Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Communicatio, **2** (2015) 7–45

Folk Culture on the Internet: Use, Context, and Function[1]

András Vajda
PhD, lecturer, Sapientia University,
Faculty of Technical and Human Sciences, Târgu Mureş,
Department of Applied Social Sciences, Târgu Mureş/Corunca 1C
vajdandras@yahoo.com

Abstract. What happens if folk tradition is not externalized in books and archives but is uploaded to the World Wide Web? What is the guiding intention of the user who deposits the products of folk culture and local tradition to the Internet? Is this a case of patrimonialization or mere archiving? Should we view the function of the externalization as communicative (informative), performative or depositive (safe-keeping)? Does the new medium lead to any change on the level of the habits and functions of use? In other words: is the new medium capable of radically transforming folk tradition and its use in the same way in which mass-media (primarily television) did?

This study attempts to explore these questions. It also openly assumes its experimental character. My interest does not primarily lie with the medium and technology but with the people and the society that uses them. Instead of the local culture of Internet use, I will offer here an analysis of the use of local (folk) culture through the medium of the Internet. In other words, my focus is on the way in which we use the Internet "for integrating folk culture in our present."

Keywords: folk tradition, folk culture, heritage, invented tradition, rewriting tradition, digitization, Internet usage.

According to Vilmos Keszeg, the epoch is an institution that defines the rules of the organization of everyday life, the strategies of contact between people, and the mentality of the individual, the group, and society. Every epoch has

1 The first, shorter version of this study was previously published under the title *A népi kultúra használatának módjai és kontextusai a világhálón* (Modes and Contexts of the Use of Folk Culture on the Internet) in Jakab Albert Zsolt–Kinda István (eds): *Aranykapu. Tanulmányok Pozsony Ferenc tiszteletére*. KJNT–Szentendrei Néprajzi Múzeum–Székely Nemzeti Múzeum, Kolozsvár 2015. The present text is the extended and slightly revised English version of my study entitled *Népi kultúra a világhálón. Használat, kontextus, funkció*, published in *Replika* 2015. 1–2.
When finishing this study, I received the Bolyai János Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

its characteristic physiology, metabolism, and rhythm. Historians of literature have adopted the term "rhetoric of the epoch" for the infiltration of thematic, ideological, rhetorical, and communicational characteristics of an epoch into the texts (Keszeg, 2011: 36–37). The narrative schemes and the productive models that are characteristic for an epoch represent transformational systems (Keszeg, 2011: 38).

McLuhan and his followers have distinguished four epochs in the history of communication technologies. These are primary orality, literacy, book printing, and secondary orality, which is mainly determined by mass-media that primarily organizes itself around television (McLuhan, 1964). However, according to Zoltán Szűts, with the rapid development of the Internet and the integration of augmented reality into our communication, we are now entering a new phase, the epoch of touch, which aims at dissolving the previous epochs into itself, thereby leading to a high intensity collaboration of hearing, sight, and touch (Szűts, 2013: 203). In this new context, our ideas about information and its storage, obtaining, and transmission (or, if you like, about knowledge and its attainment) are continually changing and being reorganized. The habits and rites of recording, storage, and retrieval are also changing, which in turn changes the horizons and perspectives of local culture, the (re)production, conservation, and consumption of folk tradition, as well as of the construction and communication of local heritage and identity.

The traditional culture of a specific region (its folk culture, or cultural heritage) is found and localized increasingly often on the Internet, on the websites of regional associations and clubs, tourism agencies, local governments, cultural institutions, or research centres, on file-sharing websites, blogs, and forums. In brief, the Internet is becoming the new medium and public space of traditional culture (and cultural heritage).

This change of medium prompts the reformulation of several questions and the introduction of new hypotheses, starting points, and frameworks of interpretation and analysis. These should apply to the nature of the altered contexts and to the problems of the habits of use, creating intentions and meaning-generating mechanisms associated with the texts and representations about folk traditions which result from this process. Simultaneously, they also impose the need for the description and analysis of new types of routines, such as online searching, the tracing back of information, saving, forwarding, Facebook liking, etc.

Thus, the question essentially becomes: how will we get to be able to digitalize and thereby save our (folk) culture for the future (see Szűts, 2013: 11)? What kinds of politics for the cultivation of cultural heritage are being formed within the new media environment? How does folk culture and local heritage appear on the Internet? Why is it, in the first place, that contents associated with folk culture and folk tradition are so popular also on the Internet?

But what happens if folk tradition is not externalized in books and archives but is uploaded to the World Wide Web? What is the guiding intention of the user who deposits the products of folk culture and local tradition to the Internet? Is this a case of patrimonialization or mere archiving? Should we view the function of the externalization as communicative (informative), performative, or depositive[2] (safe-keeping)? Does the new medium lead to any change on the level of the habits and functions of use? In other words: is the new medium capable of radically transforming folk tradition and its use in the same way in which mass-media (primarily television) did?

This study attempts to explore these questions. It also openly assumes its experimental character. My interest does not primarily lie with the medium and technology but with the people and the society that uses them. Instead of the local culture of Internet use, I will offer here an analysis of the use of local (folk) culture through the medium of the Internet. In other words, my focus is on the way in which we use the Internet "for integrating folk culture in our present"[3] (Bíró, 1987: 26).

0. Folk Culture and (Folk) Tradition

After its birth as an academic subject, ethnography has confidently traced the limits of its field. The scientific discipline of ethnography took as its object of study *folk culture* and limited it to peasant culture.[4] This situation is made even more complicated by the fact that the demarcation of its field has prevailed not only on the social but also on the chronological level. Ethnographical researches have focused on the ancestral and on the past.[5] The contemporary phenomena of folk

2 For the interpretation of these concepts, see Assmann, 2008, p. 216.

3 The translation of the Hungarian citations in the study belongs to the author (A.V.).

4 To this day, ethnography is characterized by a degree of terminological uncertainty. Besides the terminology used above, the terms "peasant culture" and "popular culture" are also employed. The former is, according to Tamás Hofer, a "more strictly and clearly delimited version" of folk culture (Hofer, 1994: 233). By contrast, the term "popular culture" indicates a difference in perspective. On the mental map of the researchers, on the popular side, the clear demarcations are drawn between the levels of culture, and, on the side of folk cultures, between the different groups of people and the various ethnicities (Hofer, 1994: 240). However, their common element is that both concepts define "in contrast to the «high» or «learned» level of culture that which they view as «folk», «popular», «non-elite» culture" (Hofer, 1994: 134). Hofer concludes his meticulous analysis of the dichotomy between the two concepts with the statement: "the terminological flow between different scientific fields and due to translations also between languages, in many cases with lesser or larger changes of the original meanings, is increasingly accelerated". Thus, "a major portion of the domain of meaning carried by the concept of *popular culture* that has been developed within the Anglo-French tradition is somehow (...) integrated into our concepts of *peasant culture* and *folk culture* and contributes to their modernisation as if behind the scenes" (Hofer, 1994: 246–247).

5 Vilmos Voigt stated the following about this phenomenon: "The uninterrupted presence of the phantasmagorical «search for the ancestors» is also very characteristic for the Hungarian conception of tradition" (Voigt, 2007: 11).

culture have also been left outside the scope of ethnographical studies. However, from the 1960s, this paradigm started to become increasingly problematic. On the one hand, researchers started to ask the question: *who is the folk?* Already in 1965, Alen Dundes argued that "folk" can refer to "any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor" (Dundes, 1956: 2). That is to say, we can apply this term to many different groups (from factory workers to Internet users) which can also be included within the scope of ethnographical research. On the other hand, ethnographers have also redefined the character of the popular knowledge (*folklore*) and the tradition (*traditio*) which should constitute the objects of their studies. As early as the 1930s, Alfred Schütz focused his interest on *everyday life* (Niedermüller, 1981: 192), but ethnographical research continued to favour high days for a long time. Mihály Hoppál calls attention to the fact that, even in the 1970s, one of the most established representatives of Hungarian folkloristics, Vilmos Voigt, "although (...) emphasizing the collective character of folklore, considers its artful characteristics, the «aesthetics of folklore», to be of primary interest for research" (Hoppál, 1982: 330).

In his synthesis of the results of Hungarian ethnographical researches in Romania, Vilmos Keszeg also concludes that it "has turned folk culture into its object of study on the basis of a peculiar selection. The criteria for this selection have been that the studied object should be *ancestral* (as opposed to generally known present-day phenomena), it should have a *peasant* or *rural* character (as opposed to being urban, official), and it should be *aesthetic* (as opposed to objects barely containing any aesthetic value), *festive*, and *spectacular* (as opposed to the everyday in appearance), *oral* (as opposed to the scriptural and recorded), text- and genre-centred (as opposed to the discursive habits of everyday communication, which follow more relaxed genre norms), as well as *national* (as opposed to that which does not have ethnic characteristics)" (Keszeg, 1995: 110).[6]

Some western authors argue that nowadays the "local" is increasingly becoming the new folk culture (Storey, 2003: 116; Noyes, 2009: 245). Folk culture (or traditional culture) is local not only in the sense that it is generated locally – i.e., it has been long embedded in the everyday life of the local society – but also because it is always used locally. Thus, several cultural elements are in use today within local societies which can be qualified as borrowed within these contexts, but they are a part of local culture in the sense specified above.

We are dealing with similar difficulties when trying to specify the meaning of *tradition*, which is pervaded by contradictions both in the scientific and in the everyday use of the term. According to Dorothy Noyes, tradition can be interpreted as communication (handing over and receiving), ideology, and a form of property (Noyes, 2009: 234). In the interpretation of Edward Shils, it is *traditum*, that is to say, it represents everything that is handed over by the past to the present (Shils,

6 Emphasis by the original author.

1981: 12). According to both of these views, the primary role of tradition consists in the preservation and transmission of knowledge.

In his essay about the necessity of our habits, Odo Marquard describes tradition as the *primary presence of history*, which is nothing else than "the sum total of habits," or – in the words of Herman Lübbe – that which "is valid not because of its proven correctness, but because we are incapable of being without it" (see Marquard, 2001: 188–189). This definition refers to the totality of life, or, if you wish, to everyday life. Tradition is not only the totality of actions, gestures, objects, and texts related to high days and celebrations but also everything that is human and makes life liveable.

In December 2012, Vilmos Keszeg organized an international scientific conference in Cluj-Napoca (Romania), bearing the title "Who does tradition belong to? And what is its use? Tradition between culture, users, and traders".[7] In his invitation to the conference, he states that three paradigms have succeeded each other in 20th century Europe in the domain of the interpretation of tradition. The first paradigm approached the subject from the side of the cultural context (typology, range, morphology, structure, function, and the historical approach to tradition), the second interpreted tradition from a sociological perspective, focusing on the instruments of its application – or, in other words, on the attitudes toward tradition –, and the third paradigm, currently in the process of establishing itself, consists in the patrimonialization of culture. According to the author, each of these paradigms stresses different aspects of tradition.

The researches led by Vilmos Keszeg in Cluj-Napoca use tradition as an operative concept. They "do not relate this concept to subsisting relics of an earlier developmental epoch of culture and society but use it for the designation of objects, knowledge, practices, mentality, and attitudes received from the users of culture within our environment" (Keszeg, 2014: 10). Consequently, tradition 1. establishes a community, 2. produces memory, and 3. serves a biographical function (Keszeg, 2014: 10–12).

In one of his studies, Vilmos Voigt expresses his opinion that, just as the concept of folk culture, tradition is also strongly ethnicized. In his own words, "as for the notorious Hungarian «conceptualization of tradition», the systematic use of the concept establishes itself in our culture in the age of reform, after some preliminary interpretations (such as György Bessenyei's conception of history). The study of Ferenc Kölcsey entitled *Nemzeti hagyományok* ("National traditions") (1826) in fact maintains a still-valid approach, according to which Hungarian «folk traditions» are simultaneously the traditions of the «Hungarian nation»" (Voigt, 2007: 10).

