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On the Contribution of Music and Musicology to the Recent Re-Shaping of Transylvanian Nationalisms

Hungarian nationalism and Romanian nationalism have, undoubtedly, a competitive and antagonist nature. In fact, not their nature is antagonist; actually, their nature and purpose are quite identical. Both nationalisms want the same things: domination, legitimacy, appropriation, ownership and expanding identity, all these in regard to the same object, which is Transylvania. They differ in the means and styles of their nationalistic approach, implementation and performance. The fact that, roughly said, to Hungary, Transylvania is an Hungarian land and to Romania Transylvania is a Romanian land, comes down to this very same fact. The main ideologically problematic issue between Romania and Hungary relates to and revolves around the problem of the political ascendancy toward Transylvania. In this respect, the Communist policy of brotherhood, as pretended and preached from 1945 up to 1989, was just hypocritical, failing to cool down the historical tension and ownership struggle, which have lasted between these neighboring states and intermingled nations for centuries. In the present essay I do not attempt to make a historical survey, nor a justification of this clash between nationalist ideologies and political interests. What I am interested in is the reflection of these conflicting nationalisms over the cultural spheres and over the scholarly sphere of musicological research. Thus, I will just mark, in a roughly comparative manner, the two different or just parallel types of nationalism (Hungarian versus Romanian) as they have been supported by musicological and ethnomusicological scholarship.[1]

If one can easily identify the source of this cultural belligerence in the roots of the specifically regional forms of nationalism, politics, and (problematic) economics,[2] the ethno-

1 Elements of this critique can also be found in: Marin Marian-Bălaşa, *Studii şi materiale de antropologie muzicală* (Academic Essays and Materials Pertaining to Musical Anthropology), Bucharest 2003, p. 203–219.

2 For the problems of backwardness and the making of the Central Europe see: *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe*, ed. by Daniel Chirot, Berkeley 1989, and László Kürti, »Globalization and the Discourse of Otherness in the ›New‹ Eastern and Central Europe«, in: *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe: Racism, Identity and Community*, ed. by Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner, London and New York 1997, p. 30–53. For the ›eternal nationalism‹ see: Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York 1997; Gilberg Trond, *Nationalism and Communism in Romania: The Rise and Fall of Ceausescu's Personal Dictatorship*, Boulder 1990; Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe*, Princeton 1998; Christian Giordao, »Affiliation, Exclusion and the National State: ›Ethnic Discourses‹ and the Minorities in East Central Europe«, in: *Rethinking Nationalism and Ethnicity: The Struggle for Meaning and Order in Europe*, ed. by Hans-Rudolf Wicker, Oxford and New York 1997, p. 175–192; Carl-Ulrik Schierup, »Multiculturalism and Internationalism in the United Sates and EU-Europe«, in: ibid., p. 111–126; Josep R. Llobera, »The Future of Ethnonations in a United Europe«, in: ibid., p 43–55; Hans-Rudolf Wicker, »Introduction: Theorizing Ethnicity and

musicological conflict under discussion became the subject of an open, critical and comparative study only very recently.[3] If in a previous essay I analyzed the history and the 20th-century incorporation of the political nationalisms in the folk music and the ethnomusicology of Romania and Hungary,[4] this time I try to finalize that analysis, focusing more on the consequences that took shape in the 1990s and matured within the first years of the 2000s.

The title of this paper is rooted in the conclusion one can draw from noticing what has happened in the field of the cultural competition that Romania and Hungary have performed during the last two decades. For more than a century, both Romania and Hungary have embarked on a battle for demonstrating the Romanianness, respectively the Hungarianness, of Transylvania. In this respect, and for the benefit of this political game, different types of folk, peasant and Gypsy music from Transylvania were all summoned to play a very significant, potent role. Moreover, the scholarly research, fieldwork collecting, recording, archiving, transcribing, publishing, distributing, learning and teaching, performing anew, touring abroad, analyzing and lecturing, all such scholarly gestures were equally subjected to the same political-nationalist goal; therefore they all stepped in with passion and fervor for demonstrating the Romanian, respectively the Hungarian, features and qualities of Transylvanian folk music. However, focusing on this unique ideological ideal and gathering around it a most popular support, during the last two or three decades Hungarians were very efficient. Whereas, in turn, Romanians have progressively proved themselves to be either less or no longer interested in such a political project; this is the reason why their performances within the offing of turning folk music into a nationalist beacon, discourse and ambassador, were ineffective. Using the arsenal of folk culture, the systematic support and promotion of this folk culture, as well as through the medium of scholarly folk music studies, within the last two decades Hungary has succeeded in convincing music consumers and musicologists worldwide that Transylvania is a

Nationalism«, in: ibid., p. 1–43 and Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History*, ed. by Felix J. Oinas, New York 1993. For folklore and folkloristic scholarly implications see: *Folklore, Nationalism, and Politics*, Columbus 1978; Hermann Bausinger, *Folk Culture in a World of Technology*, transl. by Elke Dettmer, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1990; Regina Bendix, *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies*, Madison 1997; Jane C. Sugarman, »Imagining the Homeland: Poetry, Songs, and the Discourses of Albanian Nationalism«, in: *Ethnomusicology* 43/3 (1999), p. 419–458; Marianne Mesnil, »Une flûte de Pan peu bucolique«, in: *Cahiers de musiques traditionnelles* 3 (1990), p. 35–43 and Claude Karnoouh, *Românii: Tipologie şi mentalităţi* (Romanians: Typology and Mentalities), transl. by Carmen Stoean, Bucharest 1994.

