

PERFORMING THE OLD WORLD, EMBRACING THE NEW: FESTIVALIZATION, THE CARNIVALESQUE, AND THE CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF COMMUNITY IN NORTH AMERICAN HUNGARIAN FOLK MUSIC AND DANCE CAMPS

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Every summer devotees of Hungarian folk music and dance attend camps in idyllic rural settings in Hungary, Romania, and North America where they study “authentic” repertoire with expert instructors. At such camps, traditional material is elevated on the altar of authenticity through constant comparison to the “real thing.” These comparisons underline the fact that North American camps are far away from the “homeland.” In other ways, however, these North American camps are their own homeland: they are a powerful nexus connecting people from different regions, creating what some frequent participants call an “instant community.” The unique character of these events is clearest at after-parties, when the “authentic” repertoire of scheduled programs is often displaced by popular forms from Hungary and Romania as well as genres from beyond the region. As the days and nights wear on, the atmosphere transforms from sacred rite to carnival. Drawing on fieldwork at camps in Hungary, Romania, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Quebec, and Michigan, I discuss how camps organizers and participants canonize “authentic” folk repertoire through conscious festivalization strategies. I then examine how the carnivalesque atmosphere of these camps both undermines purified concepts of “authenticity” and creates a sense of connection unique to North American camps.

Keywords: Festival, festivalization, carnivalesque, Hungarian folk music, Hungarian folk dance, revival, camp, diaspora, North American Hungarians

You cannot inherit culture. Ancestral traditions disappear rapidly unless each generation re-conquers them for itself.¹

Every year, a handful of camps (*táborok* in Hungarian) and weekend workshops across North America brings instructors from Hungary and Hungarian-speaking areas in neighboring countries to teach “authentic” folk music and dance repertoire, usually in idyllic rural settings. North American Hungarians and non-Hungarian dance and music enthusiasts travel great distances to imbibe au-

thentic traditions from these visiting experts. Despite the emphasis on authenticity, however, participants are acutely aware that they are far away from the “real thing.”

Frequent comparisons with source villages and activities in Eastern Europe also emphasize that these North American camps are only a substitute for the “homeland.” In another sense, however, these North American camps are their own homeland: as Kálmán Magyar wrote about the Hungarian Folkdance and Folk Music Symposium (Sympo) that he directs, they “become an instant community, a ‘Who’s Who in Hungarian Folkdance in America’.”² (For a listing of camps and other important events in North America, see *Table 1*.) The unique character of these events is clearest not at scheduled events but at spontaneous after-parties, when the “authentic” repertoire of scheduled programs may be displaced by popular forms from Hungary and Romania as well as genres from beyond the region, including North America.

Drawing on fieldwork at camps and workshops in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Quebec, in this article I first describe how these events establish their official ideologies of authenticity; second, I consider how participants further the canon-

Table 1. Selected list of Hungarian folkdance camps and workshops in North America with locations and dates of operation

Now ceased operation:		
Hungarian Folkdance and Folk Music Symposium (Sympo)	Enon Valley, Pennsylvania	1978–2002
Barátság [Friendship] Hungarian Dance and Music Camp	Mendocino Woodlands, California	1982–2001
Aranykapu Tábor (Golden Gate Camp)	Russian River Valley, California	2002–2005
One-time events:		
Tisza Ensemble 25th Anniversary Workshop	suburban Washington, DC	September 2002
“Le Buli” (The Party)	Laurentian Mountains, Québec	December 2002–January 2003
Ongoing:		
Ti Ti Tábor Hungarian Music and Dance Camp	Raft Island, Washington	1992–present
Cifra Tábor Hungarian Dance camp (both children’s and adult camps)	Niagara Falls, Ontario	1990s–present
North American Hungarian Festival	Montreal, Québec	2002–present (irregular; 3rd took place in February 2007)
Csipke Tábor Folkdance and Folkmusic Camp	Sauk Valley, Michigan	July 2007–present

ization and festivalization of Hungarian folk music and dance; and finally, I examine how the carnivalesque atmosphere of these camps both undermines purified concepts of “authenticity” and creates a sense of connection unique to the North American camps.

