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# OLD TRADITIONS - NEW PRACTICES

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*The Intangible Cultural Heritage of  
Traditional Hungarian Folk Singing in  
Present Day Urban Hungary*

Master Thesis by  
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## Acknowledgement

At a certain point in the process of writing this thesis the following paragraph was used as a joking introduction:

A long time ago in a galaxy far-far away there was a desperate student trying to come up with a witty starting point to capture the attention of readers and seduce them into reading an almost 90 pages long thesis on the changing field of traditional Hungarian folk singing within the framework of the intangible cultural heritage debate. Though she loved and adored her topic, finding it insanely interesting and beautiful, she could not come up with any other way of starting her thesis, than a reference truly authentic to her: one from Star Wars. Authentic, you ask? Well let me tell you about authentic. All it will take is about half a day and all the patience you have.

For having that patience several times over I would like to thank Pauwke Berkers, Piroska Nagy and Tibor Sándor. I would like to express my most sincere gratitude and respect to all the singers I had the honor and pleasure of interviewing, you made this thesis possible. I would also like to thank the librarians of the music department in the Szabó Ervin Municipal Library for their efforts in supplying me with the most well hidden books of the department. Thank you Piroska, Tibor and Omi for providing the necessary economic capital for this year – and relentless support. Liesbeth, your entertaining feedback is the only kind I want to get from now on. Last, but most definitely not least: CRIZLL for life. I owe you my sanity.



## Abstract

Hungary underwent vast and radical changes during the turmoil of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which have led, among other things, to both the decline in the practice of traditional folk culture as well as subsequent waves of folklore revivals. These revivals have alternately stemmed from, and led to, research and documentation in the field of intangible cultural heritage both within and beyond the current borders of Hungary, reaching far into secluded rural areas where folk tradition has seamlessly persisted. These revival movements have become an integral part of Hungarian history and identity, and have borne a great influence upon the current forms in which these traditions are practiced and presented today. This research investigates how safeguarding efforts called into action as a way to ward off the destructive measures of modernization, globalization, and the Communist-era push for urbanization, have ignited a process of artistic legitimization of folk culture, influencing the form the singing of traditional folk songs take in contemporary urban Budapest. Taking the interdisciplinary approach of combining heritage studies with cultural theory the thesis aims to answer the research question: *'To what extent has the authentic practice of traditional Hungarian folk singing become a legitimized performing art in modern day urban Hungary?'* In answering this question the thesis analyzes the contemporary field of folk singing. It demonstrates the emergence of authenticity as a field of restricted production and accordingly analyzes its boundaries, criteria for production and evaluation of its cultural product and the autonomy of this field. The analysis hopes to highlight certain specificities of the modern day performing art, which originate from the art forms heritage status. Key concepts investigated include authenticity definitions, safeguarding, artistic professionalization, field boundaries and the conventions of production and evaluation of traditional folk singing as a performing art. Literature on the most formative revival movement shaping current practices, the Táncház (Dance-house) movement, serves as a foundation for legitimization. Fourteen semi-structured interviews, with traditional Hungarian singers, revival artists, provide the backbone of the analysis of the modern day traditional folk singing field.

**Keywords:** intangible cultural heritage, authenticity, safeguarding, Hungary, folk music, heritage practice and presentation, artistic legitimization, criteria of production and evaluation

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## List of Acronyms

ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
FRP	Field of Restricted Production
FLP	Field of Large-scale Production

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## Introduction

*“Here’s the new craze: Hungarian folk songs, Japanese style.”* (“Itt az új örület”, 2015) What this headline refers to is the ongoing project of the Hungarian FolkEmbassy: producing the very first traditional Hungarian folk singing karaoke DVD. Using a modern popular cultural technique to teach Hungarians some of their own traditional songs, this new initiative demonstrates a truly 21<sup>st</sup> century approach to heritage lost and heritage regained.

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century several waves of heritage revivals swept across the country of Hungary, a region undergoing far-reaching changes at the time. From border and regime changes through changes in forms of government (constitutional monarchy, democracy, dictatorship), ideologies and economics (capitalism to communism and return to capitalism), the relationship of modern urban man to the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of his forefathers was continuously questioned and reinterpreted. The history of safeguarding in Hungary is that of a series of revivals, each subsequent wave bringing new aspects of ICH to the forefront, each representing different issues of handling ICH in changing social structures and political regimes. A feature of Hungary’s ICH is folk singing. Beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the turmoil of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, folk singing developed from being a rural heritage practiced by the peasant people of the country, to an urban practice. Successive waves of revivals exemplified by stylizing and recomposing ultimately gave rise to the domination of *traditional* or *authentic* folk singing, through the Táncház<sup>1</sup> movement of the 1970s.

Folk music, song and dance are intertwined and they developed together through successive waves of folkloristic renaissances. However, a deliberate choice was made to focus only on singing, for the sake of limiting the scope of this research. Singing, within the larger category of music, is often overshadowed by that of more visual and participatory folk dance and instrumental music. In addition, my choice fell on singers as their numbers are smaller than that of both dancers and musicians, forming a tighter community more easily mapped, allowing for the sample of 14 singers to yield more highly, if not fully representative results.

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<sup>1</sup> Táncház (literally translated to dance-house) are social events originating from Szék, Transylvania, where traditional folk dancing is practiced to traditional music and singing. Most of these events are open to the public. They include professionals who teach by demonstrating and every level of practitioners from amateurs to individuals involved in performing.



Singers form groups infrequently and it is more common for them to sing in various different musical formations, making them more independent than musicians and dancers. However, due to the nearly inseparable connection between the triad of music, song and dancing, the theoretical framework will often rely and address questions and dialogues of folk music in general, which should always be interpreted as including folk singing.

Be there no mistake; by *folk singing* this thesis does not refer to the contemporary genres of 'new folk' or 'indie folk', nor does it imply music rising to the spotlight from the creative hubs of modern day communities. By placing folk music at its locus this thesis aims to investigate the contemporary urban practice of singing traditional folk songs on stage. It is a tradition that singers learn through various modes of transmission, such as listening to original recordings made by ethnomusicologists starting as early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and learning from tradition bearers. Its intimate relationship with spoken language makes folk singing stand out from among the trinity of the folk culture performing arts: dance, song and music. While there is a fascinating trend among communities for example in certain Asian countries to learn Hungarian folk dancing from videos, it is much harder to imagine someone who does not speak the language learning authentic folk singing. The ICH of folk singing is therefore one with a more limited pool of potential practitioners, and a field somewhat underrepresented among the performing folk arts.

While a large part of the subject has to do with understanding ICH development in its original context, this research targets modern day practitioners, those revival artists who practice, and mostly have learnt the specific element of ICH far from the sociocultural context from which it originates. Researching the legitimization process of this folk music as art music this thesis will argue that through the procession of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century traditional folk singing has become a field of restricted production (Bourdieu, 1985). The concept of authenticity, or rather authenticities, will be crucial to this discussion alongside considerations of safeguarding and performing.

The thesis strives to bring together scholarly literature of the heritage discourse (including the works of authors such as Alivizatou, 2006; 2008; Bouchenaki, 2003; Cho, 2013; Graham, Ashworth, & Turnbridge, 2000; Kurin, 2004; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; 2004; ) with concepts of cultural theory in artistic legitimization and field theory of cultural production (Baumann, 2007; Bourdieu 1980; 1983; 1985; 1997). In analyzing folk singing in the modern world the work of Bohlman (1988) will especially be of help. The dual perspective will allow

for a more comprehensive understanding of how traditional elements of ICH can gain a second life in new, urban settings through revivals and legitimization. Hopefully, the interdisciplinary approach will help highlight those unique traits of the practice that, stemming from its original heritage and its demand for authenticity, set it apart from other musical fields. The research sets out to further the scholarly discussions on heritage in contemporary society, expanding on the notions of authenticity, safeguarding and what it means to be a tradition bearer in today's society. In doing so this thesis will aim to answer the research question: "To what extent has the authentic practice of traditional Hungarian folk singing become a legitimized performing art in modern day urban Hungary?"

The addressing of the topic is timely and relevant as the past several years have seen a growing interest towards, and initiatives being taken in, folk culture, it's popularizing and safeguarding. Examples of this include the launching of the Fölszállott a Páva folk culture based television competition show in 2012, a successor of the similar Röpülj Páva competition before 1943; the 2008 establishment of the Folk Singing BA and MA program of the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest as the newest addition to its folk music department; participation in the esteemed Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC in 2013, which was entitled *Hungarian Heritage: Roots to Revival*, and focused "*not only [on the] diversity and authenticity of contemporary traditional music, dance, arts and crafts, gastronomy, and family life, but also the significance of the Hungarian folk revival movement worldwide.*" ("Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Hungarian Heritage: Roots to Revival", 2013). This last example particularly demonstrates the ongoing impact of the 1970s movement, proving that the legacy of the past is indeed continuously shaping current approaches and conventions of ICH practice. Since the completion of the research done for this thesis, within the past few months alone, a number of interviews and articles have been published online, addressing the questions of modern day tradition bearing within the folk movement, and other themes prevalent in this study. Growing interest seems to be directing attention towards the folk movement again, demonstrating the need for an academic approach to its analysis.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See the following interviews (available only in Hungarian):

"A legtöbb mai magyar kultúrája globalizált, tömegesített kultúra" (04.04.2015.)

[http://fesztival.mandiner.hu/cikk/20150404\\_agocs-gergely-a-legtobb-mai-magyar-kulturaja-globalizalt-tomegesített-kultura](http://fesztival.mandiner.hu/cikk/20150404_agocs-gergely-a-legtobb-mai-magyar-kulturaja-globalizalt-tomegesített-kultura) (Accessed on 06.06.2015);

"Agócs Gergely: a magyar népzene ma is megállja a helyét" (10.04.2015)

<http://uj szo.com/online/kultura/2015/04/21/agocs-gergely-a-magyar-nepzene-ma-is-megallja-a-helyet>.

(Accessed on 06.06.2015); "Kubinyi Júlia: 'Ma nem a nagymamánktól tanuljuk a népdalokat'" (02.05.2015).

To my knowledge the dual approach applied in this thesis is a unique one, and previously unapplied. Nor has the practice of Hungarian folk singing in the 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> century been researched from a sociological perspective. This thesis constitutes one of few, if not the first English language analysis of Hungarian folk revival focusing on folk singing, which aims to go beyond giving a historic account of its development.

In order to answer the research question, available literature from and about the 1970s push for authenticity was extensively analyzed, to which the opinion of 14 folk singers was compared. The discussions with these singers took the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews. Due to the language barrier, both the literature used and the interviews themselves were translated into English by me. Through the process of translation strict attention was paid to keep the meaning of the quotes intact.

This thesis may offer insightful results that can serve as a reference point for future investigations into ICH safeguarding in the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century, and perhaps raise certain important questions within the members of the movement.

The thesis will have the following structure: An inclusive theoretical framework will pave the way to understanding the progression of ICH in its original context of development to it becoming a legitimized artistic field of restricted production. This will include looking at transmission methods, safeguarding, authenticity concepts and creativity. It will lead into the discussion of the categorization of singers, highlighting specialization as the basis of professionalization. Artistic legitimation and field theory will then be introduced with regard to the cultural production of symbolic goods. This will be followed by the introduction of the Hungarian case, looking at the major historical approaches to folk singing and safeguarding. The Táncház movement will be analyzed through the framework of the legitimation process and will be inspected more meticulously. The ensuing presentation of research methodology and the description of the sample of interviewees will be followed by the analysis of the results. The main focus of the results will be field boundaries and actor position taking, and field autonomy will lead the dialogue. Finally, conclusions will be drawn and discussions of further research will be suggested.

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[http://fidelio.hu/jazz\\_world\\_folk/interju/kubinyi\\_julia\\_ma\\_nem\\_a\\_nagymamanktol\\_tanuljuk\\_a\\_nepdalokat](http://fidelio.hu/jazz_world_folk/interju/kubinyi_julia_ma_nem_a_nagymamanktol_tanuljuk_a_nepdalokat) (Accessed on 06.06.2015);

fib (06.05.2015). Kubinyi Júlia: Egyensúlyban két világ között. <http://mno.hu/grund/kubinyi-julia-egyensulyban-ket-vilag-kozott-1285066> (Accessed on 06.06.2015);

“Itt az új örület: magyar népdal japán módra!” (04.06.2015).

[http://www.kulturpart.hu/folk/47020/itt\\_az\\_uj\\_orulet\\_magyar\\_nepdal\\_japan\\_modra](http://www.kulturpart.hu/folk/47020/itt_az_uj_orulet_magyar_nepdal_japan_modra) (Accessed on 05.06.2015)

## Folk Music: From Heritage to Art Form

*“[...] folk music is both a product of the past  
and a process of the present [...]”*  
(Bohlman, 1988, p. 13)

### 1. Finding folk music within heritage

In order to narrow the scope of inquiry to the questions of folk singing within ICH, one must necessarily begin by addressing the concept of heritage. Defining heritage constitutes no simple task, as the ongoing heritage debate has yet to agree on a satisfying, all-inclusive definition (Smith, 2009, p. 79). Most explanations describe heritage as that what *“which is inherited or handed on from one generation to the next.”* (Smith, 2009, p. 79; see also Vecco, 2009; Graham, Asworth and Turnbridge, 2004) The meaning of the term, originating from the individual level of the family context, has been expanded to include the heritage of communities and nations (Vecco, 2009), which often plays a large role in collective identity formation and nationalism (Asworth, et al., 2004, p. 2). Most commonly, heritage is explained through its relation to concepts of dealing with the past, such as ‘history’, ‘nostalgia’, and ‘memory’. While heritage is directly related to and defined by memory and sentiment (Chhabr, Healy & Sills, 2003), it should not be confused with history (Nora, 1989; Smith, 2009, p. 79). Essentially *“heritage is a view from the present, either backwards to the past or forwards to the future [...], the contemporary use of the past [...]”* (Asworth, et al., 2004, p. 2) Contemporary uses include both its interpretation and its representation (Smith, 2009, p. 97). Interpretation is based on memory and nostalgia, which are always selective (Debary, 2004; Halbertsma, 2011; Riegl, 1996; Turai, 2009, van der Hoeveh, 2014), and the concepts and interpretations of a particular heritage are malleable, (2003; Turai, 2009) and depend on the needs of the present (Chhabr et al., 2003, p. 705; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 151). While the question of interpretation and indeed the initial emergence of national heritage are hugely consequential and fascinating, the scope of this thesis does not allow for a detailed explanation of the process in general nor that of the specific case of Hungarian heritage<sup>3</sup>. The thesis will however focus on questions of its presentation with regard to authenticity, legitimization, institutionalization, professionalization and safeguarding.

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<sup>3</sup> For the evolution process of national heritage in Hungary see (available only in Hungarian): Hofer, T. (1994). Változó paraszti műveltség és a róla alkotott elképzelések. In: Lackó Miklós (szerk.): *A tudománytól a tömegkultúráig*. Pp. 169–190. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete.  
For discussions on the origin of folk music see Bohlman (1988, pp. 1-14)

In the contemporary heritage debate the manifestation of cultural expressions are generally classified as tangible or intangible (as the UNESCO heritage lists themselves demonstrate), which is an artificial distinction typical of the exhibition and safeguarding oriented approach (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, pp. 149-150). Though efforts of protecting tangible heritage by UNESCO, the largest global framework devised to protect heritage, reach back to the 1950s, the emergence of the concept of non-tangible elements as heritage also in need of protection arose only in the 1970s, and action was not taken until the 1980s (Vecco, 2013). To satisfy the growing need for a plan for safeguarding ICH on a global scale in face of the dual threat of modernization and urbanization (Smith, 1988, p. 124), the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003) was drawn and adopted. The Convention provides definitions for ICH-related terminology<sup>4</sup>, which this thesis uses ICH as meaning:

*“(...) the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.” (UNESCO, 2003, p. 2)*

Thusly defined the Convention sees the manifestation of ICH in the following five domains:

*“Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; traditional craftsmanship.” (UNESCO, 2003, p. 2)<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> The term *intangible cultural heritage* was chosen as an alternative for unclear terminology such as “‘folklore’, ‘oral heritage’, ‘traditional culture’, ‘expressive culture’, ‘way of life’, ‘folklife’, ‘ethnographic culture’, ‘community-based culture’, ‘customs’, ‘living cultural heritage’, and ‘popular culture’” (Kurin, 2004, p. 67) which were often misused and derogatory. The most commonly used *folklore* model emphasized a scholarly approach to collecting, documenting, and thus preserving heritage. In contrast to this approach the concept of ICH places emphasis on the communities and masters creating the cultural elements and keeping traditions alive (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004, p. 53), shifting attention from cultural product to the culture bearer(s), the cultural producer(s) (Bouchenaki, n.d.; Alivizatou, 2008). While the turn from tangible to intangible heritage meant turning from valuing physical outcome to valuing the process and skill of creation, it also meant turning from the notion of universal value to favoring diversity of human culture, relativism and specificity, and allows for a less Eurocentric view of heritage (Kurin, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Though the content of the Convention can, and is often scrutinized, it is not within the scope of this thesis to argue for or against it, as the Convention itself is not the subject of research. However, concerning the specific definition of ICH the following observation should be noted: While the Convention emphasizes the cultural community whose identity is based symbolically on the ICH passed on through the generations, this definition

Embedded in these definitions are the concepts of passing down the heritage element from generation to consecutive generation, the changing nature of ICH through recreation and the interaction of community members (Cho, 2013; Kurin 2004; Alivizatou, 2008; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004), and the implication of an oral and practice based mode of cultural transmission.

Folk music, and within it folk singing as a cultural expression bears upon itself the traits of ICH, as defined above. Though a form of self-expression – for in its original function according to tradition bearers of Hungary (Berez, 2004), singing is not a performing art or a presentation, rather it is the manifestation of an internal desire to express emotions – folk music and singing can become representative of a community, or a nation. As Péter (1974) states *“every cultural expression necessarily originates from the individual, and only in its function does it become a thing of the society, of the community.”* (p. 5) What are the communities, the *folk* these songs then come to represent? While the terminology tends to induce a discomfort of using folk as a synonym for ‘primitive’ the term may include any sociocultural formation, including *“various folk groups: ethnic, tribal, national, occupational, religious, familial.”* (Bohlman, 1988, p. X) As all cultural heritage can be a defining element of cultural identity (Alivizatou, 2008), music as part of it is similarly influential to identity (van der Hoeven, 2014). Music helps individuals answer the questions Who am I? and Who are we?, because identities are relational and based on difference: Who are they? (van der Hoeven, 2014, p. 9). It thereby serves a purpose in helping the individual define his or her identity, but also has the power to create groups with a shared culture, strengthening boundaries between those who are included and those who are not.

