The study focuses on the examination of today’s ethnographical approaches and theoretical-methodological paradigms of cultural heritage, as well as everyday social practices related to heritagization (preparing lists of local values and Hungarikums, monumentalization, festivalization, musealization, etc.). In the first part of the paper, the author briefly describes the most common ethnographic approaches to the concept of cultural heritage, as well as the most important related analytical models. He argues for approaching heritage phenomena and their various manifestations (objects, places, and practices) through a kind of ontological framework. Through an empirical example — the analysis of the collection/preservation of values that started after 2010 among the Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia — the study presents the local/regional practices and ritual and symbolic patterns of heritage making in the Western Ukrainian region. Examining the activities of minority political–cultural elites, the author analyzes the transformations of meanings through which the individual local cultural assets or certain accentuated elements become global social realities, for example national/translocal heritage objects.

KEYWORDS

concept of heritage, tradition, folklorism, ontology, presentism, Hungarikums, lists of local values, identity-building practices, Western Ukraine (Transcarpathia)

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INTRODUCTION

From the 1970s and 1980s, since the so-called critical turn (e.g. CLIFFORD – MARCUS 1986; CRAPANZANO 1972, 1980; MARCUS – FISCHER 1986; WHITE 1973, 1987), it has been an accepted view in the field of qualitative social scientific studies that scientific concepts not only record and name certain phenomena descriptively, but also prescribe certain forms of speech and knowledge in a regulative way. The language that we have at our disposal — in this case, academic statements and discourses on subjects of knowledge — prefigure our experience of the world around us, or in other words define the framework of knowledge acquisition and interpretation.¹

In this sense, the emergence and popularization of a “new” concept not only implies the recognition of new phenomena (elements of reality) and their emergence as a reflected problem, but also — in parallel — generally goes along with the acceptance of certain theoretical premises and implications (the methodological attitudes, prejudices, and prior assumptions encompassed in the given concepts).

Thus, changes in the academic discourse make possible not only the identification of new research objects and objectives but can also contribute to the taking up of certain epistemological issues and broader theoretical/critical dilemmas that are related to the academic discourses and linguistic representations of the given phenomena.

This is equally valid when it comes to the category of cultural heritage and heritagization,² which has become one of the most frequently referenced concepts in both everyday and institutional social discourses related to the transfer/adoptions of cultural goods and the reproduction of identity, both in international academic and public thinking since the 1970s, and more recently in Hungarian ethnographic research. It has become an integrative term denoting the dynamic temporal alteration (reproduction, sharing, transfer, adoption) of the most diverse things in academic and public discourse.³ From human practices (social customs, rituals, ceremonial events, languages, intellectual products: music, film, dance, the fine arts, or other vernacular — perhaps “folk” — knowledge structures), though non-human actors (e.g., animal and plant species, landscapes, mountains, rivers, forests, meadowlands, and climatic conditions that are important from a conservation point of view), to various hybrid objects (monuments, memorial sites, buildings, settlements, civilizational/technical tools, and materials; cf. LATOUR 2021).

¹Karin Knorr Cetina speaks specifically of “epistemic cultures” or “object-relational regimes,” which refer very directly to the multiple (“external” and “internal”) social, political, economic, historical, and linguistic conditions that normatively determine the arenas of academic knowledge production — that is, the practical relationship between the researcher and the object of research (KNORR CETINA 1999).

²The emergence of the concept of heritage is the result of a longer development in conceptual history, which, in earlier phrases, used different terms — preservation, conservation — and the ideological paradigms that underpinned them (ASHWORTH 2011).

³This heterogeneity, and at the same time the quantitative accumulation and turbulence of heritage discourses is also highlighted by Lowenthal, who, on the subject of the postmodern “cult of heritage,” writes that “All at once heritage is everywhere – in the news, in the movies, in the marketplace — in everything from galaxies to genes. […] One can barely move without bumping into a heritage site. Every legacy is cherished. From ethnic roots to history theme parks, Hollywood to the Holocaust, the whole world is busy lauding — or lamenting— some past, be it fact or fiction.” (LOWENTHAL 1998:XIII.)
In recent times, however, this expansion of heritagizing social practices, and of academic discourses analyzing the given phenomenon, has, in my view, been accompanied by a certain obfuscation of the semantic content of “heritage,” and by the depletion of its academic (ethnographic) and everyday (public) meaning. It would perhaps be no exaggeration to say that cultural researchers are often overcome by the feeling that the contemporary social activities observed in rural society or urban settings (festivalization, village days, monument building, heritage tourism, musealization, etc.), and the symbolic cultural constructions and interpretations associated with them, can at best be grasped only approximately and inaccurately using the contradictory and ambivalent concept of heritage as an analytical term.4

The multiplicative and elastic nature of heritage discourses (LOUANSKI 2006:210) raises many methodological and epistemological dilemmas. What are the canonized methodological and theoretical approaches to heritage phenomena in the field of contemporary ethnographic studies in Hungary? What is the new phenomenon — that is, the social reality that differs from what has come before — that can no longer be adequately described by the previous categories of ethnographic research (tradition, traditional — folk, peasant, popular — customary practices, folklorism), and/or that justifies the introduction and application of the category of heritage and heritagization in the study of contemporary phenomena? What is the nature of this change: Are we witnessing the substantive transformation of reality (the cultural phenomena themselves: folklore, folk object culture), or rather a radical change in the academic representations and discourses about it? For professionals in the field of cultural and social research, what kind of knowledge constructs (objects of study, elements of knowledge, epistemic arenas, elements of reality) is it possible to define by the two concepts (the categories of heritage and tradition)?

The detailed discussion of these questions would go beyond the scope of the present paper. Thus, my starting point will be the last of the problems raised above — the heritage discourse and historically established conceptual — theoretical approaches in Hungarian ethnographic research. In the first half of the paper, I briefly outline and critically examine the categories by means of which the discipline conceptualizes the term “heritage.” Then, in contrast to one of

4 According to Jakab and Vajda, cultural heritage “is not a scientific concept, but rather an idea that denotes the set of social and cultural practices that govern the promotion and utilization of past goods (values) that have been brought to the surface by scientific research, and that — like tradition or culture — are formed and experienced through communication.” (JAKAB–VAJDA 2018:10) In a significant part of their study, however, they provide a detailed and accurate overview of contemporary ethnographic (i.e. academic) research analyzing and describing cultural heritage phenomena and attempts to operationalize the concept, which, at least in part, refutes their abovementioned position. In my view, the identity-political origins (“descent”) of the cultural heritage paradigm do not tell us much about the status and analytical value of the concept in contemporary social and cultural studies. In recent decades, ethnographic research has increasingly developed and institutionalized its own discourses of heritage through academic conferences, discussions, research projects, academic books, collections of studies, and other publications analyzing the topic. Unfortunately, however, it has failed to develop a coherent theory of heritage within the discipline (just as it has not developed a coherent or less problematic concept of “folk,” “tradition,” “culture,” “ethnicity,” etc.). In my approach, the category of heritage is a term used in research practice and thus integrated into the academic field; ethnographic discourse, by examining heritage phenomena, not only acknowledges the ontological existence of the phenomenon, but, by applying the concept in practice, it also develops and standardizes certain of its immanent (presuppositional) academic meanings.
...the dominant approaches in Hungarian ethnography, I argue for an alternative perspective in which heritage phenomena, and their various manifestations (objects, places, and practices), are approached within a kind of ontological framework. After that, I present a case study of the Hungarikum collection movement that emerged in Transcarpathia after 2010, as well as the heritagization strategies of the minority political and cultural elites that construct and represent the region’s narratives in relation to identity politics. Here, I will focus explicitly on one, single problem: the analysis of heritage elements in the so-called Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory. In this way, I aim to explore the question of how the minority Hungarian political–cultural elites define the empirical reality around them by means of objects, phenomena, and social actions. In other words, how “Transcarpathian Hungarians” construct a specific image of their cultural assets, ethno-national values, and heritage.

**HERITAGE AS “NON-TRADITION”**

The examination of the post-traditional survival, changing function, and contemporary use of folk culture in Hungarian-language ethnographic research gained momentum from the 1970s and 1980s. This was a period when Hungarian and international representatives of the discipline — partly as a result of the disappearance of the historical peasantry as a class — began to deal with the issues of repositioning the discipline (the redefinition and critical revision of the historically established object, political/ideological role, and methodological/theoretical tools of ethnography) with increasing intensity (Bausinger 1983a, 1989; Hofer – Niedermüller 1987; Niedermüller 1989, 1990; Sarkány 1990).

During these years, the term folklorism became one of the central concepts in the study of the cultural change phenomena, including the status change of folk culture, and of new ways of using and representing those phenomena in the Hungarian specialist literature (Bausinger 1983b; Voigt 1979, 1987a, 1987b; Verebélyi 1982; Niedermüller 1981).

One of the most comprehensive and painstaking attempts to interpret the above complex phenomena was the volume of studies by Zoltán A. Biró and colleagues, Néphagyományok új környezetben. Tanulmányok a folklorizmus köréből [Folk traditions in a new environment. Studies in folklorism] (Biró et al. 1987). In this work, the contributors attempted to analyze contemporary changes in Transylvanian village society from the perspective of communications and systems theory. In one of the theoretical introductory essays, Zoltán A. Biró defined folklorism as decontextualized folk (peasant) culture — that is, as a recycled culture removed from its local environment. Folklorism, writes the author, is when “an element or a group of elements of folk culture is placed in a new environment, different from its original environment ..., and when, on entering this new, foreign environment, it changes its meaning,

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5 According to Zoltán A. Biró, folk culture means traditional peasant culture, the cultural tradition of the European peasantry, which includes not only “the facts of the ceremonial sphere of culture (folk poetry, folk music, folk dance, folk customs, folk games, and folk art)” but also the world of everyday peasant culture: “material culture and practices of object use not understood as folk art, the non-celebrated versions of customs, beliefs, communications, and the invisible institutions that ensure the operation of these systems.” (Biró 1987:29)
becomes something other than what it was in the system of folk culture” (Biro 1987:31–32).

Although the volume in which the above definition, and many other important case studies, was published did not use the term heritage, it did present, under the category (neo)folklorism, a number of recent, one might say postmodern, manifestations of staged folk customs, festivalization, peasant culture in urban settings (the Székely gate, folk art products, the marketization of folk costume, etc.).