A Brief History of Organized Hungarian Folkdance in North America

North Americans of Hungarian descent, like other diasporic communities, have long used music and dance as a point of focus for community events. In particular, folk music and dance act as an organized activity for youth, a social activity to inspire enthusiasm about their ethnic identity and to ensure continuity of that identity into the next generation.

Embracing folk music and folkdance as a marker of ethnicity did not always come naturally for the Hungarian migrants of the mid-twentieth century. Both the post-Second World War wave of immigrants and the larger group that arrived in the aftermath of the 1956 revolution were largely urban and middle to upper class in origin, and Andor Czompó, an early member of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble who migrated to the US after 1956 and became an important teacher of Hungarian dance in the west, reported to me that when he first began teaching in the United States some parents were upset to find their children costumed in “peasant clothes” (personal communication, September 2002). They seemed to overcome this scruple, though, for as the children of the revolution came of age in the 1960s and 1970s, folkdance groups in New York, New Jersey, the San Francisco Bay area,³ Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Calgary developed and became fixtures in the Hungarian communities in those places. Although these locations where Hungarian folkdance developed earliest are mostly larger cities with substantial Hungarian communities, groups have also come into being in cities with smaller Hungarian populations: Washington DC, Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, San Diego, Los Angeles, Spokane, and Detroit, among others.⁴ Participants in these groups include not only mid-century immigrants and their children but also more recent immigrants and substantial numbers of non-Hungarian dance enthusiasts.

The Dance House Movement and the Ideology of Authenticity

Hungarian folkdance as currently practiced both in “the homeland” and in North America must be understood in the context of the *táncház* (dance house) movement, which redefined what Hungarian folkdance meant in North America as it had done in Hungary. Before the advent of the dance house movement, the

folkdance of urban Hungarians in both Europe and North America was usually highly choreographed and stylized, influenced by Moiseyev's dance troupe in the Soviet Union and the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble, which was modeled after it. In contrast, in the dance house setting people learn to dance regional styles in an improvisatory fashion, thus developing what Kálmán Dreisziger, director of the *Gyöngyösbokréta* Ensemble in Montreal, calls a "living relationship ... to the traditions they practice," a relationship that, according to Dreisziger and other Hungarian folkdance leaders around the world, those who learn folkdance exclusively through choreographed routines do not have.⁵ New Jersey folkdance maven Kálmán Magyar also emphasized how the conception of Hungarian folkdance shifted in the groups with which he was involved, and he stated that by the early 1980s the pedagogy at the Hungarian Folkdance Symposium that he organized was "totally in sync with the dance house movement" (personal communication, June 2002).

Incidentally, one element of the antipathy towards the contemporary tradition of staged choreography was anti-Soviet and anti-communist, a rejection of the style developed by Igor Moiseyev's ensemble in the Soviet Union and propagated throughout the Soviet sphere of influence.⁶ But the ideology that has evolved out of the dance house, which has since completely transformed Hungarian staged folkdance as well (see Overholser 2008), also rejects the commercialized folk dance of the West. In his program notes on a 2000 stage show by a Hungarian company touring North America, Kálmán Dreisziger both emphasized improvisation and implicitly contrasted it with the Irish megahit *Riverdance* when he wrote:

In CSÁRDÁS! there are no artificial geometric forms in the choreography and there is no precision drill teamwork... the dancers are often left to improvise and show off their individual character and ability. The total effect is a more natural, more authentic presentation ... (Dreisziger 2000, 7)⁷

Authenticity and Diversity in the North American Dance House Movement

Béla Halmos, the violinist in Budapest's first dance house band, describes the dance house as "a form of recreation in which folk music and folk dance appear in their original forms and functions as the 'native language' – musical language and body language – of those taking part" (Halmos 2000, 29). A recent study conducted at Budapest's annual Dance House Festival (*Táncháztalálkozó*) suggests that recreation may be an even more important motivator than the fact that this is a "native language" or other kinds of national feeling (Fábri and Füleki 2006, 55). This conclusion may apply even more in the North American context, given the substantial participation by non-ethnic Hungarians. The appeal of the dance house