In its original sociocultural context folk music and song is subject to change as it is passed on from generation to generation through oral transmission (Bohlman, 1988, p. 20). This can be observed for example in lyrics, melody, embellishments, regional dialects, and even the compositions of the folk songs in circulation. Folk songs and music as ICH exist not in a fixed form but in its variations. Change within songs can occur as the result of repetition,

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excludes many cultural practices, for example artistic styles and modern day cultural practices, among a variety of other things (Kurin, 2004) At the same token the definition does allow for more than solely traditional culture to be included as long as the cultural practice is meaningful to a certain community and is passed on to a next generation, even if the community is of mixed ethnicity and the transmission transpires between genealogically unrelated individuals (Kurin, 2004).

forgetting, consolidation (borrowing and assimilation), substitution, addition, and individual creativity (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 20-25). Through these changes the repertoire of a person, community or nation can be seen as continuously adding to and discarding from the body of its ICH elements that, which become or cease to be functional or symbolically meaningful (Kurin, 2004, p. 74), making it diverse while at the same time region, community and even individual specific. (Sárosi, 1973, e.g. p. 70, p. 92) As Sárosi says (1973) “(...) *we mustn’t forget that the world of folk tradition is not a frozen, closed world – even if compared to its state one or two hundred years ago – it is an open one that constantly picks up and integrates new traditions, that discards what becomes obsolete, and creates newness; it is a changing world.*” (p. 133)

It is imperative to note that in this first life stage nothing is recorded using any means of technology, therefore it continues to develop or diminish, to flourish or tarnish, depending on its usefulness to the individuals and the community, the memory of the folk, and their ability to pass down their heritage from generation to consecutive generation (Sárosi, 1973p. 138). The ability of a community to pass on its ICH, however, is not only a question of individual effort, but of the stability of the sociocultural world of the community, as “[...] *Intangible heritage, [...] is not only embodied, but also inseparable from the material and social worlds of persons.*” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004 p.60). It is inherently linked to the way of life in which it originated.

The discourse thus far is relevant to ICH being practiced in the sociocultural context of its origin, i.e. in rural societies and as a part of the everyday lives of the folk. However, as Bohlman (1988) expresses, with advanced and ongoing modernization and urbanization folk music has become threatened in its original context, but as he puts it “*is not eschewed by the city,*” (p. xvii) requiring an approach to folk music in the modern world that takes into account this shift in sociocultural context, and often function. The loss of context and function leads, according to Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) – and indeed in line with the constructivist approach to heritage presented at the beginning of this discussion – a process of heritagization, in which heritage is “[...] *the transvaluation of the obsolete, the mistaken, the outmoded, the dead and the defunct. Heritage is created through the process of exhibition (as knowledge, as performance, as museum display). Exhibition endows heritage thus conceived with a second life.*” (p. 149) The concept of the second life of heritage can also be seen in Sárosi’s (1973) approach to folk singing. Identifying the origin of folk music, or of any ICH

element for that matter, is complex and based on the aim of the search, and can be limitless (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 1-14). Since ICH changes as its function changes through societal shifts (Bohlman, 1988, p.12), the end of this phase can be more readily pinpointed - not of course as a specific date, but as a progressional process. It is linked to the erosion of the social structure in which heritage lives and in the changing of the function it fulfills, which can and often does lead to the conscious process of its safeguarding. (Sárosi, 1973, pp. 24-28; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, pp. 149-150). Its second life begins at this point and can be characterized by the diversification and multiplication of contexts (urban vs. rural, staged vs. private, etc.) in which it becomes practiced, safeguarding efforts (such as collecting, documenting, classifying, learning, etc.), canonization and revivals (Bohlman, 1988, p. xix).

It is the break between the two modes of cultural production that calls into action safeguarding efforts (section 2), raises the questions of authenticities (section 3 and 5 of this chapter) and allows for the reinterpretation of what it means to be a folk singer (section 4 of this chapter).

## 2. Safeguarding

A consequence of ICH no longer being embedded in traditional communities was that traditional culture was judged too weak to fend for itself (Alivizatou, 2008; Naguib, 2013). The Convention therefore was deemed necessary *“to ward off the disappearance of living traditions and protect them from the threats of globalization, migration and the homogenization of cultures.”* (Naguib, 2013, p. 2180) Safeguarding ICH in the terminology of UNESCO, defined in the 2003 Convention consists of:

*“[...] Measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.” (UNESCO, 2003, p. 3)*

As the identification of cultural heritage elements is twofold (tangible and intangible), so is the safeguarding of it. Two distinct approaches to safeguarding can be identified: that focusing on the cultural product and that focusing on the cultural producer. While neither is exclusionary as one cannot exist without the other, the two approaches nevertheless yield different results.



## 2.1 Cultural product oriented safeguarding

This approach implies the identification, collection, documentation, research, etc. of the manifestations and equipment of ICH. In the case of folk singing this means safeguarding through focusing on the songs themselves, most commonly including notation, audio recording and video recording. Through recording (manually or digitally) ICH becomes a fixed entity, which enables both the placement of artifacts into cultural context and the compilation of a collection on its own (Alivizatou, 2006; Hennessy, 2012), a representation of itself (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, p. 151). As the Hungarian case will show this in itself can prove to be indispensable when studying cultural practices, however the insight they provide is dependent heavily on how they are approached.

At least three things must be taken into consideration when handling a documented element of ICH. First of all, recording ICH through any form has its limitations: writing takes considerable time, and technologies have their own limitations such as battery life, memory space, color scheme, clearness of audio recording device, etc. (Hennessy, 2012) This leads to selectivism on the part of the individual doing the documenting. (Hennessy, 2010). These recorded cultural elements are the results of selective documentation in two ways: they are chosen from a wider spectrum of cultural practices, which give meaning to the ICH being recorded, and they are selected from a wide range of cultural manifestations of the same type. Secondly, through documenting there is a *loss of aura* (Benjamin, 1968) as the ICH presented is stripped from the fullness of its expression through the incapability of technology to capture every element of presentation. Technological development does provide better alternatives – consider the difference in the spectrum of recorded elements in a noted song and a videotaped performance of that song – however even the fullest recording lacks essential components of the performance and its wider context. Thirdly, due to the changing nature of culture any documentation will not be but a snapshot of a moment in its life, frozen in time (Sárosi, 1973, p. 105). Considering these shortcomings, anyone using the documented versions of ICH needs to concede that in-depth cultural knowledge must be gained for understanding the ICH and its place in tradition, and only a multitude of recordings may give any insight into the actual ICH itself (Siklós, 1977). Canonization plays a significant role in this approach to ICH, the process through which professionals of the field agree on what constitutes ICH and what does not (Bohlman, 1988). Documented digital heritage is not the same thing as the heritage it aims to document. *“To think otherwise is to make the classic*

*error of mistaking a map for the territory it represents.*” (Brown, 2005 as quoted by Hennessy, 2012, p. 351)

## 2.2 Cultural producer oriented safeguarding

The shift in perspective and the emphasis on tradition bearers within the Convention was inspired by the Japanese Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties and its Korean counterpart, the Cultural Heritage Protection Act. According to this perspective safeguarding must focus not only on documenting, researching and archiving ICH, but on initiating participatory efforts in which the transmission process and the community is placed at the heart of the programs. (Alivizatou, 2008; Kurin, 2004; Bouchenaki, n.d.; Hennessy, 2012). This approach to cultural heritage can be defined as an anthropological one, the adaptation of which shows the humanization of the heritage debate (Alivizatou, 2008). As the UNESCO (2003, p. 3) definition implies, two main directions can be identified: a focus on tradition bearers (most commonly used as practitioners in their own sociocultural environment) in their original context and focusing on revivals (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 127-132). Often the dwindling number of tradition bearers necessitates popularization actions revitalization. At the core of the survival of ICH in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century are revival movements, which play a significant role in the legitimization of the *“traditionality of contemporary context, by virtue of their symbolic value.”* (Bohlman, 1988, p. 130)

## 3. Authenticity: objective

A determinant process in safeguarding ICH is identifying its measurements of *authenticity* and finding ways to maintain it through transmission, as authenticity gives heritage legitimacy. *“In order to have social import and acceptance, heritage must be adequately legitimized, and authenticity becomes the most important criterion to judge and prove its value.”* (Cho, 2010, p. 222) Within the entirety of the ICH discourse the concept(s) of authenticity are perhaps the most vague. Taking my cue, as *The Operational Guideline* of UNESCO<sup>6</sup> does, from object related authenticity definitions, Wang’s (1999) term of *objective authenticity* is fittingly

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<sup>6</sup> Refraining from defining authenticity as such they give the following description: *“Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including: form and design; materials and substance; use and function; traditions, techniques and management systems; location and setting; language, and other forms of intangible heritage; spirit and feeling; and other internal and external factors.”* (UNESCO, 2013 - Operational Guideline, par. 82)

distinguishes this concept of a nearly measurable authenticity from all other authenticity concepts, which I will soon address. Defined as *“the authenticity of originals,”* (Wang, 1999, p. 352) this concept presupposes the existence of a benchmark measurement for the originality of a cultural element. A more complex definition of authenticity in this sense is provided by Bohlman (1988) when he states: *“Authenticity in this sense can be defined as the consistent representation of the origins of a piece (or style or a genre) in subsequent versions or at later moments in the tradition’s chronology [...]”* (p. 10) This approach demonstrates a focus on the past (Bohlman, 1988, p.10) rejecting change in the present. This already demonstrates the strenuous relationship between authenticity and the changing nature of culture (Bohlman, 1988, p. 10-11). Considering that *“Heritage is thus created and re-created from surviving memories, artifacts, and sites of the past to serve contemporary demand,”* (Chhabra et al., 2003, p. 705) authenticity interpretation is subject to the needs of the contemporary demand as well, making it negotiable<sup>7</sup>. That, which at a certain point in time is considered objectively authentic is then constructed through the negotiation process of canon formation, which stabilizes change (Bohlman, 1988, p. 30-32). Folk music, song and ICH in general, safeguarded through a product oriented collection effort, can become a subject of scientific study creating measurements of authenticity, fixing its boundaries through analysis and categorization (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 33- 52).

Emphasis of authenticity as set forth by recordings and other safeguarded cultural elements begs the question: Do safeguarding efforts aimed at protecting ICH actually inhibit its development?

As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2004) notes: *“Change is intrinsic to culture, and measures intended to preserve, conserve, safeguard, and sustain particular cultural practices are caught between freezing the practice and addressing the inherently processual nature of culture.”* (pp. 58-59) To Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, the acceptance of the change of culture and its preservation without freezing it, means to slow down the speed with which it changes. However, all interventions, even if aimed at safeguarding with good intention, inevitably influences the production of the cultural element, as it changes the understanding of and the relationship between the cultural producers and the products. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004)

Though prevalent and far-reaching in the heritagization process, part of this process relates to cases in which the duality of ICH existing both in its first and second life coexist,

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<sup>7</sup> see *emergent authenticity* (Chhabra et al., 2003)

where cultural producer oriented safeguarding is still possible. In the second life of ICH the complexity of the pluralism of practices (Bohlman, 1988), directing the questions of freezing ICH toward the analysis of different creativities is a way of continuing heritage. Various approaches towards creativity exist, which Bohlman (1988, pp. 74-80) categorizes, viewing folk music in the modern world as a continuum between *regulated creativity* to *integrative creativity* and the *ubiquitous creativity*. This scale can be viewed as ranging from the objectively authentic to, what in the Hungarian usage is termed *world music*<sup>8</sup>, a “*willful departure from traditional constraints*.” (Bohlman, 1988, p. 78) The freezing or the changing of ICH in the modern context therefore heavily relies on the practitioners themselves, and their own views on creativity and objective authenticity. But how can these practitioners be classified?

#### 4. What is a folk singer?

Depending on dominant ideologies of the time, what the cultural core of folk music represents shifts from being viewed as a natural expression of the folk (Enlightenment and early Romantic eras), a symbol of the nation, and reinforcing boundaries between nations (nineteenth century) (Bohlman, 1988, p. 54). Perhaps more importantly for this thesis, interpretations of folk music drew attention to the dichotomy of urban and rural tradition revealing several consequences, such as the migration of its geographical basis from rural context to the far more complex setting of urban regions (Bohlman, 1988, p. 67), and with this the changing of its social basis (Bohlman, 1988, p. 54).

The tradition bearers socialized in the first life of the ICH element are, from a second life perspective, coined as survival artists (Lajtha, 1992, p. 149), while the modern, most commonly urban youth which learns the ICH practice through mediating channels of institutions and practice it outside its original context and function, are termed revival artists (Lajtha, 1992, p. 149; Sárosi, 1973, p.12).

Considering the hugely varied social bases of revivalism (including mobility, belonging to different social groups, having different tastes, knowledge and cultural backgrounds) (Bohlman, 1988, p. 128) in the second life of heritage, it is not only the context of its practice that changes but how it's practiced and who practices it.

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<sup>8</sup> Throughout my research process I found that the term *world music* was used to mean any music that has its roots in traditional Hungarian music and song, but diverges from objective authenticity and incorporates elements of musical genres different from folk.

The role of the modern day folk singer becomes more complex. As a tradition bearer the folk singer adheres to certain expectations, such as keeping the heritage element alive through passing it on without changing it (authentically), exhibiting immense respect towards the tradition, and performing it dispassionately (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 70-72). However, in the modern context singers and musicians often become specialist performers, ranging from *wide distribution of specialization* to *professionalism* (see detailed distinctions in Bohlman, 1988, pp. 80-86). In the analysis of the Hungarian case the most important element will be the progression from “*the specialization of elevated or important social function*” (Bohlman, 1988, p. 82) to the specialized level of *professional*. The former refers to the first life of ICH in which individuals can be community designated specialists praised as ‘good singers’, based not only on their ability to sing in an aesthetically pleasing way, but also on their ability to represent “*those social functions that a community wishes to maintain*” (Bohlman, 1988, p. 82). The latter category refers to is the point “*where music virtually becomes the full-time activity for the musician.*” (Bohlman, 1988, p. 85)

Defining artists as professionals based simply on this single aspect may be misleading. Jeffri (2004) offers a threefold approach to classifying artists as professionals: through a market based definition, through education and affiliation, and through self-and peer definition. These concepts in themselves can also be inaccurate, however there seems to be no consensus with regard to defining what the term *professional* means in the art world (Jeffri, 2004). It is perhaps more practical to speak of singers not in terms of their professionalism, but in their state of establishedness. According to Craig and Dobois (2010) there can be a distinction between unestablished artists, established artists, and well-established artists. These categories can also be seen as various stages of being and becoming a professional. Either way, the changing role of the folk singer cannot be denied, and with it views on what a folk singer must present and represent also changes. It is through the change of role that individual creativity and more subjective definitions of authenticity begin to play a role.

## 5. Revisiting authenticity in the performance of ICH

Since the degree of creativity allowed within *regulated creativity* (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 74-80) for the music to remain authentic cannot be precisely specified, as “*just how much a particular cultural item should meet different dimensions of the value attributions to be*

*qualified as 'authentic', interpretation of intangible heritage should deliver comprehensive stories, presenting value in the social and cultural context."* (Cho, 2013, p. 223)

However, divergence from the objectively authentic does not necessarily prohibit the audience of a folk music performance from having an *authentic experience*. The subjective nature of authenticity evaluation on the part of the audience is explained in a cultural theory context by Moore (2002) and an ICH framework by Chhabra, Healy, & Sills (2003).

### 5.1 Staged authenticity

Still linked to *objective authenticity*, the concept of *staged authenticity* (Chhabra, et al, 2003) emphasizes that in experiencing any staged presentation of ICH, audiences validate the production through its ability to achieve a communal feeling of nostalgia and solidarity. This perceived authenticity does not actually have to come from a knowledgeable recognition of *objective authenticity*. In fact, the authors state: "*Not every component of the experience need be authentic (or even satisfactory) so long as the combination of elements generates the required nostalgic feelings.*" (Chhabra et al., 2003, p. 705) Conversely, those educated in the given folklore may judge the performance more critically, leading to a discrepancy between their authenticity perception and that of the general public (Chhabra et al., 2003, p. 716).

### 5.2 Third person authenticity

Conceptualized as the *authenticity of execution*, Moore (2002, pp. 2014-218) directs focus from the cultural product to the producer, though within the ICH framework this still relates to the staged authenticity of objective authenticity. This differs from the previous concept in that it does not evaluate the entire performance and its success as representing the ethos of a nation or community, but focuses on the individual performer as the soul mediator of it. The experience of the audience depends on the ability of an ICH performer to exhibit and express a shared feeling of community, belonging, and tradition.

### 5.3 First person authenticity

When focusing on the performer, the *authenticity of expression* pertains to the ability of the singer to convincingly convey honesty and directness towards his/her audience. In this understanding of the word it is the effort of the presenter in reaching his/her audience directly, transmitting the message of their presentation and giving an aura of integrity and

truthfulness to ones-self, which is evaluated by viewers. Of course, as Moore (2002) also claims, the interpretation of honesty is hugely dependent on the disposition of the individual audience member. (Moore, 2002, pp. 211-214)

## 6. The legitimization of folk music as art music

Thus far, this theoretical framework has striven toward defining major concepts within the heritage debate, focusing on the changes folk music goes through as it becomes an urban practice. The collapsing of time and space (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 123-124) in the second life of ICH has a significant effect on every aspect of it – be it the element itself, its practice, its context, or its interpretation. Stating that the decrease and eventual disappearance of the dichotomy of folk music as a distinctly different form of expression than art music, Bohlman (1988) points to perhaps one of the most significant effects modernization has on folk music: the shift from culture as a way of life to culture as an artistic practice. But how is folk music legitimized as art? And what are the characteristics of the production of authentic folk music within the larger field of music and folk music? The following discussion will highlight the relevant concepts of artistic legitimization (Ardery, 1997) and the segments of theory related to fields of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1980; 1983; 1985; 1997).

Folk music as an art form is present in societies in different forms, as *“by collapsing time and space, modernization encourages new ways of looking at older styles and different repertoires [...],”* (Bohlman, 1988, p. 124) which do not necessarily take shape as objectively authentic practices, as seen in the various examples of creativity Bohlman (1988, pp. 74-80) analyzes. Making the focus of practice objective, authenticity then has to be positioned within the larger field of the cultural production of folk music. As according to Bourdieu (1985) all fields of cultural production are characterized by the struggle between *“the field of restricted production”* (FRP) and *“the field of large-scale cultural production,”* (FLP) (p. 17) conceptualized *“as a system producing cultural goods objectively destined for a public of producers of cultural goods”* (p. 17) and *“specifically organized with a view to the production of cultural goods destined for non-producers of cultural goods, ‘the public at large’”* (p. 17) respectively. In the folk music field the two poles can be paralleled to the dichotomy cited by Moore (2002, p. 211; p. 113): between authentic music, which much like high art shuns economical imperatives, and a commercial branch of the practice, often embracing Western musical solutions, classifiable as World Music.