In another publication, which came out four decades later, Vilmos Keszeg analyzed the change in folk culture and its contemporary use in a broader, ideological and cultural-historical dimension, in an attempt to understand the phenomenon in the context of the differential interrelationship among three categories: tradition, folklorism, and heritagization. According to his approach, the defining feature of (folk) tradition is that it is a (1) organic and (2) functional culture that (3) creates primary communities (characterized by bonds of solidarity), (4) produces memory, and (5) defines the framework of individual lives (biographical function). By contrast, “folklorism is an organized tradition, the search for and revitalization, reinterpretation, and use of a culture that has been relegated to memory and is no longer in use. Unlike tradition, the elements and practices of folklorism do not create primary communities of experience, but ones that are organized occasionally; they do not call social memory into being; they are present in the life of the individual in a temporary and occasional way, and thus do not have a biographical function; and they do not produce bonds of solidarity between generations.” (KESZEG 2018b:34).

According to Keszeg, the contemporary phenomenon of heritagization (patrimonialization) — in light of the above — “is itself folklorism,” which differs from the former only in terms of the method of its (re)contextualization. “Patrimonialization is folklorism itself. While folklorism shifts elements of folk traditions into a new environment, patrimonialization puts tradition into use in the most modern environment: in the context of globalization, the network society, and multimedia communication” (KESZEG 2018b:36).

Every author in this volume already uses the concept of heritage and analyzes, among other things, questions of folk architecture and heritage preservation, the musealization of folk

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6The author classifies the phenomena that fall within the scope of folklorism into four different groups, according to the way in which they decontextualize folk culture (i.e., their rhetorical/discursive formation). Accordingly, the author distinguishes between: 1) academic folklorism (the reflexive highlighting and semantic reconfiguration of popular culture for the purposes of academic interpretation); 2) representational folklorism (the use of reconstructed and presented folk culture to stage, display, and perform a particular element of culture as a totality of folk culture, for explicitly ideological purposes (e.g., consumption); 3) everyday folklorism (historically established customary practices that have been formally preserved in communities whose lifestyle has changed, but with a radically altered meaning); and 4) artistic or “classical” folklorism (which is the application of elements of popular culture in “high” culture). Of these four forms, which have different discursive codes, the first type, which describes the classical research practices and cognitive strategies of ethnography as a decontextualizing operation, deserves particular attention. The researcher interprets cultural phenomena within the epistemological horizon of the discipline (in the context of the concepts, methods, and ideological principles defined by the discipline), which necessarily lifts popular culture out of its local contexts of meaning (i.e., it provides it with “new” contexts outside the lifeworld of the examined society). This raises a number of epistemological and methodological problems. In the 1980s, the conceptualization of ethnographic knowledge production as a positioned (i.e., essentially subjective, partial, fictional, or meaning-transforming) knowledge production strategy was an explicitly critical approach in Hungarian cultural research. The importance of Zoltán A. Biró’s approach cannot therefore be overemphasized in terms of the academic history.
costume, the changing meanings of customs, heritage and rural tourism, etc. from a variety of perspectives.

However, from the definitions and examples quoted above, and without going into detail, at least three lessons can be drawn:

1. One of the most obvious lessons is to do with terminology. It is the realization that phenomena indicating cultural change — the phenomena of the utilization and consumption of popular culture in different modalities — were defined by the authors of the first volume as folklorism, while a few decades later they were defined decisively as heritagization.

2. The second — rather content-related — lesson is that the currently dominant direction of the heritage concept, as canonized within Hungarian cultural studies, ultimately reiterates an approach developed decades earlier. To put it briefly, it scarcely integrates new theoretical paradigms and approaches.

3. The final lesson — and from our point of view perhaps the most important — concerns a more theoretical inference. Namely, that both authors define folklorism/heritage as a relational concept derived from the transmutation of tradition (Fig. 1). Within this framework, the semantic content of folklorism/heritage can be defined only in the oppositional relationship between tradition (authentic folk culture) and the contrasting non-tradition (folklorism/heritage). This approach is expressly characteristic of heritage discourse in Hungarian ethnographic research. The majority of Hungarian researchers tend to see heritagization practices as the end result of a longer, linear process of transformation, which runs on a scale from a closer relationship maintained with the “original,” authentic (folk) culture (the autoreferential tradition), through increasingly looser connections (traditional folklorism, neo-folklorism), to a complete break from it (post-folklorism, heritagization):

According to the above paradigm, folklorism/heritage is essentially nothing other than a cultural phenomenon reflecting a kind of post-traditional condition. It is a copy, an imitation — a “partial,” “incomplete,” “damaged,” in this sense “altered” tradition — which, although it intentionally still reflects (traces of) the authentic, historically established (core) culture, or certain elements of it, differs from it qualitatively (in terms of its functions, embeddedness, form of appearance, institutional background, meaning horizon, etc.).

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**Fig. 1. The transformational model of traditional folk culture (“tradition”) in classical ethnographic discourse**

Folklore (organic, authentic “tradition”) → traditional folklorism → neo-folklorism → post-folklorism → non-folklore (organized, non-authentic, “not-tradition” = “heritage”)

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*See, for example: Vogt 1979, 1987a, 1987b; Verébelyi 2002.*
This rather schematic (“mechanistic”) approach, which defines the concept of heritage in terms of its referential distance from authentic (folk) culture — that is, the difference in degree between the “original” tradition and the copy of it (folklorism, neo-folklorism), as well as the mimesis of this mimesis (heritagization) — is not only characteristic of the Hungarian-language specialist literature but can also be found in international ethnographic research. According to Ullrich Kockel, for example, to mention just one author: “I have suggested cultural practices and artefacts only become ‘heritage’ once they are no longer in current, active use. In other words, ‘heritage’ is culture that has (been) dropped out of the process of tradition. The term ‘tradition’, literally, refers to cultural patterns, practices and objects that are ‘handed on’ across time and space, as skills and knowledge resource to be appropriated by the contexts of other generations and places. ‘Heritage’, on the other hand, refers to cultural patterns, practices and objects that are either no longer handed down in everyday life (and therefore left down to curators) or used in ways significantly removed from their historical trajectory, for example, as signs or citations deployed in very different contexts.” (KOCKEL 2007:21)

In my view, however, a significant part of today’s cultural heritage-producing social activities cannot be adequately described within this normative framework. A closer look at the phenomenon reveals that the majority of heritage-forming acts — from the perspective of the groups or communities carrying out the given activity — cannot be reduced to the contemporary use of certain a priori forms and patterns of knowledge from the past (those content elements that are regarded as “traditional folk culture” by ethnographers). In fact — and I will provide several empirical examples to illustrate this in the second half of the paper — it seems that the process of heritage production is not in fact primarily determined by the relationship of local communities to the past (the contemporary de- and recontextualization, consumption, and commercialization of “tradition”). This also implies an acknowledgement of the fact that in the field of ethnographic research in Hungary, attempts at heritage identification based on antithetical concepts (traditional vs. non-traditional/modern, organic vs. organized, primary vs. secondary, functional vs. afunctional, biographical vs. non-biographical culture) can be regarded as problematic in many respects. I already partially touched on some important methodological and epistemological dilemmas associated with this question in an earlier

8When examining the transformation of wedding customs (marriages in South Transdanubia), in the twenty-first century, Judit Balatonyi — and other Hungarian researchers, including myself — argue for a constructivist, performative concept of tradition, which places the horizon of action and interpretation of the examined communities at the forefront of the analysis. Criticizing the predominantly normative approach (contrasting “tradition” and “modernization”) of earlier academic accounts of wedding customs, the author writes: “the image of tradition used in twentieth-century wedding studies reflects some sort of vague historicity on the one hand, and a conservative, regulative norm and custom on the other. (...) The term ‘tradition’ thus had, and to some extent still has, a temporal and spatial dimension, as opposed to modernization, and was also seen as a rigid regulative system understood as culture and custom. Returning to the traditional image of the wedding in the descriptions of these events, the studies show that the wedding preserves, or rather preserved, traditions, or that it was the wedding that was preserved and maintained by folk tradition, which functioned as an ethno-national ‘matrix’. At the same time, various socioeconomic changes, such as modernization, have primarily eroded and simplified the former ‘traditional’ wedding rites and their traditional meanings. I would suggest that the normative and conservative view of marriage and weddings in the Hungarian ethnography of the time has been significantly influenced by the earlier normative notion of tradition.” (BALKONY 2020:187).
article co-authored with Ágota Lídia Ispán (BORBELY – ISPÁN 2019:14–15). In the following table, I will therefore confine myself mainly to summarizing those tropes in the literature that have been incorporated in recent years into the Hungarian cultural studies discourse, and above all the ethnographic discourse, on cultural heritage, and that represent a powerful, one might say paradigmatic basis for the conceptual definition of the phenomenon even today (Table 1).

Contrary to the approach to cultural heritage in the professional literature presented above, in what follows I would argue for a possible ethnographic/anthropological interpretation, in which — contrary to Hungarian research practice — the concept of heritage, and the differential characteristics of the phenomena represented by the given category, are not defined in relation to something (specifically: the normative concept of culture in ethnography). Instead, cultural heritage and the related social phenomena are approached from a practice-oriented perspective, focusing on the concrete, culturally constructed practices of heritage formation.

Table 1. Attributes of the concept of cultural heritage in the Hungarian-language cultural studies discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Tradition (authentic folk culture)</th>
<th>Heritage (non-folk culture)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the intentionality of</td>
<td>self-evident, custom-driven, routine action</td>
<td>consciously reflected on, goal-rational,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social action</td>
<td></td>
<td>performative act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mode of organization</td>
<td>organic</td>
<td>organized10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>type of social relations</td>
<td>establishes primary, lasting social relations</td>
<td>establishes secondary, occasional communities of experience and consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>functionality</td>
<td>functional, use value; the thing is valuable in as much as it is useful</td>
<td>afunctional, i.e. self-value; the thing is self-referential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relation to the past</td>
<td>direct relationship, the individual “stands in” the past, sees it as their</td>
<td>indirect (“objective”) relationship, the individual sees the past from an “external”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9To illustrate this, with no attempt to be exhaustive, I offer an excerpt from the literature by way of example: “Heritage is on the one hand an intentional tradition — that is, the community consciously relates to it as an inherited tradition. On the other hand, it can be understood as a fictional tradition, the difference being that here, in addition to political and ideological goals, economic interests are also strongly present and play a role.” (VAJDA 2016:35 – my italics: S.B) “Heritage should be seen as a cultural product in its own right, serving and representing the cultural reconfiguration of the late modern present, in which conscious, organized elements and mechanisms of cultural organization prevail over spontaneity” (FEJŐS 2005b:73 – my italics: S.B.)