reaches well beyond ethnic sympathies or nostalgia for the homeland. It also emerges from the musical and choreographic achievements in the repertoire, particularly the previously mentioned emphasis on improvisation, the almost mandatory use of live music, and long forms (dance cycles can last anywhere from five minutes to several hours). Both participants and leaders often interpret these characteristics as “more authentic” than the fixed choreographies and pre-recorded music so often used in the International Folk Dance [IFD] movement in the United States. The dance challenges of Hungarian repertoire appear to have been what drew many non-Hungarians in the United States from IFD into Hungarian dance. Ferenc and Mary Tobak, the directors of the *Barátság Tábor* [Friendship Camp] that operated in the Bay Area for almost twenty years, report that roughly sixty to eighty percent of the participants there (depending on the year) were non-Hungarians, most of whom “had been involved in International Folk Dance and at some point became more interested in the Hungarian dances [... and] music” (email communication, November 2006). Their assessment is supported by my field contacts in the Eastern half of North America. Debbie, a New Yorker and avid dancer of many styles whom I met at the Hungarian Folkdance Symposium (or Sympo) in western Pennsylvania, told me she was first exposed to Hungarian dance through what she called the “three-minute gee-whiz csárdás” with an International Folk Dance group. She had a turning point when she attended a folkdance festival in the Bay Area, where an expert dancer “dragged [her] through the *Mezőség*,” the complex Transylvanian Hungarian csárdás that ends most dance house evenings. At this point she was hooked (personal communication, June 2002). Kathy, the leader of a folkdance group in the Washington, DC area said that she and her group had begun as an International Folkdance group. They gradually shifted to the Hungarian repertoire not due to ethnic connections but simply because they found it more interesting (personal communication, June 2002). Several non-Hungarian dancers I met in North American camps have now traveled to Hungary and Transylvania, some multiple times for extended periods, in order to study the dances and their context in more depth.

In the Canadian Hungarian dance scene, International Folk Dance is not as important a source of participants, but there are still important international elements. *Le Buli* [“The party” in French and Hungarian], the 2002–2003 New Year’s Eve camp I attended northwest of Montreal, was a trilingual experience (Hungarian, English and French, the language of the several Quebecois who attended, members of Montreal’s *Bokréta Ensemble* and a handful of others. Additionally, *Le Buli* was co-organized by a Peruvian-born member of *Bokréta*, and a Toronto-based band that played at the camp featured a Polish lead violinist and lute player (although the rest of the band were ethnic Hungarians).⁸ Overall, my experiences at dance house events in both the United States and Canada have been

of a more multicultural character than those in Hungary and Romania, even though the focus in all these cases is on similar, even identical, repertoire.

Camps as Festivals

Despite the ethnic diversity of those interested in Hungarian folkdance in North America, however, the combined numbers of Hungarian and non-Hungarian dancers in any given community are relatively small, and the number of musicians able to play for the dance houses is tiny. The presence of performing groups does not translate into a regular dance house scene (as opposed to regular rehearsals). In North America only the New York/New Jersey community can support a dance house as often as once a month, and even there events are usually less frequent. As traveling great distances for an evening of dance is not always practical and such an evening can rarely provide enough instruction time for those who want to learn new material, traveling to a camp offers an important outlet for North American dance. I have listed major camps in North America in *Table 1*.

Camps share the social and pedagogical functions of a regular dance house, but unlike a regular dance house, which lasts only a few hours, camps last several days. In Europe, such camps have developed into a significant tourist niche attended mostly by regulars in the Hungarian dance house scene. In North America, in contrast, the North American Hungarian folkdance community is formed for and through camp, an “instant community” in the words of Kálmán Magyar (quoted above) and of some participants with whom I have spoken. Because of this function in the sustenance of a community, the North American camps, though not as numerous or well attended, are, I argue, even more important to Hungarian folkdance on this continent than the ones in situ are for the movement in Europe. They allow for a coming together of a wide range of participants from the East Coast to the West, with time both for focused transmission of the “authentic tradition,” guided by guest teachers of both dance and music from Hungary or Transylvania, and for partying and catching up with friends. Some weekend urban workshops have this quality, but camps facilitate a “virtual village” feel both through their relaxed rural setting and by housing participants closely together.

