards material ethnography are the implements of archaic occupations (fishing, pastoral life, hunting)."¹¹ The north-eastern and eastern border areas of Hungary where he did his collecting work were the slowest to undergo embourgeoisement and so they offered an excellent opportunity to collect the archaic objects of traditional folk culture still in use. Both the museum collections in Transylvania and the Department of Ethnography of the Hungarian National Museum supported mainly the procurement of these objects, providing work for the young researcher. The material objects and memories of fishing in Transylvania were collected for and at the expense of the Collection of Coins and Antiques of the Transylvanian Museum.¹²

Many factors could have motivated Sztripszky's interest, turning his attention towards research on fishing. He showed special interest in archaic implements and techniques and in memories of the hunting-fishing way of life. No doubt another source of encouragement was János Jankó, with whom Sztripszky did a lot of collecting, and he was also present when Jankó died in Borszék, on July 29, 1902 when they were on a research trip together. It was also very probably in his footsteps that Sztripszky planned to explore the parallels in Russia of Hungarian fishing.¹³ Jankó may have chosen Sztripszky because he was fluent in Russian.¹⁴ In his writings Sztripszky cites the Russian literature as comparative material.¹⁵

However, the influence of Ottó Herman may also be clearly seen in his research on fishing. There is also a personal reason for why Sztripszky felt that he was following in Herman's footsteps: Ottó Herman worked in the Museum of the Transylvanian Museum Association in Kolozsvár in 1864–1871.¹⁶ His investigations focused on man adapting to the natural conditions, observing and familiar with the behaviour of

¹¹ SZTRIPSKY 1902a: 9.

¹² PÓSTA 1903: 157.

¹³ JANKÓ 1900.

¹⁴ It was essentially Jankó who discovered the Russian literature for Hungarian ethnography. He specifically stressed its importance in connection with fishing and noted that "the linguistically inaccessible Russian literature hides great treasures". See SEMAYER 1902a: 116–122.

¹⁵ E.g. Danilevsky's article titled *Risunki kospijsk...*

¹⁶ HUSZTY 1972: 9–42.

fish, and the inventive Székely people naturally played a prominent role in this.¹⁷ In this respect we can regard him principally as a follower of Herman.¹⁸ He himself stated that in presenting different implement types his aim was to expand Herman's material and to extend the distribution of fishing implements shown by Herman.¹⁹ He devoted great attention in his research to changes, especially to the transformation of the landscape and the influence of these changes on fishing implements and methods. The ethnic, linguistic and social aspects of changes did not escape his attention either, but it was nevertheless primarily to the draining of the lakes and the regulation of the Tisza causing changes in the landscape and topography that could be identified on maps that he attributed the change in fish-catching implements and techniques, as the culmination of a historical series beginning with archaeological finds. He also takes into account the historical data (Székely archives, Kolosváry–Óvári Corpus, Székely village laws, Balázs Orbán, etc.).

We could regard it as the influence of both Herman and Jankó, but the intellectual climate of Kolozsvár and Hungarian ethnography, and Sztripszky's own interest also explain his great attention to research on words and linguistic data, together with the objects and implements they designate. This was "in the air" in Hungarian ethnography in the early years of the century, preceding the appearance of Rudolf Meringer's highly influential journal (*Wörter und Sachen*) launched in 1909.²⁰ In the philological circles of Kolozsvár the study of folk language was the most important subject for the linguist. Sztripszky, too, was so deeply steeped in the combined study of folk life and folk language that he showed an interest in linguistic problems right up to the end of his life.²¹ He also devoted considerable attention to the etymological examination of the folk language forms of Rusyn place-names.

It is clear from his early communications on the subject of fishing that Sztripszky very quickly found his own research method and individual character. Although – as what has been stated above also indicates – he kept an eye on a number of different scholarly approaches, he was very disciplined in drawing his own conclusions. He patiently rejected uncertain conclusions, sometimes feeling that the data were inadequate, at other times not seeing sufficient proof of historical contacts between transmitting and receiving peoples. On the whole it seems that the theoretical debate between Ottó Herman and János Jankó on basic theoretical questions of culture²² does not appear in his writings; he observed a number of trends and adopted a position on questions of fishing implements and techniques mainly on the basis of objects and his observations.

He published the findings of his research on fishing in Transylvania in several parts in the *Néprajzi Értesítő* [Ethnographical Gazette] – edited by János Jankó and

¹⁷ See SZTRIPSKY 1902b: 157–178; SZTRIPSKY 1903c: 317–318.

¹⁸ See SZILÁGYI 1992: 12.

¹⁹ SZTRIPSKY 1903a: 163.

²⁰ KÓSA 1989: 146.

²¹ SZTRIPSKY 1943: 206–228.

²² For a summary, see KÓSA 1989: 123–126.

later by Vilibáld Semayer – and then in a separate booklet.²³ Reviews of his summary work were written by both Jenő Cholnoky, the renowned geographer, and Lajos Kelemen, the outstanding cultural historian, the latter making considerably more critical observations. Among the objections Kelemen raised was that the author did not devote the attention they deserved to the *lakes at the edge of the region and in the central basin*, did not publish new data on the folklore of the lake districts and did not carry out sufficient and reassuring fieldwork. He also complained about the lack of archive research in Sztripszky's work. He regarded the main merit of the work to be that it drew attention to important questions of fishing in Transylvania, and began to collect data, so it was of value even despite its shortcomings. At the same time “he is far from exhausting his subject, and anyone undertaking to write the Book of Fishing in Transylvania will have to do a great deal of research in the field and in archives because Sztripszky has done only the easier part of the work.”²⁴

In the winter of 1901–1902 he obtained many unknown fishing implements in Kalotaszeg and part of the Maros-Torda County, in the regions of Udvarhely, Csík and Háromszék, and especially in Háromszék. The first collecting work was still *ad hoc*, and, as he put it, the first description of the objects was simply to present them. At the same time he corrected Herman on the question of the *duga*: he pointed out that this was not originally a fishing procedure, but the damming of water to allow the passage of rafts of timber. He described 11 kinds of fish-trap and pointed out that the different shapes often served the same function. He confirmed the distribution in Transylvania of acorn spears and presented the scissors spear which he considered to be an invention. He published many observations of details of fishing and also expressions.²⁵

It has seemed to us important to provide a more detailed presentation of his first communication because it shows an awareness of problems and suggests a well-equipped researcher.