10In Hungarian ethnography, the distinction between organic (local, “arranged from within/below”, i.e., “natural”) and organized (extra-local, arranged “from the outside or from above,” or “artificially” by local elites) forms of folk (“peasant”) culture has a very rich academic and research history. For earlier occurrences of the term see: FÉL 2001:323; FARAGÓ 1979:50. Among contemporary authors see, for example: KESZEG 2014, 2018a, 2018b; POZSONY 2014; JAKAB 2012:270; VAJDA 2022:47, 153–155. In relation to the critical deconstruction of the organic – organized folk culture dichotomy, see: BAUSINGER 1995; GAGYI 2021.
Table 1. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Tradition (authentic folk culture)</th>
<th>Heritage (non-folk culture)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>own, as a living present (passive relation, unreflected experience of past and continuity)</td>
<td>(ontological) position in the actual present (active relationship, i.e. reflected experience of past and discontinuity)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basis of knowledge transfer and reproduction</td>
<td>authority-based, binding transfer/adoption of cultural knowledge and traditions</td>
<td>rational and arbitrary (free) choice, rehabilitation, and selection of cultural elements endowed with value to be “preserved”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitude/cultural disposition of actors</td>
<td>norm following (“following of traditions”)</td>
<td>norm creating (“tradition breaking,” normalization of something “new”--invented, constructed, or contrary to the “old”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reception, impact, and scope of validity</td>
<td>set of rules that pervade everyday life practices as a whole (self-interpretation of individuals and communities)</td>
<td>its validity is situational and its meaning is particular (usually limited to situations in which the heritagization practice itself is expressed and comes into being)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11The thesis of heritage as an actualized (i.e., constructed from the perspective of the present) past and an experience of discontinuity is one of the important, consensual elements of the Hungarian and international literature. “Although its ties to the past are undeniable,” notes Zoltán Fejős, for example, “heritage is not so much about the past as about the present. (...) In this sense, heritage means the reflected past, therefore it is akin to history and not to the experience of sociocultural continuity. For Nora, the latter coincides with memory. It is the rupture with the past that gives heritage its value, and the idea of conscious preservation and protection originates from this.” (Fejős 2005a:45–46, 2005b:73–74). See also Husz 2006:64–65. The ethnographic literature treats the individual use of culture (i.e., culture made conscious — and at the same time objectified — through application), and the modified relationship to it, as a differentia specifica of the heritage concept. If we accept this, we must also accept the assumption that the opposite of the former also exists — that is, the phenomenon of culture living on in an unreflected form (otherwise the definitions of heritage quoted above would not make sense). Folklore, the culture of traditional (peasant) customs, is very often approached by ethnography in this way (i.e., as a kind of pattern-following behavior). However, this idea of tradition as an unreflected past and continuity experience is — in my view — not theoretically justifiable within the discipline. Gadamer refers to this conviction when he writes that human understanding is always subject to the historically effected consciousness (Gadamer 2003:335–342, 379–384) — the influential role of prejudices passed on as traditions — and that tradition is therefore always at the same time a matter of applying prejudices to our own individual, particular positions, and thus also a matter of a reflected relationship. This relationship involves — from a logical point of view — not only unconditional obedience to tradition, but also its radical rejection, its negation, the breaking of the command of tradition (Gadamer 2003:371), which transforms the process of understanding into a movement of tension (the polarity of familiarity and strangeness) (Gadamer 2003:330). It is also supported by Gadamer’s notion of the event of tradition (Gadamer 2003:325), by which he makes it clear that tradition is always an event (i.e., not a passive attitude limited to the mere recollection of memories or to the automatic following of schemes, but an active, creative, in other words combinatorial, act). “Romantic faith in the ‘growth of tradition,’ before which all reason must remain silent, is fundamentally like the Enlightenment, and just as prejudiced. The fact is that in tradition there is always an element of freedom and of history itself.” (Gadamer 2003:316).

Accordingly, I do not interpret the heritage-formation activities of the local communities that I have examined as a manifestation of (neo- or post-) folklorism but as the (hermeneutic) meaning-producing activities of the given groups in the broadest sense, in the same way as any other cultural phenomenon (from ritual ceremonial and religious practices through everyday customs related to meals and clothing, etc., to such mundane gestures as a simple stroll in the city [De Certeau 2011]). From this more general point of view, there is no essential difference among a traditional nineteenth-century village dance custom (folklore), its twentieth-century staged version (folklorism), and a contemporary museum presentation of these two (heritagization), in as much as in all three cases we are dealing with the context-generating — that is, meaning-producing — practices of various social groups, which we must regard as equally “authentic” and auto-referential — in other words, as cultural phenomena identical to themselves that cannot be derived from other phenomena.13

I define heritagization practices, in the narrow sense, as social actions that reflect the unique ontological politics (Harrison 2015a, 2018) of local communities. In other words, they represent the cultural concepts constructed and circulated by the respective communities regarding their own worlds — social beings: objects, places, people, animals, works of art, etc., and their moral and temporal status (“good” vs. “bad”, “valuable” vs. “worthless”, “old” vs. “new”, etc.). According to my approach, these locally organized practices — embedded in global discourses and institutionalized (Eitler 2022) — are not distinguished from other cultural actions by their specific treatment of folk culture — that is, by the singular (economic, political, legal, etc.) use of a particular element of content, but instead by the fact that the particular forms of activity are based on the specific metaphysical conceptions of social reality created by the groups carrying out the heritagization. This worldview is characterized by, among other things, an increased endangerment sensibility associated with globalization and late modernity (Vidal – Dias 2016:2): in short, by a reflected experience of the present as crisis. This worldview shapes a moral, emotional, and political disposition in the given communities towards the cultural assets they consider

13The cultural transfer phenomena (the adoption of objects, symbols, concepts, distinctive patterns of behavior and thinking, linguistic features, etc.) that emerge from interactions and cultural exchanges between individuals and small and large groups (sub- and counter-cultural organizations or even social classes, etc.) make it impossible to separate “folklore” and “non-folklore” phenomena by origin (“authentic,” “archaic” folk, and “non-authentic,” “quasi-authentic,” and “new” cultural heritage). In relation to this question, Anna Mária Bölva points out — through the example of the Tanec National Ensemble for Macedonian Dances and Songs — that the consciously stylized, staged versions of Macedonian dance culture are “in their own way more organic (than neo-folkloristic adaptations seeking the expert reconstruction of the ‘original’ dance culture — S. B.), since the material that was collectable up to the 1970s is presented as a living and sometimes changing expression of the cultural needs of contemporary society, using elements that meet the demand of popular music and other contemporary demands, and with an emphasis on the original symbolic meaning.” ( Bölva 2021:509). In the context of ballad collections, Liszka provides instructive examples of how folklore works considered as authentic by folklore scholarship are often in fact the result of multiple appropriations and de- and re-contextualization processes (Liszka 2014).
vulnerable and opens a way for them to heritage conservation strategies (Vidal – Dias 2016:1) as well as to the local, regional and global institutions that organize them.

The social practices of heritage formation, as discussed above, are therefore not just any ontological systems but specifically the kind of ontological systems that (via the local adaptation of global heritage discourses) are linked to a new, postmodern time regime (Hartog 2006); that are built around a historical time perceived as uncertain, threatening, unpredictable, in crisis — in other words: around a kind of presentist sense of crisis and time. Like Hartog, Ulrich Gumbrecht has described this new chronotope as the end of traditional linear history (i.e., historical consciousness based on a past–present–future continuum), in which the present (the now), or the production of a culture of presence (Gumbrecht 2004), gains absolute hegemony over all other aspect of time: “For us, the future no longer presents itself as an open horizon of possibilities; instead, it is a dimension increasingly closed to all prognoses — and which, at the same time, seems to draw near as a menace. Global warming will proceed with all the consequences that have been foreseen for quite some time; the question remains whether humanity will manage to accrue sufficient credit for a few additional years before the most catastrophic consequences of the situation arrive. (...) another problem the new chronotope presents is that we are no longer able to bequeath anything to posterity. Instead of ceasing to provide points of orientation, pasts flood our present; automated, electronic systems of memory play a central role in the process. Between the pasts that engulf us and the menacing future, the present has turned into a dimension of expanding simultaneities” (Gumbrecht 2014:xiii – my italics: S.B.).

The institutionally organized heritage industry and contemporary everyday conservation practices are both symptomatic of this self-enclosed — to use Hartog’s terms: “massive, overwhelming, omnipresent present” (Hartog 2006:179) that has no vista and no horizon (past and future), and at the same time of contemporary societies’ attempts to step outside (transcend) it. From this presentism, the “museified gaze is thus directed towards that which surrounds us,” claims Hartog. Ultimately, “we would like to prepare, starting from today, the museum of tomorrow”, since tomorrow we will be unable to do so. Thus we create a museum of today and look at it as if we were living tomorrow. We “museify” our own time, and we even place ourselves in the museum and then look around it. “If patrimony is henceforth that which defines what we are today, the imperative of the heritagization movement, caught itself in the aura of the duty of memory, will remain a distinctive feature of the moment in which we are living or have just lived: a certain relation with the present and an expression of presentism.” (Hartog 2000:21).