Hungarian dance camps in North America, like North American’s Hungarian-dance movement as a whole, reflect larger parallel institutions in Europe, where there are dozens of camps every summer. Both Hungarian and North American camps elegantly fit anthropologist Beverly Stoeltje’s definition of festivals as “collective phenomena rooted in group life,” which “express group identity through [...] memorialization, the performance of highly valued skills and talents, or the articulation of the group’s heritage” (1992, 261), in this case the transmission of folk music and dance traditions from the Carpathian Basin, especially

Transylvania. Most camps in Hungary and Romania bring in bearers of these traditions, dancers and musicians from the villages where the material taught at the camp has been collected. These “tradition bearers” (*hagyományőrök*) are revered as representatives of the “pure source” (*tiszta forrás*) of which Béla Bartók wrote, the only place the “authentic” tradition can be found.⁹ Eastern European camps also draw authority from their geographical proximity to the village. Participants at North American camps are always aware that they are far removed from that “pure source,” although as the work of Victor Turner and others shows, festival rites have the power to transform. Thus according to the website for the camp *Ti Ti Tábor*, Raft Island, Washington, becomes “virtual Hungary” for a week. According to one organizer of “Le Buli,” a youth camp in the Laurentian Mountains became the remote Transylvanian village of Csíkszentdomokos (Sândominic).¹⁰

A few of the imported instructors at North American camps qualify as “tradition bearers,” as either dancers or hereditary Romani musicians who grew up in the home region of the music and dance “dialect” of which they teach.¹¹ But they are exceptions. Most of the instructors at North American camps are city-trained, either leaders of dance troupes or teachers in the urban dance house revival in Hungary or in Transylvania. Usually “tradition bearers” at the North American camps I have attended are present only virtually, through audio and video recordings.

In fact technology saturates these camps. Near the end of most North American camps, a “video review session” encourages participants to film the dance teachers demonstrating the dances that have been taught, using an array of state-of-the-art equipment. With these video review sessions, participants have a memory aid and are more confident that they have accurately received the tradition. In this sense, these sessions are a component of festivalization: as Bakhtin writes, they “sanction the existing pattern of things and reinforce it.” (Bakhtin 1968, 9) In this case the “existing pattern of things” is the existence of one authoritative, “authentic” version of the music and dance, even with room for improvisation.

Learning and recording these dances and music transforms us as campers not into “peasants” but ethnographers, as we model ourselves after idols like pioneering folk music scholars Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály and folk dance scholar György Martin. We can see the elevation of the participants’ role from mere observer or student into collector through the active role they might take in policing the text they have recently learned. At the end of most of the video review sessions I have witnessed, one of the participants will point out to the teacher/demonstrator some figure that has been left out and ask that it be added. On the other hand, the goal of creating a clear “authentic text” for video leads to activities that are not associated with traditional village culture, such as moving demonstrators around the “stage” to make sure viewers can see clearly or get better lighting and camera an-

gles and worrying about some of the problems that arise from the operation of all this technology. At the 2002 session I noted the bemused comments of the Hungarian guest musicians and watched while one of them photographed the array of cameras just as I did.

The Carnival Element at Folkdance Camps

But it is not only the serious work of learning the authentic tradition that draws people back to these camps, it is also the carnival atmosphere that lives alongside this serious transmission of the authentic tradition. To cite Bakhtin, whereas “official feast asserted all that was stable, unchanging, perennial” (1968: 9),

Carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order ... This experience, opposed to all that was ready-made and completed, to all pretense at immutability, sought a dynamic expression; it demanded ever changing, playful, undefined forms. (Bakhtin 1968, 10)