In the process of reevaluating art *as art* (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 15) it is not only the art form itself but the function of the artist as well, that is reassessed. Following the example of Ardery' (1997), the legitimation of a new field of restricted production can be measured in the success of newcomers to this cultural field in *"overturning existing standards in favor of the newcomers' own,"* (p. 330) which brings with it the cultivation of amateurism and the economic disinterestedness (Bourdieu, 1983) of these actors. Expressed disinterest towards economic capital and the simultaneous valorization of symbolic capital contributes to what Bourdieu (1980) explains as the production of belief, and its execution relies heavily on the individual's social capital (Bourdieu, 1983).<sup>9</sup>

Considering the autonomy of a field of restricted production Bourdieu (1985) states that it *"can be measured by its power to define its own criteria for the production and evaluation of its products."* (p. 17) Linking field theory to the legitimation process described above these criteria of production, the *doxas*, the unwritten 'rules of the game' (Bourdieu 1980; 1983) can be viewed as the solidification or crystallization of the discourse and ideologies of an artistic movement, as described by Ardery (1997). Making a connection between the first and the second life of heritage, the peer evaluation stressed by Bourdieu (1985) shows strong similarities to the communal control of ICH practice.

However, the place of authentic folk music within the art sector is not axiomatic necessitating an artistic legitimation process, which Baumann (2007) describes as the process through which *"cultural products are repositioned [...] redefined; from merely entertainment, commerce, fad, or cultural experimentation or randomness to culture that is legitimately artistic, whether that be popular or high art."* (pp. 48-49) This process depends on the existence of three major components: opportunity (exogenous factors such as the political environment, or societal changes), frames (discourse developing the vocabulary of the field and ideologies by which to evaluate it through) and resources (tangible and intangible endogenous factors such as institutionalization of practices through museums, universities, etc.). (Baumann, 2007) It is not unheard of for folk art to be used by members of a movement as a successful tool for framing their agenda (Adams, 2002), though the role this may play in the legitimization of folk art as art is unclear.

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<sup>9</sup> Without attempting to summarize Bourdieu's works on the forms and transformations of capital, this thesis will be relying on the triad of economic, cultural (embodied, objectified and institutionalized) and social capital as defined by Bourdieu, 1997.



## 7. Conclusion and posing of the research question

Through these six chapters the concept of heritage was discussed in order to give meaning to the concept of ICH and demonstrate the changes it undergoes due to the erosion of the social fabric in which it is conceived and its subsequent migration to the urban contexts of performing arts. Within the framework of the concept of first and second life of heritage, this thesis focuses on the latter, specifically on the progression of authentic folk music as heritage to authentic folk music as art.

The bringing together of scholarly literature on heritage studies and cultural theory has provided this thesis with the possibility of analyzing the development of an ICH element into a performing art in the spotlight of modern day urban stages. The selection of Hungarian folk singing as the example through which the theoretical changes of ICH are to be demonstrated, was based on the well documented history of its usages and safeguarding, the advanced stage of folk music revival in Hungary, and the continuously growing scale of interest and simultaneous lack of scientific research directed towards it in the present. Sufficient literature exists on the subject of the historical development of authentic Hungarian folk singing to the present (elaborated upon in the following section of the theoretical framework) and the legitimization of ICH as a performing art from a historical point of view, to which the results of the interviews this study is based on can be compared. Following the path set forth in this theoretical framework the research question motivating this analysis can now be articulated in its full context: To what extent has the authentic practice of traditional Hungarian folk singing become a legitimized performing art in modern day urban Hungary?

Through this discussion the following themes have emerged (Table 1.). They will provide the framework for the discussion of the Hungarian case, which will now be introduced.

	First life of ICH	Second life of ICH
Heritage as	A way of life	A presentation of itself, an art form
Regulated by	Community	Folk police, producers, economic gain
Living-frozen culture	Changing, living	Frozen, changing, living? legitimate art form
<b>Opportunity space</b>		
Dominant context of practice	rural	urban
Practitioners	Everyday people, the folk	Tradition bearers; survival artists and revival artists; performing artists
<b>Discourse, ideology (later criterions of production, doxa)</b>		
Safeguarding	Through natural transmission	Cultural product and producer oriented: through recording, documenting, staging, teaching, etc.
Emphasized authenticities	Organic concern with objective authenticity, first person authenticity	Objective authenticity, staged authenticity, first person authenticity, third person authenticity
Modes of transmission	Oral, from generation to generation	Through institutions, formal education, from safeguarded documents
Rules of presentation	Region specific, not considered performing art	Staging considerations: clothing, stage, gestures
<b>Resources</b>		
Tangible	none	institutions, performing spaces, economic fund
Intangible	none (open to interpretation)	experience, labor, knowledge, networks

*Table 1: The lives of folk singing as ICH*



## Introducing traditional Hungarian folk singing

*“Folksongs are the mirrors of the soul  
of the entire Hungarian nation”*

(Kodály, in Siklós, 1977, p. 146)

Before diving into the methodology and the findings of the thesis, it is quite clear that the major historic progressions leading up to the modern day state of folk singing in Hungary must be introduced. Even more so, as the field of authentic folk singing cannot be analyzed without taking a look at the process which began the legitimization of the field. The discussion will begin with the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which period marks the beginning of the second life of the heritage element<sup>10</sup>, and the development of the over-all folk singing field. However, it must be noted that collecting, documenting and publishing folk songs dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Sebő, 1997). In fact, Béla Vikár recorded folk songs as early as 1896, being the first in Europe to do so (<http://www.heritagehouse.hu/fdk/>).

Deeper analysis will be awarded to the Táncház movement of the 1970s as this research will look at this phenomenon as marking the beginning of the legitimization process of objective authentic folk singing as a staged performing art within the larger cultural production field of folk singing. Appropriately, the three necessities of artistic legitimization as according to Baumann (2007) will provide the framework for this analysis. This section will include the consideration of the political and cultural atmosphere in which the movement arose as the opportunity space necessary for the process of artistic legitimization to begin - the main themes of discussion forming the ideological network of the movement - and will introduce the tangible and intangible resources mobilized in achieving legitimacy.

### 1. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century

As early as the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, western influences were placed in opposition to folk culture (Siklós, 1977, p. 116), sparking never before seen (cultural product oriented)

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<sup>10</sup> The first life of folk singing and the development of national culture, which rose from the reform period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when attention of the bourgeoisie and the nobility turned towards traditional peasant culture (Siklós, 1973, p. 115) are not subjects I am able to address within the scope of this thesis. For comparisons between the techniques of folk singing in its first and second life see Bognár (2004), and for a collection of tradition bearer (survival) testimonies see Berecz (2004). Please note that unfortunately all literature regarding these subjects are in Hungarian.

safeguarding efforts regarding traditional folk music and singing. The products of the life work of world renowned ethnomusicologists Béla Barók and Zoltán Kodály include a substantial body of catalogued audible recordings which later became highly influential, the development of ethnomusicological research, the formulation of various approaches to folk song classification (such as the Bartók order, Kodály order, or Járdányi order) (Sebő, 1977) and canonization (distinguishing between old style and new style folk songs and folk song-like art songs). Typical of the nostalgic sentiment of “*rescue[ing] folk music before it disappear[s],*” (Bohlman, 1988, p. xix) which leads to such safeguarding (Bohlman, 1988, p. xix), dominant figures of the era spoke out in favor of saving and spreading the ICH of Hungary not uncommonly using nationalistic rhetoric (e.g. István Györffy<sup>11</sup>). The staging of traditional ICH became a commonly debated issue. Many, including Györffy, condemned the Gyöngyösboktéra<sup>12</sup> movement, the first movement to showcase traditional folk dancing on stage, claiming that making traditional ICH into a staged performance act results in inauthenticity, fakeness. (Kósa, 1974) While the discourse around folk singing adapted terms such as *style* to refer to the (objective) authentic “*unique folk way of presentation*” (Györffy as quoted by Siklós, 1977, p. 117), the most dominant approach to staging at the time was through stylizing and composing new choir pieces, using folk songs as their basis. As Kodály explained, in order for folksongs to enter the city they must be “dressed up”, they must be given a new style. This included selecting from among the body of folk songs and composing choral works out of the primarily monophonic songs. This, Kodály believed, would in part make up for the missing context: the village and the peasant, and folk culture itself. (Kodály, in Siklós, 1977, p. 134)

## 2. Post-war period

A second wave of safeguarding began following the Second World War, after the “liberation” as it was called during Soviet times, meaning the Soviet takeover following the defeat of Germany (Vargyas, quoted by Siklós, 1977 p. 120). In this era folksong singing became one, if

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<sup>11</sup> Györffy wrote strongly and passionately about the need for fostering national culture and aiding traditional culture and ICH. Györffy was determined that the upper classes should reevaluate their positions on Hungarian national cultural education and base it on the folk traditions, as a basis for further education of a higher nature. He also called upon the need to teach children folk singing from the earliest age possible. As discussed in one of the conducted interviews, and as experienced by myself, his works can seem controversial to 21<sup>st</sup> century readers as his passionate dialogues in favor of Hungarian culture sometimes turns into a discriminatory and exclusionary, even racist, rhetoric.

<sup>12</sup> <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/2-840.html>

not the most dominant form of musical practice among university and high school dormitory youth. However, the movement was ideologically tainted with a socialist overtone. Through institutionalization and backed by communist propaganda the movement became a carrier and flagship for political goals. The movement grew with increasing, and subsequently waned with decreasing, government financing. (Siklós, 1977, p.121) Folk dancing was deemed to belong strictly on stage. Music was provided by symphonic orchestras or gypsy bands, neither of which aimed to play authentic folk music as it existed, or used to exist, in villages. (Siklós, p. 124-125) Bands playing authentic folk music were non-existent (Vitányi Iván, quoted by Siklós, 1977, p.157). Folk song-like art songs, however, were immensely popular (Siklós, 1977, p.130).

By raising the reverence of folk tradition nearly to the level of mandatory through policies such as making folk music and dance a compulsory school subject, requiring its tangible products to be collected by museums, and emphasizing a higher ideological connection between it and socialist values, the movement did quite a bit of damage to the cause of safeguarding ICH. Sociologists such as Ágnes Losonczy and Iván Vitányi found that as everyday living practice folk songs were barely present in people's lives due to the forced safeguarding practices of the 1950s. This was especially the case among the youth. The connection young people felt between bad memories of the time when the cultural policy of the early communist era highlighted folklore, and the singing of folksongs, made it an unattractive form of music for them. (Siklós, 1977, pp. 128-129). Siklós (1977) suggests that after this period of heritage use a new generation had to grow up before a different approach to the ICH of Hungary could be taken.

### 3. The *Táncház* - Dance-House - Movement

Beginning in the late 1960s, the 1970s saw the emergence of the largest folk revival movement<sup>13</sup> of the century, rippling through youth culture of the era, which questioned previous practices while creating new standards for tradition practicing. Named after a traditional recreational event, the movement spread across the capital and into some larger cities outside Budapest, with music, dance and song at its forefront but not excluding other, tangible forms of cultural heritage. (Siklós, 1977; Sárosi, 1973)

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<sup>13</sup> Though contemporary writings did not yet refer to the movement as revival, it has since become a widely used term in both scientific studies, publications and discussions.

One of the initial sparks of the movement was the nationally acclaimed and widely popular Röpülj Páva talent show program, broadcast on television in 1969, following the lesser known Nyílik a Rózsa program of 1968. Working together with specialists of ethnographic studies and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the folk culture based competition was able to further the already existing database of folk songs, and was the first stage upon which folk singing was presented without musical accompaniment, in the traditional style, a new phenomenon at the time and considered a risky choice on the part of the singers, yet one which proved to be successful. The organizers of the program were early representatives of the broader trend that was in the making: a return to the traditional form of folk songs, to authenticity. However, official politics of the time brought the first competition to a quick end and did not allow for any similar programs until, 1973 Nemzetközi Arany Páva. The last competition was held in 1981 with an observable difference in performance style compared to the very first production of the program. (Déri, 2012)

The Táncház movement itself dates back to an initially private event, which quickly opened its doors to the public: the very first Táncház in Budapest took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May, 1972, with a strong emphasis on bringing back together traditional song, music and dance. (Siklós, 1977) With folk music and song at its core the similar events, which followed included dancing, educational lectures, poetry readings, film showings and various other cultural presentations.

The significance of the emerging grassroots revival movement lay in its communal nature and its power to bring to the forefront of discussion the many questions of tradition and folk culture, and the way modern society approaches it.

The movement can be considered the starting point of the current trends of (objectively) authentic practice, such as the launching of the Röpülj Páva's successor, the 2012 Fölszállott a Páva competition, in its third season this coming year. The judges of the competition include some of the most acclaimed professionals, leaders of the Táncház-movement, who were at one time themselves participants in the competition. (Déri, 2012) Without question, the movement played a tremendously significant role in the legitimization process of authentic folk singing, and will therefore be discussed more in-depth than the previous trends. The following discussion will be structured around the main concepts of artistic legitimation (Baumann, 2007) in order to demonstrate the beginning and the achievements of the process.

### 3.1 Opportunity space

The relationship between social changes and turns towards traditional culture are well recognized within Hungarian heritage literature. As György Martin (quoted by Sárosi, 1977) states: *"[Folk songs, folkdances, folk music] always came to the forefront of attention mirroring the movement of current society, and was highly connected to the social and national problems of the times."* (p. 115) Two major factors should be taken into account when considering the changing social and cultural atmosphere in which the movement came to be: the shift in communist politics with regard to culture, and the coming of age of a second generation of urbanized society.

Firstly, after the Revolution of 1956, and the retaliations of the late 1950's and early 1960s, the late 1960's brought about a thawing of rigid communist politics and a more lenient cultural policy that allowed for previously illegal western music to enter the country. The beat movement took strong hold of the country's youth who, as Losonczy (quoted by Siklós, 1977, pp. 128-129) describes, virtually abandoned folk singing altogether. Joining the beat movement *"acted as a catalyst to break free from the ghetto of Eastern-European-nes, the Hungarian-nes that felt provincial, and the mandatory and retrograde folk song singing people felt was forced upon them."* (Losonczy, quoted by Siklós, 1977, p. 129) In this atmosphere the sociologist gives an account of the loss of the tradition and expresses a fear of its disappearance altogether. In 1969 the III. Népzenei Találkozó (3<sup>rd</sup> Folk Music Conference) was organized, where the main subject under scrutiny was how folksongs could be revived. However, no action was taken. (Siklós, 1977, p. 130) Despite all the musical formations emerging spontaneously as a result of the beat craze, made possible, and indeed became the foundation of the movement (Siklós, 1997, p.131). The search for identity, for roots, can be seen as one of the major ideological igniters of the movement, though as the political atmosphere of the time did not allow for outspokenly nationalistic rhetoric, the extent to which this search was driven by nationalism is contested (Siklós, 1977, p. 163); *"(...) a search for identity should not be mistaken for nationalism, this search I would define today as the knowing of where someone belongs, more specifically the need to belong somewhere."* (Losonczy quoted by Siklós, 1977, p. 164)

Secondly, the politics of the communist era transformed society, which in part may provide an explanation for the urgency of this identity search and the falling of the communal



gaze upon traditional ICH. In his analysis of *The New Wave of Folk Culture* László Kósa (1974), a renowned ethnographer, points to generational progression as a way to explain the newfound interest of youth in folk culture. He explains that the grandparents of the youth of the 1970s were the last generation to grow up in the traditional rural setting and folk-way of life. Moving in masses to industrialized urban areas to escape the lack of opportunities in peasant life, and indeed shedding its traditions and way of life, the next generation inflated the numbers of the working and service (employee) class, and often became members of the new intelligentsia. Despite their efforts to leave behind their past, this generation inevitably brought elements of folk culture to the cities they relocated to, which their children, the youth of the 1970's latched onto, finding a way to reconnect to the past and redefine their identity and place in society through communal learning and having fun. (László Kósa, 1974).

While Táncház participants claimed to be of diverse social backgrounds<sup>14</sup>, the leaders of the movement (organizers, musicians, singers, dance teachers, etc.) were characteristically well educated. Their passion for folk culture often had its roots in their upbringing, and was often influenced during their school years by music teachers from the second or third generation of Kodály pupils (Széll, 1970, p. 11). As the gradual process of urbanization was most developed in the capital and some other major cities, it is not surprising that the movement was limited to the youth of these places, for in most other areas of the country the youth of the towns were still fiercely trying to leave behind their rural past and conform to the latest trends in “modern” fashion. (Siklós, p. 170)

I expect to find that the current practices of folk singing can be traced back to the Táncház-movement despite, or perhaps because of the changes Hungarian politics and society have undergone. However, this thesis could not include a comprehensive analysis of the social structure and the changes in the political standpoint on culture, therefore in the analysis of the results this section will be limited.

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<sup>14</sup> The demographics of the prominent Sebő-club showed that participants were between 17 and 21 years of age, with a near equal distribution of boys and girls, with two-thirds of the members studying at high school or university level and one-third already employed. (Siklós, 1977, p. 60) While Siklós, and many of his interviewees state that Táncház events were a place where working class and intellectuals mingled without difficulty, it is hard to disregard the fact that the book was published in the 1977, with a discrete but mandatory communist agenda woven into the text, rendering this above statement questionable.

### 3.2 Discourse and ideology – framing

One, if not the most notable achievements of the Táncház movement within the development of the national discourse concerning ICH, was its redefinition of authenticity and its newfound approach to transmission. These demonstrate the beginning of the development of the doxas, the conventions of the field.

#### 3.2.1 Authenticity

As opposed to Kodály's standpoint in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, what made the movement of the 1960s-1970s so profoundly meaningful was its achievement to gain acceptance for the on-stage performance of folksongs in its (objective) authentic style, which was previously considered old fashioned (Siklós, 1977, p. 134, p 191). The discourse of the early stages of the movement revolves around establishing (objective) authentic folk singing as presentable on stage. However, at this time there were no standards, no measurement of authenticity when it came to folk song performing. Without a public consciousness of what a folksong is, *"there are no irrefutable laws about the (...) way to perform and handle folk songs"* (Marosi, 1974, p. 57). Without a general knowledge among the population of how authentic (original) folksongs sound or should sound, Marosi (1974) argued, anyone can sing the songs as they please, and become accepted as folksingers, which would in turn impact the concept of folksongs greatly and without any real supervision. Marosi's (1974) text is among the few accessible publications of the time that addresses the specific issues of folk singing. It is in her words that the developing discourse surrounding objective authenticity and *style* can be read. According to her the singer should be a carrier of the message. His/her performance should not try to enhance inherent emotion, it should not apply techniques such as making parts louder or quieter, there should be no movement by the body and the face should not express any pain however sad the song may be. It should not be made unnecessarily soft, and in an exaggerated sense must be void of modern influence. Knowledge of regional styles and differences are also mandatory, alongside knowledge of the various layers of folksongs. The purity of the singer's voice and the correctness of the lyrics in comparison to recorded songs is not enough. Singers must copy the style of the folk, and through gaining cultural knowledge of the lives and fate of the folk and personal experience *"live it"* (the songs) so as to *continue* the tradition, not only *imitate* it. This includes singing not only holiday songs of celebration,

but acquainting the audience with the everyday hardship of peasant life through song and music. (Marosi, 1974; Sárosi, 1977, p. 168)

However this authentic take on ICH presentation raised questions such as: can it still be considered to be an art form if the performers do not change anything about the ICH they are presenting? (Siklós, 1977, 186) Folk song preservation was not limited to copying authentic material, but extended beyond that, becoming concerned with *continuing* it (Marosi, 1974). However, there were different approaches to the concept of continuity. While Marosi (1974) defines learning the authentic style and “living it” as a requirement for continuation above and beyond copying, a more radical trend can also be observed. The dilemma seems to manifest through the seemingly conflicting dichotomy of maintaining and reproducing authenticity and practicing artistic freedom. (Siklós, 1977, pp. 180-181).