The social actions that serve for the appropriation and construction of local cultural assets as heritage are usually practices that are hierarchically structured and governed by formal institutions (Smith 2006; Harrison 2010, 2013). Situations where the frameworks for the creation, use, and presentation of heritage in local communities are less clearcut — that is, where institutions for professional heritage management are not yet fully developed — can therefore be particularly

14As the two quoted authors, Vidal and Dias, point out, not only in the postmodern era but in all eras of humanity, “Loss and forgetting were part of life, and of course they remain so. Yet, in contrast to the ancient sensibility, the late-modern feeling for the fragility of things is permeated by the sense of future-oriented responsibility that comes from humanity’s living in the Anthropocene – in other words, from an awareness that humans are responsible for the decimation of biological and cultural diversity, for the devastating consequences and extreme inequities of global warming, and ultimately for jeopardizing the survival of their own species by bringing about the sixth mass extinction.” (Vidal – Dias 2016:3)
Instructive. One example of such a situation is Transcarpathia\textsuperscript{15} — that is, the contemporary heritage creation activities of the cultural-political elites of the minority Hungarian population there.

Before going into this in greater detail, however, I must make two observations. Firstly, compared to Transylvania or other ethnographically valued transborder regions and relict areas, there were no comprehensive and systematic ethnographic data collections, source exploration, and data recording research after 1945. Thus, contemporary communities cannot rely on decades, let alone centuries, of detailed and elaborated ethnographic data about the traditional (folk, peasant, popular) culture of the Hungarian and other ethnic communities living in the area. In other words, the minority cultural-political elites do not have the kind of ethnographic knowledge that would provide these communities with various content elements and rhetorical-narrative tools for the realization of their own heritage-building efforts.\textsuperscript{16} A further important circumstance is that in Transcarpathia — for reasons of cultural and institutional history that cannot be gone into here in detail — there are also no non-state-maintained networks (regional or internationally respected civil society organizations or professional associations) that could provide a sufficient number of professionals with the requisite training as well as modern infrastructure for bottom-up cultural or heritage-forming initiatives. In this respect, the visible heritage- and tradition-preserving activities) and institutionalized heritage management practices (musealization, and the compilation of local, regional, and national value inventories and heritage lists, etc.), to participate as experts and specialists in tradition-preserving activities, and to play a role in its maintenance. (Cf. Lovas Kiss 2017.)

\textsuperscript{15}Transcarpathia is the westernmost and (after Chernivtsi) the second smallest oblast of Ukraine, with an area of just 12,752 km\textsuperscript{2}. It is located hundreds of kilometers from the country’s economic and power center (Kyiv), on the peripheral borderlands of five countries (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, besides Ukraine) and it is inhabited by communities of various nationalities/ethnic identities (Ukrainian, Russian, Ruthenian, Hungarian, Romanian, Roma, etc.). In the twentieth century, the area belonged to several states. Until the end of World War I, it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and within this, it was part of the Kingdom of Hungary. It then became part of Czechoslovakia for a long period (1919–1939), during part of which (November 2, 1938 – March 14–16, 1939) it was temporarily made an independent state known as Carpathian Ukraine (Карпатська Україна). After the Second Vienna Award, it was again temporarily (from 1938 to 1939) under the sovereignty of the independent Kingdom of Hungary. However, after the end of World War II (from 1944 to 1991), it became part of the Soviet Empire and was known officially first as Carpatho-Ukraine (Закарпатська Україна) and later as the oblast of Transcarpathia (Закарпатська область). Since 1991, the territory has been part of the independent Ukrainian state, where, according to the latest official census of 2001, the largest ethnic group after Ukrainians (80.5%) was the Hungarian population (151,516 people, 12.1%) (Molnár – Molnár D. 2005: 20–21). In this study, I focus exclusively on the Hungarian community in Transcarpathia and the heritagization practices of the minority Hungarian political-cultural elites representing this community. Accordingly, I do not go into the description and analysis of the symbolic nation-building practices of the post-socialist Ukrainian state (heritagization, musealization, memorialization, etc.), nor do I discuss the regional aspects of the subject, due to the restricted scope of the study and the complexity of the phenomenon (On the latter, see, for example: Fedinec – Szrede 2009; Kuzio 1998, 2001, 2002; Kovalov 2022; Kuczbarski – Boychuk 2020; Kudriavtseva 2020, Szereda 2009; Bôrdely 2023; Eröss – Kovály 2018; Fedinec – Vehes 2010).

\textsuperscript{16}As is well known, academic knowledge production, including academic ethnographic research, plays an extremely significant role in the shaping of everyday local heritage discourses in today’s rural and village societies. In Hungary, essentially since the emergence of the discipline in the nineteenth century, ethnography has accumulated a rich corpus concerning traditional peasant culture, which provides a very important referential background for local and regional heritage creation efforts. By means of academic concepts and value categories, this research defines and demarcates what we know and think about tradition and traditional communities, and about national culture and authentic peasant-popular culture today (Bausinger 1995; Burke 1991; Hoifer 1989, 1991, 1994; Ilyés 2014a; Niedermüller 1991, 1993). This “ethnographic heritage” (the body of academic knowledge on popular culture) that currently creates the authority for ethnographers and ethnologists to engage in contemporary revival movements (e.g., in the dance house movement and tradition-preserving activities) and institutionalized heritage management practices (musealization, and the compilation of local, regional, and national value inventories and heritage lists, etc.), to participate as experts and specialists in defining the boundaries of authentic folk culture, and to play a role in its maintenance. (Cf. Lovas Kiss 2017.)

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formation activities in the Hungarian minority community in today’s Transcarpathia are a relatively recent, top-down phenomenon, which are integrated into the existing political institutions of minority advocacy and which have developed over the past decade largely under the influence of the national and identity politics of the motherland (Hungary).

In what follows, I concentrate on a single element of this phenomenon: the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory, which — together with other heritage inventories compiled in other regions outside Hungary — I will approach in the way outlined above — that is, as a kind of regional ontological system.

Inventories, lists, and databases of heritage items are hierarchical collections of biological and cultural assets (beings, objects, places, practices) that are operationalized as endangered (HARRISON 2015b). Inclusion in a local and regional inventory or list (as a record of something that is to be saved or that has already vanished, and the preservation of its trace) is at the same time an explicit expression of the way in which certain social groups — paraphrasing Jörn Rüsen — make sense of time (RÜSEN 1999:42). In other words, they are expressing, articulating, and representing their moral ethos (their responsibility for the future) as well as their (subjective) experience of the actual present time, and their alternative relationship to time. However, before illustrating this phenomenon with concrete examples, I briefly touch on some specific issues: certain aspects concerning the actors and institutional networks that determine the framework of heritage discourse in Transcarpathia that I consider important.

THE REGIONAL (TRANSCARPATHIAN) INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF HERITAGIZATION EFFORTS

The everyday practices of heritage building observed in the region unfold among institutions that have close organizational links but strong hierarchical relationships.

At the lowest level of the organizational structure, the collection, classification, and listing of “Transcarpathian” (local, provincial) cultural assets — that is the organization and institutional representation of the operational work itself (fieldwork, data collection, database development, labelling, documentation, international representation, etc.) — is carried out and determined by the Transcarpathian Community College Association (KNE [TCCA]). The association was established following an external initiative coming from Hungary. According to its president, the association, “launched its activities in 2011 at the request of Sándor Lezsák, president of the Lakitelek Community College Foundation. The association operates as an independent legal entity, its main objective being the preservation of traditions and the identification and transfer of values” (MOLNÁR 2021:59).

The selection, evaluation, professional interpretation, and regional heritagization of cultural elements of local and regional value collected by the association — that is, their classification to higher levels (to the “inventory of the values of national regions abroad”) — is carried out by the so-called Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory Committee (KÉB [THIC]). This body, which essentially performs a kind of expert work and official (bureaucratic) heritage management —

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17 According to official records, the association has been officially registered as Об’єднання Закарпатський Народний Інститут = Kárpátaljai Népi Főiskola Egyesület [Transcarpathian Community College Association] since 2012.
in accordance with the Hungarian regulations\textsuperscript{18} — was established in 2013 and at the time of its foundation consisted of seven members (a teacher of history and a teacher of geography and history, a local historian, a painter, two researchers with PhD degrees in education and one researcher with a PhD in ethnography).

At the top of the organizational hierarchy of regional institutions that manage the heritagization process is a minority advocacy organization, the Transcarpathian Hungarian Cultural Association (KMKSZ [THCA], founded in 1989). This organization, in addition to representing the political and cultural interests of Transcarpathian Hungarians, also contributes to international bureaucratic/coordination tasks related to the oblast heritage. As a delegated member of the Hungarian Permanent Conference (MÁÉRT [HPC]), the THCA participates in the work of the Hungarikum Committee\textsuperscript{19} that operates within the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture. Thus, it coordinates and influences the selection of the local and oblast cultural heritage that is defined as Transcarpathian at the highest levels of decision making, and its selection as a Hungarian National Value, or Hungarikum. In addition, it has a monopoly on the nomination and selection of the membership of the Transcarpathian Heritage Committee.

According to publicly available data, the members of the first of the two organizations mentioned above — the KNE and KÉB — belong to the so-called multi-positional cultural elites\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18}On April 2, 2012, Parliament adopted Act XXX of 2012 on Hungarian National Values and Hungarikums, § 1 (1). The text of the legal norms can be found here: https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a1200030.tv (accessed May 12, 2023)

\textsuperscript{19}The Hungarikum Committee is a 21-member body established under Act XXX of 2012, which acts as the highest body in the hierarchical, bottom-up institutional system for the identification, collection, and protection of national values. The committee is chaired by the Hungarian minister responsible for agricultural policy, and its members are nominated by the presidents/heads of various delegating organizations (the Hungarian Parliament, the Hungarian Permanent Committee (MÁÉRT), the various ministries, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Hungarian Academy of Arts, and the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office). In accordance with its statutory powers, the committee may, among other things, review the content of the Hungarian Heritage Inventory, select which values may be designated as Hungarikums, or, on the contrary, decide on the deletion of particular national values from the Hungarian Heritage Inventory and the Collection of Hungarikums, and occasionally (in the absence of the National Regional Committees of Hungarian Values Abroad) perform the tasks of the bodies responsible for the designation of national values in Hungarian territories outside the borders of Hungary. https://www.hungarikum.hu/en (accessed November 13, 2023)