Within the camp but outside the bounds of the official events (classes, evening dance houses, and the review session), in spaces occupied not by transmission or recording of the tradition but by play (particularly at after-parties), the anxieties of maintaining the authentic tradition fall away. It is in these settings where people indulge in repertoires outside the bounds of “authentic Hungarian folk music.” A primary example is Hungary’s composed folk-style song tradition, *magyar nóta*. Scholars since Bartók and Kodály have vilified this tradition as inauthentic or “fakelore,”¹² and it is rarely heard in regular dance houses. At *Le Buli*, however, during several of the breaks between dance sets, our guest star musician, Rozália Duduj of Csíkszentdomokos in Eastern Transylvania, accompanied the crowd in *nóta* singing on the cimbalom. After the more “official” dance program ended on New Year’s at about 2:00 AM we moved to a room in another building and kept singing until well after dawn. Many in the North American Hungarian community know these songs and appear to associate them with nostalgia for the homeland, despite the “official” condemnation of this repertoire by the dance house movement.¹³ When I interviewed Kálmán Dreisziger, director of Montreal’s Bokréta Ensemble, during Sympo 2002, he used “Az a szép,” a *nóta* by Pista Dankó (1858–1903), as an example of this “inauthentic” genre. At the end of that year at *Le Buli*, this same song became a site for carnivalesque hybridization. Not only did many of the participants sing along lustily, but one of the most enthusiastic singers, a Hungarian-American dancer-musician, also danced a strutting dance somewhat inspired by hip-hop. By the outlandish way he brought together old-fashioned urban Hungarian popular music with contemporary urban Ameri-

can movement vocabulary, this dancer illustrated to me the way one Hungarian in diaspora was able to bring together the so-called “old” and “new” worlds.

Another event, during the *Csipke Tábor* in 2007, brought together additional repertoires from outside the usual bounds of dance house repertory. When the evening of standard dance house repertoire had come to a close (ending, as is usual in dance house circles, with the *Mezőségi csárdás*), the group spent some time gathering and snacking around a campfire. After a few hours, the male dance instructor began to sing songs from Órkő, a Romani settlement near Sfântu Gheorghe (Sepsiszentgyörgy) in the Székely region of Transylvania. The songs and dances of Órkő have recently been taught at some dance house camps in Transylvania, but their most remarkable feature for much of this audience (at least those who understood the Hungarian-language text) was probably their sexually explicit nature and the style of accompaniment using a water can and oral bassing,¹⁴ the latter almost always performed by men, but in this case, much to the amusement of the observers, by a handful of women. This singing eventually developed into an extended “Gypsy set,” featuring a handful of tunes in the popular “*mahala*” genre (also known as “*manele*” or “*muzica orientala*”), a Romanian popular music of Turkish origin which István Pávai singled out in a 2003 lecture titled “That which does not belong to the tradition.”¹⁵ While many danced the somewhat freestyle mahala, a Bulgarian immigrant who dances with a Washington DC based group led a *čuček*, a line dance associated with Bulgarian Roma which uses the same rhythm, much to the enjoyment of many participants who were alumni of International Folk Dance. The introduction of repertoire from beyond the official boundaries of the dance house (indeed, beyond Hungarian music and dance) became a highlight of the carnival space of this after-party.

Conclusions

The catholicity of repertoire choice on that particular evening and the spirit of absurdity and improvisation of these camps in general infuse them with the “sense of the gay relativity of prevailing truths and authorities” that, according to Bakhtin, allowed the camp to construct a “second world of folk culture” (1968, 11) through the carnivalesque mode, or to invoke the Kodály quotation I used as an epigraph, to allow the next generation to “re-conquer the ancestral traditions for themselves,” alongside these other unorthodox elements. I believe that it is this element that makes North American camps work. Unlike Hungarian and Romanian camps, most North American camps are not able to bring in “authentic tradition bearers.” Moreover, the North American camps are always already “inauthentic” and mediated, based solely on their distance from the “pure source.” Since the late 1990s the number of camps operating in Hungary and Romania has

mushroomed, and some might argue that the North American camps are no longer necessary when travel to “real villages” is so much more convenient than it once was.¹⁶ But even when the camper makes the pilgrimage to a “real village” in Transylvania to learn the dances and music of that village, the place is both less and more than it would be in the absence of the camp. Certain contemporary practices, including popular musical genres like the mahala (see Hooker 2006, 56–57), are suppressed or pruned away, while many modern appurtenances, such as registration fees, regular schedules for classes and meals, musicians who do not need tipping, intensive music and dance pedagogy, not to mention souvenir T-shirts and CDs and the presence of hundreds of outsiders, are added. A camp in a Transylvanian village thus becomes a simulacrum of itself, an actuality and a virtuality “at the very same place.”¹⁷