3 See the articles contained in *European Meetings in Ethnomusicology* 9 (2002): Marin Marian-Bălaşa, »Musics and Musicologies of the ›Hungarian-Romanian Conflict‹«, p. 4–44; Lynn Hooker, »Transylvania and the Politics of the Musical Imagination«, p. 45–76; László Kürti, »Ethnomusicology, Folk Tradition and Responsibility: Romanian-Hungarian Intellectual Perspectives«, p. 77–97; Craig Packard, »A Research Agenda for Studying the Hungarian-Romanian Ethnomusicological Conflict: Visits by the Ethnic Police to North America«, p. 149–159; Zoltán Szalay, »Interethnic Conflict? Reflections on the Problems Deriving from the Vast Common Cultural Repertoire of the Cohabiting Ethnic Peoples in Transylvania«, p. 98–113; Zamfir Dejeu, »Cultural Connections within Traditional Music and Dance in Transylvania«, p. 114–148.

4 See: Marian-Bălaşa, »Musics and Musicologies of the ›Hungarian-Romanian Conflict‹«, p. 4–44.

Hungarian land. Romania, on the other hand, has failed to demonstrate the Romanianness of Transylvania because of its inconsistent cultural politics related to traditional identity and musical folklorism. This is a long story cut short, which will be analytically re-formatted and retold in the following.

What Did Hungary Want?

The fact that the mainstream of Hungarian official ethnomusicology was conceived and developed as a tool within a nationalist project is nowadays very clear also to the Western, neutral/objective scholarship. Speaking about the theory of »old style« and »new style« songs – dear and typical to the dominant side of Hungarian ethnomusicology – and after observing and commenting on the brevity and erroneous simplicity of that dual characterization,[5] as well as stressing the common elements and the fact that features of the old style also appear in the new style, the old one being equally new, and the pentatonic system being common to all those theoretically devised styles, Philip Bohlman adds:

> This Hungarian construction of history out of folk-song style has clear nationalistic implications, and these are important to understand as ideas about European music. Transposition by fifth was important to Bartók because it was quite rare in Western and Central European music, but more common in Central and East Asian traditions. A style of music that utilized transposition by fifths, therefore, proved that the integrity of the Hungarian people had been maintained to some measure, at least since they left Asia to settle in Europe. The close relation of the old style to speech (parlando) also reveals an attempt to link music to the uniqueness of Hungarian culture, for the Hungarian language is not a member of the Indo-European family. Clearly, identifying song in the old style provided a strong argument for Hungarian nationalism. Recognizing that songs in the new style had been influenced from the outside – that their rhythms were regulated and loosened from their connection to language – made an equally strong nationalistic appeal. This interweaving of musical style, national history, and cultural ideology is such that we find it difficult to determine which characteristic of a song was determined for musical reasons, which for ideological reasons, and which for both.[6]

In fact, it was Bartók himself who launched such a trend, in which analysis was meant to identify ethnic and nationalistic characteristics, although the major mass of both amateur and professional ethnomusicologists might have thought they were given a politically innocent, or apolitical, method.

> Bartók remained committed to a national Hungarian character even after he had come to an understanding of the complex processes of cultural hybridization that occur over millennia. Both nationalism and cultural intermixture are celebrated in

5 Philip V. Bohlman, »The Musical Culture of Europe«, in: *Excursions in World Music*, ed. by Bruno Nettl e.a., New Jersey ³2001, p. 196–226, here: p. 203–204.

6 Ibid., p. 205.

> his oft-quoted and -discussed letter referring humanistically, but in stark contradiction to his earlier thinking, to a ›brotherhood of peoples‹. […] However, Malcom Gilles reminds us that in the continuation of the above passage, Bartók continues to project a plainly nationalistic ideal on top of the universally humanist one. He envisaged an integration of what either were (in the case of Arab music) or by this stage had become (in the case of Slovakian and Romanian music) foreign ethnic elements within a Hungarian-dominated style. He was not advocating a freewheeling pluralism, or internationalism, for his own music. Rather, Bartók argued that because ›character and milieu must somehow harmonize with each other‹ his ›style – notwithstanding its various sources – has a Hungarian character‹. In other words, his model of Hungarian culture, even at this *least* chauvinistic stage of his thinking on the subject, echoed Herder's isolationist-diffusionist model of German culture.[7]