7 "A qui appartient la tradition? A quoi sert-elle? La tradition entre culture, utilisateur et entrepreneur". 6–7 décembre 2012, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

Attila Paládi-Kovács calls attention to the fact that in the works of the researchers devoted to the domain of folk culture "the term «tradition» (...) often appears as a synonym for the folk culture stemming from the age before the Settlement of the Magyars in Hungary, which survives according to its own laws, sometimes transforming and renewing itself within the process" (Paládi-Kovács, 2004: 4). Hermann Bausinger writes about the nature of this tradition in the following way: "according to the conception that has become widespread also among the folk during the previous century, and even reaches into the present in some residual forms, that which is historically prior is also ahistorical, and can be viewed as nature itself" (Bausinger, 1995: 102–103). In one of her studies, Aleida Assmann also points to the fact that tradition is rediscovered and interpreted in the 18th century as *nature* (Assmann, 1997: 608–625).

It is the romantic, aestheticized, and archaized definition of folk culture and tradition that has become embedded in common belief. However, which is almost even more important than this fact: local communities have begun to view certain elements of their own culture as tradition.[8] One of my recent researches on the perspective used in the chapters on folk culture of village monographs written by local authors has led to the conclusion that these handbooks, which are based on the romantic conception of folk culture, established at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, and on the monographic study of certain domains (popular customs, folk poetry, folk architecture, farming), often contain mere general statements instead of presenting local characteristics (Vajda, 2015a). The majority of the folk traditions represented on the Internet also reflects this same perspective.

1. Methods and Contexts of the Use of Folk Traditions

In one of his studies, Hermann Bausinger describes how, at the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the choir of a south German town, Hayingen, the local women appeared in a costume about which, although it was defined by them as traditional, they admitted that they wore it that day for the first time. It has only become clear later to the author that the elements of this costume have been ordered by them on the basis of the descriptions of a local pastor from a century ago about the then-current native costumes (Bausinger, 1983: 434). A similar work was conducted in the 1960s in Voivodeni (Vajdaszentivány), a village that lies only 20 km from the town of Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely), by Pál Demeter. As a result, the local dance ensemble presented the still popular local folk dances at the county and national stage of the competition *Cântarea*

8 As Hermann Bausinger puts it: "Nowadays even simple peasants view tradition in part consciously as tradition" (Bausinger, 1995: 104).

României ("Praise of Romania"), dressed in the costume designed by him.[9] In this case, too, the need for the design had arisen from necessity since the village did not have any living tradition for dressing at that date, and only some elderly people had still preserved in their wardrobe a couple of sets of native costumes for funerals. The women's costume of the local dance ensemble, which is still in use today, has been designed by Demeter on the basis of the clothes of a 96-year-old woman. In Dumbrăvioara (Sáromberke), a village that lies halfway between Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely) and Reghin (Szászrégen), for the occasion of celebrating the renovation and equipment upgrade of the local culture centre, eight pairs of "native costumes" have been bought for the folk dance ensemble of the elementary school. Since neither the representatives of the local government nor the company commissioned for the acquisition had any documentation at its disposal regarding the local costume, they searched for models on the Internet. The decision makers reviewed the photos of Transylvanian native costumes and folk dance ensembles found on social media and file-sharing websites, as well as the "native costume catalogues" of Transylvanian craftsmen, also accessible through the Internet. Finally, the elements of the costume have been ordered from folk craftsmen working in Odorheiu Secuiesc (Székelyudvarhely).

1.1. Folk Traditions in a New Context[10]

The above described phenomena related to the use of tradition have been termed as *folklorism*[11] within the scholarly literature. The concept was used for the first time by sociologist Peter Heinz. In his encyclopaedia article written in 1958, he designated as "folklorism" the various nativistic movements and their unrealistic and romantic character, also citing as its main example the reintroduction of forgotten, "uncomfortable costumes" of the past. According to Hans Moser, a researcher of popular customs, folklorism is a form of appearance of certain elements of folk culture, which are forced into contexts where they do not originally belong. An example of this is the use of native costumes on the stage (see Bausinger, 1983: 435). According to Vilmos Voigt, the concept also encompasses the period of the early discovery of folk culture. He identifies the earliest forms of folklorism with the French Revolution, German romanticism, and the Russian Narodnik movement, and differentiates between older and newer

9 The folk dances of Voivodeni (Vajdaszentivány) were presented on the stage also by the ensemble Maros during this period, and they can be found until today in the repertoires of many professional and amateur folk dance ensembles.

10 The title is an adaptation. For the original, see Zoltán Bíró, József Gagyi, János Péntek (eds): *Néphagyományok új környezetben. Tanulmányok a folklorizmus köréből*. Kriterion Könyvkiadó, Bucharest, 1987.

11 For the concept of folklorism, see Voigt, 1970; 1979; 1987a, Bausinger, 1983; Gusev, 1983; Karnoouh, 1983.

tendencies, introducing the concept of *neofolklorism* (Voigt, 1970; 1979; 1987b). In addition to this, Gusev distinguishes two socio-cultural types of folklorism. These are *everyday folklorism* and *ideological folklorism* (Gusev, 1983: 441). As for Bausinger, he summarizes the characteristics of folklorism in the following way: 1. The phenomena of folklorism are created artificially. They do not stem from tradition but are its outgrowths. 2. Their incentive is external, and they are also directed externally, in the form of spectacles and presentations that also take into account the expectations of the viewer. 3. These phenomena are closely associated with the agencies of the cultural industry, including show business and tourism. 4. Folklorism can be viewed as a form of applied ethnography, in the case of which we are dealing with the feedback of the results of ethnographic research (Bausinger, 1983: 435).

In 1987, in Transylvania, the Hungarian-language publishing house Kriterion issued a volume of studies (Bíró et alii, 1987) dealing with the question whether folk culture, as it enters new/changed contexts, "can still be regarded as a creation that transmits traditional meanings, or one that now produces only dubious (?) values". "How do the elements that are disseminated from the decomposing paradigm of traditional culture find their place within new sintagma?" – this was the question asked by the editors (Péntek, 1987: 5). In his study, which can be regarded as the theoretical introduction of the volume, Zoltán Bíró argues that we are dealing with folklorism when "an element or group of elements of folk culture enters a context that is alien and different from its original one (...), changes its meaning in this alien context and becomes different from what it represented within the system of folk culture" (Bíró, 1987: 31–32). Then, the author distinguishes four basic types of folklorism: scientific folklorism, representational folklorism, everyday folklorism, and aesthetic folklorism (Bíró, 1987: 33–44). According to him, scientific folklorism is the situation in which folk culture survives in the net of scholarly interpretations. "Thus, when we are speaking about saving and safe-keeping, we are in fact dealing with a process of folklorism and a meaning shift that is associated with it. (...) The scientific approach always means that we are putting the elements of folk culture into an alien context." (Bíró, 1987: 35.) At the same time, the material that is discovered and published by the researcher can come to a new life of its own and be put to many different uses, some of which lie far from the original intentions of the scientific research.[12] Bíró includes in the category of representational folklorism the book series on folk art placed on the bookshelf, the hanging of folk carpets and jugs on living room walls, the presentation of popular culture on the stage, the exhibitions of folk art, and the "houses of regional traditions". These gestures and objects all express the idea that "folk culture belongs to us" (Bíró, 1987: 36). Representational folklore doas not only have its craftsmen but also its ideologues

12 For this topic, see also Keszeg, 2005, pp. 315–339.

(scholarly specialists) who select the elements of folk culture that they place before us and teach us how to view them. This entire process can best be described as consumption (Bíró, 1987: 38).

In the case of everyday folklorism, folk culture enters into an alien context by starting to function not as a system but as an instrument that, although serves the attempts of the individual to explain himself or herself, also creates an opposition: the individual is conscious of the fact that there are others besides him or her who do not believe in this culture, or even look down upon him or her because of it (Bíró, 1987: 39–43). As for aesthetic folklorism, it is, in fact, the classic form of folklorism, in the case of which we are dealing with the "entering of folk art and poetry into «high» culture" (Bíró, 1987: 43). The primary scene for this kind of use of folk traditions is the studio of the artist and the theatrical stage, and the context of its performance is the exhibiton, the local, regional, or national festival, and the creative contest.

1.2. The Revitalization of Folk Traditions and the Invented Tradition

International scholarly literature uses the term "invented tradition," as introduced by Eric Hobsbawm, for the designation of the process of tradition creation that revitalizes or even invents "traditional" folk costumes (e.g. the Scottish kilt).[13] In Hungarian scholarly literature, "tradition creation" (*hagyományteremtés*) is also often used (see Hofer and Niedermüller, 1987; Mohay, 1997). According to its definition, the "invented tradition" is an answer to novel situations, which takes the form of a reference to past forms and situations (Hobsbawm, 1983: 2) or a process of formalization and ritualization characterized by the reference to the past (Hobsbawm, 1983: 4). The author distinguishes three types of invented traditions. Some 1. reinforce or symbolize social community, others 2. reinforce or legitimize institutions, statuses, and power relations, and 3. the third category is primarily aimed at socialization into a system of beliefs and values or into a behavioural model (Hobsbawm, 1983: 9).

In another study, Hobsbawm deals with the "mass production of traditions". His starting point is the premise according to which, although the invention of traditions can be viewed as a universal phenomenon, from the 1870s we can see an accelerated emergence of novel traditions, both in an official and an unofficial setting, a process that lasted for half a century. The officially invented novel traditions have been introduced by the state and used for its purposes as political traditions, while the unofficially invented traditions can be viewed as social institutions created by formally organized groups without any political agenda, which nonetheless needed novel instruments to assure and express their unity and to regulate their internal system of relationships (Hobsbawm, 1987: 127).

13 For its analysis, see Trevor-Roper, 1983, pp. 15–41.

Hobsbawm calls our attention to three main innovations in his analysis of the tradition-creating process of the French Third Republic: 1. it transformed education into a secular correspondent of the Church and made it into an instrument for the propagation of republican principles, 2. it invented public ceremonies, and 3. started the mass-production of memorial monuments (Hobsbawm, 1987: 137–139). Although the author himself only mentions it later, in another context, we can also include here the creation of ritual spaces (Hobsbawm, 1987: 179).

At the same time, Hobsbawm also emphasizes three further aspects of invented traditions. First, one has to distinguish between durable and transitory innovations. Second, the invented traditions are "associated with specific classes or social strata," and, although a bidirectional process in theory, their adoption is "characterized by a trickle-down effect". As invented traditions are adopted, they are also being transformed, but the "historical origin remains visible". The third aspect is the parallel existence of "invention" and "spontaneous formation" (Hobsbawm, 1987: 178–181).

The primary context of invented tradition consists in the (national) celebration and the memorial ritual (see Connerton, 1997: 7–75; Fejős, 1996: 125–142).

The revitalization of folk tradition can be viewed as a similar process. On the basis of the data available to them, the local or the central (political and/or intellectual) elites create an ideal type of folk traditions, thereby also creating the *"representative" folk traditions* of a given community (settlement, region, or nation). Thus, tradition is removed from the medium that created it and, from being local, it becomes national. Some early Hungarian examples of this are the thatched-roof inn presented at the Paris Exhibit of 1867, the northern Hungarian and Transylvanian houses shown at the Vienna Exhibit of 1873, the 15 *peasant rooms* showcased to the public at the 1885 Budapest National Exhibition, or the Hungarian village presented at the Millennium Exhibition (Sisa, 2001: 46–50). Because this process and its final result is all too similar to the story of the Scottish kilt, we must view the revitalization of folk traditions also as invented tradition. Representative/invented folk tradition often also becomes an integral part of ideological constructions and fulfils a function in the construction of national consciousness.[14] This is the reason why it is often accused, and not entirely without any justification, of nationalism.