His next fishing study dealt with the lakes in the Mezőség region and to use a currently fashionable expression – Sztripszky shows ecological sensitivity in this article. He compares the old hydrography of the region with the state of the Mezőség lakes, describing how the landscape had been transformed. He pointed out that the lakes had been formed to serve the operation of watermills and not for fishing: this was only a secondary function. He described the types of Mezőség fishing in six groups, the result of a lengthy and detailed observation. The article also reveals his familiarity with the literature. He questioned the ideas of János Jankó on a number of points, for example he rejected the German origin of the *dobvarsa* [drum fish-trap] in the Mezőség. He noted that while its use in fishing on the Mosztonga can be quite clearly explained by the settlement of Germans between 1763–69 in Doroszló (Bács County, today Yugoslavia), in the Mezőség only the Germans of Beszterce-naszód could have played a role in its introduction but they did not know the imple-

²³ SZTRIPSKY 1902b: 157–178; 1903a: 158–196; 1903b: 221–226, 279–290; 1908a.

²⁴ CHOLNOKY 1908: 212; KELEMEN (rev.) 1911: 307–310.

²⁵ SZTRIPSKY 1902b: 157–178.

ment. He did not solve the problem but he rejected Jankó's opinion, and noted that the implement is not known among the Germans of Transylvania and only indirect influences could arise as a solution.²⁶

He also refuted Jankó's evaluation of the shape of woven fish-traps: Jankó associated the different types with ethnic groups on the basis of four elements of form.²⁷ Sztripszky argues that these formal features did not hold in the territory he examined, and he remarked that: "Research on the origin of fish-traps and the search for connections between them and the same type of objects of other nations is still a task for the future." He adopted the position that the Hungarians may have borrowed this implement in the course of their migrations from Russian fishermen, but he noted that the types found in Bretagne and Normandy were almost closer to the *fish-traps with mouths folded inwards*.²⁸

In connection with the method of fishing by lifting, he also referred to the influence of Romanian terminology: e.g. there is no Hungarian equivalent to the *csorpág* in the Mezőség language. He also noticed the process of Romanianisation. "We can see with our own eyes how the present changes into the past and observe the process from day to day. The fisherman dressed in the Vlach style and fully integrated into his environment complains bitterly and asks for forgiveness because he can no longer express himself with ease in Hungarian – although he is Hungarian – because he is surrounded here by Vlachs and is obliged to forget Hungarian. His children are not able to speak Hungarian at all. In this way the Hungarian becomes a Vlach. The whole of the Mezőség region is now predominantly Vlach, although people have names like: Csontos Ilea, Forgó Dumitru, Huszár Gavriale, Csikós Juon, Csatlós Jusztinián and – most surprisingly – Farcádi Romulus. Consider in addition that these Vlachs call the Hungarian *vejsze a vérszu*, the *meregygyú* is *meregyév*, the *nád-vágó* is *csáklya*: and we have before us a piece of the past."²⁹

He published the third part of his article on fishing under the name of Híador Mikes. This contained numerous additions to the earlier material and he also devoted special attention to the influence of the establishment of the Fishing Society and how it changed the conditions for small-water fishermen.³⁰

In addition to presenting fishing in Transylvania he also dealt with the methods and implements of fish-catching in other regions. He described the fishing implements of the mortlakes in Szabolcs County, especially of Király Lake (Szabolcs County, E Hungary), and noted how the regulation of Tisza River influenced them.³¹ In connection with the archaic occupations of Máramaros he also discussed the methods and implements of fish-catching, presenting numerous primitive elements.³² For example, bundles of twigs or branches were lowered into the water beside the

²⁶ SZTRIPSKY 1902b: 174–175.

²⁷ See JANKÓ 1900: 200.

²⁸ SZTRIPSKY 1903a: 178.

²⁹ SZTRIPSKY 1903a: 189–190.

³⁰ SZTRIPSKY 1903b: 221–290.

³¹ SZTRIPSKY 1904: 233–240.

³² SZTRIPSKY 1909b: 219–222.

bank, the alarmed fish sought refuge under them and could be caught. Thatching straw was used to catch loach. The fish were caught by hand at night by the light of a torch. At the same time, he also noted that the lifting net is called *kumher*, which in his opinion reflected a German influence in the same way as the name *kumiher* used by Romanian and German fishermen in the region of Dés (Kolozs County, today Romania).

Although the most noteworthy achievements of Sztripszky's research on fishing are his study of fish-catching techniques and implements in Transylvania, his observations and conclusions concerning the changing connection between the landscape and man and the cultural and social impact of these changes are also of note. These writings demonstrate both his skills in fieldwork and his familiarity with the literature and the discipline.³³

Although he retained his interest in archaic occupations, he published very little on this subject. As we have already mentioned in connection with fishing, he published "things of archaic occupations" from Máramaros. In connection with the description of archaic elements he repeatedly draws attention to the changes which were leading to the disappearance of such things as primitive hunting implements and procedures. However, a few relics of the archaic heritage could still be found in Máramaros, where the "rushing influence of progress" was perhaps less felt. He showed a number of variants of game-catching and traps from the practice of the Rusyns in the Talabor Valley (wolf-pit, beech-marten trap and noose). He described the method of making fire without steel, indicating that it had preserved its role mainly in kindling the new fire, the living fire (*živa vatra*), especially in the hands of shepherds.³⁴

In the short monograph on the Dolha region (NE Hungary, today Ukraine) published jointly with Izidor Bilák, following the thematic order of the local monographs that began to appear at the turn of the century, the topics of material ethnography covered are much wider.³⁵ They described the settlement forms and the techniques of peasant architecture, as well as the furnishings. The clothing, nutrition and agriculture are described in detail. They also dealt with the forms of pastoral activity (inner grazing areas + Alpine meadows) and their products, and the questions of various forms of hunting and gathering (fishing, hunting, forest work, etc.). What did not change was the detailed observations and descriptions, the attention paid to linguistic phenomena and the presentation not only of the products of material culture but also of superstitions, beliefs and customs, and considerations of social history were also raised. (The chapter on folkloristics was similarly detailed.)³⁶

To the best of our knowledge, from the 1920s Sztripszky did not write any more specifically ethnographical articles, but his linguistic communications and glosses relied heavily on his ethnographical experiences. His piece titled *Sztronga, esztrengába*

³³ See VIGA 2001: 71–82.

³⁴ SZTRIPSKY 1914: 300–301.

³⁵ SZTRIPSKY–BILÁK 1915: 129–148.