Due partly to the difficulty of acquiring objective authenticity and partly to the emphasizing of creativity and artistic freedom, the core of the movement was not exclusively purist; reinterpretations and compositions were not uncommon among repertoires. For example Ferenc Sebő, one of the leading figures and igniter of the movement, did not try to purify the folk songs he and his group encountered. He did not treat them as musicological objects that needed conservation (Koltay quoted by Siklós, 1977, p. 138). He gave it a new life, so to say, by reliving it and using it as a basis for their own art. This strand of ICH safeguarding was not unlike that of Kodály’s approach in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Siklós, 1977, p. 134) For example, he used folk music to create melodies to poems of famous modern Hungarian poets such as Attila József, or Sándor Weörös. He saw no conflict between the century-old melodies and modern poems. In fact, he found profound meaning in combining the two (Siklós, 1977, pp. 185-207).

The dilemmas of authenticity at this point already highlighted the development of a contrast in forms of ICH bearing: as a form of performing art with professional requirements that belongs on stage, and as an off-stage communal practice, which leaves room for experimentation and the reinterpretation of traditions (Siklós, 1977, 179).

### 3.2.2 Transmission

As the discourse surrounding the meaning of authenticity matured, so did the discussion on how it can be learned and transmitted.

First and foremost, members of the movement rejected several forms of documenting and product-oriented safeguarding, most specifically sheet music, which rejection is apparent in statements such as *“The noted folksong is like a well preserved corpse”* (Sárosi, 1973, p. 153). Turning away from sheet music directed attention towards culture producers, tradition bearers still living in their traditional sociocultural environment, who were referred to as representatives of the “pure style”, “the real colors,” the “pure source” (in Marosi, 1974). The role of voice recording became considerably elevated (Siklós, 1977, p. 152), and the need for better quality material drove not only ethnomusicologists but inexperienced movement members as well, to perform further collecting.

The importance of going on collecting trips was also emphasized as a means to learn all that cannot be written down or conveyed through sheet music: the cultural context from which the ICH emerged (Siklós, 1977; Marosi, 1974). Through efforts to learn the authentic practice of ICH, new instruments were created based on originals preserved in museum archives, and movement members had to learn techniques, or re-learn how to play their instruments, despite often being professional musicians or fresh graduates or students of music academies (Siklós, 1977, pp. 144-6). The trend of going on collecting trips resulted in the emergence of conventions for professional ethnomusicologists, such as focusing on a mix of both the cultural product and the producer-oriented method (e.g. Sárosi, 1973, pp. 50-54).

It was the hope of many, such as Sárosi (1977, p. 185), that the next generation would be able to learn traditional culture through early childhood socialization, as a mother tongue, much like during the first life of ICH. (Siklós, 1977, p. 185) Indeed, the leading figures of the movement did not shy away from their responsibility to pass on their newly gained cultural knowledge, believing that they *“must not only be capable of navigating [within folk culture] but must also be able to orient others as well.”* (Marosi, 1974, p. 58)

The Táncház events themselves would play a crucial part in this process, as they are both a place of community leisure and enjoyment as well as a place of transmission. In a typical Táncház, leaders of the event demonstrated the dance moves while newly formed bands played traditional music, providing participants with a learning opportunity not unlike the original village dance-house settings (Siklós, 1977). Between dances folksingers (such as the participants of the 1969 Röpülj Páva) taught folk songs to attendees, which had tremendous community building power (Siklós, 1977, p. 28 and p. 45) and was a symbol of belonging – not only to the community at hand but in a wider context to the nation. This was

enhanced by the learning of songs belonging to the so-called old-style (Siklós, 1977, p. 152). There arose a certain ceremonial ritual to these events, creating traditions around the traditions (Siklós, 1977). Because of the success of the Táncház as a way of transmitting ICH, it has been accepted in the UNESCO list of Best Safeguarding Practices in 2011 (UNESCO, n.d.).

I expect that the discourse on authenticity, transmission and other related topics that have come into focus since, such as the staging of authentic productions, will become more crystallized, detailed and overarching over the years to come, and will eventually lead to distinguishable conventions.

### 3.3 Resources

Resources, as defined by Baumann (2007), can take the shape of tangible and intangible form. It is this aspect that can least be elaborated on. When examining the available tangible resources it is important to emphasize the grassroots nature of the movement. Being solely the achievement of a then new generation of urban youth, the success the movement gained was acquired despite a lack of institutions to back it up (Siklós, 1977, p. 132). At the time this rendered the movement dependent on mostly intangible, symbolic resources. Tangible resources that were needed and were provided were community centers, houses and clubs, which became the central locations of these events, and the already extensive collections of ethnomusicological documentation, access to which (based on personal accounts) was often limited. As it was a grassroots movement, most resources were of a symbolic nature and visible in efforts of organizing, learning, teaching, collecting, among others.

Regarding the topic of institutionalization, no hypothesizing is necessary to be able to state as fact that it has developed greatly in the area of folk singing since the 1970s. The extent to which, and the areas in which it has evolved is open to question. It is my expectation that institutionalization has expanded beyond safeguarding (through documenting and teaching) to other areas of the field, such as formal criticism and management.

### 4. Conclusion

While the field of folk singing emerged in waves of cultural appropriation of traditions into modern culture, the youth of the Táncház movement - newcomers to the field - were successful in overturning these standards by focusing on learning, staging and teaching objective authenticity. As opposed to the case of the legitimization of folk art within the visual

arts field in the U.S. (Arderly, 1997) the Hungarian movement, though similar, differs on the crucial point that it was not the original tradition bearers who were rewarded artistic status, but the art form itself, being lifted from its original context into modern society.

At the time it was unclear whether the legitimization of folk culture as an urban practice would have long lasting success as the movement, often dubbed a passing fashion craze, lacked institutionalized form to support and ensure its position (Sikló, 1977, p. 240; p. 228). This chapter has aimed to illustrate the starting point of the authentic practice of traditional folk singing in Hungary, a foundation upon which the findings of this individual research can be laid, to better understand the development of this particular ICH element into a modern day art form and field of cultural production.



## Method of research

### 1. Methodology

Within the commonly accepted triad of research purposes - exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Neuman, 2014, pp. 38-41) – my thesis constitutes an exploratory study. The exploratory nature of my study, as well as the chosen research method detailed below, is necessitated by the lack of previous sociological inquiry into the field of Hungarian traditional folk singing. This approach is suitable in my case as it helps “*become familiar with basic facts, setting, and concerns, create a general mental picture of conditions,*” (Neuman, 2014, p.38) and is also helpful in determining relevant angles and approaches for future inquiry. It is the nature of social science research to have exploratory and descriptive goals and methods merge (Neuman, 2014, p.38). While exploring the field of traditional folk singing in Hungary, I have gathered information of a descriptive nature as well.

Tailoring my methodology to this approach, I have conducted qualitative research, a formal choice for these specific purposes (Neuman, 2014, p.39). As a qualitative technique I have conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews, suitable to investigate opinions, values and beliefs, in order to explore relevant themes (see topic list in appendix 1) and allow for interviewees to express their opinion in their own words and in detail (Barriball & While, 1994). This is decisive when looking at terms with uncertain meanings, such as *authenticity* and *professional folk singer*. It also allows for the probing and deeper inspection of a subject mentioned by the participant, while having a structured sequence of questions to return to (Barriball & While, 1994).

#### 1.1 Conducting the interviews

The interviews were conducted in Hungary within a three-week time period in late March and early April, at both informal locations (people’s houses, cafés, library, etc.) and a few formal ones (such as the workplace offices of individuals). Interviews were digitally recorded. As is customary, interviews lasted about 60 to 90 minutes on average, (Barriball & While, 1994) with the exception of one shorter interview and one additional case in which the interview transcript includes a previous interview I had done with the singer on the same subject, making the combined interview over 2 hours long. All together 14 interviews were realized.



## 1.2 Handling of the results

Following the discussions, all interviews were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were subsequently printed and coded manually, as I, agreeing with Saldana (2009, p. 22), felt it gave me greater control over the data. In the coding of the interviews *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Research* (Saldana, 2009) was used as a guide. Following Saldana's (2009) *codes-to-theory model* (p. 12) codes, categories and themes were analyzed within the data through a first phase of initial coding and a consecutive, more detailed and pattern oriented second cycle of coding (Saldana, 2009).

## 1.3 Operationalization – the interview scheme

In creating my interview scheme I relied on Barriball & While (1994) and Neuman (2014). The interview scheme was carefully detailed, so that it may double as a coding scheme. In answering the research question it was most integral to direct the line of inquiry towards subjects emerging in the 1970s, and towards the understanding of the field of folk singing. Therefore, a comprehensive interview scheme was constructed around the major themes discussed in the theoretical framework of the thesis.

The interviews were structured around four main themes: a) the individual, their background and their career; b) the rules of tradition bearing as a profession; c) transmission as safeguarding; and d) positioning tradition bearing in modern society.

The first section dealt with understanding how the singers became acquainted with folk songs, their musical education, and their careers. It focused on their personal stories including their family's involvement in folk culture, the course of their folk singing studies, their current jobs and performance opportunities, and discussing what they considered major turning points in their careers. It was the aim of this segment to see whether the trends of the 1970s continued with modern practitioners regarding the high level and diversity of education, their urban backgrounds, and their musical education. It was also aimed at investigating the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977) of individuals with regard to folk culture, looking at what role, if any, their parents played in the Táncház-movement, and what other areas of folk culture may be/have been involved in.

The second section, linked to the third under the overarching headline of "safeguarding and tradition bearing as a profession," was directed toward the conventions of the profession. In this segment participants were asked to discuss their opinions on what

being a professional means, how a singer can become a professional, and how the profession has changed over the past 40 years since the Táncház movement. Here participants were also asked to define what they considered to be the criteria of traditional folk singing, with specific attention paid to the question of all four discussed authenticity concepts. These discussions often included the consideration of appropriate attire, the usage of regional dialects, and certain stage elements of singing as a performing art.

The third part of the interview focused on transmission methods answering the questions who, how and what the participants think should be safeguarded. This segment was directed toward a more comprehensive understanding of what the profession considers best safeguarding practices and how they think of the tradition as ICH in need of such safeguarding.

In the fourth and final section participants were asked to position traditional folksong singing within modern society. They were asked to explain the social circles with regard to the folk singing community, and were asked to discuss folk singing within the context of contemporary society. Certain categories were considered while trying to position the profession and the contemporary practice of the heritage, such as geography, educational level, community, fashion, identity and nostalgia. Through the interviews this segment also came to include discussions on how the locality so intrinsic to folk songs relate to the increasing demand for professionals to be fluent in various different regions. Through this section I hoped to gain insight into the way singers position themselves within the movement and society at large, and how they see their roles in tradition bearing and safeguarding.

Certain themes such as institutionalization, professionalization, tradition bearing and safeguarding were addressed repeatedly, in various different sections in varying contexts and forms, in order to gain a more rounded perspective and complex image.

## 2. The sample – modes of selection

To understand the field of traditional folk singers in urbanized social settings, the units of analysis I aimed to investigate were the professionals of authentic folk singing. However, as this is the first research being done into the contemporary field of folk singing, no reference points for population size or boundaries exist. The ambiguities of defining ‘professional’ in the art sector furthered the difficulty of finding an appropriate sample. In selecting the sample two criteria for admission were kept in mind: interviewees had to be folk singers (self and

peer defined), and they had to remain within the genre of (objective) authentic folk singing. In addition, the sample aimed to include members of the field at various stages of their careers.

In order to locate suitable interviewees, two of the three dominant chain referral methods of researching uncharted territories (Heckathorn, 1997) such as this one, were implemented. In both approaches, identifying authentic folk singers was based strictly on self and peer definition (Jeffri, 2004), as using any other would have been prone to subjectivity and bias.

First, targeted sampling was conducted (Heckathorn, 1997, pp. 175-177). In the initial step of mapping the field performing spaces, events, awards, institutions and publications were researched, alongside several preliminary discussions with singers and heritage professionals. There was an effort to collect information from CD releases, however this was made complicated by the lack of accessible information due to the later analyzed neglect of marketing and self-promotion. Through the mapping of the field and preparatory discussions it became obvious that the role of the Liszt Academy is significant and increasing, therefore as an additional criterion the sample was constructed to include as many current and past students as the number of those who did not attend the institution.

The largest scale event at which singers could be approached in the second phase of targeted sampling proved to be a renowned yearly folk culture festival, the Táncháztalálkozó (Dance-House Festival), which took place in Budapest between the 26<sup>th</sup> and the 29<sup>th</sup> of March, 2015. At this event practitioners – both revival and survival – of every aspect of Hungarian traditional heritage are represented. The event is a yearly celebration of community and heritage for all individuals within the folk movement, which most individuals involved in the movement attend either as performers or as audience members.

At the event most singers who performed on stage were approached and asked to participate in the interviews. In addition, I used my social network within the folk movement to identify singers who were attending as audience members. Similarly, interviewees were recruited through going to the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music during learning hours.

The majority of singers immediately introduced me to other singers at the festival, or gave me their contacts, through which a second methodology of snowballing (Biernacky & Waldorf, 1981; Heckathorn, 1997, pp. 174-175) was realized in order to increase the number of interviewees within the sample.

## 2.1 Age groups

As the Folk Singing program at the Liszt Academy was launched in 2008, all students who are currently in the program or have graduated represent the youngest branch of participants, between the ages of 20 to 29. While the youngest of these students will only now be applying for the course, the oldest one graduated 2 years ago. The sample includes students in various years of their studies. The program as of this year consists of a 3 year BA program and a 2 year MA program, with an average of 3-5 pupils each year, according to students. Though effort was made to contact students in all classes, due to the lack of responses not all classes are represented in the sample. Out of the 14 people interviewed 7 belong to the category of students. Those who did not attend the academy are between the ages of 25 to 68.

Determining the extent to which a singer is accomplished (Craig and Doboise, 2010) is problematic, as it does not necessarily depend on age or academy attendance. In order to distinguish between groups of singers during the analysis of the findings, generally two terms were used: 'older' to describe those who did not attend the academy, implying no disrespect, and 'younger' to describe current and past students. This latter includes the two singers who are within the age group of academy students but are not, or not yet, enrolled in the program.

## 2.2 Gender

Throughout the selection process gender was also considered. While within the entire field females are largely overrepresented, I was able to interview 4 men, three of whom are generally considered leading male figures of the profession based on their current occupations, involvement in the field, on institutionalization and on life works. One of the male participants is currently a student at the academy, being (according to him) the second male ever to attend the program.

## 2.3 Place of birth

The original concept of this thesis aimed to target singers only from Budapest. While many singers fitting this criterion were reached, it must be admitted that a regional specifications could not be implemented as it quickly became apparent that this approach would not yield enough participants and would not lead to any worthwhile results. As a consequence, the criterion was loosened to include all those who now either work or study in the capital. As a

result, interviewees come from a diverse range of geographic locations, regions not only within the contemporary borders of Hungary, but from the Hungarian language areas outside current borders. However, most singers have spent considerable time in various bigger cities, and almost all of them now live either in Budapest or in areas (towns and villages) surrounding it. They all confirmed the central position Budapest plays in the folk movement and in their personal careers.

## 2.4 Educational background

All singers have university degrees or are currently perusing them. As is apparent in the sample, 50% of the interviewees either have finished or are currently studying at the Liszt Academy, though some of them already have other degrees. Since its establishment, the academy's program has been operating on a BA-MA basis, however this is about to change into a 5+1 or a 6-year program. Details are currently under development. Unfortunately, I was unable to retrieve statistical data on current and past students, however based on the accounts of interviewees BA classes generally tend to have between 4-5 student, with the current first year being of the exceptional size of 7 students, while each MA year boast around 3 students.

The second most common degree among the singers interviewed is Hungarian Ethnography at the ELTE University. Four of the singers have this degree. The remaining four singers have varying degrees such as research biologist and graphic designer. One of these singers belongs to the younger age group.

## 2.5 Occupations

While the discussion on the conceptualization of what defines a professional already showed that economic profit from the profession is not a mandatory factor, the occupation structure of the singers further demonstrates this point. While all interviewees perform regularly, most of them have registered occupations as heritage professionals in institutions, or commonly as singing teachers (both institutional and private). Most of the participants expressed the need for a registered occupation, mainly because a) the field does not provide more than 2-4 full-time positions for singers as performing artists; b) because making a career in the profession requires an extensive social network and institutionalized backing is not achievable by all; c) because performing does not yield sufficient monetary compensations necessary to make

ends meet; d) because singer's voices wear with time numbering their days as performers, and e) because many feel a calling to be a teacher. Besides official (taxed) occupations, most singers also give private lessons and participate in relatively insufficiently compensated safeguarding (such as teaching, collecting, performing, etc.) efforts. Typically, however, singers are involved in a variety of occupations, several part time jobs within and outside the field, performances and educational endeavors.

Name	Gender	Year of birth	Born in Budapest?	Education
Gréta	f	1995	Yes	Liszt Academy, BA 0
Zsófia	f	1994	No	Liszt Academy, BA 1
Kincső	f	1992	Yes	Liszt Academy, BA 3
Anna	f	1991	Yes	Liszt Academy, BA 3
Zsolt	m	1991	No	Liszt Academy, MA 1
Klára	f	1990	No	Landscape architect, MSc
Sára	f	1988	Yes	Liszt Academy, MA graduate 2013
Eszter	f	1986	No	Liszt Academy BA 3, Ethnography, MA & English language, MA
Júlia	f	1983	Yes	Ethnography, MA; clothing designer
Hunor	m	1980	No	Graphic designer
Nefelejcs	f	1978	Yes	Research biologist,
Boglárka	f	1977	No	Ethnography, MA
András	m	1969	No	Ethnography, PhD
Sebestyén	m	1947	No	Architect

*Table 2. List of interviewees. All names have been changed to provide anonymity.*

### 3. Possible limitations of the methodology

A disadvantage of the method chosen for this research is that it does not yield strictly representative data. Nonetheless, it has provided insightful information that can be the basis of further investigation. A serious limitation of the methodology is its time-consuming nature.

While already nearly too extensive, the interview scheme constructed around these four themes still leaves many issues undiscussed. For example, a more vigorous attempt to understand the position of folk singing within society would necessitate the in-depth discussion of the link between heritage and identity with a focus on questioning its relation to religion, culture and politics. The discussion of these themes, however, would necessitate independent research in itself, and were therefore not addressed.