1.3. The Rehabilitation of Folk Tradition. Heritage

As Vilmos Keszeg writes in his introductory study to the conference volume of the above-mentioned symposium, in the 1960s, a new term is introduced in Europe, that of *heritage*, which is soon extended from architectural and natural goods to

14 An example of this is the Romanian dance performed with sticks, called the *Căluş*, which was included on the list of the UNESCO in 2005. For its analysis, see Ştiucă, 2014, pp. 42–52.

cultural goods, and even introduces a new field of studies (*Heritage Studies*). But is it not merely the case – asks the author – that this term of "cultural heritage" only expresses a specifically western European cultural attitude that enacts the redistribution of cultural goods and their showcasing for strangers through patrimonialization (Keszeg, 2014: 12–13)? In another passage, he explains: "the concept of cultural heritage appeared in Europe in the 1970s. It was then that people became aware of the fact that they should attend to, secure, and musealize those elements of culture that are no longer preferred by the users for some reason. This is a turning point in the history of European mentality because there is a difference between the concept of tradition and that of heritage. Tradition refers to the values used and voluntarily transmitted through the generations, while heritage is a legal concept which emphasizes that posterity has a right to access all that has been worked out and accumulated by the predecessors, but that has been removed from everyday use. The preservation of heritage and the access to it have to be guaranteed by the law" (Keszeg, 2015). On her turn, Máiréad Nic Craith argues that the concept of heritage has enough plasticity for us to interpret it in several different ways, a fact that is also reflected by the variety of its translations into different European languages. Thus, it is difficult to imagine that we could speak of a common European heritage and a common conception of it (Craith, 2012: 11–28). Regarding the usability of the Western concept of heritage, Gábor Sonkoly comes to the conclusion that "the concept of cultural heritage differs from one level of interpretation to another. It remains a question how these different interpretations can be linked together" (Sonkoly, 2000: 62). Attila Paládi-Kovács calls attention to the fact that a conceptual duality manifests itself in France. The French use the term *patrimoine ethnologique* for designating ethnographical heritage, or patrimony, and "they have reserved the word *heritage* to refer to elite culture and to the protection of monuments" (Paládi-Kovács, 2004: 7).

Today it almost seems commonplace to talk about the "heritage boom". This alludes not only to the fact that different heritage forms and discourses have enjoyed an impenetrable proliferation but also to the existence of a process in which heritage increasingly substitutes the concept of culture (Tschofen, 2012: 29). Many authors even define heritage as a form of metaculture (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 52–65; Tauschek, 2011: 49–64) characteristic of the world of globalization. The contributors of a collective volume even speak of *regimes of heritage*, also alluding thereby to its regulatory character that expresses itself in everyday life (see Bendix, Eggert, and Peselmann, 2012).

In the interpretation of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, heritage is: 1. the culture-creating mode of the present nourished by the past; 2. an industrial branch that produces added value; 3. it transforms the local product into an export article; 4. it sheds light on the problematic character of the relationship between its own object and its instruments; 5. the key for the understanding of heritage lies in

its virtual nature (simulacrum character), the presence or, on the contrary, the complete lack of any actual relevance (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1995: 369).

We can identify four main directions within the vast scholarly literature. One research trend approaches the subject from the direction of use and asks about the essence of heritage and its social framework. Another approach starts from the perspective of use and studies the transnational or, on the contrary, nation-specific regulations for something to be proclaimed cultural heritage and to be preserved, transmitted, and used as such. How do these regulations influence, on their turn, cultural heritage itself, its different media, and its use? Who is (or are) the owner(s) of cultural heritage, and which institutions operate and control its use? What is the relationship between normative regulations and everyday practice (see Aronsson and Gradén, 2013; Bendix, Eggert, and Peselmann, 2012; Smith, 2004; 2006; Smith and Akagawa, 2009; Therond és Trigona, 2008). The third direction of research deals with the relationship between heritage (formation) and economy, primarily including the function fulfilled by cultural heritage within the tourism industry (Dawson, 2005; Lyth, 2006; Rowan and Baram, 2004; Thompson Hajdik, 2009). Finally, the fourth direction analyses the relationship between modern technology and the creation of cultural heritage (patrimonialization), its representation (or visualization), scientific study, and everyday use (Falser and Juneja, 2013; Ioannides and Quak, 2014).

A specific use of traditions is increasingly often referred to with the concept of *heritage* (viz. heritage creation) also in Eastern Europe, but primarily by historians and not ethnographers.[15] The appearance of the heritage paradigm in East-Central Europe can be related to the accession to the European Union. In any event, the concept has significantly gained in importance in the 1970s both within scientific and political discourses.[16] This is also related to the fact that "as major science started to become increasingly personal, and communal, in its character (...), a change of scale has also taken place with the spread of analytical categories situated on lower levels than the global or national" (Sonkoly, 2009: 199). The "small community" has become not only a legitimate research category, but these communities have also begun to work out their heritage "in their own right," complementing regulation from above with local participation (Sonkoly, 2009, 2000).

15 For this reason, the patrimonialization of folk culture is pushed into the background. When we are talking about the local heritage, we are in fact thinking of the national heritage and reflect upon it in a national context. Our heritage lists also talk about national heritage – for instance, the *Magyar Értéktár* (*Hungarian* Repository of Values) is also primarily the *Hungarikumok Gyűjteménye* (Collection of Hungarikum) –, and the frames of reference for the creation and use of local heritage are not clearly defined yet.

16 For this topic, see, among others, György, Kis, Monok, 2005; Erdősi, 2000, pp. 26–44; Fejős, 2005, pp. 41–48; Husz, 2006, pp. 61–67; Paládi-Kovács, 2004, pp. 1–11; Sonkoly, 2005, pp. 16–22; 2009, pp. 199–209; Frazon, 2010.

Today, everything that wants to remain in memory and everything that holds something in memory is somehow part of the heritage. One of the driving forces behind the continuous production of heritage is the increase of interest in the past: the local community, as it creates its past, recognizes itself in its relics. This is what makes it possible to sustain the feeling of belonging to a community, since – as Löwenthal puts it – heritage is that which keeps the community alive, and the people of today can express, keep alive, experience, and transmit abstract ideas through the language of heritage (see Husz, 2006).

If tradition is the past that is embedded in everyday life and is alive in the present, then heritage is a form of past that is also alive in the present, but separated from everyday life. Tradition is tied to a specific place (locality), but heritage transforms the local into national tradition, just as we have seen in the case of the invented tradition. At the same time as it valorizes locality and difference (Sonkoly, 2000: 60–61), heritage also creates a situation of rivalry for them (Sonkoly, 2000: 55–60).

The construction of heritage always includes a restauration process as well. The restauration of tradition means that political power, as it reinforces the original intention of the use of tradition, puts it to its own use (Hartog, 2006: 156). On the one hand, heritage can be viewed as *intentional tradition*, that is to say, the community relates to it as an inherited tradition, in a conscious way. On the other hand, it can also be interpreted as *invented tradition*, with the sole difference that in this case, along with the political and ideological objectives, economic interests are also strongly present and play a decisive role. The characteristic context for the use (and consumption) of heritage is primarily tourism.

Finally, I would like to cite an important – and thought-provoking – observation made by Vilmos Voigt: "Many fashionable arguments concerning world history have reached us lately. (...) Maybe all this also influences the way in which we interpret tradition today. Ultimately, globalization has also become such a magic word nowadays. It is generally known that «traditions» should be viewed as the opposite pole of globalization, and their «conservation» is especially recommended in order to mitigate the adverse effects of globalization. Without thoroughly reviewing this entire topic, we can only allude to the fact that this «anti-globalist» interpretation of traditions is now a worldwide phenomenon. We ourselves have imported this argumentation from abroad. Ironically, we could even add to it that it is typically a «global» phenomenon" (Voigt, 2007: 12).

1.4. The Rewriting of Folk Tradition

Vilmos Keszeg approaches the use of folk tradition and the habits of use associated with it from another direction. Relying mainly on the results of the French historians of literacy and of the anthropology of narration, the author searches for

an answer to the question whether oral tradition can be recorded and transferred from orality to scripturality. What are the consequences of the recording of traditions in writing? And what happens to tradition when it is transferred into a foreign medium and processed with the instruments of a style that is alien to it (Keszeg, 2005: 315–339; 2004: 36–467)? In his study, the author calls attention to the fact that tradition constructs itself upon 1. a collective life-world, 2. the local practices of discourse, 3. a genealogical structure (tradition is assumed by the descendants) and a local structure (the community speaks about the same thing), and 4. it has a biographical function as it regulates biographical pathways. These are all certainties that authenticate and legitimize tradition, whose function in its primary social context is to handle conflicts, strengthen identity consciousness, and continually produce and teach attitudes and habits. Tradition is simultaneously part and constructor of the life-world (see Keszeg, 2004: 437). Recorded tradition is encountered in three possible statuses. These are: 1. representation is the only form in which tradition is given, 2. representation functions as a historical form of tradition, and 3. representation does not remind us of tradition anymore, it works against tradition, and its reception and assessment happen according to the rules pertaining to literary texts (Keszeg, 2005: 316). If this tradition is removed from its original context, another kind of linguistic behaviour and attitude becomes characteristic. On the one hand, in this context, tradition loses its relation to the life-world, it does not organize the world anymore, but only speaks about it, or, in other cases, that which has been reality in the original context becomes fiction during the process of rewriting (Keszeg, 2004: 437).[17] On the other hand, the author comes to the conclusion that the rewriting of tradition produces prejudices on all the levels of society, both within the local community and in the external world; notwithstanding the fact that the causes for this differ from one social group to another (see Keszeg, 2005: 336).

1.5. Folk Traditions on the Internet?

In the above paragraphs, I have presented four characteristic modes of existence of tradition and four characteristic contexts of its use. In their case, the local is transformed into a national or even universal tradition (world heritage), and its use can take place not only locally but also in alien contexts. Thus, the question emerges: what is new in the fact that folk tradition is localized on the Internet? In my opinion, the interesting thing is not that the local tradition can spread globally through the Internet but that the folk tradition accessible through the Internet simultaneously becomes a uniformized content and part of the local

17 J. Lottman distinguishes between three types of texts: 1. myths are about the absolute truth, texts that repeat themselves and create a world; 2. history presents events in succession, but it does not create a world, it only talks about it; 3. the artistic text describes fiction (Lottman, 1994).

interpretations. Furthermore, the interesting aspect is that the previously orally recounted and/or scripturally recorded folk tradition is being represented virtually on the Internet (see Stanley, 2003).

Folklorism references the fact that folk culture becomes part of the culture of the masses, and it does not play a role anymore in the regulation of local life, but it is prepared for consumption and is represented on the theatrical stage and in television and radio programmes. Some elements of tradition fulfil an instrumental role in the process of provoking aesthetic pleasure (cf. Keszeg, 2004: 437). In the case of invented tradition, folk tradition becomes an instrument for another kind of manipulation and plays a role in the maintenance and legitimation of the ideologies of political power. Heritage is also the result of an editing process, but in this case traditions do not have to be lifted out from the twilight of the past, but its still existing elements have to be recombined in the present. New images and identities are produced through the combination of past and present, respectively their representation within the same horizon (cf. Gagyi, 2008: 16). A common element in the latter two cases is that the intention of preserving the tradition is associated with central control and strong conservativism.

The written recording of traditions and its depositing into archives and publications represents a modality of its preservation and the externalization and transmission of heritage (patrimony) (Keszeg, 2011: 60). This places the Internet that (also) presents the values of local culture into another context and shows it to be a driving force for the production of heritage. Thus, the World Wide Web becomes an active factor in the production and consumption process of heritage (see Falser and Juneja, 2013; Ioannides and Quak, 2014),[18] an instrument for the awareness of our living together with the past, but one that is not characterized by the conservativism inherent in the attitudes based on the cultivation of folk tradition (see Nyíri, 1994a: 77).

Thus, this heritage and this kind of heritage formation significantly differs from the ones we have been used to. As Zoltán Szűts also points out in his book, it is not too difficult to recognize that, "with the spread of technology, artefacts and objects do not appear anymore in contexts that barely change for centuries, as the role of museums and maps is taken over by augmented reality, and the collection is created by the community in a space in which the canons of social media are in effect. In this context, the role of the curator is fulfilled by the maker of the layer that is placed over reality" (Szűts, 2013: 202). And this *maker* is neither a scholar (ethnographer, anthropologist, etc.) nor a state official nor even a public educator or an enthusiastic amateur but the user himself (herself).