³⁶ SZTRIPSKY–BILÁK 1916: 141–158.

fog published in *Magyar Nyelv* [Hungarian Language] is of special interest.³⁷ He not only showed the spread of the expression and the linguistic and cultural contacts with the different pastoral people governed by Vlach law, but also the regional connections and method of operation of Carpathian pastoral techniques. He corrected the opinion of Sándor Takáts who understood from the sources the secondary meaning of the word *sztronga*, a form of taxation. Sztripszky confirms that the tax was imposed on the basis of the *trial milking*, but the primary meaning of the word is “milking aperture”, the place where shepherds caught sheep for milking at the shepherd’s hut.³⁸

In his paper on the *bajka-juh* [bajka sheep] he corrected another mistake made by Takáts, pointing out that *bajka* is not a kind of sheep, but the correct form is *lajka*, meaning a brown-faced girl or black-faced sheep, which led to *rajka* meaning brown girl and *rajko* meaning Gypsy child.³⁹ However, a more important feature of the article is that, in connection with the terminology of alpine pastoral activity in Slovakia he listed the borrowed words of Vlach or Romanian origin and mentioned many place-names of Romanian origin in the territory of Trencsén and Zemplén Counties.⁴⁰

THE MUSEOLOGIST

Although he was for a long while without a position, Hiador Sztripszky for the most part carried out his activity within the frame of museums and it was collecting objects and the proximity of objects that determined both his attitude to ethnography and his working method. His main focus of attention was the study of “archaic occupations”, archaic implements and techniques and for him this went together with collecting them for museums.

In 1901, he obtained a position as assistant with the Carpathian Association of Transylvania, but his career at the museum in Kolozsvár lasted only a very short while: in the spring of 1903, after he had organised the commemorative celebrations for King Matthias, he was dismissed due to lack of funds. However, the short period of his museum output was very substantial. As Vilibáld Semayer put it: “He learned collecting on the first collection trip to Kalotaszeg as János Jankó’s assistant; later he continued this work independently in the Székelyföld region, and the close to 7000 objects that now constitute the present state of the museum (of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania) (1902) are the fruit of his efforts and expertise.”⁴¹ According to Károly Kós, Sztripszky’s expert collecting of objects also laid the foundations of the independent ethnographical collection of the Museum Association of Transyl-

³⁷ SZTRIPSZKY 1924: 80–82.

³⁸ See FÖLDES 1963: 169.

³⁹ SZTRIPSZKY 1944: 37–40.

⁴⁰ See FÖLDES 1963: 164.

⁴¹ SEMAYER 1902b: 143–144; see also SEMAYER–RADNÓTI 1902: 7–8.

vania, which later in 1942 absorbed the ethnographical collection of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania, a collection that had gone through many vicissitudes.⁴²

From March 16, 1910 he was a staff member of the Ethnographical Department of the Hungarian National Museum: at first as an assistant curator, later as a museum curator. He had been employed earlier by the museum on various assignments: he regularly collected in Máramaros too, using the weekends and the summer break for fieldwork.⁴³ In the autumn of 1909 he still continued to collect objects in Máramaros and Bereg, but in the course of the summer his attention turned towards Háromszék. The report he made on the collecting trip has also come down to us.⁴⁴

From August 7–21, 1910 as a staff member of the Museum of Ethnography he purchased ethnographical objects in Ung County: in Kisberezna, Zábroggy, Csontos, Patakófalva, Hajasd, Határszög, Uzsok, Fenyvesvölgy and Drugetháza.⁴⁵ In his acquisitions activity special mention must be made of the collecting trips he made in Máramaros between November 5 and December 22, 1910 during which he collected 507 objects from the Rusyn-Hutsul ethnographical legacy. He acquired material relics of the household and farming, aquatic life, costumes and harness in the villages of Tiszabogdány, Rahó, Körösmező and Volóc. At the same time he also studied the naïve folk images in the church of Radvác in Ung County.⁴⁶

On February 22–28, 1911 István Györffy, then an assistant and Hiador Sztripszky, assistant curator, together visited Székelyhíd (Bihar County) and Válaszút–Visa–Borsa (Kolozs County), and the national fairs in the two settlements. They purchased 18 objects at the Székelyhida fair.⁴⁷ Between October 15–27 he made a study visit to the museums of Lemberg and Chernivtsi.⁴⁸

In the absence of sources it is not possible to document Sztripszky's further acquisition activity for museums. Up to the end of 1918 he was a staff member of the Museum of Ethnography: on December 10 the Hungarian National Museum informed Vilibáld Semayer, director of department, that Dr. Hiador Sztripszky had been ordered for service in the ministry headed by Oszkár Jászi and that he was to hand over his position in the Department of Ethnography in the Hungarian National Museum on December 22, 1918.⁴⁹

The objects collected by Sztripszky quite clearly reflect his conception of ethnography and his priorities in research on folk life. It is no exaggeration to say that thinking on the collecting of objects, its importance and procedures, obtaining large ensembles and “series”, in general rescuing material ethnographical objects for public collections were in the air among practitioners of ethnography, especially from the Hungarian millennium (1896) on, and there was also a general agreement that

⁴² KÖS 1989: 183.

⁴³ Archive of the Museum of Ethnography 122/1909.

⁴⁴ Archive of the Museum of Ethnography 151/1909.

⁴⁵ Archive of the Museum of Ethnography 98/1910.

⁴⁶ Archive of the Museum of Ethnography 8/1911.

⁴⁷ Archive of the Museum of Ethnography 36/1911.

⁴⁸ *Jelentés* 1911: 125.

⁴⁹ Archive of the Museum of Ethnography 117/1918.

this collecting should aim to explore together the “cultural wealth” of *the peoples living in this country*.⁵⁰ Besides carrying out practical museum work, Sztripszky showed an interest right from the start in the theoretical problems of the museum and it is very regrettable that his activity in this direction has been largely forgotten. The focus of his conception was the presentation of ethnography in museums.

In 1902 he wrote an article in the newspaper *Magyar Polgár* [Hungarian Citizen] titled “A múzeumok s az E(rdélyi). K(árpát). E(gyesület). Múzeuma” [The museums and the Museum of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania] – also circulated in reprint – which can be regarded as a polemic on Hungarian museum affairs, especially in the interest of the ethnographical collections.⁵¹ “For what is the purpose of this Museum of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania with its acidulous waters and objects made by peasants? Can a museum be made of such things and is it worth spending money to bring together something that can be seen *free of charge* in any peasant house? We were prepared for such questions in advance because the Hungarian and especially the Transylvanian Hungarian public – in the widest sense – does not have the opportunity to visit so many museums here and to learn from such visits, that these questions could not be raised with justification. Because the public must be educated to acquire a general culture, this education is carried out in part by museums, but unfortunately we do not have such an abundance of museums that would allow us to simply ignore the above questions.”