> Yet while Bartók betrays in the essay on Slovak music a consciousness of the rising tide of fascism and the cultural oppression that went with it, he is keen to absolve Hungary from charges of deliberate cultural oppression. Hungarian cultural penetration was different, he seems to be arguing. Bartók's national self-interest is plain. But he was clearly floundering by this stage in the face of a mass of data about processes of folk music hybridization on the one hand and a conviction that art and non-art music operate in completely separate spheres on the other, together with a need to refine and even redefine political positions in tune with world events, all the while remaining at core a committed Hungarian nationalist.[8]

The same epistemological-ideological vein was followed during the entire 20th century. Thus:

> The official folk music in the 1980s was music with a message, above all an historical message about the displacement of national peoples and boundaries, and the power of folk music to effect their replacement at the centre of the cultural orbit generated from Budapest.[9]

> The pride of place that folk music enjoys in Hungary is only possible because of the extensive investment of symbolic capital in folk music. Folk musicians acquire national prominence, and as that prominence increases, so too does the potential export capital that it might bring. In the 1990s, Hungarian musicians paved their way into world beat with folk music, usually a dual repertory of centralized Hungarian repertories with traditions from the historical and geographic peripheries to destabilize and relocate the otherwise parochial borders. Folk music embodied and grew from a musical discourse of Hungarianness, and the stages of that discourse were very high indeed, for they raised questions not only of ethnic identity but of racial purity and of national integrity.[10]

7 Julie Brown, »Bartók, the Gypsies, and Hybridity in Music«, in: *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2000, p. 119–142, here: p. 133.

8 Ibid., p. 135–136.

9 Philip V. Bohlman, *World Music: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford and New York 2002, p. 65.

The Politics of the Tánchus Movement

Within this section I will neither retell the entire, detailed story of the Hungarian dance-house phenomenon,[11] nor will I launch my own thoughts on it. Instead, I will restrict myself to summarizing two positions, belonging to other scholars: one of a ›protective‹ nature, and one of a critical standpoint.

Usually, (most) scholars belittle the political significance and potency of the dance-house movement, stressing its artistic, revivalist, and recreational side. On this vein, Judit Frigyesi, one of the most prominent experts in Hungarian musical and musicological issues, pleads for the apolitical innocence of the movement, demonstrating that the music and the dance movement itself was in fact avant-garde, and that people did not look for a nostalgic evocation of the past – but on the contrary, for an art that appeared superior. »What we may call today the core of the Hungarian revival movement is undoubtedly the creation of the intelligentia«, Frigyesi argues.[12] But I wonder if anything was ever created by intellectuals with no political overtones and agendas? However, let's follow Frigyesi for a while:

> Many hoped to exploit the movement for nationalist aims, interpreting its orientation toward Transylvanian Hungarian music as a sign of Hungarian right-wing nationalist revival on the whole, the creators of the movement had no nationalist agenda. Some groups take utmost care to emphasize their nonnationalist attitude. But certainly not all revival events are devoid of nationalist overtones, and although the musicians rarely encourage nationalist expressions, they sometimes allow them. In the dance houses one often finds a map of greater Hungary evoking the period before World War I. Many of the intelligentia turned away from the movement because they feared that it would be used for political aims. […] The revival movement had a cultural significance far greater that could be expected in the case of most new developments within the world of musical entertainment. At first sight, it may seem almost absurd that a seemingly insignificant cultural movement could stir up such passionate feelings in Hungary. But, paradoxically, it is precisely because the music of the revival was considered ›art‹ (both by its creators and receptive public) that it was judged not only for its ›artistic‹ value but also became a national and political issue. […] In Hungary there had never been ›free‹ and ›noncommitted‹ art in the way it exists, for instance, in the United States. Since the sixteenth century, and even more obviously since Romanticism, Hungarian art has always been considered a crucial part of national life, or even more: the embodiment of a national desire in the social sense, the manifestation of communal thinking. This was not a question of official ideology, although it is true that the political establishment was always

10 Ibid, p. 66.

11 See Judit Frigyesi, »The Aesthetic of the Hungarian Revival Movement«, in: *Retuning Cultures: Musical Changes in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. by Mark Slobin, Durham and London 1996, p. 54–75; and László Kürti, *The Remote Borderland: Transylvania in the Hungarian Imagination*, Albany 2001.

12 Frigyesi, »The Aesthetic of the Hungarian Revival Movement«, p. 55.

> ready to exploit art for its own purposes. This happened not only in the Communist era but also much earlier: in the course of the nineteenth century, for the cause of the Revolution of 1848; at the end of the nineteenth century, for the sake of chauvinist propaganda; and from the 1920s until the end of the Second World War, for the promotion of right-wing and fascist ideologies. In fact, the abuse of a national cultural tradition was by no means as extreme during the communist period as it was during these other eras.[13]

Furthermore, Frigyesi states that, »The revival movement of the 1970s constituted a real revolution. It was motivated by two cultural desires: an avant-garde opposition of young people against the conception of art in general and against the intellectual's attitude toward folk art in particular.«[14] Now I would like to make wider known the interpretation Lászlo Kürti offers for the same, dance-house movement.[15]. Briefly, Kürti assesses that,