At the same time, Internet forums and blogs make it possible for anyone to publicly speak about tradition, and due to the democratic character of these

18 For the relationship between the Internet and folk culture, see the studies published in the volume edited by Trevor J. Blank (2009).

contexts specialists and laypeople can enjoy the same level of media representation (Szűts, 2013: 111–112).

The Internet as a context that carries traditional folk culture (cf. Szűts, 2013: 21) can be regarded as a new form of the cultivation and preservation of tradition in all of its aspects, in the case of which "the medium of the transmission, i.e. the digital platform itself, lacks any material substance. In the digital context, the information moves far away both from its source and its carrier. As we move away from the world of objects, the extent of unreliability, falsification, and copying also increases" (Szűts, 2013: 22.). In this medium, tradition increasingly becomes invented, or, more exactly, an *interactive fiction* (see Szűts, 2013: 97). The preservation and/or use of tradition can be characterized with the metaphor of "saving" or "saving as" (in another format) (cf. Szűts, 2013: 23). That is to say, it is an adaptive practice through which the relocation of the tradition, stemming from the offline, local space, into the digital online space produces a kind of *remix* that is largely based on the recycling of already existing composing elements. In this case, the value added by the user exhausts itself in sharing and expressing his or her opinion about the shared content (Szűts, 2013: 145).[19]

2. Theoretical Reference Points

2.1. The Consequences of the Horizon Shift

According to Hermann Bausinger, the revaluation of space and the rediscovery of locations is the result of the *shift* (or decomposition) *of the horizon*. This process has brought about the spread of the current concept of homeland and the development of symbols that have enriched this concept with content. The birth of the concept of homeland is indicative of the fact that communities have become aware of the existence of others besides themselves. The tradition that they have viewed thus far as the organizing force of the entire world loses its general validity outside the boundaries of their community. The author emphasizes that the very existence of the innumerable local anniversaries celebrated nowadays refers back to local history (Bausinger, 1995: 81–83).

Pierre Nora uses the term "realms of memory" to denote the procedures used for the anchoring of local history and traditions. He explains the development of these realms with the disappearance of the authentic contexts of memory (Nora, 2010: 13). Besides the spatial and temporal constraints of memory, Jan

19 Zoltán Szűts repeatedly calls attention to the fact that the remix is an integral part of popular culture. In this case, "the author, having in view the receiver, creates a product that is often more readily receivable, or differently receivable, than the original" (Szűts, 2013: 110). In my opinion, this kind of creating an attitude is even more characteristic of Internet users.

Assmann also calls attention to its concrete character by stating that "ideas have to assume a perceptible form in order to gain entrance into memory," and he uses the term "formations of memory" for this concreteness (Assmann, 1999: 38–39). At the same time, this also means that memories are no longer preserved and transmitted by the communities but by institutions. *Collective memory* is substituted with *cultural memory*, which is aimed at the solid points of the past and transforms the factual past (history) into memorable past, or myth. Thus, the past is dissolved into symbolic formations (Assmann, 1999: 53).

Arjun Appadurai uses the concept of *locality* for the description of the space that is delimited by horizons. According to him, "locality primarily means relations and contexts, not degrees and spatiality. It is a complex phenomenological quality that is produced by the feeling of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the series of relations between the relativized contexts" (Appadurai, 2001: 3).

The shift of the horizon also influences the view of temporality: the dread of the future and the longing for the past leads to the absolutization of the present. Thus, the orientation towards the future is substituted by *presentism*, the cult of the present that continues to preserve the relics of the past. However, this is a present that has already passed before it could happen completely. So, the faith in progress is replaced by the concern for preservation. Nevertheless, it still remains questionable what is to be preserved and by whom (see Hartog, 2006). The rapid development and spread of Internet technology has given a new impetus to the above-mentioned concepts and theories by placing them in a wider context.

The phenomenon of the narrowing of space, which is discussed by Hermann Bausinger, can also be interpreted as an answer to the accessibility of the cultural products of the folk and to the fastening pace of this accessibility. In a context in which radically different goods appear in a rapidly changing series, tradition can only be preserved if the forms become rigid and are then adopted with maximum precision (Bausinger, 1995: 111). In the case of the invented tradition and heritage, the invented/patrimonialized traditions and models have to be followed this rigorously. Bausinger invokes the example of the native costumes that, according to him, strongly resemble uniforms (Bausinger, 1995: 114). This tendency is even more pronounced nowadays. It suffices to think of the costumes of folk dance ensembles or the costume elements of master craftsmen of folk arts, also popularized on the Internet.

2.2. The Changing Function of the Archives: From Preservation to Sharing

The computer is an instrument of visual acquisition (and propagation) of knowledge. Its use resembles more closely that of the telescope and the microscope than of the printed press. That is to say, representation (or visualization) is that

which is more important in the case of the Internet and not its capacity to store data (Stanley, 2003). Nevertheless, from a certain perspective, it seems that the World Wide Web is also a huge archive, or database, for a very significant part of the users.[20] Thus, all the theoretical considerations that pertain to the nature of the archives (databases, records, libraries, etc.) are also valid, or at least worthy of consideration, in the case of the structure, functioning, and especially the use of the Internet.

In his book about the "art of forgetting," Harald Weinrich describes the archive as an "institution for the preservation of documents," in which "the written material that documents legal and state administrative procedures [...] is at disposal as a model: it serves as a reference for future objectives, including historiographical ones" (Weinrich, 2002: 297). At the same time, the author calls attention to the fact that in our present "overinformed society" the selection of information is a much more difficult and important task than its acquisition, which in the case of the archives means "the systematic destruction of documents," also called "annulment" (*Kassation*) (Weinrich, 2002: 297–298).

Similarly to the archive, the library is also a response to the theoretical question about the possibility and the method of the written word's systematization and about the possibility of controlling the ever-expanding world of books (Chartier 1994: vii). In his study about the function fulfilled by libraries within Transylvanian Hungarian culture, Zsigmond Jakó emphasizes the fact that the library can be viewed as a social construction that requires the simultaneous presence of certain social needs and conditions for its formation. Therefore, its content and composition are defined by the cultural and, we should add, economic, life of the social community that creates the library (Jakó, 1977: 284–285).

Reflecting on the current problems of archives, Tibor Takács states that the archive not only bears upon itself, but it occasionally also shakes off the *burden of history* that has been thrust upon it by political power and historiography. Exiting the archive, the archival document can function not only as a historical source but can also enter into various contexts such as the official, the personal historiographical, or even the literary context (Takács, 2009: 62–63). This is of particular importance to me, since ultimately it defines those three essential media or contexts in which the World Wide Web and the information that can be found on it fulfil their function.

The user of the archive (the ethnographical writer, the historian, the local specialist, or the private person) experiences there not only the past but also

20 In his work about the relationship between history and computerized representation, Stanley writes that historians are conservative computer users (which is also true about the representatives of the humanities and the majority of average computer users). They primarily use it as a typewriter and an archive, and written history (viz. folk tradition) transforms itself only very slowly into represented history (folk tradition) (Stanley, 2003).

solitude. Relying on Steedman's work, Tibor Takács argues that the user of the archives is motivated by the desire of knowing the past and taking it into possession since "in the past we are looking for that which we want to become" (Takács, 2009: 63). Thus, the archive is also a space of desires, "a place where people can remain alone with the past and where an entire world, a complete social regime can be imagined on the basis of a scrap of paper" (Takács, 2009: 64). Going even further, I could say that the user experiences himself (or herself) in the archive, as he or she also does on the Internet (e.g. social networking sites).

Pierre Nora, the author behind the great research project related to the places of memory, discusses in no less than two studies the archive as a "lieu de mémoire" (Nora, 2006: 4–6; 2010: 121–128). He manages to show that the extension of the concept and the debates about research rights and the maintenance (i.e. control) of the archives point to their central position within contemporary memory (Nora, 2006: 4). On the one hand, the memorial and identificatory function of the archive surpasses in importance its historical and documentary function, while, on the other hand, the increase in historical sensibility and the pluralization of history have also resulted in an increase in the modalities of access. The function of the archive as a place of memory has been extended so that it also functions as a place of regional, local, and personal (that is to say, alternative) form of memory, besides the national one (Nora, 2006: 5).

This transformation of the archives manifests itself in three domains: "in the process of decentralization, in the expansion of the circle of things that seem worth it to be remembered, and in the process of democratization that makes everybody his or her own archivist". This is the source of the *quantitative revolution* of the archives (Nora, 2006: 5). In many respects, the archive conserves the temporality of the state, the *long-term processes*, and offers the condition of possibility for its representation.

In his study entitled *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Jacques Derrida writes that, on the one hand, the archive can be conceived of as a guarantor of repeatability, recordability, and of the remembrance of the origins; on the other hand, these levels of meaning are also associated with collecting, categorizing, and regulating as the tropes of control (Derrida, 2008). At the same time, the title already outlines the fact that, "according to Derrida, the technique of archiving as a political and institutional instrument, on the one hand, and the terminological considerations of Freudian psychoanalysis, on the other hand, can be placed upon a common register. In Derrida's opinion, the interpretation of the act of archiving as repression can serve as the point of intersection of the explanations of archivology, inspired by cultural science and psychoanalysis. The inseminating demand of archiving acts as a desire in the mirror of the previously incalculable an/archiving event because the trauma that is imprinted into human consciousness has to break free to the surface. For Freud, the logic of

repetition as neurotic compulsion is inseparable from the destructive propensity of the death wish. One could argue that the ancestral principle of destruction generates the excruciating desire of the archive. «The archive always works, and a priori, against itself» because it always counts with the element of that which is infinite and impossible to delimit" (Miklósvölgyi, 2008).

Michel Foucault extends the concept of the archive in his work entitled *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault 2001). He describes the archive primarily as a system that is responsible for regulating the appearance and functioning of statements. In this view, the archive is not a mere static deposit of a fixed medium but one in which information continuously fluctuates and whose functioning is also influenced by the dominant discourses of power (see Hermann, 2010; Miklósvölgyi, 2008). According to this definition, the archive can be conceived of as an interface between different bundles of information, or as their metaphor, especially as the etymology of the word "metaphor" also carries in it the element of transfer and transportation (Miklósvölgyi, 2008). According to Zsolt Miklósvölgyi, "the media archives of the present do not so much store as transmit information. In the age of digital culture, the archive has to be thought of entropically, as part of an impenetrable, open and process-centred network, in which we have to permit the maximum level of chaos. By liberating the bureaucratic archaism of the previous concept of the archive, we can make possible the free proliferation of various open-network architectures. Thus, it becomes questionable if we should call the depositing medium itself or the totality of the data contained in it the archive" (Miklósvölgyi, 2008).

Media archaeology studies, among other things, the new kinds of relationships and phenomena that are formed during the virtualization of real containing media (Miklósvölgyi, 2008). This is the direction from which the German media theoretician Wolfgang Ernst approaches the subject in his study about the cybernetics of archives (Wolfgang, 2008), *Das Rumoren der Archive* ("Archive Rumblings"), rethinking it from the perspective of technical innovations, digital technologies, and the habits of media consumption. His conclusion is that "in the 21st century, media archaeology (...) goes beyond the classic systems of archives and archiving. Its advantage can be sought in the specific character of the conveying medium: in the possibility of digital encoding and its continuity. The function fulfilled by the media archives of the present does not exhaust itself in mere transmission. This differentiation is similar to the one observed in the case of the archive and cultural memory, or the archives and their media. One of the most important contributions of the digital world consists in incompleteness or, if you wish, in unsystemacity" (Hermann, 2010).