While the target sample approach may result in ‘institutional’ bias (Heckathorn, 1997, p. 176) it is clear that due to the scale of the field all singers are, to an extent involved in the aspects considered while mapping the territory, most linked to institutions. For example, even though selection did not control for institutionalized awards or participation in large scale events, the sample includes 5 out of the 10 singers ever awarded the title of Népművészet Ifjú Mestere (Young Master of Folk Art<sup>15</sup>), and all three singers invited to perform at the esteemed 2013 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Hungary: Roots to Revival.

Though it is commonly accepted that the snowballing method may be risky as it may yield one-sided results, I believe this not to be of concern in this particular case as a) the profession is small enough for all singers to know each other; and b) the target sample approach was implemented in order to give different starting points for the method.

To ensure the sample represents the field of authentic folk singers well, interviewees were asked off record to list the names of singers they considered to fulfill the requirements. Contrasting these names with the sample showed more than considerable overlap, especially in the case of male singers where no other than the four men interviewed were mentioned. In the case of female singers 3 names were frequently mentioned outside the sample, however either due to a lack of response or technical difficulties these interviews didn’t materialize.

The sample selected is limiting, as it neglects the inclusion of less authentic singers. Though one singer belonging to the less authentic category was interviewed, it must be admitted that her expressed opinions will rarely be mentioned in this thesis, as she alone cannot represent the field of FLP. The inclusion of this particular singer was warranted by her own research conducted in the field of folk singers, specifically the comparison of revival and survival singers. Making a diverse sample would have allowed for the comparison of views and career paths across the folk singing field. Additionally, while the sample does include three singers who teach at the Liszt Academy those professors, who are either of an older generation, or do not sing anymore, were not consulted.

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<sup>15</sup> For more information see <http://www.hagyományokháza.hu/nmm/nim/>

## Results

*“By production, I do not mean that the result is not ‘authentic’ or that it is wholly invented. Rather I wish to underscore that heritage is not lost and found, stolen and reclaimed. It is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past.”*  
(Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998 p. 150)

As Fülemlé (2014) states *“More than 40 years after its inception, the revival is now a wide-spread, complex and institutionalized movement [...]”* (p. 45) Its strong link to the Táncház movement of the 1970s is well demonstrated in the concept of the 2013 Roots to Revival Smithsonian Folklife Festival program<sup>16</sup>, and is apparent in the rhetoric of most folk culture related media publications. In fact, the singers interviewed firmly stated that they represent the continuation of the movement. Therefore, the field of folk singing, in its contemporary state, should be viewed as the continuation of the processes emerging in the 1970s, creating what can only be described as the revival tradition.

Perhaps most visible in the continuation of the legitimization process of folk singing is the development of institutions of both safeguarding and teaching, alongside the fixation of discourse. Key institutions and projects realized since the millennium include the establishment of the Hungarian Heritage House (Hagyományok Háza, or HH<sup>17</sup>) in 2001; the acceptance of the Táncház method on the Best Safeguarding Practices list of UNESCO in 2011; and the creation of the online ethnomusicological database of digitized recordings by the Institute of Musicology within the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Zenetudományi Intézete, or MTA ZTI), between 2004-2013<sup>18</sup>, to name a few of the institutionalized developments of the movement<sup>19</sup>.

The number of educational institutions focusing on folk music has increased. The first of these, the Óbudai Népzenei Iskola (Hungarian Folk Music School of Óbuda in Budapest) was officially established as a music school in 1991, though it had been a place of authentic folk

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<sup>16</sup> For details on the event see Fülemlé (2014). Available in English.

<sup>17</sup> See [http://www.heritagehouse.hu/hh/about\\_us/](http://www.heritagehouse.hu/hh/about_us/)

<sup>18</sup> See <http://db.zti.hu/>

<sup>19</sup> For more information on institutions concerned with ICH in Hungary see the website of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Hungary (Szellemi Kulturális Örökség Magyarországon. See [http://www.szellemiorkseg.hu/index.php?menu=nepmuveszet\\_mesterei&m=nemzeti](http://www.szellemiorkseg.hu/index.php?menu=nepmuveszet_mesterei&m=nemzeti)



music teaching since 1975<sup>20</sup>. Several of the interviewees attended this institution, typically those who did not attend the Liszt Academy. Several conservatories and music schools, such as the Hermann László Zeneművészeti Szakközépiskola of Fehérvár (Laszlo Hermann Music High School of Fehérvár<sup>21</sup>) many of which were attended by interviewees, and a growing number of after school music education programs ensure the training of young musicians and singers. The highest level of institutionalized education available for folk singers is the Folk Singing BA and MA program of the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest, launched in 2008<sup>22</sup>. However, despite the growing number of institutions engaged in folk singing one way or another, professionals in the field still complain about the lack of diversity among them: *“Well are unfortunately not there yet [...] we don’t even have enough institutions for them to argue. [...] It’s still developing.”* (Sebestyén)

In the current state of the movement at least two types of folk singing must be identified: folk singing as a community activity or a hobby, and folk singing as a profession. While in practice the distinction may not be so obvious for people outside the field, singers themselves made it abundantly clear that singing on stage, even at a *Tánc ház*, or singing as one of the dancers *in* a *Tánc ház* are different things altogether, with different rules and expectations.

Singing in the *Tánc ház* (off-stage) was considered a necessary and identity forming communal experience, with relatively few constraints. On the other hand, singing on stage in the *Tánc ház* was considered an ambivalent position, as singers believe musicians, trying to concentrate on the dancers for whom they play, are often displeased with having to consider a singer on stage as well. Singers also felt that singing in the *Tánc ház* is a form of collective ritual expression, one that should not be led by any one individual, though music from certain regions do call for the on-stage presence of a singer at the *Tánc ház*. In opposition to this, singers regarded singing on stage (not in a *Tánc ház*) as an artistic practice of *folk singers*, which can and must be distinguished from the community practice of folk singing. *Folk singer*, as a marker of, but preferred terminology to professional (as opposed to amateur) folk singer, can be considered an umbrella-term, which includes roles such as performing artist, teacher and tradition bearer. The rise of the *folk singer* from within the participatory movement

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<sup>20</sup> See <http://www.folkmusicschool.hu/index.htm>

<sup>21</sup> See <http://hermannzenesuli.hu/szakkozepiskola/>

<sup>22</sup> For reference about the opening ceremony see <http://folkradio.hu/hir/2997>; for the university website see <http://lfze.hu/hu/nepzene-tanszek/kapcsolat>

points to the increase of specialization, resulting in the professionalization of the practice (Bohlman, 1988).

This chapter aims to analyze the field of traditional folk singing, which has emerged since the 1970s as the continuation of the movement and the continuation of the legitimization process of the genre.

### 1. A field of the traditional

As one of the interviewees states, *“Folk singing is a style, with stylistic boundaries, just like all other genres.”* (András). In the discussion of the Táncház movement and the rise of discourse, two main elements were addressed: authenticity and transmission. Based on the views expressed by the interviewees it can be stated that with regard to both the development of their meaning has continued on the path set forth in the 1970s, and has reached significantly defined states. While transmission methods will be discussed within section 3.1.1 of this chapter, the position of authenticity has risen and been fixed as the key determinant of genre classification. It appears that the borders of authenticity constitute the most significant field boundary.

Authenticity was defined by interviewees as being true to the *style* typical of the region or village from where the song originated (from where it was recorded, noted). Placing the *style* at the nucleus of objective authenticity implies measurable authenticity based on technical and aesthetic considerations, such as singing from the throat, intonation, choosing of the songs and lyrics, etc. *“For those who are in it [the field of folk culture] there absolutely is [such a thing as measurable authenticity]. [...] And we are also always confronted with, and are fighting to remain, more true to the style, to catch the flavor that we hear in the recordings.”* (Kincső) The role of *style* in the field therefore is definitive, and well understood by singers. *“We are now at the point where, after the convictions that ‘sheet music is sacred and inviolable, and ‘recording is sacred and inviolable’ have become outdated, a new motto must be etched above our gateway, which should sound something like ‘the style is sacred and inviolable’.”* (András) However, where the specific boundaries between authenticity and inauthenticity lie are open to interpretation.

Flipping the coin of reproduction from authenticity to creativity in the Bohlman sense (1988, pp. 78-80), provides further insight into how much deviance from original materials is allowed within an accurate presentation. As the most radical interviewees maintained, any divergence from the recordings is unacceptable: *“Well yes... authentic... it’s important that we*

*reflect exactly the same thing, that we don't put any elements into it that aren't there. We need to take care that we learn from authentic recordings, proper safeguarded recordings"* (Gréta) or *"[...] some people are real supporters of authenticity who believe that if she [the singer on the original recording] takes a breath there in the middle of a line, then you should also take a breath there [...]"* (Júlia) However, this dogmatic view was more often than not rejected based on the understanding that recordings represent only a single preserved version of the many variations of the song. Singers described what Bohlman (1988) defines as regulated and discriminatory creativity as the main forms of authentic practice, used in unison with rationalized creativity, to characterize authenticity within the modern performing context. The emphasis of these forms of creativity originates from what can only be described as a need for first person authenticity. *"So the singer should not be simply copying, but should let the song pass through himself/herself. But one should be able to hear the original recording within it. But it shouldn't be idiotically copied. The style, however, absolutely has to be adhered to."* (Nefelejcs)

Since the beginning of its safeguarding and research, folk music has been regarded as a language, a musical mother tongue (Sárosi, 1973). As all languages it, too, has different levels and elements, and the ability to express (personal) meaning, through preexisting structures. Being fluent in the mother tongue of folk songs implies that singers are able to use it to express themselves, without an accent and authentically (to themselves and the language). This is illustrated by one of the interviewees:

*"But it must immediately be added, that language, like songs, cannot be spoken through memorized texts, because life molds the texts, every instance of speech is worded differently. It is the same way with folk songs, with folk music. It is an absolutely creative thing. The language of self-expression. A singer never says things the same way twice. Only rarely, if someone sings a lot, then certain expressions can become fixed."* (Sebestyén)

Creativity therefore is a defining element in the field of authenticity. It is also what draws the boundaries of the field, as too much of it results in inauthenticity. Inauthentic elements include, but are not limited to: intonations, vocal training and melody variations not typical of the regional style of the song, orchestration not originally used in the given region and often musical accompaniment itself, modern musical or other non-Hungarian musical influences, and world music itself. This spectrum of inauthenticity can be characterized by ubiquitous and

integrative creativity (Bohlman, 1988, pp. 78-79). Precise division lines are, again difficult, if not impossible to define, as stated by many of the singers.

*"I see the biggest difference, the biggest dividing line, between singers who sing only authentically [...] and those who sing some sort of adaptation, which points more towards world music. This has its various steps, levels, shapes, and depths. It's especially difficult to talk about this, because it's very hard to make categories."*

(Eszter)

Generally, those who are deemed 'good' world music singers were believed to have deep and expanded knowledge in authentic folk singing as well, and often still perform in the genre.

This was found to be true in the case of the one singer leaning more towards world music in the sample. From a critical point of view, most world music singers are believed to have shifted towards the genre, as a consequence of insufficient knowledge or talent in the authentic genre, or superficiality, not a lack of opportunity within the authentic practice. *"We [authentic singers] can move on such a wide scale, that I don't believe there ever is a moment when a person reaches a point, where there is nothing more, so let's go make world music."*

(Zsolt)

World music singing was often judged and looked down upon by interviewees, though the aversion to or acceptance of world music (or other experimental forms of folk music) varied considerably. While interviewees categorized themselves as *folk singers* they often referred to singers who have moved away from the regulated concept of creativity towards ubiquitous and integrative practices, presenting themselves with flamboyance, as *folk divas* (carrying a pejorative connotation). Placing authenticity and unregulated creativity in opposition to each other results in a construct mirroring Bourdieu's (1985) dual structure of FRP and FLP.

Most of the singers interviewed have themselves dabbled in experimental forms of folk singing. However, they described experiencing a deep and intrinsic repulsion when doing so. On a personal level, singers emphasized the closeness of traditional singing to their own hearts. *"I believe, that if a singer can't find themselves within the authentic performance style, then that singer is not a folk singer. I think that those, who choose not to go with the authentic style have no place within the genre. This may be strict, but this is what I believe."* (Eszter)

Taking a broader perspective singers stated they *"didn't want to ruin the songs"* (Anna) or that they felt that distorting the traditional songs was, so to say, morally wrong. This points to

the major underlying factor that structures the field, namely the belief in the elevated value of authenticity, due to the heritage status of folk singing. From the most conservative perspective then, world musicians desecrate tradition and prioritize their individuality and career. As one of the interviewees explained, representing by far the harshest tone:

*“After a while these girls come to believe that they are better. That they are better than the tradition bearing masters on the recordings. [...] That’s why they add different instruments, ones not typical of the given region, why they use personal musical solutions, ones that are outside the stylistic boundaries of the genre, and basically they are building the career of a performer, they are building themselves. I once said about this that they don’t see themselves as a means but as an end. And this is a problem.”*

(András)

Career building was associated with business perspectives intertwined with expectations of economic gain, such as wanting to cater to the audience through constantly producing *“newer and newer things, new songs, new lyrics”*<sup>23</sup> (Sebestyén), including captivating them with musical solutions outside the *style* and reaching out to the audience through extensive (self-)promotion. (Self-)promotion was often contrasted with quality of product: *“The most financial gains are not pocketed by those most recognized by the profession (...) you are as big an artist as is the size of your poster”* (András). Often, singers labeled *folk divas* not only have Facebook pages, but up to date, creatively constructed personal websites used for promotional purposes. In contrast, the number of interviewees who consider self-promotion and marketing for themselves as important is marginal. Singers having their own Facebook pages, for example, are an exception, and in some cases these pages were not created by the singers.

In summation, it is in the contrasting of *folk singers* and *folk divas* and their respective attitude towards heritage and their audience, that the structure of and conflict within the field becomes apparent. The singers interviewed positioned themselves as bearers and representers of a value-based heritage characterized by an attitude of integrity and value. They create arts for art sake - or rather art for heritage’s sake - and profess economic disinterestedness. On the other hand, world music singers were often described as having

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<sup>23</sup> Most concerning to some is a revival of the genre of folk song-like art songs observable in the music of certain musicians popularizing it as retro, the very genre the Táncház movement wished to replace,

sold themselves, being economically motivated, and dishonoring the integrity of the tradition.<sup>24</sup>

It also appears that coexisting with these more conservative views are concerns about the market of the authentic genre as a whole. As one interviewee noted, duly recognizing the contradiction between personal disinterestedness and the survival of the genre on the market: *“At the moment folk music hasn’t been able to create a market for itself in Hungary. This is actually our fault, because we didn’t want to create a market. We didn’t try to develop/educate our audiences [...] who think that because it’s folk music, it should always automatically be free to them.”* (Hunor) This not only highlights the struggle of the FRP of authentic folk singing to establish a market beyond its own borders, but also demonstrates the loss of community claim to it. While as heritage folk singing belongs to the community in which it lives, as a commodity it belongs to an individual, or a group (band) of producers. This, perhaps is one of the most significant peculiarities characterizing the transition from folk culture as a way of life to folk culture as art. It points to the importance of taking the audience into consideration despite the heritage-based values of the genre, recognizing their role in making the practice of authentic folk singing economically viable as a musical genre. It suggests the potential opening up of the FRP of authentic folk singing, and leaning towards a FLP model, while maintaining integrity and *style*. As the same singer remarked: *“It’s actually a big debate, whether we should cater completely to the audience, or whether we play for our own enjoyment. I think it’s possible to find a middle ground. Of which, by the way, popular music provides a good example.”* (Hunor)

While considered a novelty within the genre, Hungarian FolkEmbassy is doing just this: following in the footsteps of popular culture with their own YouTube channel and current aim of raising awareness and teaching people a variety of traditional songs through karaoke. Several of the singers interviewed are participating in the ongoing project, which can be seen as a definite step toward approaching a wider audience and opening up the RFP of authentic singing. Even more so as the production, though not dependent on it, is aiming to cover

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<sup>24</sup> It must be noted that economic success in the field hardly means a large income. As a recent interview with one of the 4 most commonly mentioned singers shows, relying on folk singing as a sole source of income is not profitable. As the singer explained, she is unable to buy a house or a car from her income – she is living in a house provided for her by her parents – and has only once in the past 5 years gone on vacation.  
[http://hvg.hu/elet/20150422\\_Szaloki\\_Agi](http://hvg.hu/elet/20150422_Szaloki_Agi)

certain costs through crowd funding<sup>25</sup>. Unfortunately the initiative is, as of yet, only a moderate success demonstrating the lack of economic capital within the field and the lack of interest or awareness from outside it. However, this example highlights the slowly emerging trend of opening up the field through creatively catering to a wider audience by producing more familiar forms (karaoke) and through reaching them through (social media) channels.

## 2. Actors of the field – position taking

Having described the field of folk singing with its boundaries and inner dynamics, the main answer of the question What defines a folk singer? was also made clear: his/her ability and desire to stay within the authentic genre. However, further questions arise, such as: Who are the folk singers? What positions do they fulfill? How do they define themselves? Bearing in mind that the interviewed singers almost exclusively represent the established and well established authentic branch, the FRP of the entire folk singing field, it is not surprising that they demonstrate certain similarities with regard to the answers to these above questions – such as the way they first came into contact with folk music and their learning curves. Position taking within the field must be inspected through two dichotomies, namely the distinction between folk singers as tradition bearers and/or performing artist, and a second one between folk singers as teachers and/or performing artist. While both include folk singing as a performing art there is a very clear distinction between being a performing artist in the ideal sense of being an artist, and choosing to be a performing artist as a profession. All the above listed similarities and differences will now be individually discussed, continuously considering the differences between older and younger singers.

### 2.1 Who are the folk singers? - First exposure and learning curves

It is perhaps not surprising, that most of the interviewees have been intimately acquainted with traditional Hungarian folk music from a very early age through family, friends and educators. Three general categories can be made: those who grew up in the still existing tradition, embodying the cultural capital of the given community to the full extent; those who grew up in the revival tradition where relevant embodied cultural capital was gained mostly through its inheritance from family members, as part of their habitus; and those brought into the revival tradition at a later age gaining folk singing related embodied cultural capital in the

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<sup>25</sup> For details see <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/folk-karaoke-dvd-hungarian-folkembassy#/story>

form of institutionalized capital. In many cases interviewees highlighted the support they had from their families, while none of the participants expressed a lack of support or opposition.

Only two singers reported having been raised in the tradition in the original rural context. They recounted having been both raised into and consciously learning the traditions in their native environments. While the concept of tradition bearing and tradition fostering will be discussed shortly it must be noted here that their backgrounds and roots in the rural traditions do not guarantee their self-categorization as tradition bearer.