He had a clear view of the task of the museum and, within it, of the heritage and cultural history of the different strata of society. “The ‘public’ in the widest sense generally understands a museum to be a collection of cannons, stones and paintings, without concern for the fact that the continuously functioning human spirit has produced many other old and new things which throw light on that spirit and show it to the viewer. And an object worth putting in a museum must necessarily be old; as the saying goes, an idea that is not modern or an old-fashioned person ‘should be in a museum’. But this interpretation is not correct. *The museum* – within its narrower or wider frame – *is the place to collect and preserve objects that show the development, history, spiritual life*, what we could call the *inner world of mankind as a whole or of a given nation, whether these objects are old or new.*”⁵²

Changes played an important part in Sztripszky’s thinking on ethnography. He does not see the material legacy of the culture entering museums as a static picture either and assumes that there is a continuity between the world of the distant past and its material legacy. “The thinking mind must be excited by the question: what length of time and what struggles led to today’s railway, to Marconi’s telegraph, to the respect of human rights? What is the starting point of the path leading to today’s culture and what are the signposts showing the intervening progress? The various disciplines each answer this in their own field, and the *cultural history of humanity*

⁵⁰ BÁTKY 1906: 7; BELLOSICS 1907; see KÓSA 1989: 130–132.

⁵¹ SZTRIPSZKY 1902a.

⁵² Our italics.

gives a universal answer. And the places where cultural history is accumulated and studied are the museums.

Each of the implements meeting man's needs is a piece of history. It is history, but not in the accustomed direction of power of the word which is taken to mean only the origin and disappearance of nations, bloody battles and political bargaining: but the history of anonymous individuals, of millions of individuals, the life of the masses *beneath the surface*. Neither of the branches of history – the political or the cultural – can be complete as long as it deals only with those in power and the life of the outstanding intellectuals.

*We cannot imagine the history of the life of either mankind or of a given nation without a knowledge of the life of the lower people, the mass. Because this silently working, nameless mass is the developing and sustaining force in both.*⁵³

This is not the place for a full analysis of Sztripszky's conception of the museum but it should be mentioned that the demand to organise the museum affairs of Transylvania and – as a new element – to collect the material legacy of folk culture essentially appeared simultaneously in Hungarian museum affairs, at the end of the 19th century.⁵⁴ It is not by chance that these two things come together in Sztripszky's thinking, too. Another factor contributing to all this was that all his research was done in marginal regions where the lack of modernisation and the serious social problems perhaps arose in their most acute form, and the problems of modernisation of society and preserving the material legacy of tradition must have appeared together.

It should also be noted that at the turn of the 20th century the National Centre for Museums and Libraries organised what we would now call further training courses for museum curators, e.g. in Kolozsvár under the direction of Béla Pósta, and it therefore seems likely that the Hungarian (and Transylvanian) concept of museums was shaped collectively at the beginning of the century.⁵⁵

In defining the place of the ethnographical museum, Sztripszky – as his essays also indicate – clearly sets out in this paper the reason for his attraction to archaic occupations: “The implements of the archaic occupations (fishing, pastoral life, hunting) are the most characteristic as regards material ethnography.”⁵⁶ He supplements this with his opinion on the history of objects: “Every object characteristic of the life of the people has an origin, a development and an influence, that is, it has a *history*, as data which, taken together, create the history of the origin and development of the people, that is, its cultural history.”⁵⁷ All this once again sums up the influence of the whole intellectual environment which launched Sztripszky on his career as an ethnographer.

⁵³ SZTRIPSKY 1902a: 3–6.

⁵⁴ KOREK 1988: 96.

⁵⁵ UDVARI-VIGA 2001: 563–573.

⁵⁶ SZTRIPSKY 1902a: 9.

⁵⁷ SZTRIPSKY 1902a: 10.

In this writing – in which he sets out the aims of the Museum of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania – he largely sums up his ideas on the museum and ethnography. “The Museum of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania was established with the purpose of presenting Transylvania to the public and specifically for one of its biggest departments, the ethnographic, to show the life of the common people in its objects; and to provide the opportunity to write the history of the objects, to draw conclusions from them and thereby to show from what and where the people of Transylvania developed, into what and where at the present time, in other words *to show a part of the cultural history of the peoples of Transylvania, in its material evidence*. In this light we can also draw the borderline between the two-fold tasks of the Museum of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania: one is *to be at the service of the public*, precisely in the interest of the public (possibly also of craftsmen, and by offering decorative motifs worth copying in embroidery work), the other is *to serve science, by continuing to collect and study the material of the museum*.”⁵⁸

THE RESEARCHER ON THE TRADITION OF PEOPLES LIVING TOGETHER

Sztripszky’s oeuvre suggests that he gradually came to a deeper examination of the ethnographical questions for which his increasingly strong philological background and not least of all his knowledge of languages fitted him. He pointed out important similarities in the oral tradition of the Hungarians and the neighbouring peoples which he attributed to the organic unity of the region’s culture. One of these which deserves special attention is his essay on the cult of Kossuth among Rusyns, an approach to Hungarian-Rusyn contacts of model value.

The historical links between the Hungarians and the Rusyns, and the fact that the Rusyns were *Rákóczi’s people, gens fidelissima*: loyal followers of the great prince, is well known in the historical and ethnographical literature of the two peoples and especially in Rusyn tradition.⁵⁹ It is still little known even in professional circles, that Rusyn folk poetry also preserved the figure of Lajos Kossuth. Sztripszky devoted a separate article to the question, published in 1907 under the title *Lajos Kossuth in Rusyn folk poetry*, in which he expressed his firm opinion on the cultural interaction between the two peoples. Even the title of the article reflects the approach to problems that attracted the interest of the author throughout his scholarly career and was also clearly present in the fields of his private life too: how and under what influences was early 20th-century Rusyn (folk) culture shaped, how and in what way did the peoples living together in the north-east region of the Carpathian Basin influence each other, and why is the influence of the Hungarian language and culture so marked on the culture of this small people living on the western side of the Carpathians? “But why was it the Hutsuls who were most extensively influenced by the

⁵⁸ SZTRIPSKY 1902a: 10. Authors’ italics.