The American art and media theoretician W. J. T. Mitchell also emphasizes this disorganization associated with the surge in intensity of the flow of information. According to him, "previously, the main objective and task of the archive consisted

in preservation and storage, which presupposed the writability of history, while today our task is precisely the deconstruction of these, and its essence consists in the adaptation of chaos" (Hermann, 2010).

At the same time, the most important characteristic of the World Wide Web archive as a form of technology and as a system of technological knowledge that operates its functioning consists in the fact that the electronic archive depends upon electricity and the Internet. In the case of a power outage, the entire system becomes paralysed. Its users are left only with the ideas, but they cannot completely access the techniques for their implementation. As opposed to the other kinds of archives, the information stored on the Internet does not have any materiality; the information is encoded not in material form but in bytes. Immateriality also contains the "unbearable lightness" of annihilation (or, if you wish, forgetting). As easy and as fast as websites and Internet interfaces offering the possibility of storage, organization, and display of vast amounts of information according to different criteria are being born, as quickly do they also disappear. And yet another important consideration: because the information is not systematically organized, search results are mostly contingent and accidental.

2.3. The Internet as a Centreless System

In his monograph on the nature of the World Wide Web, László Ropolyi analyses the Internet as technology according to its material, as communication according to its dynamic, as culture according to its form, and as an organism according to its objectives (Ropolyi, 2003). Deleuze uses the term "assemblage" for those particular multiplicities and conglomerates formed on the basis of the fitting together of different parts, which are always centreless, open in all directions and whose every element relates to all the others. These are not systems based on hierarchy and regulatory forms of memory lacking central control. They lack any central automatism and are only determined by the flow of different states. Additionally, they also lack a beginning and an end, and their countless links make it possible for the multiplicity to be governed not by a predetermined centre but to move in always new directions, to change and increase its dimensions (Deleuze and Guattari, 2002).

In his book about current society and its functioning, DeLanda uses the concept of network and that of assemblage as more or less interchangeable synonyms (DeLanda, 2006). Following his ideas, I hold that this concept can also be used to describe the nature of the Internet. This is even more so the case since the main thesis of László Ropolyi's monograph is that the sole and privileged version of knowledge characteristic of modernity comes to a crisis in the age of the Internet, and our interlinked social existence ("web-being") facilitates the appearance of a previously unimaginable multiplicity

of different versions of knowledge and alternative spheres of reality. During their postmodern individualization, people begin to relate personally also to scientific and technical knowledge (Ropolyi, 2006).

If patrimonialization, the invention of tradition, and folklorism presuppose a central controlling organ and central regulation, in the case of the Internet we do not have any of these. At the same time, since the folk tradition uploaded to the Internet can be continually updated, just as any other content (see Nyíri, 1994b: 19), the knowledge that is brought to a fixed form within theatrical performances, tourism, or the archives (and this observation is also true for invented tradition and heritage) comes to life again on the Internet and, in a certain sense, reclaims its variability.

2.4. The Internet and the *longue durée*

Sticking to the categorization of duration introduced by Braudel (see Braudel, 1972: 988–1012), one can most frequently encounter short duration, a temporality of the events that can be experienced. In order to better understand this, we have to take a step back. The author has created the concept of the short duration as the conceptual opposite of the *longue durée* that he considers more important from the perspective of the historiographer's work. In his interpretation, the long duration does not refer to the length of the period; rather, it denotes the rhythm of the development. It expresses something about the relationship between the surrounding natural landscape and man, which has only changed very slightly during the centuries. As opposed to this, short duration represents the temporality of the "tumultuous surface," the temporality of events, defined by speed, variability, and pulsation. Short duration refers to the individuals and their experiences and does not merely mean a short (time)span but also the dispersion of time (history/tradition), in which chance also plays a major role. Thus, when I affirm that the Internet can be studied from the perspective of short duration, I do not only refer to the fact that the majority of the contents uploaded to the Internet reflects the experiences and the momentary mood of the individual, but I also mean that these contents move at a very fast and random pace: they appear, gain huge popularity in short time, and become obsolete and/or are deleted just as fast. At the same time, since all this is played out on levels very close to the surface, in most cases, it also hides from us that which is inherited from the past unnoticed and unchanged and principally characterizes our culture, i.e. that which plays itself out on the deeper (structural) level.

3. Folk Traditions on the Internet. Contents, Attitudes, and Functions

The present popularity of the concept of "heritage" has been studied on the basis of the results of a survey conducted on the Google search engine on 11th February 2004. According to this survey, "heritage" appears on 277 000 websites. Within this amount, the highest rate belongs to "national heritage" (approximately 34%), while "cultural heritage" appears on nearly 68 000 websites. This finding proves that Hungarian language has adopted this concept surprisingly fast (Sonkoly & Erdősi, 2004: 7.).

On 26 December 2015, I conducted a similar survey about the popularity of the concepts of "tradition" and "folk culture" (as well as several concepts related to these, such as "folk customs," "folk music," "folk dance," "folk dance," "folk poetry," "folklore," "(folk) belief," "folk costume," "folk art," and "folk architecture") with the search engines Google and Bing. The search results are presented in the table below:

Table 1.

Concept	Google	Bing
Tradition	approximately 797 000 results (in 0.38 seconds)	309 000 results
Folk tradition	approximately 127 000 results (in 0.72 seconds)	20 000 results
Folk culture	approximately 74 100 results (in 0.51 seconds)	10 300 results
Folk customs	approximately l 309 000 results (in 0.36 seconds)	71 200 results
Folk music	approximately 699 000 results (in 0.47 seconds)	522 000 results
Folk dance	approximately 464 000 results (in 0.50 seconds)	159 000 results
Folk poetry	approximately 95 200 results (in 0.39 seconds)	33 000 results
Folklore	approximately 601 000 results (in 0.50 seconds)	230 000 results
(Folk) belief	approximately 123 000 results (in 0.34 seconds)	18 200 results
Folk costume	approximately 206 000 results (in 0.41 seconds)	30 700 results
Folk art	approximately 393 000 results (in 0.43 seconds)	85 300 results
Folk architecture	approximately 57 200 results (in 0.41 seconds)	12 500 results

The analysis of the data in the table indicates that the correlation between the two rows of data is relatively high (0.868), i.e. the same trends are manifesting themselves in both cases. In both cases, the incidence of "tradition"[21] and "folklore" is high compared to the other search terms. Furthermore, the results also hint at the fact that folk culture is primarily associated with folk music, viz. this is how it appears on the Internet.

However, if we search for the same terms on the video-sharing website YouTube, we can notice important differences. On this site, "folklore" occupies the top spot

21 It is surprising, however, that in the case of "folk tradition" the number of incidences is relatively low (approximately 16% in the case of Google and almost 6.5% in the case of Bing).

with 430 000 results,[22] followed by "folk dance" (approximately 70 700 results), "folk music" (approximately 43 600 results), and "tradition" on the fourth spot, with approximately 10 900 results. As for the other terms, the search engine had significantly less results.[23] On the Hungarian site *Startlap*, which – according to its advertisement – catalogues the links of around 9 000 lap.hu websites related to different themes, the following categories can be found: "folk architecture," "folk remedy," "folk game," "folk tale," "folk art," "folk dance," "folk costume," and, of course, "ethnography". Themes closely related to folk culture can also be found on sites such as *skanzen.lap.hu*, *tajhaz.lap.hu*, and *muzeum.lap.hu*. On *Startlap*, "cultural heritage" only appears as a subpage. Evidently, these websites do not contain all the links related to themes associated with different areas of folk culture, but they do offer us an insight into the themes and contents related to folk culture, which can be found on the Internet.

Why is folk culture (tradition) also fashionable in the Internet age and within this new medium? Is this not a contradiction? In my opinion, it is not, since the accelerating pace of change is also associated with processes of slowing down as a compensation, as globalization is compensated by processes of regionalization and individualization. The culture of innovation is associated with the culture of conservation (Marquard, 2001: 11).

Local registers have gone through a spectacular increase in importance during the 20th century (Keszeg, 2009: 124).[24] Because the instruments for the regulation of everyday life, of self-expression, and of memory (viz. commemoration) change, not only from one social group and cultural level to another but also from one epoch to the next, the development of technology has brought about significant changes also in this field since the last decade of the 20th century. The websites of local administrative units, settlements, regional associations, and societies for the cultivation of traditions, thematic blogs, and similar Internet pages now also play a major role in maintaining the awareness of local history and folk tradition and in the communication and archiving of the knowledge associated with these (not to mention the various regional and national institutions dedicated to the

22 However, the search term "*magyar folklór*" ["Hungarian folklore") has only approximately 3 420 results.

23 "Folk culture" (approximately 3 510 results), "folk art" (approximately 2 870 results), "folk customs" (approximately 2 490 results), "folk costume" (approximately 2 180 results), "folk architecture" (approximately 487 results), "folk tradition" (approximately 415 results), "folk poetry" (approximately 273 results). On the Hungarian video-sharing site *Videa*, the results are as follows: "folklore" (657), "tradition" (382), "folk dance" (351), "folk music" (178), "folk costume" (37), "folk culture" (24), "folk art" (19), "folk tradition" (17), and "folk customs" (8). As for "(folk) belief," the site did not have any relevant results and were no results at all for "folk poetry" and "folk architecture".

24 These registers function as institutions of the public sphere for narratives and narrations, and they offer the possibility of social contact, the exchange of opinions, and the storage and distributin of narratives (Keszeg, 2009: 124).

conservation and/or research of traditions). At the same time, as the result of technological development, a new generation has risen up, which does not gather its information (also) about folk traditions primarily from their parents and grandparents, nor from manuals, but from the Internet.

To whom does the folk tradition uploaded to the Internet address itself? Relying on the ideas of Vilmos Keszeg (see Keszeg, 2011: 40), I would argue that it addresses those about whom it speaks, its creator and user, the one who uploaded it to the Internet and searches for it, reads it, listens to it, watches it, and downloads it with a web browser. It is the property of a (virtual) community and an epoch. And simultaneously it is nobody's.

What kind of tradition appears on the World Wide Web and in what form? Those contents associated with traditional culture which appear on the Internet and become largely available come from four main directions. These are: scientific research, the public sphere, the entrepreneurial sphere, and the Internet users. Besides the homepages of ethnographic museums and other institutions dedicated to the research and conservation of folk traditions, such as local governments, regional associations, and touristic websites, various blogs, forums, news portals, Internet encyclopaedias, and file-sharing web pages, as well as social media websites and homepages dedicated to presenting the products of folk artists also publish contents of this kind.

In the past decade, I have searched for subjects related to folk culture with a daily frequency. I have visited several websites regularly and others occasionally or even accidentally. This research is primarily based on the results of these experiences. However, while writing this paper, I also researched more conscientiously some Hungarian and Transylvanian Hungarian webpages.

From the category of museums, I have researched the websites of those which also have an ethnographic collection: the homepage of the Ehtnographic Museum (*Néprajzi Múzeum*) (http://www.neprajz.hu), the Open-Air Ethnographic Museum (*Szabadtéri Néprajzi Múzeum*) in Szentendre (http://www.skanzen.hu), and the Village Museum in Göcsej (*Göcseji Falumúzeum*) (http://gocsejiskanzen.hu), from Hungary, and of the Szekler National Museum (*Székely Nemzeti Múzeum*) from Sfântu Gheorghe (Sepsiszentgyörgy) (http://www.sznm.ro), the Szekler Museum of Ciuc (Csík) (*Csíki Székely Múzeum*) (http://www.csikimuzeum.ro), the Haáz Rezső Museum in Odorheiu Secuiesc (Székelyudvarhely) (http://www.hrmuzeum.ro), the Tarisznyás Márton Museum in Gheorgheni (Gyergyószentmiklós) (http://www.tmmuzeum.ro), and the Molnár István Museum in Cristuru Secuiesc (Székelykeresztúr) (http://www.mimuzeum.ro), from Transylvania. As for the institutions and civil society organizations dedicated to the research and preservation of folk culture, I have studied the homepages of the House of Traditions (*Hagyományok Háza*) (http://www.hagyomanyokhaza.hu), the Hungarikum Committee (*Hungarikum Bizottság*)

(http://www.hungarikum.hu), Forster Gyula National Centre for Cultural Heritage Management (*Forster Gyula Nemzeti Örökségvédelmi és Vagyongazdálkodási Központ*) (http://www.vilagorokseg.hu), from Hungary, Kriza János Ethnographic Society (*Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság*) (http://www.kjnt.ro), the Society of Hungarian Folk Dance from Romania (*Romániai Magyar Néptánc Egyesület*) (http://www.neptanc.ro), and the Tradition Keeping Centre of Harghita County (Hargita Megyei Hagyományőrzési Forrásközpont) (http://www.hagyomany.ro), from Transylvania.