\textsuperscript{20}The term is a kind of adaptation of György Lengyel’s concept of the \textit{multi-positional economic elite}. Lengyel originally coined the term to describe the actions of a different historical period and context — the top management of large companies and wealthy elites with macroeconomic influence in the Horthy era (LENGYEL 1993). According to official records, the Transcarpathian Community College Association has three founding members. They hold several official positions on the board at the same time. The head of the association, in addition to his position as president, is a professor at the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education. The second founding member is the vice-president of the Uzhhorod Mid-Level Organization of the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ), head of the KMKSZ faction of the Uzhhorod District Council, and a member of the KMKSZ Uzhhorod Board. The third founding member, among other positions, is president of the Uzhhorod Mid-level Organization of the KMKSZ, president of the Chop [Csap] branch organization of the KMKSZ, and president of the “For the Hungarian Population of Csap” Charitable Foundation. He is also a member of the Ede Egán Transcarpathian Centre for Economic Development Charitable Foundation, the Life Source Women’s Association, and the organization for Hungarian Education in Csap. He is also a representative of the Transcarpathian County Council and a lecturer at the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education. Without going into details, the membership of the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory Committee, established in 2013, also holds leading roles and/or positions in a number of educational, cultural, and political institutions (the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, the KMKSZ, the Imre Révész Society of Carpathian Applied and Fine Artists, the Transcarpathian Hungarian Scout Association, the Transcarpathian Hungarian Pedagogues, etc.).
within the regional minority elite in Transcarpathia. This means that the members of a given group simultaneously hold several organizational positions (in various foundations, civil society organizations, political organizations, educational institutions) and possess various network resources (exogenous and endogenous economic, cultural, and political capital). With the help of these resources, the given post-socialist minority elite not only exercises extensive control over the arenas of identity building — that is, on the institutions that maintain the cultural identity of the Transcarpathian Hungarians — but also has a significant influence in the social public sphere, including a significant proportion of public representations concerning their own activities in relation to identity politics. The members of the cultural-political elite involved in the representation of minority interests are thus in many cases not only actors (subjects, active figures) but also the objects of the social practices of heritage creation that they control, as the following example illustrates.

Well over one-third (42.6%) of the cultural assets included in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory were created after the regime change (1989), and most of them were created as a result of the activities of minority Hungarian advocacy organizations or their related cultural elites operating in the region (Fig. 2). From the 1990s, the activity of these elites in the public sphere — as in most Eastern European countries — was largely linked to a more general (macro-level) nation-state anti-communist campaign in Transcarpathia, the primary aim of which was to develop a post-Soviet national politics of identity and memory.

Over the past three decades, these minority elites have thus been involved simultaneously in the formulation and institutional re-production of ethno-national ideology (minority Hungarian identity and history politics), in the creation of physical and symbolic spaces (memorial sites, commemorative signs, public sculptures, carved headstones, memorial rooms and museums, national educational and cultural institutions) for the appropriation and practice of these ideologies, and in the selection and presentation of the foregoing as values and heritage. Consequently, the majority of the heritagization practices visible in the region today can be described by the concept of self-musealization (HYSSSEN 1995:14), which in this case refers to the Transcarpathian minority elites’ monumentalization and historicization attempts furthering their own ambitions in terms of politics of ethnic identity and memory.

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21 For Polish parallels, see, for example, STOLA 2012.
22 The fact that the prime minister of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko — partly as a result of the revolution/foreign policy conflict in eastern Ukraine (the “Russian–Ukrainian” war) that broke out in the winter of 2013/2014 — signed the so-called “decommunization package” on April 9, 2015, containing four laws targeting the elimination of the country’s totalitarian heritage, can be evaluated as the conclusion of this process. The four laws concerned: 1. the condemnation of Communist and National Socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes and the prohibition of the propagation of their symbols in Ukraine (Law on the Condemnation of Totalitarian Regimes, No. 317–VIII); 2. the legal status of and respect for the memory of those who fought for independence (Law on Commemorating the Struggle for Independence, No. 314–VIII); 3. commemoration of the victory over Nazism in the World War II during the years 1939–1945 (No. 315-VIII); and 4. access to the archives of the oppressive organizations of the Communist totalitarian regime of 1917–1991 (Law No. 2540). According to Yuliya Yurchuk, these measures clearly show the outlines of a new strategy on the politics of memory, which in contrast to the previous imperial, militaristic approach, embeds the national politics of memory in a transnational or global framework. This new discourse now largely “looks at war from the perspective of the victims and thus condemns all wars in general” (YURCHUK 2017:90–91). According to the author, Ukraine uses this new European master narrative as a resource to legitimate its current national and geopolitical goals in relation to Russia (YURCHUK 2017).
THE TRANSCARPATHIAN HERITAGE INVENTORY

Created by the KNE in 2013, the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory contains data on the collection of Hungarikums and cultural values in four administrative districts of Zakarpattia Oblast in Western Ukraine (Beregszász/Berehove district, Nagyszelős/Vynohradiv district, Munkács/Mukachevo district, and Ungvár/Uzhhorod district), and one ethnographic region (Upper Tisza region). According to the database available on the association’s website, the staff and experts who compiled the list have identified a total of 224 settlement-level values and nine
regional-level values (not associated with a settlement) in Transcarpathia. Of these, five national values have been highlighted by the KÉB in recent years: thus one natural relict plant species (the so-called Hungarian lilac or Syringa josikaea), two handicraft products (the Salánk barrel and Bereg homespun cloth), one contemporary monument (the Verecke conquest memorial, 1996), and two folklore creations (the “Transcarpathian” archaic prayer and the so-called Rákóczi cult) have been included in the Inventory of the Values of National Regions Abroad.

Based on the collection points featured in the online database, the work on the identification and collection of local and regional cultural values covers some 88 rural and village settlements and 15 towns in Transcarpathia. According to the 2001 data — the last official census in Ukraine — this means that the association has collected information or data in the majority (about 88%) of settlements inhabited by Hungarians in Transcarpathia. We found no substantial information concerning the method used to compile the inventories (sampling procedures, selection of the investigated settlements, selection of the persons identified and interviewed, structure and content of the questionnaires, and method of questioning), or on the research methodology and theoretical/conceptual framework for data collection.

However, there are brief descriptions, annotations, and accounts of the content of each cultural asset and phenomenon in the summary list of values by settlement, although with no attention to detail. One characteristic of the descriptions is that rather than providing information about the local reception or the history of the impact and interpretation of each listed heritage object (e.g., a description, narration, or analysis of community perceptions or the

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23 The “Non-settlement-specific Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory” online database originally included 10 heritage objects, but since the inclusion of “Mihály Kolodkó’s mini statues” in the list of heritage by settlements (as cultural values of Uzhhorod [Ungvár]), I have reduced the number of cultural goods in the regional list by one. For the database of the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory, see https://www.karpataljainepfoiskola.com/karpataljai-ertektar/ (accessed June 5, 2023).

24 A more detailed anthropological analysis of these heritage objects as prominent, site-specific cultural goods of the Hungarian minority in Transcarpathia that are intended for preservation for future generations would certainly reveal many important correlations (including those that elucidate the linguistic, cognitive, power, organizational, etc. mechanisms of heritage formation). However, due to space constraints, I will focus on a single but dominant part of the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory: its local-level elements, listed in the inventory by settlement. (Therefore, I will not address the cultural goods included in the Inventory of the Heritage Values of National Regions Abroad or the non-settlement-related elements in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory.

25 By “Hungarian-populated settlements in Transcarpathia” I understand settlements with a Hungarian population of at least 10% or 100 Hungarian inhabitants. According to József Molnár and István D. Molnár, 117 settlements in Transcarpathia met this criterion in 2001. For the source of the data and methodological problems arising from this approach, see Molnár – D. Molnár 2005:33.

26 The name of the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory is somewhat misleading, in so far as it suggests that the database is not ethnocentric but primarily meets geo-territorial criteria. It suggests, therefore, that the compiled list presents the cultural and intellectual heritage not only of the Hungarian minority but rather of the region as a whole, including that of the majority of the multiethnic population (the Ukrainian/Russian/Rusyn/Romanian, etc. national/ethnic groups) living there. “Transcarpathian Hungarian Heritage Inventory” would thus be a more appropriate name. The collection of values researched by the KNE focuses only on the lowland region of Transcarpathia inhabited by Hungarians, where the vast majority of values, memorial sites, and intangible/cultural heritage elements of national (“Hungarian”) significance are located. The database does not include, or includes only sporadically, the cultural values or “common,” transethnic heritage objects of the non-Hungarian nationalities living in the region.
associated attributions of value and meaning in relation to a medieval church), they typically present the history of its creation and change. (To use the previous example, they describe when the medieval church was built, destroyed, rebuilt, or restored.) At the same time, this also means that the cultural-political elites compiling the inventories attempt to conceptualize the notion of cultural heritage in Transcarpathia not from the narratives of local society but through heritage objects as objects that are meaningful in themselves (removed from their original relational systems). Thus, the heritagization process of individual values is usually determined by criteria outside the locality of the objects. Two of these criteria would seem to be relevant:

The first is the referential historical background of the heritage objects — that is, the “old,” “archaic,” “past” nature of its creation, or at least its character as a contrast to the “new” of today. I will refer to this dimension — adapting the concepts originally developed by Alois Riegl for monuments, that is, objects with a physical appearance — the “age value” (Alterswert) of the cultural assets of Transcarpathia (RIEGL 1998:20).27

The second criterion, which is closely related to, and often difficult to separate from, the first, is the symbolic ethno-national (“Hungarian”) meaning of the heritage objects, which can be defined as the ideological value of the monuments, buildings, memorials, folk art objects, etc. included in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory.

These two value dimensions are connected by reversible authentication procedures: in the discourses of minority elites, either one aspect or the other legitimizes the promotion of the selected object as heritage. In the case of recent or contemporary heritage objects that obviously lack a long history going back several decades, the ideological value of the object (its ethno-national mobilizing role) legitimizes the inclusion of the selected cultural phenomenon in the local inventory, and vice versa. The newly founded minority institutions (the Fedák Sári Community House in Halabor 2021; and the Fodó Sándor Community House in Viski, 2019) are good examples of the former (Figs 3 and 4); public statues and commemorative sites inaugurated in the last few years (the statue of St. Stephen in Koson [Mezőaszony], 2021; the Rákóczi Statue in Berehove [Beregszász] 2019; the Gulácsy Lajos Memorial Park in Mukachevo [Munkács], 2017), or even certain post-modern community rituals (the Bene Peach Festival, 2016; and the Hecha [Mezőgece] Jam Making Festival, 2011).