Eight out of the 14 singers interviewed grew up in families where either the parents themselves were revival musicians or dancers, or were closely drawn to the movement exposing their children from an early age to Hungarian ICH through attending events and the more prestigious folk music camps where such goddesses of the trade taught as Ilona Budai. In the case of singers raised in such environments it is not uncommon for their siblings to be involved in heritage practice as well, sometimes even as folk singers themselves. Categorized in this thesis as having grown up in the revival tradition the high number of singers represented in the sample belonging to this category (while not claiming to be representative of their actual ration within the entire field) further establishes the continuation of the movement.

Four singer accounted having been introduced to folk music at a later age, in lower school, while three of them began singing traditional Hungarian songs before their teenage years. These three were discovered, their talents fostered by teachers at their schools.

The manner in which singers became acquainted with folk music and culture often determine the paths their studies took with regards to singing. Those raised in the tradition did not attend formal classes but learnt from tradition bearers. While those growing up after the revival movement of the 1970s without any familial connections to it attended private lessons and institutionalized music education at the highest level available to them at the time. Those raised in the revival tradition have more diverse educational backgrounds, mostly consisting of some private or institutionalized lessons and a large amount of organic learning through practice and exposure.

It is difficult to state with certainty anything about the career paths of singers, except that success to a large extent relies of the connections, the social capital (Bourdieu, 1997) of individuals. All singers claimed to know all other singers, and reported that their social circles are to the most extent influenced by their being folk singers and thus a member of the revival



movement. As one singer illustratively explained the revival movement and the field of folk singing itself is *“a small playground, with a small sandbox.”* (Nefelejcs) Others used a common metaphor: *“I think the whole folk music movement is like one big family. Honestly we all know each other, we know everything about each other, sometimes even too much.”* (Zsófia) The dependency of actors on social capital was viewed as both negative and a positive.

The weight social capital carries has certain consequences. On the one hand social capital was seen as integral to the everyday working of the field, as singers stated nearly all their bookings are initiated through their social networks. None of them have ever booked a show through media publicity outside the movement. Because of the tight knit nature of the field singers have highly evolved social networks, and therefore mostly do not employ managers to secure bookings for them. Though none of the interviewees have assisting personal on staff a few singers not interviewed and a number of musicians and bands do. However a singer's ability to gain widespread success and recognition, often in terms of gaining institutional support, occupations or recognitions, may also be hindered by social capital. Linked to political corruption (several times mentioned, but always with refrain from disclosing any specifics) and favoritism, not having certain kind of social capital (e.g. connection to certain high power individuals) was stated to potentially hinder the careers of some. Acquiring social capital, like the gaining of relevant cultural capital was generally expressed to begin at an early age, often as a part of the learning curve of individuals. Three main environments were mentioned in the acquisition of social capital: the families' network, community activities such as camps, lessons or classes, and thirdly competitions (see section 3.1 of this chapter).

## 2.2 Position taking: teachers and performing artists

According to those interviewed the career paths of singers (not considering here their non-singing related activities and careers) tend to take on two forms: becoming a teacher (in institutions) or becoming a performer. The line between the two directions of practice are often, like most boundaries of the field, hazy as most singers teach in camps and give private lessons, even if not identifying themselves as teachers. The two practices are of course not mutually exclusive, and in fact the overlapping of roles was typical as observed in the case of the pre-Liszt Academy generation of singers. Seasoned singers expressed how much they themselves have gained and learned through teaching, making it an integral part of the way

they sing and approach the tradition they practice. Some also see it as the responsibility of folk singers to pass on the tradition through education.

The younger singers however, demonstrated awareness and deliberation in their choice to be either one or the other.

*“So there is this state that is not always obvious or consequential, that a performing artist, and a very good performing artist at that, is not necessarily a good teacher. And the same is true the other way round. The same way the best coach is not necessarily the best athlete.”* (Zsolt)

This unbending distinction can easily be traced back to the Liszt Academy, as the folk singing program itself makes a distinction between the two professions.

It is in this highly developed sense of specialization that the term *professional* gains meaning. It must be noted that in the Hungarian language there are two distinctly different terms, one for being a professional, a pro, really good at something, and one for doing something as a profession. An example of this: *“Well (...) I would never say that I’m a pro, if anything I’d say that we try to do this in a professional way”* (Kincső). While the two do overlap, the singers themselves often felt that they are singers by profession but do not consider themselves professionals. An income-based definition of professional (Jeffri, 2004) was frequently used among singers as *“Choosing music making as a pillar of ones livelihood”* (András). The emphasis on a pillar is significant, as demonstrated in section 2.5 of the methodology chapter, most singers must maintain several sources of income in order to get by. While in a strict sense professional was used to describe those whose only income came from folk singing – *“Whoever has a contract, an official position as a folk singer.”* (Eszter) – this includes only about 2-3 individuals within the entire field. All other singers wishing to pursue a career in performing can be considered freelancers. Choosing to be a performing artist as a profession therefore cannot, or only rarely, be defined in terms of income. Instead competence, experience, knowledge and professionalism – as in adhering to the expectations of the field – were mentioned as some of the factors of classification.

A consequence of folk singing being a profession is competition within the field, resulting in rivalry and hierarchy. Competition between professionals, while more expressly present among performing artists, affects both the teaching and performing branches, due to the relatively small scale of the field and the limited positions available within it. At stake in this competition are concert opportunities, recording opportunities and receiving contracts.

*“Well there always is competition, especially among singers, among women, this is a given, but I think this is normal. It can’t be and shouldn’t be denied. There is competition going on, but this whole thing can be done in a healthy manner.”* (Eszter) *“We are constantly competing, whether we say it out loud or not, but this is almost a natural thing, everyone is trying to get ahead and everyone’s trying to make a living, everyone wants to be the best.”* (Zsolt)

Controversially, many of the singers demonstrated a visible discomfort in openly admitting to there being competition and hierarchy among professionals. Majority of them attested to there being no such thing as “best” within folk singing. This was often proven, so to say, by arguing that everyone has regional styles in which they are better: *“Everyone is better in a different thing, everyone can sing a different dialect better, (...) everyone is good at something.”* (Gréta) This compromise regarding recognition does not mean that singers believed there is no actual hierarchy, but rather that they claim it makes categorization extremely difficult and subjective to personal judgement.<sup>26</sup>

Singers who wish to be teachers can be considered professionals not only in terms of income, but also as educators (Jeffri, 2004). They must attend the Liszt Academy to gain the necessary qualifications that allow them to teach not only in after school music programs, but in music schools and conservatories. Based on the accounts of current academy students, at least half of each class wishes to pursue a career in teaching, while those choosing to become performing artists are the minority. This is possibly related to the financial insecurity of being a performing artist, as opposed to the relative stability of having a contract as a teacher.

Having a profession as a performing artist also yields certain controversial results. First of all, singers as performing artists *“must always keep in mind the wishes of the client. They always have to learn a repertoire, or if the client has extra requests then maybe they have to learn additional things.”* (Hunor) As a performing art there are also expectations with regard to presentation, staging, and first and third person authenticity, conventions that must be adhered to in order to be successful (discussed in section 3.1 of this chapter). Interviewees stated the existence of various fashion waves in often dominate the field of folk singing as a

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<sup>26</sup> Since all singers strongly agreed that all singers in the field know each other, it is not surprising that they do not want to openly discuss the categorization of individuals. I believe it is also the part of the nature of interviewing itself that did not allow for singers to divulge categorization to a stranger. However, as a community strongly tied to the *Táncház-mozgalom* and its legacy of rejecting hierarchies for the sake of openness (Könczöl, 1977) it is possible that the notion of such classifications offends their sense of values. In this case then it may be a struggle between the values of the art form, the traditions it is attached to and the rivalries of a market based professional field.

performing art. For example Transylvania, and especially the town of Szék, has always been a point of reference and very popular, and according to many interviewees music from these areas continues to be the most commonly played and sang.

Considering again the relationship between singer and audience, but this time from the point of view of those who choose to be performing artists by profession, there seems to be a slowly increasing trend of accepting (self-)promotion, or at least the admittance of its the necessity. This is mainly limited to websites. *“I’m sure that for those who are doing this [performing] in a different quantity, those who are only performing artists, people say that if someone seriously wants to go abroad and everything, that a website is the minimum. So if someone really wants to become a ‘pro-pro’ [very professional] singer, then you need these.”* (Sára). It is mainly the music labels producing the albums of singers that are currently paying increasing attention to promotion. A good example can be given through the account of one of the singers interviewed. Talking about her first solo album launched not long after the interview was conducted, she said:

*“Before now I paid absolutely no attention to things like this, like self-promotion. I have a new album coming out soon, and the office in Sopron is helping me with things like applying for financing, and now, now there is a person who is responsible for things like advertising, so now we are obviously trying harder to advertise the launch of the CD. So now this person places more emphasis on these sort of things. But the things I did before, I didn’t have to do any promotion for those.”* (Klára)

### 2.3. Position taking: tradition bearers and performing artists

A second distinction can be made among singers, in part as a consequence of the presented specialization of the field, and in part due to individual views and identity formation. *“So there are singer, who are fundamentally trying to safeguard the tradition, which is also true for musicians. [...] And there’s the other, who is dependent on repertoire, so (s)he learns a repertoire and then (s)he knows that repertoire from A to Z. These are... stage singers.”* (Hunor) While being a teacher of traditional folk singing is a modern form of transmission, several singers believe that performing folk songs on stage does not play a role in such

safeguarding. *"I think that's separate. [...] So purely by singing on stage, I don't think that means tradition bearing [safeguarding]"*<sup>27</sup> (Klára)

In this sense a second distinction can be made. This time not based on profession, but on self-identification as a tradition bearer (not limited only to teachers) or as a performing artist. The aspects of folk singing as a profession have been detailed earlier, so what is important to note here is that it can be seen not only as a choice of occupation, but as a general mentality towards ICH practice. This includes placing aesthetic considerations at the forefront of practice, and the capability to conduct one's self as professional of the heritage, regardless of being on or off stage. As one interviewee put is:

*"What is a master of folk art? A person who can sing and be merry, even when (s)he is not drunk. [...] A normal person only does such things when (s)he is happy, right? [...] But a person, who can stand up and repeat the whole thing at the push of a button – that's an artist, isn't it? But this goes for everyone: actors, singers... The question, is can they push their button themselves?"* (Sebestyén)

In contrast with this is a more holistic view of the practice, which focuses on the culture and way of life the ICH the singers perform represents. This view emphasizes the unity of folk music and the individual: *"Folk music and the individual should basically be one"* (Anna)

The singers interviewed demonstrated two different approaches to being or becoming a tradition bearer. The first approach was often canonically quoted and can be summed up as follows:

*"Tradition bearing is the process by which cultural values are transmitted and received, and implies that the given cultural values of a given region are taken on by the people living... the people born into the social medium of the given region, and that the continuation of that culture happens by way of transmission."* (András)

This definition is that of tradition bearing as it occurs in the first life of ICH. From the sample of singers interviewed, two singers identify themselves as tradition bearers of certain regions or villages according to this interpretation of the word. In general, survival singers were most often labeled as such tradition bearers.

The second approach bases tradition bearing on being able to speak the musical mother tongue of a region without accents, alongside having immersed and internalized oneself deeply in the given region's culture, resulting in a more complex and layered cultural

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<sup>27</sup> The Hungarian language does not differentiate between the two as the English language does.

knowledge, though not as complete as it is of those who were socialized in it. Singers who identified themselves as tradition bearers through such an approach emphasized: a) the regularity with which they go collecting and visiting villages where they now have masters, teachers and friends; b) other elements of folk knowledge they have gained deep knowledge in, such as traditional herbal medicine, for example; c) their use of folk singing as a way to heal their soul through self-expression, even off stage. Embodying complex cultural knowledge and a functional use of folk singing that is perceived as being the same as it was in the first life of the heritage, allows for several singers born and raised in Budapest - i.e. outside the tradition - to identify themselves as tradition bearers of certain regions or villages.

Those who identified themselves as tradition bearers in the first sense may also define themselves as tradition bearers in the second sense by having learning the songs and culture of regions different from where they were socialized. *"I brought one [song] on mother tongue level with me from home, I was able to learn two more at mother tongue level, two very well, and one I think I can present convincingly, but I know where I'm faking it."* (Hunor)

Of course all this is not to say that those who identify themselves as performing artists do not possess increased levels of cultural knowledge and that they do not delve into the ICH as deeply as those who consider themselves tradition bearers, or that the two are mutually exclusive. They are not. In fact, those who identified themselves as tradition bearers most often also consider themselves performing artists as well, and are some of the most accomplished folk singers today. However, those who consider themselves first and foremost performing artists only occasionally identify themselves as tradition bearers. Instead, they use the term tradition-fostering or tradition-guarding, in the sense that:

*"Tradition fostering is the process by which certain selected values of tradition are practiced in a place not its own, a place other than the socio-cultural medium or locality the given values developed in, maybe hundreds of kilometers away, in a typically urban setting, although it could be a rural setting too, that's not the point."*  
(András)

Some, however, see this as a distorted way of tradition bearing: *"To express myself gruesomely, [we are] mutilated tradition bearers. We are continuing a different form of tradition. Of course we are continuing the original tradition too, but we are also carrying a different sort of tradition."* (Gréta)

### 3. Autonomy of the field: criteria for production and evaluation

As quoted earlier, Bourdieu (1985) sees the autonomy of a FRP in its ability to set its own standards and criteria for producing and evaluating its products. These are important questions as the level of agreement on these subjects demonstrates the crystallization of discussion and ideology in the sense Baumann (2007) uses these terms. Criteria of production and evaluation will therefore be analyzed in detail.

#### 3.1 Criteria, standards and rules of production

Criteria of production can be hugely subjective, as these doxas are unwritten rules, often not yet solidified. This emphasizes the role of competitions as platforms where unestablished singers may learn the conventions of the field from established gatekeepers, which seem to be the only events or spaces where these questions are addressed directly. Despite this, as will be seen there is a sense of convention within the community. The most important criteria is of course the demand for authenticity, already detailed. The second biggest category can be seen as the canonized ways of learning this authenticity, the methods of transmission. Two further categories will be explained: the criteria of quality and those of performing on stage.

##### 3.1.1 Criteria of transmission

It is one of the unique traits of ICH as art in the modern world, that its authentic practice demands a long period of continuous and intensive learning. The cult of the amateur as observed by Ardery (1997) does not adequately describe the case of Hungarian folk singing, as even if institutionalized education is deemed unnecessary, practitioners must learn the heritage from others. Learning was describes as happening ideally through a mix of original recordings, private or institutionalized lessons, and from tradition bearers. Though questions were directed at further investigating teaching styles and the best modes of learning/teaching, the answers received were usually short and direct: through recordings, generally with the guidance of a teacher or mentor, whom the pupil sings together with and by whom the students is guided through the vast amount of documented material. The large extent to which singers agreed on these matters demonstrates the crystallization of discourse and ideology as a process of legitimation.

Acquiring the capability of speaking the musical mother tongue of a region without an accent – in its *style* – through the use of original recordings can be arrived at in two steps.

First, by learning to imitate the recordings exactly while learning each song in different variations from various recordings. Then, having learned the myriad variations of different songs, one naturally develops the capability to hear and replicate, to creatively navigate within the *style*. This use of original recordings appears to have reached a canonic state of consensus. All singers agreed that recordings should be used in their multitudes, as the fallacies and distortions of recording through a product oriented safeguarding method have become widely known, as demonstrated by an interviewee:

*“A recording is a recording of a certain moment, the fixing of a given moment. It’s a canned preserve. Right? Beside the stylistic elements that should be learned, the given document, recording, also includes a row of other auditory elements which are not a part of the style. [...] Now without proper source criticism these can’t be sifted out.”* (András)

All singers are expected to be able to navigate among and within recordings and find the elements that are typical of the style, as a basic requirement. This necessitates long years of in-depth learning. While many original recordings can now be accessed online, none of the singers expressed the possibility of someone becoming a (professional) folk singer from having learned purely through these recordings.

Looking at the role of institutionalized education, specifically higher education, it can be discerned that while it is not mandatory to have attended formal lessons the importance of it is growing, despite the unwillingness of singers to admit so. Singers consistently maintained that a good folk singer needn’t necessarily have attended the Liszt Academy, with the exception of those singers who wish to pursue a career in teaching. In fact, some of the seasoned singers stated that those attending the academy learned to sing long before, and that the academy provides good background and theoretical knowledge but is not the place where the singers acquire their authentic style. Criticism was voiced concerning the BA and MA program, while always keeping in mind that it is the youngest, though highest, level of institutions within the field. Criticism includes the lack of organized collecting trips and the strict scheduling of when and what to learn as opposed to it being a more natural process. In general, its academic approach was labeled as resulting in a practice that, so to say, smells of sheet music.

Despite the conviction that singers needn’t attend the Liszt Academy, among the younger generation there is only one singer who is well established without having had attended the program. Her being the sole example of a young folk singer today, who has



reached such acclaimed status without having attended the Liszt Academy, was mentioned by several interviewees, herself included. Paradoxically, her lack of institutionalized education greatly influenced her self-definition as a folk singer: *"I don't have a degree in folk singing, therefore I can't say I am a folk singer by profession, however I am still a folk singer and am still considered one because of the awards and the bands I've sung in, and the amount of time I've been doing it for."* (Klára). She also perceives herself to be somewhat of a unique case, an outsider within the new generation of academy-trained folk singers.

Perhaps the most interesting and prevalent question from a heritage perspective within the field concept of cultural production is the role of collecting trips. As already mentioned, collecting plays a formative role in the lives and careers of revival singers. All interviewees agreed that it is an absolutely necessary, integral part of being a folk singer, something that shapes the individual in more ways than one. However, many of the older singers complained that younger singers and Liszt Academy students neglect experiencing folk culture first hand. In contradiction of these claims all young singers emphasized the necessity of going on collecting trips as well. Of course this does not mean that the claims of neglect are not warranted. However it does mean that theoretically the importance of participating in collecting trips is considered a basic requirement for all folk singers.

The role of connecting with tradition bearers through collecting is important in at least four ways. The most obvious reason is that in the cultural product oriented safeguarding processes, as discussed in the theoretical framework, many nuances of the heritage performance are lost. Therefore, many of the mannerisms and modes of presentation may get 'lost in translation' if one does not observe tradition bearers in their original socio-cultural environment. As one singer explained:

*"The more elements we can document the better. But still, passing on the tradition is best done face-to-face, because the human brain can register phenomenon in such a complex manner, that if we break it down to its elements it becomes difficult to put them together again."* (Sebestyén)

Secondly, singers expressed a deeper emotional attachment to songs they were taught by tradition bearers. *"Obviously I sing her songs completely differently than I sing the songs of a woman from Moldva, who I've never met because I've never been to Moldva."* (Zsófia) Several young singers have also gone out of their way to find those tradition bearers whose recorded songs they grew up learning. *"It was very exciting when I saw Erzsi néni in real life... I've been*

*listening to her at home since I was a teenager. I really enjoyed these, they were very-very good.” (Sára)*

Thirdly, the importance of safeguarding was referred to as a responsibility of the folk singer. An important aspect of this is re-recording – when songs recorded from tradition bearers are recorded again years later – in order to analyze and document the changes the songs and the regional styles themselves undergo. This is not a new practice, Kodály regularly sent his students to villages and tradition bearers where he himself had recorded (as related by Sebő, who himself was the pupil of one of Kodály’s students).