In contrast, North American camps tend to be more intimate and, because of the smaller number of camps available on this continent, draw a large percentage of “repeat customers,” facilitating the constitution of the “instant community” Kálmán Magyar described as a feature of the *Sympo* and perpetuating it across the continent. A quotation from the web announcement of the three-day (and night) Third North American Hungarian Dance House Festival, held in Montreal in February 2007, both captures the community-forming function of North American Hungarian events and hints at the carnival that awaits those who attend:

Who will you see?

All your friends and acquaintances from that last-best festival, from that Symposium 10 years ago, from that pálinka-soaked Transylvanian camp...

Musicians and dancers (maybe even dance groups) from, like, Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Washington, New York/New Jersey, Detroit, Cleveland, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. Of course.¹⁸

My experiences at North American camps and conversations with other participants indicate that the concept of “instant community” evoked here, in addition to being an advertising slogan, is something that participants in that and other North American camps and workshops do value and talk about. Although the passing of the *Sympo* and *Barátság* camps is symptomatic of financial and organizational struggles that this modestly-sized affinity group faces in North America, other institutions, *Ti Ti Tábor* in Washington state and *Cifra Tábor* in Niagara Falls, are thriving, and new ones, such as the *Csipke Tábor* in Sauk Valley, Michigan, outside of Detroit, are off to a very promising start. To some, they might seem like a poor substitute for camps in Hungary and Romania, since like those institutions they justify their existence by offering a sort of “festival of tradition,” the opportunity for Hungarian dance and music enthusiasts to add to their repertoire, refine their skills, and learn more about traditional expressive culture in Hungar-

ian-speaking Eastern Europe, a function that arguably could be better served in situ. For both North American Hungarians and non-Hungarian dance enthusiasts, however, the peculiar brand of play found in these camps sets them apart. The specifically North American Hungarian version of the carnivalesque mode is crucial to sustaining Hungarian folk cultural activities on this continent.

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Notes

- ¹ On the page "About Bokréta" [Gyöngyösbokréta Ensemble, Montreal Hungarian folkdance ensemble], written by artistic director Kálmán Dreisziger, <http://www.bokreta.ca/AboutUs.htm>, accessed November 5, 2006.
- ² In American Hungarian Folklore Centrum (AHFC) – Amerikai Magyar Folklórközpont, "About the Hungarian Folkdance and Folk Music Symposium", <http://magyar.org/index.php?projectid=3&menuid=86>, accessed November 5, 2006.
- ³ The Eszterlánc Magyar Népi Együttes of the San Francisco Bay Area, formed in 1977. For more information, see "Hungarian Online Resources (Magyar Online Forrás)" <http://hungaria.org/han/index.php?topicid=703&messageid=758>, accessed November 5, 2006.
- ⁴ A useful source for North American Hungarian folk music and dance organizations is the American Hungarian Folklore Centrum's "Hungarian Online Resources", <http://hungaria.org/han/index.php?subcategoryid=36&type=2>, accessed May 27, 2008.
- ⁵ On the page "About Bokréta," written by Kálmán Dreisziger, <http://www.bokreta.ca/AboutUs.htm>, accessed November 5, 2006.
- ⁶ For more on the role of the Moiseyev Ensemble in the history of staged folk dance see Anthony Shay's *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002), 57–81.
- ⁷ The reference to, and rejection of, "show dancing," particularly better known styles of staged folkdance, is explicit in the following quotation from "About Bokréta": "Our repertoire is free of the artificial bravado so loved by 'show' tradition (whether Broadway or ballet – whether Riverdance or Moiseyev)." [From Kálmán Dreisziger's notes on the webpage "About Bokréta", <http://www.bokreta.ca/AboutUs.htm>, accessed June 1, 2008.