> The dance-house movement signifies a fundamental societal process through which literary populism, peasantism, and Transylvanianism were fused into a coherent set of ideas offering a sense of national unity and identity to Hungarians. This movement was […] a catalyst for the contestation of nationality issues between Hungary and Romania in the last decades of the twentieth century […], a unique ethnonational process that helped shape Hungary's post-communist national self. Aside from its nationalist qualities – which it certainly acquired by the mid-1980s – this movement could be easily classified as populist regionalism because of its identification with specific territorial and peasant cultural values.[16]

At the beginning, Kürti stresses, this was »quite an apolitical, harmless activity«; but its form of »neopopulist art« represented also »a folkloristic turn of politics«. The more it grew, the more it (was) turned into a fully, in the sense of being powerful and intoxicating, political instantiation and agent.

> The dance club down-played its nationalistic overtones and at the same time highlighted its seemingly internationalist stance. Moreover, it provided a model for neighboring Romania for the positive discrimination with which the Hungarian state treated its minorities. […] The grassroots neopopulist movement of the late 1970s succeeded, ironically, in achieving precisely what socialist education failed to accomplish since the 1950s – to teach Hungarian youth folk music and folk dance, as Zóltan Kodály had so ardently advocated. By the early 1980s, the movement gathered such momentum that it was able to develop into a powerful cultural and political force for Hungarian national identity.[17]

13 Ibid., p. 56–65.

14 Ibid., p. 65.

15 Though Kürti's well-aware ideas on this subject are distributed in several papers, in the following I refer to and quote mainly from the 6th chapter »Youth and Political Action: The Dance-House Movement and Transylvania« of his book *The Remote Borderland*, p. 137–164.

16 Ibid., p. 137–138.

17 Ibid, p. 145–146.

Thus, based on distilled folkloristic elements borrowed from the Transylvanian peasant tradition, the dance clubs turned into a forceful, dynamic anti-governmental and anti-communist movement. […] However, the dance-house movement was more important as a cultural-political force: it paved the way for the development of the populist Hungarian Democratic Forum, a political embryo formed at first by a loosely structured group of intellectuals that won the first free elections in 1990.[18]

The folkloristic movement, for that is how the dance house was recognized at first, slowly was transformed into something more serious as time went by, as inquiring minds began to question the origin of these dances and songs, especially the people who created them, their provenance, and their function in their native environment. This was the crucial turning point of the late 1970s, when the movement shifted into a revivalist, more politically oriented youth culture.[19]

By the start of the 1980s, youth from Hungary flocked to Transylvanian villages in increasing numbers. This form of cultural pilgrimage was watched with growing suspicion by Romanian border guards and the Romanian secret police. Initiated by the lessons at the dance houses, the youngsters' major aim was to witness and collect songs, to learn dance steps, to gather old pieces of embroidery, and to spend a few days observing ›colorful‹ rituals, weddings, and folklore. In this search of the national self, ›real‹ peasants were rediscovered by a new generation, which learned only about ›socialist‹ peasant workers in collective farms. To them, Transylvania was the place to see real and proper Hungarian peasants. In this way, the lost territory, Transylvania, and the Magyars there were once again found, reconquered, and reintegrated into the Hungarian imagination as its own. […] The rediscovery of Transylvania and its various cultural and political forms of representation in literature, television, cinema, theater, and popular culture led in a sense to the development of a new spirit of Magyarness.[20]

In conclusion, what the dance-house movement really achieved was a genuine contribution to create a transnational political discourse. For dance-house fans and neopopulists, state borders suddenly were seen as no borders at all. They identified Transylvanian Hungarian culture as remote and archaic and, moreover, that the borders between Hungary and Romania were not insurmountable. No matter how many miles apart they lived, for them, Transylvanians became the ›real‹ or ›proper Magyars‹ who were part of the Hungarian nation. Their non-communist and non-Romanian identities were seen as a testimony to their unwavering national identity – and this construct helped in fact to reconfigure new social relations both in Hungary as well as between Hungary and Romania. For this reason, the dance-house movement became a dangerous, offensive subculture to both the Hungarian and Romanian states as soon as elites openly identified themselves with the plight

18 Ibid., p. 147.
19 Ibid., p. 148–149.
20 Ibid, p. 150/157.

of the minority and diaspora populations in Transylvania. Now the state borders of Hungary suddenly were transcended and the borders of the nation reopened. On June 27, 1988, Hungarians in Hungary were able to mount the largest anti-state demonstration since the 1956 revolution in Budapest's Heroes' Square to express their unity with Hungarians in Romania. The remote regions of Transylvania, all interethnic to be sure but for the dance-house followers primarily Hungarian, represented the new borders, within which remnants of the national culture could be found.[21]

Within the Last Decade

In Hungary, both the public and private investment in folk music has brought fruitful political benefits, both in terms of popularity and territorial *cum* emotional recuperation. After 1989, the dance-house populist movement is still in full swing; except that it has acquired new and impressive commercial and touristic dimensions, surpassing its initial regional borders and becoming international. New activities appeared; in the following I list only a few:

