SOCIALIST FOLKLOORISTICS: A DISCIPLINARY HERITAGE

International Interdisciplinary Conference
Riga, 16–18 December 2020
Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia

SOCIALIST FOLKLORE: A DISCIPLINARY HERITAGE

International Interdisciplinary Conference

Riga, 16–18 December 2020 via the Zoom platform
The conference is organized by
the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia

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The Mission Statement

The grandiose Soviet experiment left us a heritage that profoundly affects the public image, collections, and research of folk-related disciplines even today. It manifests itself in a broad range of representations from stage performances and archival collections to the very perception of what is authentic, real, or national. Socialist traditions were invented, myths made, and rituals staged. And now, it is a vast and crudely mapped history of culture and knowledge production, stretching for more than 70 years across half of Europe and beyond.

The conference *Socialist Folkloristics: A Disciplinary Heritage* aims to produce and exchange knowledge that will help to arrive at better understanding of this region – beyond the outdated Cold War epistemic dispositif and across the boundaries of national scholarships. By that, we will enrich disciplinary histories of the countries once behind the infamous Iron Curtain and contribute to a new, critical account of the post-war folkloristics and ethnography. For we firmly believe that a reflexive disciplinary history is a fundamental value of academic strength and growth in the future.

The conference completes a two-year research project *Latvian Folkloristics (1945–1985)* at the University of Latvia, Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art. It is the most recent contribution to our more than a decade-long dedication to the national and international history of folkloristics.
16 December 2020

16.00 –17.30 Welcome. Presenters only
Informal opening
Technical instruction
Discussion on socialist heritage

Chairs: Toms Ķencis, Rita Grīnvalde

17 December 2020

9.45–9.50 Logging into Zoom, technical check-up

9.50–10.00 Opening greetings by Dace Bula, Director of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia

10.00–11.00 Plenary session
Elo-Hanna Seljamaa (Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu). History of Folkloristics in the Light of Soviet Postcolonial Studies and More

11.00–11.30 Coffee break
11.30–12.45  THE SECOND WORLD OF FOLKLORE: IDEOLOGY AND DISCIPLINARY IDENTITIES

Chair: Rita Grīnvalde

Toms Ķencis (Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia). Socialist Folkloristics and Soviet Nationalism

Ewa Klekot (Institute of Design, University SWPS, Warsaw). On Self-Folklorization. Folk Art in Poland in the Period of Late Socialism

Joseph Grim Feinberg (Institute of Philosophy, Czech Academy of Science). The Folk as Communist Philosopher: On the Socialist Content of Folklore

12.45–14.00 Lunch break

14.00–15.40  THE NEW FOLKLORE: TRANSFORMATIONS OF GENRES AND INSTITUTIONS

Chair: Digne Ūdre

Pawlo Artymyshyn (Ivan Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine). New Songs for a New Life: Sovietization and the Emergence of the Socialist Folklore in Western Ukraine

Janika Oras (Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonian Literary Museum). National or Soviet, Modern or Ancient Songs? Ambivalent Meanings of the Performances of Traditional Song by Laine Mesikäpp at Soviet Estonian Festivals

Alexandra Coțofană (Humanities and Social Sciences Department, Zayed University, Abu Dhabi). Reeling in the State: Socialist Folklorists and the Production of Difficult Research Topics

Gabriella Vámos (Eötvös Loránd University). New Methods and New Approaches of the Hungarian Folkloristics in the Early Communist Years (1949–1953) in Hungary
18 December 2020

9.50–10.00  Logging into Zoom, technical check-up

10.00–11.40  DARK FATES:
FRAMING, RESISTANCE AND REPRESSION

Chair: Sandis Laime

Kaisa Langer (University of Tartu). Adapt and Overcome: Evaluating Folklore in the Early Soviet Estonia

Radvilė Racėnaitė (The Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore). The Study of Lithuanian Mythology in the Soviet Period

Austė Nakienė (Lithuanian Folklore Archives, the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore). Lithuanian Folklore Movement and Academic Society: Continuation and Representation of Tradition

Gatis Ozoliņš (Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia; University of Daugavpils). The Dievturi Movement in Latvia under the Soviet Regime

11.40–12.10  Coffee break

12.10–13.50  SERVING THE STATE:
THE MOBILIZATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

Chair: Toms Ķencis

Anete Karlsone (Institute of Latvian History, University of Latvia). Ethnography in Soviet Latvia: The Fieldwork Discourse

Digne Ūdre (Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia). Ideological Tuning of Latvian Folk Ornament
Sohee Ryuk (Columbia University). Handicraft at the Intersection of Folk Art and Commodity in the Soviet Union (1930–1953)