The fourth reason collecting was deemed one of the most important methods of transmission and a fundamental part of being able to achieve and maintain authenticity, was the need for understanding the cultural background of the ICH. As one singer put it:

*“Folk music, if we only focus on folk singing, remains hollow. We can’t understand a lot of things in them. From the lyrics, and especially not the way of thinking behind it. You can only understand it if you understand the person who sang the song.” (Nefelejcs)*

It helps with some of the difficulties revival singers with urban roots have in becoming tradition bearers. This need to connect also demonstrates the respect folk singers have towards the heritage and those who carry it, demonstrating an “art for heritage’s sake” mentality. Singing the songs without wanting to understand the mentality and the thinking of the people, the emotions and life stories behind them, were perceived as shallow, opportunistic, something not right – characteristics of a market oriented FLP.

The encouraged connection between tradition bearers and folk singers is most likely the single most important aspect in the process of learning the authentic style. However, it is apparent in the speech and the accounts of older singers that the deaths of tradition bearers weigh heavy on them, in some cases holding back singers from revisiting certain villages where all the women and men they consider their masters have passed away.

### 3.1.2 Criteria of quality and repertoire

It is expected that all singers, be they established or not yet established, teachers or performing artists, have and indeed represent a high quality of singing. This includes having had vocal training, knowing when to use and when not to use regional dialects, and possessing a considerable repertoire.

The term *vocal training* was used in two ways: being well trained in singing (being able to sing clearly, using the right breathing techniques, etc.) and being able to do these according to the different styles of the various regions. Most interviewees stated that when judging at a contest they consider the level of vocal training the contestants present. Some consider being able to replicate the authentic style more important than having had voice training, while at the same time the neglect of vocal training among young singers was often criticized by the established singers. In general, many expressed concern about the emphasis - or lack thereof - singers place on achieving the proper, authentic, voice training.

All singers agreed that while adapting to the regional dialects of pronunciation is the 'spice', so to say, which makes a song truly authentic and distinctive, is not necessary for a revival singer to reproduce. Due to the immense consumption of original recordings, most singers are able to "speak" a few dialects in which they have achieved mother tongue proficiency. This, however, is not required in order for a song to be considered authentic, as according to interviewees, the forcing of the accent often results in inauthenticity both in the objective and in the first person sense of the word. This raises the question of how fully the ICH of a given region or village is actually being preserved and safeguarded through the practice of folk singing, and how its traditions are changing through their urban practice.

Concerning the requirement of repertoire two approaches – tradition bearing and performing artist – emerged. On the one hand many singers agreed, that a folk singer as a professional performing artist or teacher must be able to perform songs in their given *style* from all, or most regions of the Hungarian language areas. *"A singer should be able to authentically perform songs from all regions, if asked to. This does not mean that they don't need to prepare for it. But they should be able to do it."* (Anna) This requirement was mostly emphasized by students of the Liszt Academy program. Some pointed out that while all singers have regions that they prefer, are better at or feel closer to, due to the lesser number of singers compared to e.g. the number of musicians, singers must be able to be more versatile in addition to specializing in certain areas. On the other hand, several interviewees agreed that a large repertoire can also mean being familiar with the complete repertoire of only one or two regions, or even a few villages, as being familiar with all regions results in a certain level of superficiality. This approach is linked to the tradition bearer perspective, being one of the main elements which those who classify themselves as tradition bearers identify themselves through: they had mastered the regional style at the mother-tongue level. This

approach was commonly linked to the holistic approach previously discussed. Some singers, mostly those with the most experience, pointed out that while it is important for singers to be able to take a step back and view the tradition from afar and in a broader context, in order to be familiar with all the styles of all the regions it is also integral that they reach mother-tongue level in some regions, as opposed to *just* being familiar with them.

### 3.1.3 Criteria of staging a performance

Last but not least, the standards and criteria of staged performing need to be addressed, which demonstrate the technical questions of the characteristically second life-induced staging of ICH. In general, singers were very aware of their positions as performing artists and their ability to have an impact upon their audience. They were quite confident in stating what audiences wish to experience as well: *“The audience needs us to impress upon their senses,”* (Júlia) and affect them emotionally. They linked this to other performing arts and perception of it :

*“(…) If I go to a theatre or any kind of performance, then I expect it to affect me. Affect my emotions. No? I expect it to give me an experience that will determine my next few hours or whole day (...), for it to fascinate me.”* (Zsolt) Therefore, singers should be able to *“musically and emotionally give something to the audience, if they [folk singers] are to be considered performing artists.”* (Eszter)

While singing in itself may be done authentically, as a performing art it must also be considered authentic by the audience. As discussed in the theoretical framework, staged authenticity largely relies on perception. However, the conscious elements of staging may support the experience of authenticity. In the following section several elements of staging authenticity will be considered: first and third person authenticity, and their relationship to attire, stage setup, and poise.

If third person authenticity means conveying a sense of belonging and community, then in the case of folk singing it can be seen as conveying heritage. First person authenticity on the other hand, is concerned with conveying the genuine honesty of the individual, *“being authentic as an artist”* (András), in which individual creativity, artistic freedom and stage presence become more pronounced. In the case of heritage as art it became clear that the community aspect of presented authenticity (third person) can relate to two things: both the audience and the community that created the ICH. In both cases the message of heritage

seemed to be intertwined with the message of the individual singer, especially from a tradition bearing perspective.

*“Artistic expression or attitude, the expression of my attitude as an artist, is probably much-much more effective if I represent selected elements of culture on stage in such a way that I take on the original medium of this art, which includes its world view, its motivations. In other words, if I identify with these people, these individuals, who produced these values.” (András)*

All singers emphasized that singers, as performers, are expected to have charisma, poise, self-confidence: *“In addition, of course, singers as performers also need charisma on stage, so we have to have an aura.”* (Nefelejcs) This is not analogous to acting or conveying emotions through posture or gesture or mimicry, which strictly goes against objective authenticity and was generally considered a characteristic of *folk divas*. As one interviewee expressed: it should be the audience who is touched, who cries, not the singer. However, as performers, they are considered the “lead singer” of the band so to speak, and therefore often have to introduce the band and speak to the audience. Stage fright is considered a hindrance in giving a convincing (first person authenticity) performance.

First person authenticity was stressed not only as necessary to providing a convincing performance, but also to achieving unity with heritage.

*“Besides knowing the style very well and knowing a million and one songs, besides this a singer needs to be able to let the song seep through him/her, give him/herself as well, integrating the song into him/herself, his/her feelings, experiences, that’s how the singing becomes authentic [truthful], if (s)he really lives it as truthful, experiences it, or in some way can associate with the songs, the message of the songs.” (Eszter).*

As already discussed, creativity within the FRP of authentic folk singing is limited, however certain forms of creativities were expressed as being crucial criteria of conveying and living this first person authenticity. They were also said to help keep singing close to its original function as a form of self-expression. One such creative tool is choosing melodies and paring them with lyrics (always from the same village or region) that the singer feels expresses and represent him/herself. If musical accompaniment is chosen, then there is room for choosing which instruments should be used (again selecting only from those typical of the region),

when they should play, when there should be solo singing, etc. There is also a certain amount of freedom in varying the tempo – needless to say all line with the regional style.

The ability of a singer to not only copy songs but to adapt them to their personality is the most crucial part of practicing first person authenticity. As the most experienced interviewee and a teacher at the Liszt Academy explained:

*“This is an daily topic at the academy: ‘Child, can’t you sing this with different lyrics? Are these lyrics really about you?’ ‘No, I just learnt it from Mácsi néni.’ ‘Well,’ I say ‘those [issues expressed in the lyrics] were Mácsi néni’s problems, why don’t you choose freely? We have so unbelievably many lyrics documented.’ ‘Oh, we’re allowed to do that?’ they ask. Not only is it allowed, it’s mandatory!” (Sebestyén)*

Several technical elements of staging were also mentioned by singers, when talking about giving an authentic performance. There was no consensus regarding questions such as background lighting (this was predominantly an issue in the Fölszállott a Páva competition), whether a singer should use a microphone or not (though this is also largely dependent on setting), or where a singer should stand during a performance and what the singer should do while only the musicians are playing. Concerning the position of the singer, those more performance oriented found the frontal and central position to be the most suitable. Others, who are more focused on the heritage presenting aspect of the performance, believe that standing beside the band gives fuller access, a better position from which to communicate with musicians, which in turn allows for more interaction and more improvisation. Concerning physical movement while on stage but not singing, there also seems to be confusion. Those who mentioned this element of performing expressed the lack of an existing convention for this. Solutions include standing still, going off stage and sitting down, stepping slightly from side to side, and in some cases even moderate dancing.

The clothing singers decide to present themselves in seems to be a significant issue of the perceived authenticity singers aim to provide their audience with. While some representative occasions call for singers to be dressed in traditional folk attire, the conventions for what to wear when the singer can decide for him- or herself are not set in stone and are indeed a point of ongoing negotiation.

In general, interviewees explained that a singer must wear appropriate, respectable attire that matches the messages they wish to mediate through the songs, and must be in line

with the scale of the occasion. This does not mean that they must wear old, traditional clothing. Male singers refrain from wearing shorts and t-shirts, and female singers generally do not wear miniskirts as these are seen as inappropriate. However, some singers mentioned that there are efforts to make folk singing more a part of contemporary culture, and this often includes dressing in everyday contemporary clothing, regardless, or despite the convention of wearing long skirts and non-revealing tops.

The difficulty of wearing traditional costumes is twofold. On one hand it is within the nature of performances that they often include a lineup of songs from different regions, which cannot be represented in a single costume.

*“It is very rare - not unheard of but rare – for there to be a concert where we only sing from one region all evening. [...] But I think that what we’re supposed to be wearing as singers on stage is a really big question today, it’s absolutely not figured out yet.” (Sára)*

Though some singers believe that quick dress changes can be executed if well planned, or that varying elements of different attires can be put together in one outfit to symbolize the various regions represented in the performance, these are not common approaches. Often, if unable to match the performance with a single attire, singers said they choose not to wear a traditional costume at all. Some singers, especially some of the younger ones, expressed an ambivalent relationship toward the costumes as they believe that they are, as the English term suggests, costumes. Many of the young singers stated that while they find traditional clothing beautiful in its own right, they do not feel it is theirs. Many of them do not own their own sets of traditional costumes. In contrast, all four singers who identified themselves as tradition bearers placed emphasis on maintaining first person authenticity not only on stage but off-stage, in their everyday lives, as well. This was often demonstrated through the tangible example of wearing elements of traditional clothes off-stage as well as on stage.

In summary, similar to the question of stage usage there is no consensus regarding how singers should be dressed on stage and the choice is either at the discretion of the individual according to their professed ideology<sup>28</sup>, or adheres to the concept of the production.

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<sup>28</sup> An illustrative example of one of the most elaborate tactics of deciding on attire was given by one of the male interviewees *“Protocol zero is when, for example, the event is something like singing at a reception of the prime minister. [...] The singer can choose: he can join the musicians and wear what they do... I usually don’t choose*

Ultimately, it is the intermingling of all three authenticity concepts (objective, first, and third person) that make up an authentic experience through staging. As one interviewee remarked: *“Authenticity is an aesthetic category. (...) Many things are included in this. Obviously, staying true to the style is included, right? It includes the artistic, performing creativity, right? The translation of the original message (...)”* (András)

Several elements of staging a convincing performance seem to remain disagreed upon. However, in line with the findings of Chhabra et al. (2003), singers agreed that a convincing performance has the potential to hide or mask objective inauthenticity. In fact, as a criterion of production singers are expected to be able to give a convincing performance, sell their art as they say, despite being fully aware of their inaccuracies and potentially inauthentic solutions.

### 3.2 Evaluating criteria of production

Finally, the analysis of autonomy must include questions of evaluation. Bourdieu’s (1985) claim on the prevalence of peer-evaluation within a FRP especially resonates with the findings of this research.

Interviewees largely agreed that as of yet there are absolutely no official channels of critique. While a limited number of publications devoted to discussing matters of the folk movement exist such as *folkMAGazin*<sup>29</sup> and *FolkRádió*<sup>30</sup>, it is rare that releases or specific performances are addressed. There are no forums either in print or online that aim to give evaluation and feedback to folk singers. Lacking such forums interviewees mentioned three sources of feedback and evaluation: audience response, awards, contracts and invitations (to perform and record), and most importantly peer evaluation.

#### 3.2.1 Audience feedback: movement members and non-members

The first source of feedback arrives from the audience. Singers differentiate between two types of audience members: those within and those outside the movement. Audience

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*this. I usually choose to wear traditional clothing. [...] It’s so beautiful in itself [...] that it’s appropriate even for a protocol zero event [...] Protocol one means wearing a tie, not necessarily a suit, a jacket is fine. [...] Protocol two is jacket and dress shirt.”* (Zsolt).

<sup>29</sup> See <http://folkmagazin.hu/mag/>

<sup>30</sup> See <http://folkradio.hu/>



members can include anyone ranging from those utterly foreign to the folk scene to those considered the elite of the folk cultural field, often associated with coworkers of the three major institutions already introduced: the HHH, the Liszt Academy and ZTI. Though this thesis could not incorporate audience information, singers primarily believe that audiences come mostly from within the folk revival movement except in the case of large scale events, international performances, and concerts connected to the Fölszállott a Páva competition. Some singers believe that they – and folk singers in general - have fans, though opinions differ regarding their involvement in the movement. Singers see two general ways audience members participate in evaluation: through direct feedback, and through the purchasing of tickets and CDs. This second aspect brings to light the economic compensation approach to evaluating performance.

Singers claim to receive limited feedback from audience members outside the movement, though they are more likely than movement members to contact singers through social media channels when expressing their enjoyment of the performance. While some singers expressed a basic willingness to respond more often than not, personal contact was emphasized as appreciated above digital contact. Based on the lack of personal websites and effective communication, there seems to be a gap between singers and the general audience or potential audience members.

Concerning audience members involved in the folk movement, interviewees described that a growing number of them are able to discern certain elements of authenticity and have learned, to some extent, how to evaluate the entirety of a performance. They link increasing awareness to the growing number of individuals involved in dance groups and Táncház events, and exposure through events and popularization programs such as the Röpülj Páva<sup>31</sup> competition. While feedback from such movement members can be considered peer review, it may carry less weight than the opinion of folk singers and what can only be categorized as the elite of the movement, though the interpretation of whose opinion matters is always subjective, as interviewees emphasized.

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<sup>31</sup> On a side note, it is important to consider that the media coverage of traditional folk singing is at its lowest point in history, with only a few radio programs dedicated to the genre (most of them under heavy scrutiny by the interviewees, necessitating official forums of criticism all the more) and no television programs other than the broadcast of the Fölszállott a Páva competition.

### 3.2.2 Invitations, contracts and awards

Evaluation through awarding, contracting or inviting a singer, is a form of both institutionalized evaluation and peer review. The gesture of inviting a singer to play at a concert or participate in a recording project was viewed as reinforcing their position in the field and a form of recognition.

The most obvious example of this is the *Új élő népzene* (New living folk music), a series of 20 compilation albums of aspiring singers and musicians applying for inclusion. *“This is the way I started back then as well. You apply with material, and whether you’re selected or not is very serious feedback. If you aren’t, then you get a critique explaining why not.”* (Nefelejcs) Similarly, rewards and invitations to participate at events and in productions are viewed as a way of determining how the profession evaluates one’s work.

With regard to awards, contracts and invitations, one serious concern was voiced repeatedly: corruption in the form of favoritism. Though details were not disclosed, several singers referred to there being politics at play in the decision making process of awarding certain honors (not the previously referenced Népművészet Ifjú Mestere), especially in the case of state recognitions (distinguished from professional awards).

### 3.2.3 Peer review

Preeminent among all forms of evaluation is peer feedback, the *“[...] huge, gigantic, unmeasurably big criticism within the profession [...]”* (Júlia). As another interviewee put it: *“Discussion happens, though not in written form, but for example if a new release enters the market then the professional elite is sure to talk.”* (Zsolt)

This may take the form of direct face-to face discussions or speaking without the singer present, often considered as talking behind their backs. Considerable frustration was expressed over the whispering that goes on among singers, and the snide remarks of the competition. To balance these out many singers emphasized turning a deaf ear towards bad-intentioned verbal attacks, while considering the words of those they respect: *“There are no official things. (S)he comes over to me, and tells me his/her opinion, whether (s)he thought I sang this well and that not so much... Basically everyone decides for themselves whose opinions matter to them, whose words they trust.”* (Klára)

Respect itself is contingent on the singer’s work and the evaluation of his/her peers: *“A person’s credibility is given by his or her work. As it is in every field. And because we all*

*know each other, we know who worked where and for how long, what came out from under one's hand, so based on these we can decide.*" (Júlia). The extent to which peer evaluation may be influential is well demonstrated when considering the implications of such a statement. One of the indicators Bourdieu (1985) offers for the measurement of FRP autonomy is the discrepancy between the hierarchy set forth by peer recognition, and market based success. This can clearly be observed.

Competitions (not considering the Fölszállott a Páva section organized only for children and teenagers) were largely considered the most direct form of peer feedback. Competitions are considered the most explicit and open forum for members of the FRP to establish and evaluate the process of cultural productions, which makes it a good example through which to view all other peer evaluations. Just as many interviewees felt discomfort evaluating other singers openly, most singers agreed that folk singing competitions somehow are inappropriate, in a way opposing the inner values of the genre: they violate the nature of "art for heritage's sake" by placing the significance of the performer before the art form. Additionally, they believe that it places unnecessary pressure on competing children and may discourage them. However, they all agreed that competitions are important events and can perhaps be even be considered one of the pillars supporting a career in folk singing, as it allows for networking. Just as Cragi and Dobois (2010) observed within their research on poetry readings, events such as folk singing competitions are primary events where a) unestablished singers can come into contact with other unestablished singers and form lasting bonds in working together, and where b) they come into contact with established artists who function at these venues as gatekeepers. Competitors may gain early access into the field through participation, while the events function as a place to define and reinforce the criteria of production and evaluation. The following table shows the combined elements interviewees stated they evaluate at such competitions. To a large extent these criteria are aligned with those already discussed in section 3.1, demonstrating how competitions mirror the less visible possibilities and restrictions of production. The only aspect lacking is that of staging, which is understandable considering the age of the children.

<b>The songs they choose: authenticities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the songs from one region? (objective authenticity)</li> <li>• Do the songs have one common theme? (objective authenticity)</li> <li>• Do they reflect the singer? (first person authenticity)</li> </ul>
<b>Vocal training: standards of quality and repertoire</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the chosen songs appropriate for the singers level?</li> <li>• Degree of training</li> <li>• Voice clarity</li> <li>• Are they able to manage the song? (e.g. Do they run out of breath?)</li> </ul>
<b>Style: transmission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was there significant attention paid in teaching the child, and to the child learning the song in the style of the given region?</li> </ul>

### 3.2.4. The folk police

Going one step further it becomes clear that peer evaluation is the primary form of controlling the borders of authenticity. This brings the discussion full circle to the question of boundaries, this time going beyond definition to looking at how it is enforced through peer evaluation.