⁵⁹ For the ethnographical aspects of the question and further literature, see MÁRKUS 1972: 121–124.

transmitted Hungarian spirit? This question is answered by the geographical conditions: because the valleys on this side of the Ung-Bereg-Máramaros Carpathian border have no counterparts elsewhere, the road leads from our Hutsuls to the Galician Hutsuls at only one point, i.e. at Kőrösmező, and for this reason the easiest way to travel between our country and Galicia is here, through the Upper Tisza valley at Kőrösmező. (The same influence can be found, although to a lesser extent, among the peoples on either side of the crossing points at Mezőlaborcz and Dukla, where similar geographical conditions helped Hungarian elements to seep through among the Poles.) The mobile Hutsul merchants, crossing frequently into our country and coming into daily contact with the Rusyns here, came into contact with and learned Hungarian words, Hungarian feelings, songs, rhythms, sympathy and thoughts. They then disseminated them at home, in Galicia. This is the explanation why the name of Lajos Kossuth is so popular among the neighbouring Rusyns, precisely in the land of the Hutsuls.”⁶⁰

He left no doubt either, in the Kossuth essay, that this is only one example of Hungarian–Rusyn contacts and of elements of culture borrowed by the Rusyns. “It is well known how deeply the ethnos of Rusyns in Hungary is imbued with Hungarian elements. In places the foreign Rusyn cannot understand their language without a Hungarian dictionary; their dances, costume, architecture and melodies are fifty per cent Hungarian, while their hunger for land and their sentiments are entirely Hungarian. It is therefore quite natural that they so often remember Kossuth and Rákóczi in their songs ... Ever since Bocskai, the Rusyns in Hungary have taken part in all national movements together with the Hungarians. One of the reasons for this is to be sought in the political conditions, where the counties inhabited by Rusyns depended on the independent Hungarian *Transylvania*. The other reason why they became separated in the matter of culture from their fellows in Galicia and in general beyond the border and their lives have taken an entirely Hungarian direction is to be found in the *geographical* situation. The economic and consequently the cultural interest of the peoples follows the downward flow of the waters. The rest of the Rusyns came under Polish, which is after all Slavic, influence and they have been freed of this only in very recent times, as a consequence of the awakening of national awareness; ...”⁶¹

In his essay he presented texts known mainly by the Hutsuls, both in Galicia and in Bukovina, as well as in the villages of the Tisza valley. Sztripszky indicated that while he knew the philological background of the collection and publication of the texts, that was not the primary problem for him here. He placed special emphasis on the fact that the vocabulary of the Hutsuls of Galicia and Bukovina was full of Hungarian linguistic elements and that Hungarian linguistic forms appeared in their texts already in the 16th–18th centuries. “Although there are one or two Hungarian words in the language of almost all the Austrian Rusyns, e.g. the words *legény* and *betyár*

⁶⁰ SZTRIPSKY 1907: 160.

⁶¹ SZTRIPSKY 1907: 157.

are used almost everywhere, nowhere can such a massive Hungarian influence be found as among the Hutsuls.”⁶²

In his monograph, Oreszt Szabó devotes great attention not only to the person and research activity of Hiador Sztripszky, but also quotes his Kossuth essay at length.⁶³

Sztripszky’s Kossuth essay clearly reflects two main lines of his ethnographical thinking. In one he considers that his ethnographical collecting activity is realised in the reconstruction of the past. “It is not an impossible undertaking to revive the past through the systematic study of folk beliefs, folk poetry and the relics of material ethnography.”⁶⁴ The second defines the scope, geographical and ethnic frames of this. For him, this is quite clearly above all historical Hungary, the north-eastern region of the Carpathian Basin where a number of peoples live(d) together, shaping each other’s everyday life and their whole culture. As he put it in his obituary for Mihály Fincicky (1842–1916), mayor of Ungvár known as a man of letters, literary historian and collector of folklore, in his opinion the search for Hungarian–Rusyn, Hungarian–Slovak, Slovak–Rusyn connections is of decisive significance.⁶⁵

Despite the linguistic differences, he interpreted the role of the *igricek* [sing.: *igric*], the mediaeval minstrels, within the large cultural unit of the region. He presents the problem as an example of Hungarian–Slav connections. He points out that the name of the minstrels in Great Russian is *igrok*, while in Rusyn it is *ihrec* (*igrec*), and he speculated that the place-names dating from the Árpád dynasty in Krassó and Ung Counties also suggest the existence of their villages. He considers the singing beggars to be the modern successors of the *igric* and gives their texts, which they recite. However, he does not analyse the texts in detail (e.g. he does not note the history and spread of the text beginning *Paradicsom kő kertjében...* [In the stone garden of Paradise...]). More recent research has largely confirmed Sztripszky’s hypotheses concerning the *igric*.⁶⁶

In its 1909 volume *Erdélyi Múzeum* published an article on the mortuary plays of Rusyns in Máramaros, mainly in the Tarac and Talabor valleys. In one of the plays *animal mummies* perform a real carnival buffoonery, known in Rusyn as *lopátká*. The first two parts of this were widely known among the Eastern Rusyns – from Ung to Máramaros. In addition to the *grandfather*, *grandmother*, the *miller* and the *miller’s wife*, an interesting figure was that of the *mill*, played by a participant who was covered and wore a sieve on his head. The third part of the play was the *goat play*, which the Rusyns presented as a fair scene with the figures of a *Jew* and a *Jewish shepherd*; the latter made the goat dance. Sztripszky also described other plays and noted that the Rusyns perform such plays only in the mortuary and, in his opinion, the Christmas plays had been forced out into the mortuary. He explained all this with the geo-

⁶² SZTRIPSKY 1907: 158.

⁶³ SZABÓ, O. 1913: 82, 101–109.

⁶⁴ SZTRIPSKY 1908b: 345.

⁶⁵ SZTRIPSKY 1916: 140–142.