1) The ›Final Hour‹ project, conceived and advertised by its initiators and contributors as an apolitical work,[22] it is, in fact, very political in its final results. Because the project consists of recording as much Hungarian folk music from Transylvania as possible and then turning it into a globally available commodity, it is not only the Hungarian traditional identity and heritage that are preserved: it is the imaginary representation of the Hungarianness of Transylvania that is forwarded and promoted, it is the feeling and pride of the Hungarian cultural excellence and alleged superiority that are, be they innocently or subconsciously, suggested or inferred. Like the dance-house movement, this recording campaign is an act of »folklorism«.[23] But folklorism is also a way of manipulating the illusion of »authenticity« or pristine condition,[24] which has always been a premise for political mobilization. This experienced illusion reaches its apex within the touristic-pilgrimage-like sojourns at the Hungarian music and dance summer workshops and camps.

2) Within the last years, in almost countless Transylvanian villages where consistent Hungarian communities exist, dance and music camps have mushroomed exponentially.

21 Ibid., p. 163.

22 See Béla Halmos, »The Táncház Movement«, in: *Hungarian Heritage* 1/1–2 (2000), p. 29–40 and Lászlo Kelemen, »The ›Final Hour‹ Folk Music Project«, in: ibid., p. 50–52.

23 Folklorism is »the process of a folk culture experienced at second hand. The concept addresses the widespread fact that folklore – in the widest sense, not limited to oral tradition – appears in contexts to which it originally did not belong.« Bausinger, *Folk Culture*, p. 127.

24 The last words of Bausinger's seminal volume are: »Folklorism is the means used to protect the allegedly essential folk culture from actual development, and it is done with the help of all the technology of culture industry. Folklorism makes it possible to pretend that the issue is the *Kyffhäuser* (legends), while the real movement of culture is carried by the principle of the *Kaufhäuser* (department stores), i.e. consumerism. Folklorism seems to preserve culture in a realm of the original and authentic; it denies the connection between culture and industry, which in reality has given folklorism its weight.« Bausinger, *Folk Culture*, p. 160.

On these mainly summer time occasions, youngsters and seniors from Hungary spend a certain period of time in these Transylvanian places, having great fun around the dance and music formal lessons and especially informal sessions. These camps are heavily advertised, also foreigners being invited and favored in order to get in touch with this revivalist folklorism, as well as to let themselves be impregnated by the sense of Hungarian belonging and identity, which irrepressibly results from the celebration and good time provided by the occasion. As already mentioned, the *in situ* celebration through music and dance turn out to be – indirect, less conscious yet effective – a celebration of Hungarianness; it surpasses any of the classic notes on the touristic value of folklorism,[25] and ends up being the nurturing and nourishing of feelings of appurtenance and expanding identity. For the memory of all attendants, the place where such sentimental experiences occur is the place that will legitimately bear the identity which was sentimentally induced.

3) The musical and choreographical tourism that is promoted by Hungarian agencies abroad also contributes consistently to letting foreigners identify Transylvania with Hungarianness. Tours from Western states or from Budapest guide Hungarians and foreigners through Hungarian communities in Transylvania – direct ethnic comparison is never on their agenda – and the unilateral information provided leads again to the construction of a point of view and a sentimental attitude favorable to Hungarians only. All these instances of fun-, tourism-, and business-making are, in fact, also ideological, political, ethnocentric, and nationalistic. It is not necessary for them to appear as such within the declared agenda of all the mediating agents (Hungarians from Transylvania or from abroad). In fact, most of the time they do not appear like that, or they even declare their non-, a-, or even anti-nationalism. Yet, in this field of culture, formal or public discourses rarely matter.

4) These days, the internet is full of websites promoting the Hungarian identity as based on folk music from Transylvania, and they are very instrumental in directly and indirectly convincing their visitors of the culturally dominant Hungarianness of Transylvania. This fact is easily realized by individuals, especially since Romanians do a pathetic job using folk music in order to express national cohesion and identity. Folk music websites making cultural demonstration through Romanian folk music are insignificant both in quantity and quality. Kürti[26] has shown how it was possible for the music of enthusiastic, professionalized amateurs to turn Transylvania into a myth and a mystification close to global commercialization and cyberspace imagination.

5) In full conquering expansionism, Hungarian ethnological sciences contribute to the discreet equivalence between Hungary and Central Europe; the process is intentional, its political agenda becoming clear especially when one witnesses the substitution of Hungary and Hungarianess with Europe and Europeanness. Similar to the shift of and from the

25 »Development of folklorism influenced by tourism: 1. tourists confront the local population with a standardized role expectation; they do not look for their equals, but for the powerful charm of the earthly and original. 2. Local people accept this expectation and seek to do it justice; they adopt the role demanded of them. 3. To the extent that this leads to conflict with their own norms they are playing a double role: among themselves and in the private sphere they are participating in economic and cultural progress; when dealing with tourists they are pretending to be living relics of a past era.« Bausinger, *Folk Culture*, p. 130.
26 Kürti, *The Remote Borderland*, p. 158–159.