- ⁸ A series of anthems sung at midnight on New Year's Eve – the culmination of the four-day camp – further illustrates the international character of the event: depending on language competence, we sang the Hungarian national anthem; the “Székely Himnusz” (Transylvanian anthem); “O Canada”; the Quebecois anthem; the Star-Spangled Banner; the Polish national anthem; and finally Auld Lang Syne.
- In a related point, Kálmán Dreisziger writes proudly of the “multicultural nature” of Montreal's Gyöngyösbokréta Ensemble, which he directs, in the webpage for the group <http://www.bokreta.ca/AboutUs.htm>, accessed November 8, 2006.
- ⁹ Bartók used this expression as the closing line of the text to his *Cantata profana* – “Only from pure sources/springs” (Csak tiszta forrásból); following the 1936 Hungarian premiere of the work, in the words of Klára Móricz, this phrase “was soon interpreted as expressing the essence of Bartók's entire oeuvre” (2000: 244). Bartók also used concepts of purity vs. impurity in a handful of his essays (see Móricz 2000: 248–249) and emphasized the importance of the untainted rural source in several of his writings on folk music research methods, perhaps most notably “Why and How Do We Collect Folk Music?” (Bartók 1976 [1936]: 13). The expression *tiszta forrás* is still a common epithet in references to Bartók and folk music in Hungarian folk music circles.
- ¹⁰ For information on *Ti Ti Tábor*, see <http://www.titabor.org/>, accessed May 28, 2008. The reference for “Le Buli” is recorded in the author's field notes for December 31, 2002.
- ¹¹ The exceptions that prove the rule are Csaba and Ági Sándor, dance teachers for Le Buli, the New Year's Eve camp I attended in Canada in 2002–2003, featuring the dance and music of Csíkszentdomokos. Publicity for this camp advertised that they had grown up in the region and had been doing its dances all their lives. However, as the leaders of a dance troupe in Csíkszentdomokos and long-time participants in the dance house movement in Transylvania (Csaba spent his university years in Cluj dancing in dance houses there, and in recent years the couple has appeared at dance house camps in Transylvania demonstrating and teaching dances of their home region), the Sándors do not fit the profile of “authentic tradition bearers,” who should be those who have traveled the least and had little to no education (see Bartók 1976 [1936]: 13). Csaba Sándor's presentation during “Le Buli” of the folkdance customs of Csíkszentdomokos, illustrated using videos he made of the village's “real” tradition bearers, members of the previous generation, performing the music and dance of the village, further positioned him as a semi-professional expert rather than a tradition bearer.
- ¹² See among many other examples Bartók's 1911 statement that “these amateur compositions [...] are not even representative of national music, since they are not Magyar but Gypsy-type music.” (Bartók 1976 [1911], 301)
- ¹³ I base this on observations made at a variety of events and a handful of conversations since 2000. Jim Cockell, violinist and leader of the Edmonton, Alberta based Cifra Hungarian Folk Music Ensemble, also addresses this topic in his unpublished essay “Folk or Fake? ‘Gypsy Music’ and the Construction of Hungarian Identity.”
- ¹⁴ That is, rhythmic accompaniment patterns of non-lexical, often guttural, syllables made with the voice. For further description of these elements, see section 4 of Irén Kertész Wilkinson, “Gypsy [Roma-Sinti-Traveller] Music,” in Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/41427> (accessed June 2, 2008).
- ¹⁵ Fieldnotes for July 16, 2003.
- ¹⁶ I've heard some say “why pay all that money to go to Sympo or *Ti Ti Tábor* when I could just go to Transylvania.”
- ¹⁷ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 131. Both in spite of and because of the em-

phasis on the “authentic,” the dance house movement has transformed the meaning of whatever the original might have been. Baudrillard’s concept of simulacrum thus resonates strongly. This quotation from his essay “The Precession of Simulacra” is particularly apt: “When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality [...] an escalation of the true, of the lived experience; a resurrection of the figurative where the object and substance have disappeared.” (Baudrillard 2001 [1983], 1736)

¹⁸ See “Bokreta Home Page,” <<http://www.bokreta.ca/index.html>>, accessed November 9, 2006.

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