From the category of regional associations, I have studied the website of the Regional Association of Nyárádmente (Nyárádmente Kistérségi Társulás) (http://www.nyarad.ro, http://www.nyaradmente.ro) and of the local governments, the web portals of the villages from Scaunul Mureşului (Marosszék), inhabited mostly by Hungarians. As for the touristic sites, I have looked at the touristic and cultural information homepage of Scaunul Mureşului (Marosszék) (http://www.marosszek.ro), at the Mezőség website (http://mezoseg.eloerdely.ro), and the Szilágyság website (http://szilagysag.eloerdely.ro), both run by the Living Transylvania Association (http://mezoseg.eloerdely.ro), as well as the websites *Erdélyi Turizmus* (http://www.erdelyiturizmus.hu/) and *Székelyföldi Szálláskereső* (https://www.szekelyszallas.hu).

Blogs dedicated to certain thematic areas of folk culture are rare. These are primarily run by certain institutions[25] or young ethnographers working within the discipline, viz. former students of ethnography.[26] Several other blogs and forums – occasionally or regularly – also publish entries related to folk culture,[27] as do some of the news portals such as *szekelyhon.ro*.

Besides the video-sharing websites YouTube and Videa, I have studied Wikipedia and the *Adatbank* ("Database") of the web portal *Transindex*, the databases found on the homepage of the Kriza János Ethnographic Society (*Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság*) (database of folk ballads, the catalogue of ethnographic museums, and the photo archive), and a website which defines itself as the "first independent ethnographic portal of Hungarians," "primarily concerned with the ethnography of the people living in the Carpathian Basin" (http://karpatmedence.net).

So-called "folk artists," who run small enterprises based on traditional crafts, also popularize their products through the Internet and in several cases present the historical background or regional characteristics of the finished products. E.g. Ferenc Asztalos, a musical instrument maker, runs the website http://nepihangszerek.hu. The "Szekler products" (*Székely termékek*) web portal (http://

25 E.g. the blog of the *King* St. Stephen Museum at Székesfehérvár (https://szikmblog.wordpress.com/tag/neprajzi-gyujtemeny).

26 E.g. the anthropological blog "Green Sunglasses" (*Zöld napszemüveg. Antropológiai blog*) (http://znsz.blog.hu).

27 E.g. "Transylvanian Hungarians Worldwide" (*Erdélyi magyarok a világban*) (http://www.erdelyimagyarok.com).

szekelytermekek.ro) also presents numerous products which use motifs from folk culture. Several folk costume makers, Szekler portal carvers, folk potters, etc. run their own homepages, and some homepages of boarding and guest houses also publish short descriptions about the local traditions.[28]

The Internet pages of museums, research centres, and scientific societies are aimed at presenting scientific discourses and their research results within a new medium and at increasing the popularity of the institution. Besides these, digital databases and digital libraries also contribute to the fast and theoretically unlimited propagation of scientific results. However, in these cases, the controlling mechanisms elaborated in the previous epoch are still in effect, and the only innovation is in the instrument of the presentation, the new medium. At the same time, the vast majority of the users also consists of people interested in the information published on these websites due to their profession or from a scholarly perspective.

The case is different, however, with the other websites. The discourse about folk traditions fulfils a completely different function on the homepages of the various settlements, administrative units, and small regions. They answer the question of "Who are we?" not only by enumerating the local characteristics but also by employing a vast array of photographs, short films, and maps, which is ultimately also a method of self-definition and contributes to the creation of identity. Besides their mentioning of the first written records, folk traditions are also presented in a prominent manner due to the importance of demonstrating the people's "autochthony" and that of the symbolic appropriation of the past (the more distant, the better).

In the case of these homepages, it only rarely happens that a specific local custom is presented in a more detailed manner. In most cases, we can encounter descriptions in the form of bullet-point lists, or, if you wish, *lists of traditions*. Besides this, a merely imagistic representation of the folk traditions is also frequent. These pictures published on the Internet mostly show examples of traditional folk architecture, native costumes, festive events organized for the cultivation of tradition, and artisan products. In many cases, these traditions are presented under the heading of "local monuments" or "sights," as elements of culture that can play a significant role in increasing the attractiveness of the region for tourists. At the same time, it is also important to note that hyperlinks are completely lacking on these websites.

The same technique and perspective on tradition can be observed in the case of the websites that popularize touristic destinations. In this case also, folk traditions appear as "sights" and exotic elements, which strongly limits the thematic choice (or content) and the language use. These homepages limit themselves to the presentation of traditional foods, built heritage, dramatic representations of

28 See http://madarasvendeghaz.hu.

folk customs in the public space, folk festivals, local ethnographical collections (museums), and some local legends which have become known through the work of Balázs Orbán, Elek Benedek, and other authors. The main factor that determines the development of the concept of tradition consists here in economic interests. In this context, the importance is placed not upon precise, detailed, and professional description but primarily on a tone of voice and view that is reminiscent of the great 19th-century authors (e.g. Balázs Orbán) or relies on the works of the local specialists, dedicated to the conservation of traditions, characterized by the above-mentioned claims of autochthony. Although in most cases the curator of the traditions that are popularized online (the publisher of the content and the administrator of the homepage) is not someone equipped with the necessary professional knowledge (an ethnographic researcher), the publishing of the content is controlled from above. In the case of the rural settlements, townships, and small regions, the deciding factor is the local élite, and in the case of touristic homepages the marketing professional of the business decides which are the traditions that should be uploaded to the Internet and in what presentation, with a view to specific goals and user types.

However, this type of regulation is lacking in the case of blogs, Internet forums, and file-sharing websites. Since in these cases "the provider only furnishes the context" (see Szűts, 2013: 60), the chances are the same for the scholar and the mere copyist (Szűts, 2013: 55). The user skips over the traditional forms of control, and becomes simultaneously an author and a publisher from a reader (Szűts, 2013: 147). In this case, the authors of the contents do not publish these for any specific target group but for their own amusement and the Internet users also view these contents as a leisure activity. The represented contents mostly offer a "view from below" of the contemporary public discourse on folk traditions. On the one hand, these contents present the events in which the uploader has participated, considered by him or her to be traditional, while, on the other hand, they reflect the way in which the uploader has experienced them. At the same time, the preponderance of visual representations (films, photographs) over verbal descriptions is also characteristic of these websites.

Zoltán Szűts classifies Internet users into three categories on the basis of their behaviour. These are: 1. *wiki citizens*, whose objective is the creation of works; 2. *vandals*, who aim at defacing the contents uploaded by others and at provoking the users; 3. *hackers and spammers*, who try to popularize various products (see Szűts, 2013: 103). Another categorization is that of György Csepeli and Gergő Prazsák, who speak about *eternalists* (people who authenticate information), *network entrepreneurs* (who function as hubs for receiving and sending information), and *curators* (who mediate between the first two groups) (Csepeli & Prazsák, 2010: 38). On the basis of the employment of the Internet for social relation purposes, we can speak of *contactocrats*, *correspondents*, *chatters*,

and *contact proletarians* (Csepeli & Prazsák, 2010: 54). Finally, according to their activity on the Internet, the authors distinguish *recluses*, *information seekers*, *learners*, *receptors*, and *extensive users* (Csepeli & Prazsák, 2010: 79–81). The authors and users associated with the folk traditions accessible through the Internet also stem from these categories.

4. Further Considerations

The patrimonialization of folk traditions implies the necessity of the legal regulation of conservation and use. However, these rules prove themselves too weak when applied to the representations appearing within the new media. In this medium, too many people motivated by many different intentions undertake to present folk traditions, and the use of this information can also be all too varied. "The medium [...] often organizes itself according to radically different values, presenting the totality of human culture in infinitely many personal, often mutually contradictory, variations" (see Szűts, 2013: 142). Due to this reason, the poor regulation of the content that appears on the Internet (in our case, folk tradition) contains not only possibilities but also many paths that lead astray, which is also the cause of the *weightlessness* of the digitally recorded tradition (see Szűts, 2013: 143).[29]

In the case of the presentation of the folk traditions of specific settlements or regions, it is difficult to decide if it is a still living tradition or one that exists only in memory, or even only within the archives and book volumes. In many cases, it is even questionable whether we are dealing with a local tradition of the specific settlement or region, or with a mere adaptation, an "imported article," or, ultimately, an invented tradition, described by the author just because "it was handy" due to his or her lack of awareness about other traditions of the region or because his or her lack of other source materials. Besides this, we can often encounter cases in which the representations of tradition found on the Internet are not related to any place, epoch, or social group.

The media played an important role in the formation and popularization of the *representative tradition* in the past too. New media has only augmented this role and attracted new generations and social groups to its production and consumption.

Digitalized folk tradition (folk tradition appearing in digital media) is part of the cultural and not of the collective memory; it is not an organic tradition, and thus it possesses only a commemorative function and lacks the normative one. Its sole role is to aid the formation and preservation of local identity or to function as

29 This weightlessness is also due to the fact that these traditions lack a material body because of their digital existence (Szűts 2013: 153).

a pastime, but it does not regulate everyday life anymore. Through digitalization, folk traditions are not only removed from their primary context, but they can also get far removed from their primary users.

The relocation of tradition in this new medium implies the appearance of new meanings and functions. For instance, after it is uploaded to the World Wide Web, the traditional folk dance of Voivodeni (Vajdaszentivány) can be shown to and learned by almost anyone. Thus, folk tradition that has been formed in its primary context in order to resolve certain specific situations for the community becomes a form of entertainment in its new context, and its use (i.e. browsing) becomes a leisure activity. The role played by tradition as a norm that guarantees the functioning of everyday life (viz. labour) is overshadowed by its festive role and its function as an instrument for filling out our free time and as a tool of entertainment.

At the same time, due to the nature of the Internet, the subjective representations and interpretation (also) becomes part of the cultural memory. The digitalization of traditions can be viewed as a new form of the externalization of memory (Assmann), and the single Internet pages as virtual places of memory (Nora) and virtual sites of heritage formation. If in the 1960s it was a problem for the local teacher to find out how the native costume of Voivodeni (Vajdaszentivány) looked like, answering this question has now become very simple. The native costume of Voivodeni (Vajdaszentivány) is the one in which the local folk dance ensemble dresses, the one that can also be seen on many pictures on the Internet, and the one that many other folk dance ensembles from Mureş (Maros) County who have learned the folk dances of Voivodeni (Vajdaszentivány) have also commissioned for themselves on the basis of these visual representations found on the Internet. Thus, digital memory substitutes collective memory in the transmission of traditions. The one who keeps alive and transmits tradition is no more the individual, viz. the community, but a network, the machine (cf. Szűts, 2013: 50).

The relocation of folk tradition into this new medium does not only imply the formation of new meanings but also a change in the routines of use. The keywords of this new type of use are: *searching*, *saving*, *saving as* (i.e. in a different file format), *downloading*, *forwarding*, *liking*, *sharing*, and sometimes *deleting*. Thus, browsing on the Internet can be interpreted, on the one hand, as a journey[30] or a detective investigation (see Szűts, 2013: 69), while, on the other hand, as a commemorative ritual. The Internet page (homepage) as public space creates an alternative publicity, memorial place, and formation of memory. However, it is

30 Balázs Orbán has visited in person the Székely settlements in order to get to know the Székely Land, and the general outline of his presentation also follows his actual routes. The Internet user does the same thing with the aid of the hyperlinks, and deciding that he also wants to experience the locations, narratives, and traditions of which he has learned about thus in the offline world, makes this process of discovery on the basis of ready-made patterns (routes and sites). In this case, discovery and experience takes place in the online rather than in the offline world.

also true that in a digital context the joy of discovery is realized without the absorption involved in reading (Szűts, 2013: 69). Because of the integration of the computer into everyday life situations, the user becomes increasingly impatient and consumes the contents at an increasingly faster pace (Szűts, 2013: 75, 143).