Joonas Ahola (Department of History, Philosophy, Culture and Art Studies, University of Helsinki). The Mobilization of Traditional Poetry in Soviet Karelia (1930s–1950s)

13.50–14.20 Closing discussion and final remarks

Chair: Toms Ķencis

N.B. Sessions will be recorded and might be made available to the general public online
In this paper, the author will discuss the ambivalent stance towards ‘tradition’ in the Soviet Karelian public discourse between the late 1920s and 1950s and how this ambivalence was embodied in the ‘Soviet kalevalaic poetry’ – verses in traditional Kalevala form, composed by folk singers and reflecting the content of ideological Soviet discourse of the 1930s–1950s. Such notions as ‘backward’, ‘from below’ and ‘national’ were considered innate properties of ‘tradition’. Simultaneously, the opposites of those notions, ‘progressive’, ‘from above’ and ‘international’, were acknowledged as alternative dimensions or potential of ‘tradition’, which could be utilized for the ends of ideological education and propaganda. Such notion-pairs are reflected in both the contents of the Soviet kalevalaic poetry and the concurrent public discourse surrounding their production and publishing. From the utilizing perspective, Soviet kalevalaic poetry was: (1) grouped together with literature and other expressive culture, whose function was stressed to be ideological education through media that reached the masses, but also (2) had value for representing the same formal features as Kalevala that had a significant role for the evolving national identity of Finland, having only fairly recently (1917) proclaimed independence from Russia. Those aspects are reflected in the contents of the Soviet kalevalaic poems that were recorded and archived largely by folklorists. These poems bear marks of struggle to include vocabulary and ideas alien to the traditional culture to which the singers belonged.

Joonas Ahola’s research interests lie in societal and cultural backgrounds and historical developments of traditional narration. He has especially scrutinized the Old Norse literature and Kalevala-metre poetry in this light. Currently, Ahola runs the research project Soviet Kalevalaic Poetry: its Form, Content and Meaning in Soviet Karelia funded by the Kalevala Society.
New Songs for a New Life: Sovietization and Emergence of the Socialist Folklore in Western Ukraine

Unlike the rest of modern Ukraine, the Western region of country, the lands of Halychyna/Galicia and Volhynia (and later Northern Bukovyna) were annexed to the Soviet Union in 1939–1940, at the same time as the territories of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. As the parts of the USSR, the Eastern and Central Ukraine in 1939 were completely Sovietized. But the Halychyna/Galicia and Volhynia in the 1920s–1930s were part of the interwar Poland (Northern Bukovyna was ruled by Romania during the interwar period) and were influenced by culture and social order, which in Soviet propaganda were recognized as ‘backward’ and ‘bourgeois-nationalist’. Therefore, already in 1939–1941 along with the formal Ukrainization of social life (introduction of Ukrainian language and culture in the state structures) in Western Ukraine, the Soviet administration began the industrialization of the cities, collectivization of local agrarian society and the dissemination of Communist ideology and anti-religious agitation. It was at this time that the projects of the Sovietization of folklore and culture emerged. However, the Soviet presence in Western Ukraine did not last long and was replaced by the Nazi occupation, so many of these projects remained unrealized. Systematic Sovietization of society and culture and the formation of socialist folklore began after 1944, the second coming of Soviet power into the region and its continuous functioning until 1991. After 1991 (proclamation of Ukrainian independence and the fall of the Communist regime), this quasi-oral tradition or fakelore, as termed by Richard Dorson, completely disappeared.

Pavlo Artymyshyn in 2018 defended his Ph.D. thesis Socio-Political Processes in the Russian Federation and Russian-Ukrainian Relations in Ukrainian Public Opinion (2000–2012). His scientific interests include Russian studies, the recent history of Ukraine and Russia and development of their relations, problems of national identity and historical memory, history of the USSR, history of Lviv.
During the late 1960s, a Romanian socialist folklorist managed to use state-owned video equipment and personnel to make a documentary about a witch. How did the researcher manage to navigate the state apparatus and to produce a film about a topic that was very much at the margins of what the socialist state promoted? What were the strategies employed by ethnographers to conduct their research relatively unbothered, navigating the ideological and political landscape? The paper highlights a narrow window in the change of the regime’s direction, which the socialist folklorist used, as well as the global entanglements that led to a new direction of the state starting in the early 1970s. At the same time, the ways in which filmmaking resisted the regime adapted and reacted to the technologies of power that the state relied on. The state itself, on the other hand, resisted the pressure coming from the outside. In polarizing political times this can be considered a reality, which reflected on how the governing apparatus dealt with internal affairs.