On the contrary, in situations where the national meaning of a specific heritage phenomenon has faded, or for some reason was not easy to grasp in the first place, the temporal aspects of the heritage element in question (its pastness, or oldness) are highlighted and become a prominent and defining semantic element. In the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory, I regard those natural, spatial, or landscape elements28 that betray a perspective reflecting a “folk” cosmology rather than a rational (e.g., nature conservation) world view to be heritage objects with this kind of structure, for example: they appear in the abovementioned lists as things that refer to an

27 Alois Riegl (1858–1905) was an Austrian historian and a prominent representative of the so-called Vienna School of Art History. He developed an influential analytical model specifically for monuments and relics — that is, for material, tangible goods and their social evaluation. According to his approach, the meaning of a monument is determined by its subjective perception, which not only varies from period to period (culturally and temporally) but can also give rise to several epistemological systems even within a single society.

28 The socio-historical and economic-historical dimensions of the heritagization mechanisms of the natural environment/landscape are studied by ISPÁN 2019, for example.
archaic natural/aesthetic state (the Schönborn Palace Park in Berehove [Beregvár], Shalanky [Salánk] Forest, the Skakalo [Szkakalo] Waterfall, or the longest avenue of linden trees in Europe in Uzhhorod [Ungvár]).

However, the majority of cultural goods and practices in Transcarpathia — partly through the simultaneous operation of these legitimizing frameworks — can most often be approached as a kind of hybrid heritage construct. The different value dimensions of these heritage cannot be sharply separated from one another. In fact — as shown by the example of the village of Nevetlenfalu [Nevetlenfalú] and the Old Hungarian Flag discovered there as a cultural-national value — the historical and political-ideological aspects (the “oldness” and “Hungarianness” of the heritage object) appear simultaneously, with a mutually reinforcing impact.29 The following brief description of the flag can be found under the name of the village in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory (Figs 5 and 6).

As is well known, the interweaving of these two aspects — that is, historical narratives (referring to the origins, mythological past, period of existence, ancientness, etc. of a culture, people, or custom) and national-ethnic discourses — is a universal feature of nationalist political ideologies. In the context of modernity, as has been pointed out by several authors (Anderson 1991; Nash 1988; Yelvington 1991; Eriksen 2011), national-ethnic affiliations are often articulated as a kind of metaphorical kinship, the mobilizing capacity of which is due mainly to the fictional narration of common historical roots and the development of a linear historical consciousness (an organic link between past and present).

Fig. 3. Presentation ceremony for the new design of the Sári Fedak Community House in Halabor on October 15, 2020. In the background is the commercial building, which opened in 1977, as it was before the reconstruction. (Photo: Kárpátalja [online], no. 1029, October 16, 2020. https://karpataljalap.net/2020/10/16/bemutattak-halabori-fedak-sari-kozosseg-haz-latvanytervet accessed June 24, 2023)
In August 2020, an unusual object was discovered in Nevetlen, near the Ukrainian–Romanian border. A Hungarian national flag, more than one hundred years old, was discovered in a cupboard in an old family house, the ancient home of the Kosztya family. The members of the family knew about the old flag, having preserved it from generation to generation. However, since it was dangerous to keep a Hungarian symbol in the house during the Soviet era, the adult members of the family hid it in a cupboard, and eventually everyone forgot about it. The flag came to light when the Kosztya family decided to demolish the house. It is uncertain exactly when and how the more than one-hundred-year-old flag came into the family’s possession. What is certain is that it was owned by one Endre Kosztya (1871–1947), who bequeathed the carefully guarded symbol to his two daughters, Erzsébet and Mária. The well-preserved tricolor remains with the family and is now proudly displayed in the room.” (my italics: S. B.)

The quotation contains several sentence and textual elements that suggest (even if only vaguely) that the object in question bears not only a national-ethnic significance for the family but also far more personal, family-historical, genealogical connotations. This connection, which

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**Fig. 4.** The new Fedák Sári Community Centre building, which was inaugurated on October 29, 2021. (Photo: Kárpátalja [online], no. 1029, October 16, 2020. https://karpataljalap.net/2020/10/16/bemutattak-halabori-fedak-sari-kozosseg-haz-latvanytervet. accessed June 24, 2023)

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30https://www.karpataljainepfoiskola.com/nevetlen/ (accessed July 1, 2023)
Fig. 5. The Old Hungarian Flag in the village of Nevetlenfalu [Nevetlenfalud]. (Photo: Egy magyar trikolór kálváriája. [The calvary of a Hungarian tricolor]. Kárpátaljai Igaz Szó, August 2, 2022. https://kiszo.net/2020/08/02/egy-magyar-trikolor-kalvariaja-%E2%94%82kiszo-riport/). accessed July 1, 2023)

Fig. 6. The Old Hungarian Flag in Nevetlenfalu [Nevetlenfalud]. (Photo: Egy magyar trikolór kálváriája. [The calvary of a Hungarian tricolor]. Kárpátaljai Igaz Szó, August 2, 2022. https://kiszo.net/2020/08/02/egy-magyar-trikolor-kalvariaja-%E2%94%82kiszo-riport/). accessed July 1, 2023)
is apparently irrelevant to an external observer, and even to the compiler of the list, but which is important from the perspective of the owners, is relegated to the background in the official heritagization process. The only reason for the selection of this case, its linguistic description, and its inclusion in the inventory — as the title itself and the entire premise of the narrative suggest — is that the Old Hungarian Flag, as a heritage object, is able to mobilize both “old” and “national” content for the identity politics discourse.

Looking at the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory from a slightly more distanced, purely logical, perspective, however, we should not ignore the fact that the ideological value of a heritage element (such as the aforementioned flag) appears to have a broader semantic dimension than its age value. Indeed, the retrospective accentuation of the historical past, like the upvaluation of ethno-national components, is itself the result of a modern political discourse — that is, it is ab ovo an ideological product. From this perspective, the value dimensions of cultural goods that are constructed as heritage should be thought of as a hierarchically structured system (Fig. 7).

In this multidimensional system, artefacts with an age value or antique value can be further classified into smaller groups based on certain formal and content features.

1. On the one hand, we can set apart heritage objects endowed with historic value. This group includes cultural goods and phenomena that are of particular significance for the historical development, ethnogenesis, and cultural history of the physical and symbolic space (Transcarpathia) and the population living there (the Transcarpathian Hungarians). Here, we might include most of the built heritage of the Transcarpathian Hungarian settlements (castles, manor houses, mansions, village and town churches, chapels, belfries, monasteries or their ruins), as well as the majority of public buildings that are monumental in character (law courts, the casinos of the gentry, county halls, railway stations). This group of heritage objects in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory makes up 39 percent of the all the cultural assets in the list. One of their distinguishing features is that, although in a substantive sense — at the moment of their creation and according to the intentions of those who created them — they did not originally serve commemorative purposes for the contemporary communities but rather other (practical, functional, etc.) goals, they have for some reason acquired a cultural-historical value (from the point of view of the recipients, and posterity) retrospectively.

2. Heritage objects and cultural phenomena with an intentional value represent a different type from the above. In contrast to commemorative objects endowed with a historical value, these are primarily cultural goods that were created by contemporary communities with the reflected, conscious purpose (intention) of transmitting and/or preserving a human action

31From the seventeenth century, the categories of “traditional” (old) and “modern” (new) were canonized as opposing concepts, very often accompanied by the notion of civilizations (primitive and Western societies) with different levels of development (ANTTONEN 2005; GERMOND-DURET 2016).

32In the words of Riegel: “Since those who fashioned the works which we have subsequently termed ‘historical monuments’ wanted primarily to satisfy their own practical and ideal needs—those of their contemporaries and, at most, those of their immediate progeny—without as a rule intending to leave testimony of their artistic and cultural life to later centuries, when we call such works of art ‘monuments,’ it is a subjective rather than an objective designation. It is not their original purpose and significance that turn these works into monuments, but rather our modern perception of them” (RIEGL 1998:11). “Both intentional and unintentional monuments are characterized by commemorative value,” however, “…in the case of the intentional monument, its commemorative value has been determined by the makers, while we have defined the value of the unintentional ones.” (RIEGL 1998:11).
(a real or fictitious individual or community deed, behavior, event, or activity) for the present or for the imagined future.

2.1. The practice of monumentalization by the Hungarian political-cultural elites in Transcarpathia is one of the most typical manifestations of this phenomenon. The region’s various public sculptures, memorial plaques, memorial parks, memorial sites, among others, constitute approximately a quarter (13%) of the heritage objects (224 in total) listed in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory and they appear to have specific forms of time representation. They designate specific “sites of memory” (NORA 2010) in time, thus creating a peculiar reading of the region’s past, reflecting the paradigms of the minority elites in terms of the politics of memory (Table 2). From this point of view — that is, from the perspective of the time represented by the monuments and the historical-political concepts expressed in them — the monumentalization practices in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory are organized along the lines of four major discourses that are hierarchically ordered in relation to one another.