⁶⁶ UJVÁRY 1986: 31ff. With recent Slav literature.

graphical environment: because of the distances and the scattered settlements people could not go home at night after vigils, but at the same time the figures in the play and their props (weasel, fire, Jewish shepherd, etc.) were also participants in the mountain way of life. Contrary to the opinion of Gyula Sebestyén, he confirmed the presence of mummers in a number of areas.⁶⁷

It has already been noted several times that a complex interpretation of the elements of material culture, the characteristics of the society and religious and folkloristic aspects appears in Sztripszky's approach at a very early age. Everywhere he regards the geographical and topographical endowments as the principal determinants of culture. "Historical factors are also powerful instruments in the cultural life of peoples, but the greatest power is nevertheless always geography. It is the earth, the air, the climate that dominate over people grouped together in masses, that determine their fate."⁶⁸ In his formulation, *ethnography* is the researchers' science of people, while *folklore* is the science of the people itself. The latter, of course, interested him mainly in connection with Rusyns, although he regularly studied the Romanians, too, regarding the Rusyns as similar in their development, conditions of life and early religion. He attributed a determining role to the Eastern Church in shaping the entire culture and habit of the two peoples. He repeatedly compared the Eastern Church and its followers with the Western Church and its followers and quite clearly considered that the weaker organisation of the Eastern Church is the reason why Christians also preserved the spirits from heathen times, since the Church did not build up its organisations. He regarded *spells* as a tool of the cult outside the church and points out the role of priests of the Eastern Church in exorcising the devil, in spells for rain. (Sacred figures of the Christian religion play a part in it and become instruments for spreading the new religion.) He drew attention to a similar role of the *Romanian priest*.⁶⁹ In his opinion it was also the East that first created a system out of the *superstitions* that arose from the mingling of the old and the new religion. Here he underlined the role of *bogumilism*, which conveyed the cult of the devil to Western Europe and developed in full the evil spirit that was found in embryonic form in all of the old nature religions. He pointed out that "although Hungary rather belongs to Western Europe due to its geographical situation, it has preserved many Eastern influences in its society". In his opinion the spells are Hungarian–Rusyn, Hungarian–Romanian (which he calls Vlach) textual analogies which were preserved in Romanian and Rusyn books copied by the Eastern priests.⁷⁰

What has been described above is also reflected in his interest in early Rusyn (and Romanian) books. In this area he was interested in the problems of church and secular literature, as well as in the history of liturgy, printing houses and their

⁶⁷ SZTRIPSKY 1909c: 180–188. In a footnote to the article he remarks that part of the text of the plays is practically untranslatable. He also published these in the original, see SZTRIPSKY 1908c: 43–52.

⁶⁸ SZTRIPSKY–ALEXICS 1911: 12.

⁶⁹ More recently on the subject see KOMÁROMI 1996: 87–98; KESZEG 1996: 335–370.

⁷⁰ SZTRIPSKY 1911c: 209–213. The outline of his lecture held on October 28, 1911.

printed materials.⁷¹ The complex approach mentioned above can be observed most clearly in connection with Gergely Szegedi's *hymn-book*. (As Sztripszky noted, the article was originally written by him, but he subsequently joined György Alexics as co-author, and “the work not only gained in depth in the part on cultural history, but was also expanded with a Romanian linguistic examination of the songs”).⁷² He analysed the circumstances and history of the origin of the book which he discovered in 1911 when browsing in an antiquarian bookshop; it was a Calvinist hymn-book translated from Hungarian into Romanian in the 16th century. Moreover, he analysed the context in which the book arose, the state of culture of the Rusyns and Romanians before the 17th century. He devoted a separate chapter to comparing the ethnic identity and culture of the peoples of Greek religion in Hungary. He points out that “a population of almost the same ethnos, Romanians and Rusyns” live in the Eastern part of Hungary, along the border, in a great arc and almost unbroken chain from Orsova, through Brassó, Beszterce, Munkács, right up to the Szepes region. Up to the end of the 17th century these people were specifically *pastoral peoples*, a feature that they retained for a long while after that time. Their culture changed very slowly and very little, most of the changes occurring mainly around the edges of the different basins, in the lower-lying territories where there was also a degree of influence from the towns. The Romanian and Rusyn peoples were identical in the geographical environment of their subsistence and in their way of life. This identity also extended to their *religion* and status under *constitutional law*: and in his opinion the fact that the Rusyns and Romanians were regarded as newcomers, and that in the past these peoples had no political weight was due in part to the *Eastern religion*. “The moral attitude arising from the Greek religion, the tendency to mysticism, the sea of superstitions, the complete suppression of the individual in church life, the autocratic direction of the hierarchy, etc., are perfectly identical features in the two peoples.”⁷³

He also points out the geographical causes of the cultural difference as well as the backwardness and lack of demands: he attributes the isolation which he considers equally characteristic of the agriculture carried out under constraint, the folk architecture and costume, to the scattered settlements, the closed valleys and the absence of towns. “The way of life determined by the geographical conditions is thus the principal reason why the Romanian and Rusyn common people lagged behind the cultures of all other peoples in our country up to the 17th century and to the same extent.”⁷⁴ Although he also believes the lack of towns to be of decisive significance, he considers that the church, as the *only cultural factor in past ages*, was perhaps the most important factor. Compared to the Western church, the church in the East had very inadequate institutions and consequently “could not carry its followers forward in culture at the same pace as happened in the West”.⁷⁵

⁷¹ For a summary, see UDVARI 1999: 1–30.

⁷² SZTRIPSZKY–ALEXICS 1911: 7.

⁷³ SZTRIPSZKY–ALEXICS 1911: 11–15, *passim*

⁷⁴ SZTRIPSZKY–ALEXICS 1911: 18–19.

⁷⁵ SZTRIPSZKY–ALEXICS 1911: 27.

It is not possible to present the whole volume here, but it is worth noting that besides discussing the influence of Calvinism on the Romanians, it also contains much religious and folkloristic data from the history and religious ethnography of the peoples following the Greek rites, mainly the Rusyns and Romanians. The book and especially its chapter comparing the factors of Western and Eastern culture, would reward detailed analysis by researchers on the ethnology of religion. The same also applies to its other, bibliographical communications.

As can be seen from his bibliography, although he worked in the Department of Ethnography of the Hungarian National Museum, from the 1910s Sztripszky published fewer articles on ethnography than in the first decade of his activity. At the same time, the years in Budapest had a positive influence on his bibliographical activity. The capital city's libraries and antiquarian bookshops provided an excellent opportunity for it. This is also confirmed by his growing number of reviews. At times his reviews of Slavic-language journals can almost be regarded as articles in themselves and no doubt he also had a considerable influence personally in the increased attention shown in Russian publications by the editors of ethnographical publications. Of course, a substantial part of his reviews and criticisms directly or indirectly touch on the ethnographical questions of the Rusyn (Little Russian) groups. Special mention should be made in this connection of his article-like presentation of the ethnographical map drawn by Tomašivskij, on a scale of 1:300 000, on the Rusyns of Hungary.⁷⁶ He objected to many aspects of the work: e.g. the title of the map (Uhorska Rusj), and to the fact that the work essentially equates the ethnographical and the linguistic territory. In his opinion the territorial distribution of Rusyns should be examined at least by dialects and on the basis of anthropological types. While he distinguished 7 territories in the folk language, from the anthropological viewpoint he recommended that the zone of the "original settlers" stretching in an East-West direction towards the Great Plain be distinguished from the area of immigrants from Galicia, as well as the transition between the two which differs from both main groups in both language and material ethnography. He criticised the fact that the map does not note the cultural difference of the Jews living in Rusyn villages, and he disputed the claim that the total number of Rusyns was unchanged, referring to the process of Slovakisation. Although he corrected the data of the map on many points and recommended that its title should be geographical and statistical map of the Rusyns in Hungary, on the whole he regarded it as the best of its kind up to that time. His writing certainly shows that he was up-to-date on the problem of the Rusyns which was of key importance for him.