Committee for Human Rights in Romania (an international agency founded in 1977) into Hungarian Human Rights Foundation (1984), which was a shift from transnational purposes to fully nationalist ones,[27] now the European Folklore Institute has changed into a solely Hungarian folkloristic institution. The periodical of this centre, which commenced as a multi- and transnational *Bulletin*[28], was turned into *Hungarian Heritage*, a periodical celebrating Hungarianness in exclusivity, after just a few years. By doing so, our colleagues have demonstrated that to them Europeanness means Hungarianness, an appropriation which also infers, indirectly but undeniably, at least marginalization if not rejection of other neighboring peoples. *Hungarian Heritage* is a European journal – if I may use a phrase by Julia Brown – »at the heart of cultural nationalism«[29] in early 21st century's Budapest.

6) The quasi-monopoly enjoyed by Bartók's personality over the international ethnomusicological and musicological scholarship: Indeed, referring to Central Europe, Bartók Béla appears to Western colleagues to deserve sole reference. Bartók is an international topic, accepted and supported by international musicological agencies, whereas there seems to be no Romanian composer or ethnomusicologist deserving half the attention and interest granted to Bartók. Working on Bartók is considered an international topic, whereas George Enescu, for instance, would hardly meet the interest needed to attract journals or research grants. Just have a look at the serial volumes titled *The Cambridge Companion*, each devoted to one prominent musical personality, where Bartók is honored with a collective volume[30] and Enescu is formally refused.[31]

7) The generalization in Hungarian ethnomusicology of the concept of ›Hungarian speaking territory‹ as a grand geographic unit for hosting unilateral, monoethnic references, classification, typologies, and especially quantitative field collections, is also a trend of effective political reinforcement. Over this huge, multicultural, multinational, multiethnic territory, many Hungarian ethnomusicologists approach the music of Hungarian ethnic communities, be they remote/isolated ones, with no regard to possible mixture, hybridization, interchange, and acculturation phenomena, with no interest in the music of other surrounding or cohabiting ethnicities, with sole focus on Hungarian, Hungarianness, and Hungarian-style of research. Thus, walled into this self-sufficiency at all levels, they convince themselves of the objectivity of their approach, and keep calling scholarly research by the same one-century-old infatuation name of ›science‹ used by the founding fathers of the local ethnomusicology.[32] Positivism and essentialism, plus the ethnocentrically cumulative policy of registering, assessing, identifying, labeling, qualifying technical-

27 Ibid., p. 132–135.

28 See also the review in: Marin Marian-Bălaşa, »Hungarian ›European Centre for Traditional Culture‹«, in: *East European Meetings in Ethnomusicology* 3 (1996), p. 102–105.

29 Brown, »Bartók, the Gypsies, and Hybridity«, p. 125.

30 *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók*, ed. by Amanda Bayley, Cambridge 2001.

31 Based on a personal investigation, this assumption was confirmed by people in charge at Cambridge University Press.

32 See the type of essentialism professed in: Szalay, »Interethnic Conflict?«, who, in complete solidarity with traditional trends in Central and East European musicology, calls »science« exclusively the identification of melodic scales, pitches, intervals, types, and other such conventional categories.

ly and theoretically the existent music as Hungarian, all such features that characterize the Hungarian ethnomusicology to a very large extent, qualify for a historically (imperial-) indebted, no-longer-Western, less modernist, anti-globalizing, nationalist-ethnocentric oriented paradigm. Yet, by admitting this paradigm, nationalist feelings and representations are fulfilled and nourished, the political lobby is supported, and an image of enlarged Hungarianness, expanded by promotion and commodification, is legitimated.

What Romanians Really Did

While the Hungarian nationalist ethnomusicology worked through inclusion and the demonstration of the Hungarian preeminence and superiority, the Romanian nationalistic ethnomusicology worked through exclusion, favoring the belittling of the presence of Hungarian folk music in Transylvania. Discreet as they were, Romanians' methods went from ignoring this folk music to over-seeing any Hungarian naming. Romanians never professed the type of comparativism Bartók and Kodály recommended – in fact, even if, they might have arrived at very similar conclusions, only in the opposite sense: as Bartók and Kodály saw Hungarian influence and dominance over Romanian repertoires and styles, Romanians would have surely seen Romanian influence and features everywhere in the Hungarian folklore from Transylvania. Yet, Romanians never studied the Hungarian folklore, and always let Hungarian ethnomusicologists be responsible for doing research in Transylvania. As a minor, curious yet symptomatic example, I will evoke here only the fact that, in the entire Romanian bibliography after 1940, no Romanian author correctly quoted Bartók's title of his 1913 volume. That collection, *Cântece poporale româneşti din comitatul Bihor (Ungaria)*,[33] was published by the Romanian Academy of Sciences, and contained Romanian pieces from a county which at that time belonged to Hungary. In a parenthesis, Bartók's title noted also this particular fact. Yet, all Romanian folklorists and ethnomusicologists, including collections and studies, which referred to the same repertoire and zone,[34] set the full stop immediately after »Bihor« when quoting Bartók's title. The following parentheses, containing the word ›Hungary‹, although printed by the Romanian Academy in 1913, disappeared. This might also be the reason why the continuation, which is, the same title also rendered in French – by Bartók himself – is no longer quoted by any Romanian. In fact, a small kind of a similar reply is given by the editor Benjamin Suchoff: he mentions the same volume without the Romanian title, by its second-half French title only, plus his own adding: »Arias from Bihor«[35].