2.1.a. The first type includes heritagization practices aimed at the establishment of national-ethnic identity. The monuments that belong in this category commemorate the remote and distant past of Hungarian history — in other words, absolute history. They mark events and figures of national importance (the Conquest, the foundation of the state, the struggle for national independence and the revolution [1703–1711, 1848]; St. Stephen of Hungary, István Werbőczy, Ferenc Rákóczi, Kelemen Mikes, Sándor Petőfi), and in doing so they create the historicization and historical continuity of the ethnic identity of the
**Table 2.** Public monuments, statues, and commemorative signs, and the historical periods and dates represented by them in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle ages</th>
<th>Modern age</th>
<th>Modern/Contemporary period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hungarian Conquest</strong></td>
<td><strong>Founding of the state</strong></td>
<td><strong>16th c.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hungarian Conquest</th>
<th>Founding of the state</th>
<th>16th c.</th>
<th>17th–18th c.</th>
<th>19th c.</th>
<th>WW1 (1914–1918)</th>
<th>Trianon (1920)</th>
<th>WWII (1939–1945), Gulag/Gupvi</th>
<th>Local/sacred identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mala hora [Kis-hegy] Hungarian Conquest Memorial, Berehove [Beregszász] (2017) (Fig. 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Greek Catholic Way of the Cross, Berehove [Beregszász] (2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 9. Svalyava [Szolyva] Memorial Park (Photo: Website of the Szolyva Memorial Park Transcarpathian County Charitable Foundation. https://szolyvaipark.org/fenykepek. accessed July 1, 2023)
Transcarpathian Hungarians; they effect the ideological representation of the cultural, historical and political cohesion of the minority community and the motherland.\(^{33}\)

2.1.b. The second discourse — which is less pronounced than the one above — is a kind of anti-totalitarian way of speaking. These memorial sites and works of public art commemorate the recent past — that is, lived time: the twentieth century (World War I, World War II, 1920, 1944) and the victims of the associated political dictatorships (priests who were imprisoned and exiled to Stalinist gulags, prisoners of war, civilians deported for \textit{malenkiy robot} [forced labor]). They also present the subjective historical experiences\(^ {34}\) of the social groups concerned. The monuments that can be classified under this heading — since they do not commemorate the guilty (the anti-humanist political regimes themselves) but primarily the victims (and their individual suffering and historical traumas) (cf. \textit{Assman 2012}) — present totalitarian, autocratic political regimes as an essentially historical experience, or in other words as a social experience constituted in opposition to the present (the military cemetery in Yasinya [Körösmező], 1918; the Svalyava [Szolyva] Memorial Park, 1994; the Székely gate in Mali Selmenseti [Kisszelmenc], 2003).

2.1.c. The third, more dominant discourse is represented by projects for the occupation of symbolic space, which serve the construction of local identity. These are usually aimed at the commemorative canonization of well-known figures who are either linked to the given region or who symbolize the broader “Hungarian” or “national” culture (the statue of Sári Fedák\(^ {35}\) in Berehove [Beregšázs], 2018/\textit{Fig. 10}/; the Lajos Gulácsy\(^ {36}\) Memorial Park in


34The “official” (canonized) historical representation of the Transcarpathian Hungarian minority elite and the historical experience of everyday actors, which is articulated through collective (folk, vernacular, social) memory, represent non-identical analytical levels of social actions aimed at reconstructing the past. They have a different epistemological status, referential (intentional) structure, and functional properties; thus, their relationship is often characterized by a kind of opposition (for more details see \textit{Borbély 2017}). These differential characteristics are very precisely defined by Pál S. Varga, who argues that historiography is based on the Cartesian model of cognition — that is, the subject–object relationship — while memory is based on the modus of being-in-the-world — that is, existential experience. The two epistemological horizons form an operationally closed system, where the system of historiography is based on the binary of true/false — or, more precisely, verifiable/unverifiable — while that of collective memory is based on the functionally relevant/irrelevant binarism. Consequently, the former can be seen as a critically reflexive stance, while the latter is a different, automatic, traditionalist, and authoritarian stance (\textit{S. Varga 2012}).

35Sári Fedák (1879–1955), born Sarolta Klára Mária Fedák, was a renowned Hungarian actress, singer, and prima donna of Carpathian origin, who had a significant stage and film career both in Hungary and abroad, from the turn of the century onwards.

36Reformed pastor Lajos Gulácsi (1925–2016) was born in the Transcarpathian village of Fedorove [Tivadarfalva]. He was arrested by the Soviet authorities early in his career due to his religious activities among the Hungarian population of Transcarpathia and was sentenced to several years of forced labor (from 1949 to 1956). After returning from the labor camp in Kazakhstan, he served as a pastor in Transcarpathia for decades; he held important positions in the church leadership from the 1980s (bishop’s councilor, deacon, diocesan chief notary, and bishop from 1994 to 1998).
Occasionally, however, they aim to portray a unique, local characteristic or custom (the statue of the woman stringing peppers in Velyka Dobron [Nagydobron]).

2.1.d. Among the identity politics discourses of the post-socialist cultural elite, the most marginal role is played by religious and sacred (reverential) practices of monument building and mapping. These are generally aimed at the visual sacralization of the public spaces of the given communities, and sometimes at their denominational privatization and symbolic appropriation by the local Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, and Reformed communities (the Greek Catholic Way of the Cross in Berehove [Beregszász], 2013; the Calvary cemetery in Uzhhorod [Ungvár], n.d.; the limestone headstone in Kidesh [Kígyós]). The former four comprehensive discourses — mostly controlled by the minority Hungarian political-cultural elites — represent four different forms of historical

Mukachevo [Munkács], 2017; the statue of Gyula Illyés in Berehove [Beregszász], 1989). Occasionally, however, they aim to portray a unique, local characteristic or custom (the statue of the woman stringing peppers in Velyka Dobron [Nagydobron]).

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Fig. 10. Statue of Sári Fedák, Berehove [Beregszász] (Photo: Nóra Jakab; Fedák Sári, Beregszász húléanya — Gyerekkorom tündérvilága [Sári Fedák, faithful daughter of Beregszász — The fairy world of my childhood].) https://kmmi.org.ua/cikkek/hirek/fedak-sari-beregszasz-hu-leanya-gyerekkorom-tundervilaga. accessed July 1, 2023)

37Gyula Illyés (1902–1983), Hungarian poet, writer, playwright, editor, and translator, was one of the most influential leaders of the so-called peasant literary movement or folk literature.


39On symbolic space occupation practices among denominational/ethnic/national groups in great detail, see, for example, BODÓ – BÍRÓ 2000; FEISCHMIDT 2006; ILYÉS 2005; PETI 2008.
The first (a) represents history as continuity; the second (b) history as discontinuity; the third (c) history as exemplification; and the last (d) history as a sacralized time by means of certain institutionally created and maintained mnemonic-technical and heritage-constructing social practices.

2.2. Manifestations of intentional heritage objects — that differ from those above — include the official (educational, cultural) institutions of the Hungarian minority community in Transcarpathia. These institutions undertake to reproduce the national-cultural identity of the Hungarian ethnic community within the framework of the Ukrainian state. These formal organizations account for a significant share (about 13 percent) of the heritage elements included in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory. Among the network of institutions that use the Hungarian language, however, only a single educational institution (the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College, 1994) was included in the oblast register. By contrast, several small rural and urban community centers, village museums, and museums, as well as the only professional Hungarian-language theater in the region, are included in the list of values among public cultural institutions. These formal organizations are not only the dominant representational spaces of the minority elites’ heritage management (maintaining the ethnic-cultural diversity of the group) but are also very important actors in these spaces (managers, organizers, regulators). Foucault explicitly interpreted similar institutions that (also) serve the purposes of the politics of identity (e.g., museums) as a realized utopia — that is, as a counter-space (heterotopia) —, where, on the one hand, the internal power relations of a given society (i.e., everyday reality itself) are transformed, inverted, and reinterpreted, and, on the other hand, where familiar time is ruptured or suspended (Foucault 1999).

2.3. Famous figures (writers, poets, scientists, public figures, fine artists, applied artists, and folk artists) with closer or looser ties to the region, along with their oeuvre, work, and legacy, form a heritage group that is apparently different from monuments and minority institutions with a materialized (tangible, objective) reality. However, in fact, the two heritage groups are very similar in terms of its political functions. The most general characteristic of these heritage objects, which are reminiscent of public sculptures, is their powerful normativity: the representation and metaphorical expression of the imaginings of exemplary heroic acts — of “good” and “bad” lifestyles, of “moral” and “amoral” forms of community behavior, and of “glorious” and “unworthy” ancestors. Around 14 percent of the collected

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41For example: the firemen of Dertsen [Dercen] (n.a. = no data); Pál Nagy Beregszási, linguist and language historian (1750–1828); the work of György Csánádi, Transcarpathian local historian and newspaper editor (1931–2018); the work of actor Sári Fedák (1879–1955); the work of Sándor Fodó, Transcarpathian politician and university professor (1940–2005); the work of Simon Hollósy, painter (1857–1918); the work of Anna Horváth, ceramicist (1924–2005); the work of the poet Béla Kecskés (1941–1997); the work of Balázs Keresztyén, cultural historian (1949–2007); the work of Vilmos Kovács, poet (1927–1977); the work of Tivadar Lehoczky, local historian and archaeologist (1830–1915); the work of the painter and writer György Riskó (1955–2014); the work of László Sáláry, poet (1910–1943); the work of Menyhért Simon, poet (1897–1952); and the work of Kálmán Sütő, historian (1929–2013).
Transcarpathian values fall into this category, and most of them are more closely related to monumentalization practices serving the building of local identity (2.1.c.). Among heritage elements of this kind that serve the musealization of individual achievements (the “self”), heritagization efforts aimed at the work of contemporary Transcarpathian artists (living, with a significant oeuvre, or even at the beginning of their careers) appear particularly interesting. According to the available information, the youngest of the mentioned authors and artists is just 41 years old, and the oldest 82 (István Balázs, woodcarver, b. 1948; Lajos Czébely, poet, local historian, teacher, and folk musician, b. 1951; Tihamér Ferenczi, poet, b. 1941; Gizella Cipola, opera singer, b. 1944; Géza Fodor, poet and essayist, b. 1950; Mihály Kolodko, sculptor, b. 1978; Melinda Molnár and others involved in value-creating, tradition-conservation activities;42 Volodimir Petrusinec, maker of ornamental leatherwork and harnesses, n.a.; Róbert Tóth, painter, b. 1969; Endre Hidi jr., sculptor, b. 1982; and László Vári Fábián, poet, b. 1951). When the work of artists who are just starting out on their careers is presented as a life history that already has a certain completeness, it demonstrates, in my opinion, one of the most typical forms of the immediate heritagization (Deschepper 2018:7–9) of objects and processes, and ultimately of the present (the now).