The representation of folk tradition in this medium becomes shallow and confused. Real values appear in the same context as the kitsch, the junk, and the fake. Thus, the representations of folk culture transmitted through the Internet suffer from a deficit of meaning. The concepts of tradition and of the traditional lose their limits and are (or can be) applied to almost anything. All this is, for the most part, the result of the activity of current public figures and of the misunderstood form of tradition tourism (ethno-business).

The representation of folk traditions on the World Wide Web is a form of the conservation and patrimonialization of tradition. Consequently, the digitalization of folk traditions and their representation on the Internet not only has an important *informative* (communicative) and *depositive* (conservation) but also a very significant *performative* function. Digitalization and sharing itself represents an act of patrimonialization.

Similarly to the archives, the Internet also offers a site for the domestication of the past and folk tradition. However, besides these, it is also a place for their mercantilization. The context for the use, conservation, and patrimonialization of tradition within the new media consists in leisure activities and the forms of tourism characteristic for the heritage industry. However, this type of conservation of tradition comes simultaneously from many directions and also goes on in many directions. Both those who digitalize folk culture (the Internet users who transpose it into a multimedia context) and its users lack any elaborate strategies for the use of digitalized tradition. And both the representation and the search has an accidental character. The specialists of the digitalization and the representation of tradition on the World Wide Web are being formed only now. For the time being, the Internet users who digitalize folk culture exploit only partially the functions put at their disposal by the World Wide Web, such as the use of links and the various possibilities for involving their readers into the process of knowledge production (see Szűts 2013: 13). Only a small portion of those who browse on the Internet use it for searching scientific information about folk traditions, the vast majority searching for these guided by different intentions than this.

Finally, two more questions should be asked. On the one hand, who is worthy of digitalizing folk traditions and externalizing them into the online medium? On the other hand, who vouches for the authenticity of the traditions? In the case of books and archives, the ethnographic researcher is the one who, due to his or her status, knowledge, and presence (think of participatory observation), guarantees that everything that can be read in the volume or on the card of the archive is an authentic representation of peasant life. However, the authenticity of the folk

traditions represented on the Internet is rarely guaranteed in a similar way by experts. Since the identity of the authors is mostly questionable, the "reader," i.e. the user, is left unsure about the knowledge value of the contribution. Of course, "intruders" also have appeared in the case of the traditions that are "enclosed in books" (see Vajda, 2007: 9–32). They have offered naive or even pseudo-scientific explanations regarding folk traditions, but the number of these "intruders" has been relatively low, and their works have been published by publishing houses and with a typographical appearance that immediately show that these are not scholarly works. By contrast, in the democratic medium of the Internet there are no, or very few, clues for the reader for distinguishing relevant and irrelevant information, not to speak of the increase of irrelevant information.

5. Conclusions

The conservation of tradition and modern technology are not mutually exclusive. In a certain sense, online services based on technological development can even give a new impetus to the cultivation of tradition. There are several modes in which tradition is used on the Internet, associated with different user habits, and the represented traditions can also have different functions. Programmes dedicated to the preservation of traditions or presenting such events, which are transmitted by Internet or uploaded, can be categorized as the products of folklorism, similarly to websites presenting/advertising Hungarian folksy costumes, products prepared from medicinal plants, dishes, furniture or even residential houses, and other products of folk artists, considered traditional (and sometimes rustic). Images, descriptions, and audio-visual material presented on the homepages of museums can be interpreted as manifestations of scientific folklorism. The heritage industry, patrimonialization and the discourse about heritage also strongly use the possibilities of the Internet. During the process of the patrimonialization of tradition, its representation on the Internet, through a homepage, is currently almost indispensable. The Old Village of Hollókő and its surroundings, inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987, is represented not only on the homepage of the World Heritage of Hungary (*Világörökség Magyarországon*),[31] but it also has its own webpage[32] where inquirers can obtain information on the history of the settlement, local sights, gastronomy, tourist programmes, hiking options, and lodgings. However, the most illustrative Hungarian example is the funnel cake (*kürtőskalács*), widely considered a Szekler–Hungarian product, which was declared *an outstanding national value* ("kiemelkedő nemzeti érték") and has a short description on the

31 http://www.vilagorokseg.hu
32 http://www.holloko.hu

homepage of the Collection of Hungarian Values – Hungaricums (*Magyar Értéktár – Hungarikumok Gyűjteménye*).[33] Additionally, the funnel cake also has its own homepage, which presents its history in several languages (Romanian, English, and German), its preparation, and other information and promotional material which can also be downloaded.[34]

As it is in the case of its noting down (scriptural recording), the function of tradition also changes with its representation on the Internet. The (folk) tradition which can be found on the Internet: (1) produces representations; (2) provides a model for others both regarding the content and the mode of representation, i.e. it has a normative function; (3) produces identity and the past; (4) entertains.

The representation on the Internet – due to its archival character – offers the possibility of preservation and archiving, it has a depository function, and, which is even more important, allows an almost infinite number of shares (e.g. forwarding, linking) and active participation. Simultaneously, it also has presentative and performative functions.

However, the tradition that is represented on the Internet is much more fragile than that which is deposited in books and archives or which is locally preserved (heritage). Its retrieval is accidental and its storage temporary; it does not leave any trace behind if the website on which it was represented is cancelled.

After being uploaded to the Internet, folk tradition is capable of renewing itself even in the context of the new media. It is also possible to use the folk traditions represented on the Internet in a way in which the online information becomes the starting point and the source for the renewal of tradition.

The rapid changes in the medial context of social communication did not involve the decline in contents related to traditional culture. Traditional content has promptly found its way into the new media. At the same time, a major part of users relates to the new media on the basis of old patterns. In other words, old habits exert a violent influence on new technological instruments. Thus, medium changes have brought along developments on the level of representation and the routines related to it (e.g. copying, sharing, liking, commenting, etc.). On the level of habits, narrative models, and connective structures, the use of new media has only resulted in superficial changes.

References

Appadurai, Arjun. 2001. A lokalitás teremtése. *Régió* 12(3): 3–31.

Aronsson, Peter–Gradén, Lizette. 2013. Introduction: Performing Nordic Heritage – Institutional Preservation and Popular Practices. In: Aronsson, Peter–Gradén,

33 http://www.hungarikum.hu/ertek/721a3888f2de045f07f6a0fe87315c8714623841

34 http://www.kurtos.eu

Lizette (eds), *Performing Nordic Heritage. Everyday Practices and Institutional Culture*. Farnham–Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 1–26.

Assmann, Aleida. 1997. Fluchten aus der Geschichte: Die Wiedererfindung von Tradition vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert. In: Klaus, E. Müller–Jörn, Rüsen (Hg.), *Historische Sinnbildung*. Hamburg: Rohwolt, 608–625.

Assmann, Jan. 1999. *A kulturális emlékezés. Írás, emlékezés és politikai identitás a korai magaskulturákban*. Budapest: Atlantisz Könyvkiadó.

2008. *Uralom és üdvösség. Politikai teológia az ókori Egyiptomban, Izraelben és Európában*. Budapest: Atlantisz Könyvkiadó.

Bausinger, Hermann. 1983. A folklorizmus fogalmához. *Ethnographia* XCIV(3): 434–440.

1995. *Népi kultúra a technika korszakában*. Budapest: Osiris-Századvég Kiadó.

Bendix, Regina F.–Eggert, Aditya–Peselmann, Arnika (Hg.). 2012. *Heritage Regimes and the State*. (Göttingen Studies in Cultural Property, Volume 6.) Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen.

Bíró, Zoltán. 1987. Egy új szempont esélyei. In: Bíró, Zoltán–Gagyi, József–Péntek, János (eds), *Néphagyományok új környezetben. Tanulmányok a folklorizmus köréből*. Bukarest: Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 26–48.

Bíró, Zoltán–Gagyi, József–Péntek, János (eds). 1987. *Néphagyományok új környezetben. Tanulmányok a folklorizmus köréből*. Bukarest: Kriterion Könyvkiadó.

Blank, Trevor J. (ed.). 2009. *Folklore and the Internet. Vernacular Expression in a Digital World*. Logan: Utah State University Press.

Braudel, Fernand. 1972. A történelem és a társadalomtudományok: a hosszú időtartam. *Századok*, CVI(4–5): 988–1012.

Chartier, Roger. 1994. *The Order of Books. Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Connerton, Paul. 1997. Megemlékezési szertartások. In: Zentai Violetta (ed.), *Politikai antropológia*. Budapest: Osiris-Láthatatlan Kollégium, 64–82.

Craith, Máiréad Nic. 2012. (Un)common European Heritage(s). *Traditiones* (Ljubljana) 41(2): 11–28.

Csepeli, György–Prazsák, Gergő. 2010. *Örök visszatérés? Társadalom az információs korban*. Budapest: Jószöveg Műhely Kiadó.

Dawson, Bruce. 2005. *"Why Are You Protecting This Crap?": Perceptions of Value for an Invented Heritage – a Saskatchewan Perspective*. http://freepdfs.net/why-are-you-protecting-this-crap-carleton-university/93b77627adb9253bd6453fddf1969b44/ (Accessed on 30 January 2014).

DeLanda, Manuel. (2006). *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*. London: Continuum.

Deleuze, Gilles–Guattari, Félix. 2002. „Rizóma." In: Bókay, Antal–Vilcsek, Béla–Szamosi, Gertrud–Sári, László (eds), *A posztmodern irodalomtudomány kialakulása. A posztstrukturalizmustól a posztkolonialitásig*. Budapest: Osiris, 70–86.

Derrida, Jacques. 2008. Az archívum kínzó vágya. Freudi impresszió. In: Derrida, Jacques–Ernst, Wolfgang (Figura 3), *Az archívum kínzó vágya – Archívumok morajlása*. Budapest: Kijárat Kiadó, 7–104.

Dundes, Alan. 1956. What is Folklore? In: Dundes, Alan (ed.), *The Study of Folklore*. Englewood Cliffs N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1–3.

Erdősi, Péter. 2000. A kulturális örökség meghatározásának kísérletei Magyarországon. *Régió* 11(4): 26–44.

Ernst, Wolfgang. 2008. Archívumok morajlása. In: Derrida, Jacques–Ernst, Wolfgang (Figura 3), *Az archívum kínzó vágya – Archívumok morajlása*. Budapest: Kijárat Kiadó, 105–184.

Falser, Michael–Juneja, Monica. 2013. 'Archaeologizing' Heritage and Transcultural Entanglements: an Introduction. In: *'Archaeologizing' Heritage? Transcultural Entanglements between Local Social Practices and Global Virtual Realities*. Heidelberg–New York–Dordrecht–London: Springer, 1–18.

Fejős, Zoltán. 1996. Kollektív emlékezet és az etnikai identitás megszerkesztése. In: Diószegi, László (ed.), *Magyarságkutatás 1995–96*. Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 125–142.

2005. Néprajz, antropológia – kulturális örökség és az emlékezet kategóriái. *Iskolakultúra* 3: 41–48.

Foucault, Michael. 2001. *A tudás archeológiája*. Budapest: Atlantisz Könyvkiadó.

Frazon, Zsófia. 2010. Szellemi kulturális örökségünk: miről gondoljuk, hogy az, és miről nem? *Magyar Múzeumok*. Interneten: http://www.magyarmuzeumok.hu/tema/144_szellemi_kulturalis_oroksegunk_mirol_gondoljuk_hogy_az_es_mirol_nem (Accessed on 15 January 2013).