In addition to the movement of artists towards world music as a consequence of choice or superficial knowledge, the practice of authentic folk singing also seems to be threatened by the availability of technology and the non-existence of critical forums to regulate cultural productions. As one singer illustrates: *“Today anyone can make a CD. If (s)he thinks (s)he is a good singer, (s)he can make a CD without any acknowledgement of the profession. Many people make such folk music CDs. And because there are no official critical forums for the genre these are not sifted out.”* (András)

Who patrols then, the borders of authenticity? Simply put: the *folk police*. Using the term in the expression: *“Be careful, the folk police will come and get you!”* (Sebestyén, Sára, Nefelejcs, Klára) refers to the playful acknowledgement of fuzzy boundaries and inauthenticity. Interpretations of the folk police vary slightly but remain in the same vein: *“The folk police is no one, but it is present everywhere”* (Sára).

*“Individuals, who really, unshakably stick to the recordings. [...] This is an interesting concept, because people use it to... when you know that this wasn’t done this way back then and there by musicians, but we think it still fits, and then people say ‘the folk police will take you away’.”* (Klára)

*"It's this professional thing, that immediately starts the whispering, saying that's not the way it's supposed to be. It can be anything. This is malice, or not malice, but like 'I have my opinion about you', this is the folk police." (Sára)*

*"So we all know each other, and there is a conservative, limiting force, which I don't think is bad at all, that we are afraid of this so called folk police [...] But it's mostly a non-existing, fictitious, restraining, conserving direction." (Nefelejcs)*

The *folk police* are not really certain individuals or a cultural elite, but certain types of remarks and attitudes regarding authenticity. They can come from anyone; a peer singer, a movement member or just an individual from the general audience with adequate cultural knowledge. Such comments can be straightforward and expressed through face-to-face discussion, but some singers also mentioned that with the growing number of recorded material available online, often unknown people leave *folk police*-like comments, on for example YouTube-videos.

Its function in both practice and theory is to ensure the maintenance of authenticity, controlling each other through criticism, review and evaluation, to include and exclude singers from the field. Some singers link the *folk police* directly to the power of the communities to shape ICH in their first lives. *"It's a little bit like 'the village will speak'<sup>32</sup>. So its function is very similar."* (Nefelejcs)

In this sense the *folk police* is much more than the malicious comments of the more conservative branch of the field. Authenticity is not only a marker of a musical genre but an internal strive to keep an element of ICH alive. After all, as one singer put it: *"[...] Our masters will disappears, and then only we by ourselves will remain. Therefore there's this inner fear in this whole community, which motivates us to stay authentic"* (Júlia) The communal control of authenticity through *folk policing* therefore is not only the main mode of reinforcing the boundaries of an FRP, but is a way of modern day safeguarding, in its authenticity, an element of ICH. The two are of course intertwined, as the changing of ICH to a contemporary performing art brings with it the duality of safeguarding not only heritage, but a genre of

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<sup>32</sup> Hungarian expression, meaning that a person will be judged and disapproved by the community of a village.

music. Therefore the *folk police* plays a larger role in both ensuring the purity of a genre of music, while ensuring its practitioners produce and transmit the authentic heritage element:

“But of course it’s their job to maintain the expectation of authenticity, to say ‘kids, pay attention, because this is not how it really sounds’ [...] It’s important, that it is safeguarded in its original form, that we always know what we’re basing our practice on. Because if these become blurred, then there’re won’t be any rules after a while, and there aren’t any musical genres without rules.” (Klára)

#### 4. Living culture?

After having analyzed the field of authentic folk singing a final reflection must be made, which links the discussion back to the following question of ICH: Can the legitimized urban mode of cultural production keep the ICH of folk singing alive, or is it already the practice of a frozen heritage? Interviewees gave very different answers.

Most conservative opinions consider the heritage frozen and not undergoing change, while others compare it to classical music in the sense it is also a living and changing cultural element. However, this analogy is imprecise, as the composition of classical music is possible in the present, while the composition of folk music is not. Perhaps a more illustrative analogy is one on language. Much as it is impossible to make up new words in the Latin language, it is also impossible to write new lyrics or melodies within the authentic branch of folk singing. As an interviewee explained, this means that: *“Certain things, the spirit, the mentality of this modern world cannot be formulated in the terms of these songs.”* (Boglárka) However, using the existing words of Latin it is possible to compose sentences that were never documented as having been formulated. Similarly, so can the creative use of existing lyrics and melodies be used to express the feelings and issues of the modern day singer, as *“Human emotions are much the same today. And those can be expressed through these songs.”* (Boglárka)

Others, who use the definition of authenticity more flexibly, argue that perhaps keeping songs relevant much as they were in their first life can be accomplished through its creative and interpretative use. While this may have many variations and does not necessarily take the form of world music, some singers believe that the everyday use of songs in families, communities and Táncház events will integrate the contemporary reality of Hungarian people into the body of ICH. The most optimistic singers believe that by learning the songs - the authentic style - and by teaching, staging and practicing every aspect of the tradition they are

striving to keep it alive in spite of a changing world that endangers it. Understanding the impact of impending changes they see it as their duty, responsibility and privilege.

All singers, however, are astutely aware that answering this and related questions will be unavoidable in the near future, as interviewees estimate that ICH in its original, first life, has only about 10-20 years left. There are efforts to reverse the extinction process. The prevailing approach is the popularization of folk culture aiming to make it “cool” among the youth. Television programs such as the broadcasting of the Fölszállott a Páva competition or ones, which honor tradition-bearers (survival) and place them in an elevated social position, also serve this purpose. However, in the case of complete loss of tradition in its first life it is uncertain whether revival singers themselves can keep the tradition alive through the emerged mode of cultural production.

*“I consider it alive. I hope that this [keeping folk singing alive] will be the result of our endeavor, of mine and the many others, for sooner or later there won’t be any old ladies or old men left that we can go back to in the villages. And then, everything will be completely different.” (Eszter)*

## Conclusions and discussion

### 1. Answering the research question

Through looking at the specific case of traditional Hungarian folk singing, this thesis set out to investigate the changes ICH practice undergoes as a consequence of its changing socio-cultural context, posing the research question: “To what extent has the authentic practice of traditional Hungarian folk singing become a legitimized performing art in modern day urban Hungary?” Combining concepts of both heritage studies and cultural theory, the progression from heritage as a way of life to heritage as a performing art was demonstrated in two steps. The first step was pinpointing the beginning of the legitimation process, which has its origins in the active cultural scene of the 1970s Táncház movement. As a second step, semi-structured interviews were conducted with contemporary revival folk singers to better understand the current state of the practice.

I had three expectations regarding the three components of legitimation. The first postulated that present day practice is the continuation of the Táncház movement. This proved to be true not only in that it is the continuation of the Táncház legacy, but also in the emergence of the revival tradition and the transmission of cultural knowledge to second and third generation descendants. The variance in emphasis on objective authenticity and creativity in modern day practice resulted in distinguishing between two fields: the field of restricted production and a field of large-scale production. In this dichotomy authentic folk singing was shown to be a FRP, the autonomy of which can be measured by its ability to define and evaluate its criteria of production. My second expectation was the significant solidification of discourse, which has led to the emergence of exactly such criteria. While certain criteria, such as those regarding quality, learning, and most importantly the *style* – authenticity – have reached a high level of consensus, while others such as the requirements of staging a performance are currently being negotiated. My third expectation presumed the development of institutional platforms in evaluating these criteria of production. Here, however, forums were found to be lacking. While no official platforms exist for the evaluation of production, peer feedback, mostly through dialogue but also in the form of institutional awards, regulates the boundaries of the field.

Combined, the results of the study point towards the highly legitimized state of the practice. The emergence of its autonomous field of restricted production demonstrates that



this particular form of ICH has indeed established a place for itself within the modern urban cultural sector.

## 2. Contributions to the heritage discourse and cultural theory

The explored case provides several interesting results concerning the second life of ICH, which may further the heritage discourse regarding modern day ICH practices. This study points towards the existence of what was here defined as revival tradition. Suggesting that despite the decrease of the number of ICH practitioners socialized and living in their natural socio-cultural environment, urban revival movements are able to pass on certain elements of ICH to the next generation through much the same modes of transmission as in the past. It also provides an example of the possibility of revival artists identifying as tradition bearers. This, however, raises the question of whether an individual can be considered a tradition bearer objectively if he or she does not embody the full range of cultural knowledge of a certain place and time, not having been born and raised in the tradition. Though the specialization process of ICH practicing results in its professionalization and commodification, it is not clear how these processes safeguard ICH. While it can be argued that certain aspects of revival such as communal events and learning and teaching among others, contributes to safeguarding through keeping traditions alive, it appears that the staging of ICH leans more towards freezing it or presenting already frozen cultural elements.

Considering the production of a heritage based art form the thesis brings to the surface certain difficulties and contradictions within the field. Primarily, it demonstrates the struggle of maintaining the value of the heritage despite wanting to establish its market as a commodity. While maintaining a façade of economic disinterestedness may strengthen practitioners claims of being both genuine as an artist and true to the ICH tradition – practicing “art for heritage’s sake” – the survival of the genre necessitates income, which in turn forces practitioners to turn outwards towards potential consumers.

It is questionable however, whether the symbolic value of the genre’s heritage status, which demands authenticity, will ever allow for such fields to truly expand and captivate audiences who do not have relevant folk cultural knowledge. While world music can be seen as a compromise between addressing audiences lacking knowledge in the field and sacrificing authenticity, the education of the audience may also lead to a growing market for folk music.

### 3. Limitations of the study

As the limitations of the methodology have already been discussed, this section will mention only a few more considerations. Though the interviews provided an abundance of information concerning field boundaries, long-term in-depth participant observations would have been able to give more detailed explanations about *how* and *when* singers negotiate boundaries. Participant observations would also have helped in confirming my general impression that the singers aimed to give the impression of a community that is less judgmental of its members than is probable. Certain elements of the interview scheme, too, would have benefited from the possibility of conducting field-work beforehand, as certain sections (such as the questions of teaching) and terminologies (such professional) were unnecessarily overemphasized. Additionally, the final part of the interview scheme proved to be more inherently intertwined with previous discussions than a segment on its own, also stemming from limited initial field experience.

### 4. Suggestions for further research

Though far reaching in nature, this inquiry into the modern day practice of folk singing leaves many areas undiscussed. Like a safeguarded element of ICH carefully recorded, it lacks the analysis of the connection between the practice and other elements of culture. Based on off-record (at the request of the interviewees) discussions following the interviews, it would be worthwhile to make several connections in future research of the subject, namely the connection between the folk movement (and specifically folk singing) and political views, religion, and alcohol consumption. The discussion of these subjects, along with the analysis of the cultural consumption of folk singers, could yield prominent results regarding the shift from culture as a way of life to culture as a performing art, if used as a tool to understand the extent to which members of the folk movement embody folk culture and a nostalgia for the traditional way of life.

As the sample of interviewees did not include audience members, future research may include the comparison of how singers aim to demonstrate and how audience members perceive various authenticities, furthering the heritage debate on authenticity. Such studies may also include looking at the composition of audiences and fan-bases and questioning how singers promote folk culture, influencing younger generations to participate.

In order to better understand modern day ICH practices in urban settings the concept of revival tradition must be developed. What exactly the revival tradition means would necessitate an individual study in itself, as it is related not only to folk singing and its questions, but to all folk artists and heritage professionals, their social networks, and much more. However, the continuation of the revival heritage will perhaps have far-reaching consequences and aid the development of the folk singing field within the modern day context.

As we move forward in history towards a more and more globalized world, it is imperative that the relationship between authentic ICH practice and reinterpreted practices such as folk music, be resolved and understood. Retreating into objective authenticity is necessarily exclusionary, though important for the safeguarding of the tradition. However, as stated in this thesis several times, intangible cultural heritage lives in its variations and is a constantly changing thing. Therefore, the place of contemporary interpretations within the heritage debate is one of significant interest. After all, as one interviewee so eloquently put it: *“It’s important that there are people who stick with the original, authentic form, and people who sing in only a stylized manner, and that there are singers who move away from it completely. The tradition lives on in its diversity!”* (Boglárka)

Building upon this research it may be illuminating to examine whether the framework presented in this thesis is applicable to other forms of ICH, and whether or not it is applicable outside of Hungary in different survival and revival conditions. Room for future studies is virtually limitless as ICH continues to be adapted as an urban phenomenon, art form and modern practice, and attention turns from the sole consideration of old traditions to their new practices as well.



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## Appendix

### 1. Interview scheme

#### Intro

First of all let me thank you for your participation; it means a lot to me and will truly help my research. Before we start let me make a few introductory comments.

As you know I am researching traditional Hungarian folk singing in the context of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, as my MA thesis topic. Through these interviews I hope to gain insight into the field and contribute to the heritage preservation discourse, bringing to the surface the perspectives of traditional folksong singers.

In this interview I will be asking you about three general topics: a) your personal background and career; b) safeguarding as a profession and as transmission; and c) the place of tradition bearing in modern society.

I am curious to hear *your* views and experiences, so please elaborate on what *you* think is important, and don't hesitate to introduce new topics and issues to the conversation. You are always welcome to return to a previous topics, and of course you are under no obligation to answer any questions you cannot or do not wish to answer. If at any point you have questions or suggestions please do ask, suggest them.

The interview will probably take anywhere between 60-90 minutes. As you can see I do have a large number of questions I must ask you, and it is important for my research that I ask them all, so please keep this in mind if answering at length.

I will be recording the conversation, strictly for the purpose of transcribing it later on. Please note that while this research is made for the specific purpose of writing my thesis there is a slight chance that I will, in the future, want to expand on it and try to get the results published in an academic journal. Please consider this when deciding whether you wish to stay anonymous or agree to use your name in my study.

Lastly I would like to ask whether it would be all right if, in case I have some follow-up questions, I contacted you later on via e-mail, skype or phone?

That is all I had to say for now, do you have any question before we start?

## Topic List

I. The individual, their background and their career	
<b>Demographic data</b>	<p>Where were you born?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is that where you grew up?</li> </ul> <p>When were you born?</p> <p>What is your parents highest level of education?</p> <p>What is your highest level of education?</p> <p>What is/are your current position/job(s)?</p>
<b>First exposure</b>	<p>Can you tell me about your first introduction to folk songs? (active/receptive elements)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>How</u> were you introduced to them?</li> <li>- <u>When</u> were you introduced to them?</li> <li>- <u>Who</u> introduced you to them? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Did anyone from your family participate in the Táncázsmovement?</li> <li>b) If yes, how do you think that this influenced you?</li> <li>c) Was there a tradition of singing folk songs in your family/among your friends/in your village/city?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Learning to sing</b>	<p>Can you please tell me about the way you learnt to sing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>When</u> did you learn to sing? (How old were you?)</li> <li>- <u>Who</u> did you learn to sing from? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) school, private lessons, recordings, sheet-music, tradition bearers</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <u>How</u> were you taught to sing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Kodály-method, sheet-music, orally</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>How do you think this influenced you as a singer?</p>
<b>Persona career</b>	<p>What do you consider the most important stages of your career?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education, contests, CDs and other releases, ethnographic research</li> </ul>
<b>Singing and Dance-house</b>	<p>Do you regularly attend Dance-houses?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you know how to folk-dance?</li> <li>- Do you play any folk-instrument?</li> </ul>
II. Safeguarding and tradition bearing as a profession	
II/a The rules of tradition bearing as a profession (doxas)	
<b>Becoming a professional</b>	<p>What do you think are the most important requirements/steps in becoming a professional?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At what point in your career did you consider yourself a professional?</li> </ul>

<b>Being a professional</b>	<p>What distinguishes a professional from an amateur? (What makes a professional a professional?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What expectations are there of professionals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) commercial expectations (income, audience, performances)</li> <li>b) critical expectations (good reviews, peer acceptance)</li> <li>c) professional expectations (awards)</li> <li>d) artistic expectations</li> </ul> </li> <li>- If you are a judge at a folk singing contest how and what do you judge?</li> </ul>
<b>Defining folk singing</b>	<p>What makes traditional folk song singing traditional?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Content, style, presentation</li> <li>- What does authentic folk singing mean? (objective – what is it compared to, who decides)</li> <li>- What is inauthentic?</li> <li>- Can authenticity be measured?</li> </ul>
<b>Between authenticity and art</b>	<p>How do you experience creativity in folk singing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you think there's a conflict between creativity and authenticity?</li> <li>- To what extent and in what way can you practice artistic freedom?</li> <li>- Do you consider yourself a performing artist and/or a tradition bearer? What does this mean to you?</li> </ul>
<b>Changes of the trade</b>	<p>How do you think the profession has changed since the 1970s?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Historically</u> what has happened concerning traditional folk singing since? (institutionalization, revivals)</li> <li>- Has there been a change in <u>the approach</u> to traditional folk singing? (authenticity, tradition bearing)</li> <li>- Have there developed any <u>traditions around the tradition</u> of folk singing?</li> <li>- What role does <u>institutionalization</u> and the Fölszállott a Páva play?</li> </ul>
<b>II/b Transmission (as safeguarding)</b>	
<b>Safeguarding agents (Who)</b>	<p>Who do you think are the most important actors in safeguarding?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Artists</li> <li>- Mediators/gatekeepers (venues, institutions)</li> <li>- Audience</li> </ul>
<b>Safeguarding practices (How)</b>	<p>What do you think are the best safeguarding practices?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the best teaching methods according to you? (formal/informal; oral/material) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) for whom: average student/potential professional</li> </ul> </li> <li>- How are recording, videos and sheet music used today?</li> </ul>

	<p>a) How do you think they should be used?</p> <p>b) How is this different from how they were used in the past?</p> <p>c) What are the consequences of this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technological advance – how does it affect the profession?</li> </ul>
<b>What</b>	<p>What do you think needs most protection within the folk singing tradition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different categories of songs, different regions, regional dialects</li> <li>- Style</li> <li>- Its changing nature</li> </ul>
<b>III. Positioning tradition bearing in modern society</b>	
<b>The social circle of professionals</b>	<p>How does your profession shape your social circles?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are you friends mostly with other tradition bearers?</li> <li>- Do you think most of the professionals know each other?</li> </ul> <p>About how many professionals would you say there are today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is it an urban practice? (geography)</li> <li>- Does it involve mostly the higher educated? (education)</li> <li>- Are there different subgroups within the tradition?</li> <li>- Are they in competition?</li> <li>- Do folk singers have fans?</li> </ul>
<b>The place of folk singing</b>	<p>Does folk singing have a social mission?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is it tied to nationalism/nostalgia? (identity/belonging/inclusion/exclusion)</li> </ul>