2.4. Activities or phenomena (cultural events: village days, festivals, feast days; various examples of folk poetry and/or artefacts, customs regarded as traditional, etc.) that are more closely related to folk or popular culture (to the concept of folklorism) can also be included among the abovementioned heritages that have an intentional or commemorative value. The combined share of these, out of the 224 Transcarpathian values included in the oblast list, is less than a quarter of the total national-cultural values (21%). From a functional perspective, the heritage objects included here most often serve to reinforce some local or regional landscape identity (or an element of it), or to represent a symbolic and/or ritual community. However, it should be noticed that this is apparently realized by means of cultural goods that — in terms of their origin, embeddedness, and social use — include relatively few activity, object, or custom elements that are explicitly site-specific (linked exclusively to a particular village). From this point of view, quasi-local cultural goods — that is, cultural goods that are “non-local” but adopted, and thereby also represented, as such, or locally born and in existence for generations — also appear in a quite wide variety of forms:

2.4.a. They may, for example, take the form of events and activities belonging to contemporary revival movements: renewed, revived, rediscovered folkloric traditions, or various invented ones (cf. Hobson-Bawm 1983). In total, there are twelve such items in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory, representing about 27 percent of the larger category (2.4) above (Batiovo [Bátýú] feast days and customs; Dyida [Beregdéda] bridegrooms’ poems; Berehuifalu [Beregújfalu] tales; Easter Monday verses from Hat’ [Gát]; folk songs from Rafainovo [Rájfajnaújfalu], music making [name-day songs and verses] in Orosijevo [Sárosoroszi]; folk ballads and folk songs from Fornosh [Fornos], folk dances from

42Melinda Molnár (n.a.) is a librarian from Nove Szelő [Tiszaujheyl] and leader of the civil society organization Szeresd és tedd a jót (Love and Do Good). Together with others, “she organizes craft workshops in schools, kindergartens, camps, festivals, and village days, where they teach bead threading and woodcarving, create clay plaster plaques, gingerbread, bracelets from corn husks, and bread holders, or make forest huts and windmills out of matches.” Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory, Tiszaujheyl Heritage List. https://www.karpataljainepfoiskola.com/nevetlen/ (accessed July 1, 2023)
Vyshkovo [Visk]; and the Velyka Dobron’ [Nagydobrony] csárdás dance and Palm Sunday celebration). However, they can also appear in the form of political myths—which became widespread mainly after the regime change but which can be traced back far earlier in terms of their ideological and historical roots—constructed by the Transcarpathian minority elite around various historical and ecclesiastical figures and leaders in order to legitimize and historicize their own ethnic-national aspirations (e.g., the cult of Rákóczi in Shalanky [Salánk], and the veneration of Tódor Romzsa).

2.4.b. A slightly larger heritage group (comprising around 29%) is made up of the Transcarpathian festivals (gastronomic events and competitions: the Bene Peach Festival, 2016; the Jam Making Festival in Hecha [Mezőgécse], 2011; the Paprika Festival in Mala Dobron’ [Kisdoborny], 2008; the Halabor Traditional Gastronomic Day, 2013; and the Hecha [Mezőgécse] Pig Slaughtering Competition, 2007). Tradition preservation camps (the Kelemen Mikes Tradition Preservation Arts Camp in Shalanky [Salánk], 2004, and its predecessor, the Yurt camp, 1995) and contemporary gatherings in villages and small rural towns in the immediate and more scattered regions (the Meeting of Máramaros Royal Free Towns, 2009, Vyshkovo [Visk]; the Homecoming Village Day, 1995, Solovka [Szalóka]; the meeting of Transcarpathian Groomsmen, 2009, Solovka [Szalóka]) as well as village celebrations linked to certain historical-religious events (Turul celebrations in Vylok [Tiszaújlak], 1989; St. Stephen’s Day in Solotvyno [Aknaszlatina], n.d.; and the Pentecost Days in Hut [Gut], 1991).

2.4.c. Within the larger grouping of heritage objects that represent folk and/or popular culture, there are smaller proportions of folk art and craft objects (16%) and cultural assets that manifest certain elements of regional food culture (“craft” foods/drinks prepared from local ingredients and/or recipes, and the manufacturers that produce them) (12%). The

43Ferenc Rákóczi II (1676–1735) is a prominent and well-known figure in Hungarian history: as a high nobleman and prince of Transylvania, he was the leader of the first major national liberation struggle (1703–1711) against Habsburg absolutism. The cultic, heroic image surrounding his figure was the result of a longer historical process, which began already during the life of the prince but became pronounced at the end of the nineteenth century in Hungary (Cutunderlik 2013; Kincses 2020:434; Kőpeczi - R. Várkonyi 2004; R. Várkonyi 1961, 2006). In Transcarpathia, the image of Rákóczi as a benevolent prince who cared for the minorities living in the countryside, and as a symbol of the rebellious Hungarian minority, became an important rhetorical tool and topos of the Transcarpathian minority elite in the 1990s, which they used to articulate and historically legitimize the aspirations of the Hungarian ethnic community to autonomy within the new Ukrainian nation-state. However, the image of Rákóczi and his era preserved in the communicative and cultural memory of the local people — for example in the folklore tradition as tales, myths, and legends in predominantly sporadic, partial, and heterogeneous narratives — is presumably not identical with the heritage item listed in the inventory (the phenomenon identified as the Rákóczi cult), which has not yet been comprehensively and carefully analyzed (ethnographically and in terms of the history of mentality). For this reason, I do not treat the cult of Rákóczi in Transcarpathia as a group-level phenomenon (representing the identity of Transcarpathian Hungarians) but interpret it only as a powerful ideological project and construction of the politics of memory among the Transcarpathian minority elites.

44Born in Nagybockskó, in the southeastern part of present-day Transcarpathia, Tódor Romzsza (1911–1947) was a Greek Catholic priest and leading ecclesiastical figure. From 1944, he was assistant bishop to the Greek Catholic diocese of Munkács, and later, after the Soviet troops had entered the region, its first leader and bishop. He was executed by the NKVD in 1947 for political reasons. (He refused the apostasy of the Ruthenian and Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics of Transcarpathia — and their conversion to Orthodox Christianity — and the abolition of the Greek Catholic Church.)
Table 3. Distribution of cultural assets included in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory by settlement type and heritage element group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage elements</th>
<th>Type of settlement</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Nom.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II Monuments, statues, commemorative signs</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Educational and cultural institutions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV &quot;Folk-style&quot; popular cultural heritage</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Oeuvres and legacies of famous people</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI Natural values</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII Other</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
former are exemplified by Bereh [Bereg] folk weave, Shalanky [Salánk]-style barrels, hats, and waxed egg decoration, the Chomonyn [Csongor] sorghum broom, Velyka Dobron’ [Nagydobrony] folk costume, Hidi pottery,\(^{45}\) Velyka Dobron’ [Nagydobrony] painted Easter eggs, and Serednjé [Szerednje]-style barrels. Examples of the latter include pretzels from Astei [Astély], cheese from Shom [Som], kukó soup from Chop [Csap], Fedák cake from Berehove [Beregszász], the John Gaspar brewery (2014) in Berehove [Beregszász], Barna Nagy’s fruit juice manufactory in Fanchykovo [Fancsíka] (2015), and the chocolate factory in Bushtyno [Bustyaháza] (2006). These groups of elements often also appear as part of the abovementioned festivalization processes and tourist or other events (village festivals, fairs, music and art camps, conferences, meetings, etc.).

The relative proportions and numerical distribution of Transcarpathian cultural goods and heritage objects in the oblast heritage list (and the structure of the heritage discourses in the region) are illustrated in Table 3:

CONCLUSION

In the present study, I have addressed several characteristic features of Hungarian ethnographic approaches and theoretical-methodological paradigms that deal with cultural heritage, as well as certain cases of everyday social activities (such as the compilation of lists of local values and Hungarikums, monumentalization, festivalization, musealization, etc.) that are related to heritagization.

In Hungarian ethnographic discourse, the use of heritage as a relational concept derived from the transmutation of “tradition” — its structural/content-related transformation and change of function — is quite widespread; this use defines the criteria for conceptualizing a given phenomenon in relation to a normative basis (the initial form), the “original,” “traditional,” “peasant,” “folk” culture.

Based on the empirical examples presented above — that is, the concrete heritagization practices of the Transcarpathian minority elite (value collection, selection, value appropriation, listing) — we have seen, however, that they include heritage elements that can be identified academically as traditional, or as non-traditional (neo-folkloristic), indiscriminately. On this basis, it would therefore seem that this kind of “external” (academic) classification and division of cultural practices (traditional vs. non-traditional, organic vs. organized, functional vs. afunctional, etc.) does not follow criteria that take into account the “internal” cognitional and ontological systems of the studied communities. According to my approach, this is not at all the consequence of the culture of the groups studied and described by ethnography (i.e., from the substantial nature of the studied phenomena itself) but is rather a consequence of the discipline’s epistemological positioning, and its historically developed, regulative concept of culture.

From this point of view, it is remarkable that only one-fifth (21%) of the cultural goods included in the Transcarpathian Heritage Inventory — see Fig. 6 — are more integrally related

\(^{45}\)Born in Velyka Dobron’ [Nagydobrony], Endre Hidi (b.1944) is a potter, ceramist, and holder of numerous prestigious national and international awards and honors (Honored Folk Artist of Ukraine, 2002; Silver Cross of Merit of the Republic of Hungary, 2010; Imre Révész Award, 2015). His handicrafts and works of folk art are well known and popular throughout Transcarpathia.
to the contemporary use of folk/popular culture — that is, to the category of folklorism. Heritage-producing social activities cover a very wide semantic range. Even in itself, this means that the correspondences and similarities at the level of content — between tradition and heritage that is identified as non-tradition — cannot provide a sufficient basis for the elaboration of the academic criteria of the concept of heritage. Moreover, almost half (42.6%) of the cultural goods earmarked for preservation fall into the category of newly created cultural heritage — that is, heritage without historical depth (cf. DESCHEPPER 2018:6–7). In other words, it is explicitly aimed not at preserving past, historical acts (“traditions”) but rather at conserving, salvaging, and manufacturing the present as something to be saved.

This is in line with Harrison’s assertion, according to which “we must recognize that ‘heritage’ has very little to do with the past but actually involves practices which are fundamentally concerned with assembling and designing the future. (…) While heritage is produced as part of a conversation about what is valuable from the past, it can only ever be assembled in the present, in a state of looking toward, and an act of taking responsibility for, the future. We could almost say that the ‘new heritage’ has nothing to do with the past at all, but that it is actually a form of ‘futurology’” (HARRISON 2015a:35. My italics: S.B.)

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