Fearing the Hungarian assimilationist, inclusive and recuperating position, Romanian scholars dismissed interethnic comparativism to the same extent Hungarian colleagues

33 Béla Bartók, *Cântece poporale româneşti din comitatul Bihor (Ungaria): Chansons populaires roumaines du departement Bihar (Hongrie)*, Bucharest 1913.

34 Such as Traian Mîrza in: *Folclor muzical din Bihor: Schiţă monografică* (Musical Folklore from Bihor: Monographical Skech), Bucharest 1974.

35 See: Béla Bartók, *Rumanian Folk Music. V, Maramureş Country*, ed. by Benjamin Suchoff, text translation by E. C. Teodorescu, preface translation by Alan Kriegsman, with a foreword by S. V. Drăgoi and Tiberiu Alexandru, The Hague 1975, Reprint of 1923, p. xv–xvi.

dismissed it. In fact, it was already glossed over due to the obvious lack of cooperation and communication,[36] and the very few contemporary attempts have just made this gap more obvious[37]. On the other hand, in contrast with Hungarian musicologists, Romanians were exaggeratedly selective. When Romanians studied folk, traditional and ethnic music they deliberately ignored marginal, non-Romanian and Romanian-further-related music, whereas Hungarians paid attention not only to typically Hungarian categories but also to minor yet Hungarian-(far-)related categories. Romanian researchers decided to ignore whatever was ›tainted‹ by foreign influences, whether it came from the domestic otherness or from people from inside Romania. And, on the other hand, Romanians did not perform consistent cultural policies with regard to diasporic resources, whereas Hungarians had such a topic as a core policy. Romanians made no efforts to recuperate or integrate any of their remotely diasporic kinfolks into the paradigm of Romanianness. Thus, while Hungarian ethnomusicologists undertook research and wrote very consistent academic essays on Roma communities which bear more or less consistent links with Romanian language (Ardelean Roma, Boyash Roma, and the several branches of Vlach Roma, who are spread throughout Hungary, Serbian Vojvodina, and Slovakia), there were no Romanian scholars to ever research or write something on such groups. Even nowadays (August 2004) in Romania there seems to be no interest or attempt at considering these folks and their cultures more Romanian than Hungarian, or vaguely connectable to Romanian history, language or folk culture.

Another aspect in which Romanian musicologists were inactive is their internationally available literature. In fact, Romanians' internationally effective lobby was almost nonexistent. The Romanian-oriented literature in general cannot be compared, quantitatively, with the Hungarian-supportive one.[38] And if there was anything noticed by Romanians at length it was often a negative lobby.[39] As mentioned above, just by using the internet one can notice the lack of presence (i. e., quasi-absence) of Romanian lobbying, whereas there

36 See the articles by Marian-Bălaşa, Hooker, Kürti and Packard in: *European Meetings in Ethnomusicology* 9 (2002).

37 See the articles by Szalay and Dejeu in: ibid.

38 Samples of the Romanian anti-Hungarian nationalism, irredentism, revanchism and chauvinism, or at least strong demystification of the Hungarian revisionism, can be seen in: Traian Golea, *Transylvania and Hungarian Revisionism: A Discussion of Present-Day Developments*, Miami Beach 1988; and Laszlo Fényes, *Revisionist Hungary. Part II: Hungarian People Accuses*, Miami Beach 1988. The last mentioned work puts together two older books: *Revisionist Hungary* (p. 5–250), first published in 1935, and *The Hungarian People Accuses* (p. 251–310), written in 1934. The author named revisionism a driving political force in Hungary and accused Hungary of anti-democratism. A most recent yet almost completely ignored contribution is the mysterious work signed by Z. Dragoş, *Transylvania, Late 20th Century: Romanians Hunted Down in Their Own Country: Harghita, Covasna, Târgu Mureş, Tragic Testimonies (December 1989–March 21, 1990).* [No place/year].From the introduction (p. 5), it becomes obvious that the book was compiled soon in or after 1990. All ›documents‹ and testimonies were part of the Romanian Parliament investigation on the Hungarian-Romanian conflicting events in spring 1990, and their originals are in the Parliament's archive.