Gagyi, József 2008. *Örökség és közkapcsolatok (PR)*. Kolozsvár: Scientia Kiadó.

Gusev, Viktor Evgen'evich. 1983. A folklorizmus tipológiája. *Ethnographia* XCIV(3): 440–442.

György, Péter–Kiss, Barbara–Monok, István (eds). 2005. *Kulturális örökség – társadalmi képzelet*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.

Hartog, Francois. 2006. *A történetiség rendjei. Prezentizmus és időtapasztalat*. Budapest: L'Harmattan–Atelier Kiadó.

Hermann, Veronika. 2010. Törj be a szakrális térbe! Archívum és reprezentáció a múzeumban. *Magyar Múzeumok*. http://www.magyarmuzeumok.hu/tema/index.php?IDNW=751 (Accessed on 13 May 2011).

Hobsbawm, Eric. 1983. Introduction: Inventing Traditions. In: Hobsbawm, Eric–Ranger, Terence (eds), *The Invention of Tradition.* Cambridge–New York–New Rochelle–Melbourne–Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1–14.

1987. Tömeges hagyomány-termelés: Európa 1870–1914. In: Hofer, Tamás–Niedermüller, Péter (eds), *Hagyomány és hagyományalkotás. Tanulmánygyűjtemény. Kultúraelmélet és nemzeti kultúrák 1*. Budapest: MTA Néprajzi Kutatócsoport, 127–197.

Hofer, Tamás. 1994. Népi kultúra, populáris kultúra. Fogalomtörténeti megjegyzések. In: Kisbán, Eszter (ed.), *Parasztkultúra, populáris kultúra és a központi irányítás*. Budapest: MTA Néprajzi Kutatóintézet, 233–247.

Hofer, Tamás–Niedermüller, Péter (eds). 1987. *Hagyomány és hagyományalkotás. Tanulmánygyűjtemény. Kultúraelmélet és nemzeti kultúrák 1*. Budapest: MTA Néprajzi Kutatócsoport.

Hoppál, Mihály. 1982. Parttalan Folklór? A rejtett tudás antropológiája. *Korunk* XLI(5): 330–336.

Husz, Mária. 2006. A kulturális örökség társadalmi dimenziói. *Tudásmenedzsment* VII(2): 61–67.

Ioannides, Marinos–Quak, Ewald (eds). 2014. *3D Research Challenges in Cultural Heritage. A Roadmap in Digital Heritage Preservation*. Berlin Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag.

Jakó, Zsigmond. 1977. *Írás, könyv, értelmiség*. Bukarest: Kriterion Könyvkiadó.

Karnoouh, Claude. 1983. A folklór felhasználásáról, avagy a „folklorizmus" átváltozásairól. *Ethnographia* XCIV(3): 442–447.

Keszeg, Vilmos. 1995. A romániai magyar folklórkutatás öt évtizede (1944–1994). *Erdélyi Múzeum* LVIIII(3–4): 99–111.

2004. A rontás és gyógyítás mint irodalmi trópus. In: Pócs, Éva (ed.), *Áldás, átok, csoda és boszorkányság*. Vallásetnológiai fogalmak tudományközi megközelítésben. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 436–467.

2005. Az etnográfiai leírás mint olvasmány a helyi társadalomban. In: Szemerkényi, Ágnes (ed.), *Folklór és irodalom*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 315–339.

2009. 20. századi életpályák és élettörténetek. In: Vargyas, Gábor (ed.), Átjárók. A magyar néprajztól az európai etnológiáig és a kulturális antropológiáig. *Studia Ethnologica Hungarica* XI. Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó–PTE Néprajz-Kulturális Antropológia Tanszék, 95–133.

2011. *A történetmondás antropológiája*. Néprajzi egyetemi jegyzetek 7. Kolozsvár: Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság–BBTE Magyar Néprajz és Antropológia Tanszék.

2014. Tradition, patrimoine, société, memoire. In: Keszeg, Vilmos (ed.), *Á qui appartient la traditions?/ Who Owns the Tradition?* Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 7–15.

2015. *Nem írunk többet kézzel? Fordulóponthoz érkezett az írás története*. Transindex (kérdezett: Gál László). http://eletmod.transindex.ro/?cikk=24904 (Accessed on 22 January 2015).

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1995. Theorizing heritage. *Ethnomusicology* 39(3): 367–380.

2004. Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production. *Museum International* 56(1–2): 52–65.

Lotman, Jurij. 1994. A szüzsé eredete tipológiai aspektusból. In: Kovács, Árpád–V. Gilbert, Edit (eds), *Kultúra, szöveg, narráció. Orosz elméletírók tanulmányai.* Pécs, 82–118.

Lyth, Peter. 2006. *Selling History in an Age of Industrial Decline: Heritage Tourism in Robin Hood County*. XIV International Economic History Congress, Helsinki, 21–25 August 2006, 1–17. http://www.helsinki.fi/iehc2006/papers2/lyth.pdf (Accessed on 30 January 2014).

Marquard, Odo. 2001. *Az egyetemes történelem és más mesék*. Budapest: Atlantisz Könyvkiadó.

McLuhan, Marshall. 1964. *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Miklósvölgyi, Zsolt. 2008. Az an/archívum logikája. *KuK – Kultúra & Kritika*, A PPKE BTK Esztétika Tanszék kritikai portálja. http://kuk.btk.ppke.hu/hu/content/az-anarch%C3%ADvum-logik%C3%A1ja (Accessed on 13. May 2011).

Mohay, Tamás. 1997. Hagyomány és hagyományteremtés a csíksomlyói búcsún. In: S. Lackovits, Emőke (ed.), *Népi vallásosság a Kárpát-medencében II.* Veszprém–Debrecen: Veszprém Megyei Múzeumi Igazgatóság, 130–148.

Niedermüller, Péter. 1981. A mindennapok folklórja, avagy a folklór mindennapjai. In: Niedermüller, Péter (ed.), Folklór és mindennapi élet (válogatott tanulmányok). *Folklór — Társadalom — Művészet* 7. Budapest, Népművelési Intézet, 192–219.

Nora, Pierre. 2006. Küldetés és kihívás: a levéltár a mai társadalomban. *Levéltári Szemle*, LVI(1): 4–6.

2010. *Emlékezet és történelem között*. Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó.

Noyes, Dorothy 2009. Tradition: Three Traditions. *Journal of Folklore Research* 46(3): 333–368.

Nyíri, Kristóf 1994a. A hagyomány fogalma a német gondolkodásban. *Politikatudományi Szemle* 1: 73–77.

1994b. *A hagyomány filozófiája*. (Alternatívák) Budapest: T-Twist Kiadó.

Paládi-Kovács, Attila. 2004. A nemzeti kulturális örökség fogalma, tárgya. Örökség, hagyomány, néprajz. *Honismeret* 2: 1–11.

Ropolyi, László. 2006. *Az Internet természete. Internetfilozófiai értekezés*. Budapest: Typotex Kiadó.

Rowan, Yorke–Baram, Uzi (eds). 2004. *Marketing Heritage. Archeology and the Consumption of Past.* Walnut Greek-Lanham-New York-Toronto-Oxford: Altamira Press.

Shils, Edward. 1981. *Tradition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Sisa, József. 2001. Az 1896-os ezredéves kiállítás néprajzi faluja és a magyar állam önreprezentációja. *Korunk* 12: 46–50.
Smith, Laurajane. 2004. *Archaeological Theory and the Politics of Cultural Heritage*. London and New-York: Routledge.
2006. *The Uses of Heritage*. London és New-York: Routledge.
Smith, Laurajane–Akagawa, Natsuko (eds). 2009. *Intangible Heritage*. London és New-York: Routledge.
Sonkoly, Gábor. 2000. A kulturális örökség fogalmának értelmezési és alkalmazási szintjei. *Régió* 11(4): 45–66.
2005. Örökség és történelem: az emlékezet technikái. *Iskolakultúra* 3: 16–22.
2009. Léptékváltás a kulturális örökség kezelésében. *Tabula* 2: 199–209.
Stanley, David J. 2003. *Computers, Visualization and History. How Technology Will Transform Our Understanding of the Past*. New-York–London: M. E. Sharpe Inc–Armonk.
Ştiucă, Alexandra Narcisa. 2014. Living a Ritual: The Meaning of the Căluş Today. In: Keszeg, Vilmos (ed.), *A qui appartient la tradition?/Who Owns the Tradition?* Cluj-Napoca: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 42–52.
Storey, John. 2003. *Inventing Popular Culture. From Folklore to Globalization*. Malden-Oxford-Melbourne-Berlin: Blackwell Publishing.
Szűts, Zoltán. 2013. *A világháló metaforái. Bevezetés az új média művészetébe*. Budapest: Osiris Kiadó.
Takács, Tibor. 2009. Sancho Panzától az álmok palotájáig: néhány megjegyzés a levéltárról. *Levéltári Szemle* LIX(2): 61–68.
Tauschek, Markus. 2011. Reflections on the Metacultural Nature of Intangble Cultural Heritage. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* 5(2): 49–64.
Therond, Daniel–Trigona, Anna. 2008. *Heritage and Beyond*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
Thompson Hajdik, Anna. 2009. "You Really Ought to Give Iowa a Try:" Tourism, Community Identity, and the Impact of Popular Culture in Iowa. *The Online Journal of Rural Research and Policy* 4(1): 1–20.
Trevor-Roper, Hugh. 1983. The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland. In: Hobsbawm, Eric–Ranger, Terence (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge–New York–New Rochelle–Melbourne–Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 15–41.
Tschofen, Bernard. 2012. Heritage – Contemporary Uses of Culture Beyond the Everyday? Challenging Ethnography and Cultural Analysis. *Traditiones* (Ljubljana) 41(2): 29–40.
Vajda, András. 2007. Irodalom és tudomány között: egy verses helytörténeti kismonográfia. In: Ilyés, Sándor–Jakab Albert, Zsolt (eds), *Lenyomatok*. Fiatal kutatók a népi kultúráról 6. Kolozsvár: Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság, 9–32.

2015a. A falutörténetek szerzői, forrásai, médiumai és a helyi kultúráról alkotott szemléletük. In: Keszeg, Vilmos (ed.), *Falutörténetek, lokális történelmek, lokális emlékezet.* (Emberek és kontextusok). Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 7–23.

2015b. A népi kultúra használatának módjai és kontextusai a világhálón. In: Jakab Albert Zsolt–Kinda István (eds), *Aranykapu. Tanulmányok Pozsony Ferenc tiszteletére.* Kolozsvár, KJNT–Szentendrei Néprajzi Múzeum–Székely Nemzeti Múzeum, 173–188.

2015c. Népi kultúra a világhálón. Használat, kontextus, funkció. *Replika. Társadalomtudományi folyóirat* 90–91(1–2): 187–211.

Voigt, Vilmos. 1970. Vom Neofolklorismus in der Kunst. *Acta Ethnographica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 19: 401–423.

1979. A magyarországi folklorizmus jelen szakaszának kutatási problémái. *Ethnographia* XC(2): 219–236.

1987a. A folklór és a folklorizmus határai. In: Voigt, Vilmos (ed.), *Modern magyar folklorisztikai tanulmányok*. Folklór és Etnográfia 34. Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem Néprajzi Tanszék, 181–186.

1987b. A neofolklorizmus fogalmának körülhatárolása. In: Voigt, Vilmos (ed.), *Modern magyar folklorisztikai tanulmányok*. Folklór és Etnográfia 34. Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem Néprajzi Tanszék, 187–194.

2007. A hagyomány modern fogalma. In: Török, József (ed.), *Hagyomány és modernitás*. IX. Közművelődési Nyári Egyetem Szeged, 2007. július 2–6. Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Közművelődési, Pedagógiai és Sportintézmény, 10–13.

Weinrich, Herald. 2002. *Léthé, a felejtés művészete és kritikája*. Budapest: Atlantisz Könyvkiadó.