In the 1910s a number of his ethnographical writings appeared in the columns of *Vasárnapi Újság*, *Görögkatolikus Szemle*, *Pesti Hírlap*, *Erdélyi Lapok*, *Máramaros* and other newspapers. Even these minor pieces reveal a researcher with a wide horizon and a mature view, at home in many topics.

⁷⁶ SZTRIPSZKY (rev.) 1910: 264–270.

In 1912, he published early Hungarian bibliographical data,⁷⁷ in 1913 he published a selection from the writings and speeches of Jenő Szabó, a leading proponent of the establishment of the Hungarian Greek Catholic bishopric and of the Greek Catholic liturgy in Hungarian. Sztripszky presented his own research in an appendix to the book which had close to 550 pages. He was the first in the Hungarian literature to trace the history of the liturgy in Hungarian, he published the earliest full translation of the Greek liturgy and in a bibliography presented the ecclesiastical, church history and secular literature on the Hungarians “of the sacred religion of the East”. The bibliography includes prayerbooks and primers of the “old faith” translated into Hungarian, historical studies, pamphlets from the 1870s on the newspaper of the Greek Catholics in Hungary, etc. Sztripszky later published the material in the appendix in a separate volume.⁷⁸

With the support of political forces close to the government, in 1916 Sztripszky launched a paper titled *Ukránia* in which he stressed the importance of Hungarian-Ukrainian relations. An ethnographical examination of the paper will be the subject of a separate article, but reference must be made here to Sztripszky’s efforts to make Ukrainian scholarship known. In essence it was essentially he who discovered for Hungarian scholarship the Ukrainian, and especially the Galician Ukrainian literature which he had been following systematically, presenting and using since his studies in Lemberg. He himself also published a number of articles in Lemberg journals.⁷⁹ In contrast to the Rusyn intelligentsia who were oriented towards the Russian literary language, Sztripszky urged that the local Rusyn folk language be developed and raised to literary level. He did not regard the Subcarpathian Rusyns as part of the Ukrainian nation that was taking shape and classified himself as a Hungarian or Rusyn researcher.

His scholarly activity, and especially its first stage, was marked throughout by the intention to use his knowledge to learn and present the traditions of Rusyns in order to raise the level of their culture.

He gave a lecture on the Rusyn question on April 29, 1914 in the National Association for the Study of Peoples. He spoke on the problem of shizma and language, pointing out that the intelligentsia (= priesthood) should take up the social and cultural problems of the people and should not become more remote from the people. The tool for this is to use the language of the people in place of Russian.⁸⁰ The report on the meeting notes that it was chaired by Oreszt Szabó, secretary of the Ministry of the Interior and that Sztripszky’s lecture “provided full proof that the Rusyn people has a full knowledge of its social, cultural and historical past”.⁸¹

⁷⁷ SZTRIPSKY 1912.

⁷⁸ SZABÓ, J. 1913; see SZTRIPSKY 1913a.

⁷⁹ Here we refer only to his study of the Nativity play from Alsóapsa already cited, see SZTRIPSKY 1908c: 43–52.

⁸⁰ SZTRIPSKY 1914: 278–296.

⁸¹ Lecture on the Rusyn question. *Görögkatolikus Szemle XV* (1914) 19, 2.

In 1899, the board of the Carpathian Association of Transylvania issued an appeal to readers in *Erdély népei* for an exhibition on the ethnography and landscapes of Transylvania and the Carpathian Museum, and also gave relatively detailed information “on the matter of the main objects of ethnographical collecting”.⁸² In 1900, Sztripszky published in *Kelet*, the paper appearing in Ungvár, the principles elaborated by Antal Herrmann and proclaimed by the Carpathian Association of Transylvania, which he adapted to the Rusyns of Subcarpathia.⁸³ Earlier, the Ukrainian literature regarded this piece of writing by Sztripszky and in particular the appeal it contains for ethnographical collecting, as the intellectual influence of Volodimir Hnatyuk.⁸⁴ Sztripszky gave a detailed written guide on the collecting and noting down of data, and described a questionnaire covering the details.⁸⁵

In 1909, he outlined a full programme on school history, and requested that objects, documents and records of relevance to school history be collected and perhaps sent to his address in Kolozsvár. He also issued an appeal for the establishment of a museum of school history.⁸⁶ From 1906, he returned again and again in the columns of *Görögkatolikus Szemle* to the idea of setting up a museum of the Munkács diocese.⁸⁷

According to his own communication, Sztripszky translated the Rusyn monograph of Oreszt Szabó into the Rusyn language but it was not published.⁸⁸

Sztripszky’s commitment in the Rusyn question and his position on the complex religious-church processes in the region can be seen in his introduction to the “short monograph”, *Dolha és vidéke* [Dolha and vicinity], on the ethnography of Dolha written jointly with Izidor Bilák.⁸⁹ As in many of his other writings here, too, he seeks the causes explaining the high degree of Hungarianisation of the Rusyns and their support for Rákóczi’s war of independence. He points out that this can be attributed to three factors: the proximity of Transylvania, the legal status of Máramaros and the special influence of Rusyn religious history. However, in his view, it was not the political saviour of the Hungarians that the Rusyns supported in Rákóczi, but the power in which they saw the defender of their Orthodox religion under attack. “For what they hoped from him was not the protection of the Hungarian nationality or the survival of the Hungarians – this was of little interest to the ignorant serfs who

⁸² See *Erdély népei II* (1899) 1, 1–4.

⁸³ RUSZKOCZI [SZTR. H.]: *Válamit a mi néprajzunkról* [Something about our ethnography]. *Kelet*, 1900. April 19, May 17. Sztripszky had also published a series of pieces here earlier on ethnographical themes – under the title *Vén emberek, öreg papírok* [Aged people, old papers]. See *Kelet*, 1900. March 1, 8, 22, April 5, 12, 19.

⁸⁴ RUDLOVCHAK 1976: 361–365. The same in Hungarian: RUDLOVCSÁK 1986: 52–60.