39 See this scholarly/exegetic anti-Romanianism illustrated in: Paul Nixon, *Sociality – Music – Dance: Human Figurations in a Transylvanian Valley* (= Studies from the Musicology Department 34), Göteborg 1998; and discussed in: Marin Marian-Bălaşa, »Romanian Folk Music Studies Abroad: Perceptions and

exist hundreds of Hungarian nationalist websites. As far as folk music is concerned, the Romanian offerring is marginal, almost nil – if compared with the plentitude displayed by the countless Hungarian networks. As mentioned, as far as folk music studies are concerned, and with reference to the musicological scholarship, I already stressed the confusion related to the equally ethnical and epistemological borders that Romanian musicology has set for itself, resulting in a poor, unfocused scholarly penetration, visibility, and promotion.[40]

However, perhaps the worst job was done inside Romania, mainly by the nationalist cultural activists, with regard to the internal folklore market, i. e. with regard to the popular tastes and traditional music consumption. The type of cultural policies the Romanian state and most of professional ethnomusicologists have officially applied for many decades have led the general public in Romania to hate Romanian folklore (or rather the dominant official folklorism), and, in the ›end‹ of the 1990s, to develop an increasing appetite for the Orientalized, Gypsy-Turkish genre and style called *manea*. In Romania there is no longer a real identification with the cultural Romanianness through an ethnocentric folklorism, despite the efforts undertaken toward this end by the entire arsenal of mass media, governmental institutions, and musicological programs, in fact, of the entire state-backed cultural, scientific, educational and managerial establishment. In fact, in Romania, if the state invests in folk culture it either unwittingly turns many Romanians against this culture (against a folkish self-representation) or deludes them by cultivating their outdated, nostalgic attachments of psycho-spiritual weakness. All in all, today one can easily see that the formally supported Romanian folklorism gets more and more condensed, whereas the Hungarian folklorism thrives.

Conclusion

The topic discussed here is linked to a multicentennial development of politics and ideologies, which I did not find very useful to present here, mainly because excessive historical literature is already available. My focus was to point out – including discourses beyond the cultural and scholarly – how strategies and gestures have somehow finalized this entire political ›conflict‹ through culture. Although the cultural and scholarly phenomena appeared at the beginning of the 20th century, this particular (cultural) ending of the political competition began in the late 1980s. Yet, only with its climax in the 1990s and the early 2000s can one consider the process of competing nationalisms as conclusive. Numerous cultural-political gestures in 2002 and 2003 confirm this, therefore I consider the ›novelties‹ of the last decade to have simply finalized some historical trends, resulting in the failure of the Romanian traditionally political nationalism and the success of the Hungarian cultural nationalism.

Representations«, in: *European Meetings in Ethnomusicology* 8 (2001), p. 111 – 139; like also in: Marian-Bălaşa, *Studii şi materiale de antropologie*, p. 173 – 201.

40 See Marin Marian-Bălaşa, »Romanian Ethnomusicologies: A Briefly Commented Bibliography of Academic Literature Published in International Languages«, in: *The World of Music* 43 / 2 – 3 (2001), p. 259 to 303, here: p. 259 – 263, and Marian-Bălaşa, *Studii şi materiale de antropologie*, p. 173 – 201.

Nowadays, at least in the Western perception, Hungarians manage a substantial part of the entire (mixed, multiethnic) cultural capital of Transylvania. One can say that, because of their emotional and artistic effectiveness, they took control over the promotion of Transylvanian folk culture abroad. Due to this, most of today's foreigners are convinced that Transylvania is – only or at least mainly – Hungarian, once ›annexed‹ (which means incidentally and unreasonably held) by Romania. In United Europe, however, not nation-states, but rather regionally constructed entities will dominate. Such an entity is now the all inclusive musical map of ›Hungarian speaking territory‹, in which Hungarians, Romanians, Gypsies, Germans, Slovaks, Serbs, Roma, and everyone else are generously embraced by the hegemonic aegis of Hungarian revivalist folklorism. Though one cannot say that a proper cultural hegemony is about to take place, one can say that there is a discursive predominance of cultural nature in the air, in which, exactly like in the 19th century, the Hungarian minority in Transylvania ›dominates‹, this time culturally, the Romanian majority. If anything has changed in this respect, it is only the fact that the delicate issue at stake is now being discussed, finally, for the first time in an open, relaxed way.

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Ethnic Dynamics and Viena Karelian Singing

The View from a Post-Soviet Karelian Song Culture

Since the Second World War Northwest Russia has been under pressure from rapid social, economic and political change. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the question of revived cultural and linguistic identities in Russia has become increasingly complex due to the rapid social transition and political uncertainty. My study concentrated on the change of singing among the Karelians in the period of 1920–2000 in Northwest Russia, so-called Viena Karelia, bordered on the west by Finland.

The changes in life in local villages have affected the occasions of singing and singers as well as repertoires. Modernization can be seen as an impact which creates new meanings connected to singing and songs. Somehow it also consolidates meanings which have been connected between the songs and cultural habits. The theoretical background of this study consists of the idea that through the meanings associated with musical occasions and singing, Karelians try to find their place in a changing culture.