⁸⁵ It should be noted that the Hungarian literature on history also took note of the article based on Antal Herrmann, and published a detailed review of the draft on collecting. See MAYER 1977: 90–91.

⁸⁶ SZTRIPSKY 1909d: 54. He himself also published data on school history: e.g. he supplied county data for the *Lexicon Locorum Máramaros*, submitted by district administrator József Szaploneczay. See SZTRIPSKY 1909e: 77. It should be noted that the *Lexicon Locorum* was not yet published at that time, and is very little known.

⁸⁷ MITRÓ 1906; KOZMA 1909.

⁸⁸ SZABÓ, O. 1913; see SZTRIPSKY 1913b: 296.

⁸⁹ SZTRIPSKY–BILÁK 1915: 129–148; 1916: 141–158.

did not even speak Hungarian – but rather that Rákóczi would rescue them from the Roman religion that had been imposed on them by force and would give them back their earlier Orthodoxy ... This can also explain why so many *kuruts* were recruited from among the Vlach serfs of Transylvania to join Rákóczi's soldiers; it was only a few years before the Rákóczi period that a part of the Vlach people had been forced by the powers-that-be into the Union with Rome and they were just as dissatisfied with this as the Rusyns. With the support of the Orthodox neighbours in Moldova, Bukovina and Transylvania Orthodoxy continued to exist officially in Máramaros until 1763, but in reality – under the cloak of the Union – it remained for much longer. Indeed, it has managed to survive right up to our times.”⁹⁰ Thus it can be seen from his writings that for Sztripszky the Rusyn people were simultaneously and inseparably part of the ethnography and folklore of the marginal regions, of the political and religious problems of the birth of nationhood, and there can be little doubt about his commitment in these questions. This also largely explains why he undertook a political role; participation in the processes of realignment in the region was unavoidable in his fate. Sztripszky considered that the future of the Rusyns could only be ensured within Hungary. He was a committed supporter of the thousand-year-old country which – we can claim without exaggeration – protected the Rusyns too (as well as the Slovaks).

The article he published in the Greek Catholic almanac in 1919 proposing the establishment of a Church Museum of the Munkács Bishopric also reveals this commitment and throws light on his approach as a museologist. He considered it important to set up the following departments in the proposed museum: 1. library, 2. historical, 3. ethnographical, 4. natural science. In the *department of ethnography* he wanted to collect and preserve the objects of everyday life and holidays, presenting them in at least ten exhibition units. He would have presented the exhibition in the following thematic units: 1. pastoral life, 2. hunting, 3. fishing, 4. agriculture, 5. architecture, 6. weaving hemp and wool, 7. costumes and embroideries, 8. the furnishings of the house, 9. the implements and products of village handicrafts. In the proposed order of the objects of folk life we can recognise Sztripszky's opinion on the traditional way of life and in particular the material culture of the Rusyns living in the border region. Herding, hunting and fishing play a determining role in this and are the main focus not only of Sztripszky's approach to ethnography but also of his collecting activity.⁹¹

Sztripszky's Greek Catholic religiosity is also expressed in his plan for the museum to be realised with church and state support: “the museum is a Greek invention and why should we, of Greek religion, not have a museum”. He considered that it would be desirable for the museum to have a photograph of all the Greek Catholic soldiers who fell in the First World War. “With this we would honour all those who fell for us and with the photographs the museum would acquire very valuable eth-

⁹⁰ SZTRIPSKY–BILÁK 1915: 131–132.

⁹¹ See Paru szlov o muzejach. Miszjacoszlov na 1919 obiknovennij hod, imijuscisj dnej 365. Ungvár 1918, 48–53.

nographical and ethnological material.” He also made a very original proposal: it would be a useful thing if the families of the fallen soldiers were to donate the civilian clothing of the deceased to the museum. In this way it would be possible to obtain an almost complete picture of men’s costume in the region from Szepes to Máramaros, and the memory of the owners would also be preserved.⁹²

IN PLACE OF A SUMMING UP

We have traced the main stages in the successful and rich career of an ethnographer. All this is the work of barely two decades because Hiador Sztripszky gave up ethnographical research after just two and a half decades of work. If we add to his ethnographical and folkloristic writings his bibliographical and literary history work and his activity as a linguist and translator, we have before us a very substantial career.

Sztripszky is almost unknown as an ethnographer, and if we seek the reasons for this, the fact that he abandoned ethnographical activity in mid-life does not provide an entirely satisfactory explanation. The question can only be raised as why his career did not rise further, because the results he achieved held greater promise. In the absence of sufficient information we cannot answer this question and do not wish to guess. It is, however, certain that there was a marked change in the direction of Sztripszky’s interests already in the early 1910s, when he turned largely to a study of the early history of Rusyn culture, the religious and cultural history of the region. This came in part from his – at times barely veiled – commitment to improvement of the situation of this ethnic group in a marginal situation and the advancement of its culture. At times he pointedly raised the role and responsibility of the church in these questions. Increasingly, he wanted to put his knowledge of ethnography to use in his native land. His commitment and training naturally carried him towards politics and a role in public life, leading to a tragic break in his career even if it was not less successful from the scholarly viewpoint.

The initial stage of Sztripszky’s career also held out greater promise for ethnography. He had a sound grounding in theory and knew the languages of the peoples living in the region and in his approach as an ethnographical researcher the world of objects was inseparably linked to the theoretical problems of ethnography. His ability to grasp problems and his approach as a researcher which took shape very early and bears witness to interests in many directions could have produced valuable results for the ethnography of the Hungarians and the peoples living together with them.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that the trauma of Trianon certainly did not favour the careers of those who devoted themselves to the study of the culture of a “minority” or of the peoples living together. Sztripszky’s political commitment was

⁹² *Ibid.*

quite clear. But these are only details, elements in a research career and an individual life history.

If we do not separate the examination of his career according to the different disciplines, we find that Sztripszky's career forms a very organic whole. His whole scholarly career grows naturally out of his background, his studies, his training and his commitment. The same main organising principle runs through it; it is only the focus of attention in his research work that shifts from one discipline to another.

The work of Hiador Sztripszky in the study of the archaic occupation of the Hungarians and the peoples of the Eastern Carpathians, the interaction of their languages and culture, the history of their religion, the history of the Rusyn people and the nature of their connection with the Hungarians constitutes one of the basic achievements of Hungarian and Central European ethnography. Sztripszky's undeserved neglect needs to be ended and he should be raised to his fitting place in the history of ethnography in the first half of the 20th century.

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