Alexandra Coțofană earned her Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from the Indiana University Bloomington, with a Doctoral Minor in Religious Studies. Currently, her research explores the intersections of politics, modernities, and ontologies of governing.
The author will focus on what might be called the ‘socialist content’ of Soviet and Soviet-bloc thought on folklore. While much research has been done to reveal how folklore was used to serve the Communist national policy, providing a medium of expression that could be ‘national in form’, less attention has been paid to the conceptual relationship between folklore and the socialist idea. With an emphasis on discussions that took place in Czechoslovakia, the author argues for taking seriously the role of folkloristics in the context of the socialist cultural-political thought. From this perspective we can see, in particular, that folkloristics was able to address a theoretical question that the socialist movement had historically faced, but which classical Marxism had difficulty answering: how to conceptualize and analyse the conditions of possibility of collective, communal, popular, and ethnically sensitive creativity in the context of a modern, industrialized, internationally-oriented society.

ANETE KARLSONE

Ethnography in Soviet Latvia: The Fieldwork Discourse

The culture and lifestyle of the working class were defined as the main objects of ethnographic studies in the USSR. The ethnographic field in Soviet Latvia was under control of the N.N Miklukho-Maklai Institute of Ethnography at the USSR Academy of Sciences that stipulated both the main directions of the work of ethnographers and the working methods that were binding in all Soviet Republics.

Collecting research materials and doing ethnographic fieldwork was an important scientific activity of ethnographers. The Repository of Ethnographic Materials at the Institute of Latvian History of the University of Latvia has preserved a rich collection of ethnographic materials gathered in annual expeditions since 1947. The objective of the presentation is to compare the information about the expeditions from the official documents, press releases and entries in the expedition participants' diaries in order to reveal the daily research work of ethnographers.

Anete Karlsone’s research interests lie in cultural history and heritage, national identity, an invented tradition, history of national costume, and history of textiles.
TOMS ĶENCIS

Socialist Folkloristics and Soviet Nationalism

On the basis of the disciplinary history of Latvian folkloristics, the paper explores productive links between Soviet national policy and knowledge production in the fields of folklore and ethnology during the period of late socialism (1955–1985).

In the USSR, nationality was a fundamental social category sharply distinct from the notions of statehood and citizenship. Soviet nationalism provided categories of social, ethnic, and territorial identifications that were pervasively institutionalized on all levels of governance. Folklore and ethnology became the cornerstones of national representations, politically safely differentiating various populations of the Soviet Union.

After World War II, the Central and East European countries entered the socialist knowledge and cultural production system with almost a century-long legacy of involvement in National Romanticism and identity constructions of modern, independent nation-states. Further disciplinary history unfolds as an interplay of this legacy and Soviet scholarly politics, also shaped by Soviet nationalism. This hybridity had a systematic influence on archival work, academic research and popular publishing, folklore studies, and other fields of knowledge production. Folklore can be simultaneously conceptualized as an attribute of Soviet propaganda and a resource of national and civic resilience in the Baltic countries during the period of late socialism.

Toms Ķencis has a Ph.D. degree from the Tartu University (2012). He is the Principal Investigator in the project Latvian Folkloristics (1945–1985). He has been involved in various research projects of disciplinary history for more than a decade. His main research interests lie in academic knowledge production, cultural nationalism and Soviet history.
On Self-Folklorization. Folk Art in Poland in the Period of Late Socialism

The author argues that folk art is constructed in an asymmetric relationship between two creators. One is its rural maker, the other an intelligentsia member, authoring the ideological content of the object produced by the maker and defining its formal qualities. Making themselves into manufacturers of folk art, rural makers underwent what the author refers to as self-folklorization: against their own taste they provided products in accordance with the folkloristic image of the rural constructed by the intelligentsia. The Polish People’s Republic encouraged self-folklorization, both by the agenda of the ‘peasant-workers ally’ and its interpretation of folk art as ‘people’s art’, which was surprisingly made to the taste of the nation’s intelligentsia, not its workers and peasants, as well as by the use of folklore in polishing social, ethnic and regional differences by turning them into aesthetics. The process was facilitated by state-sponsored contests and a system of social security for folk artists.

Ewa Klekot is an anthropologist and translator. She studied archaeology and ethnography and holds a doctorate degree in art studies. She is interested in interdisciplinary approaches to research of art, design and material culture. Member of the Committee on ICH of the City of Warsaw.
Adapt and Overcome: Evaluating Folklore in the Early Soviet Estonia

It was stated in the 1948 museological conference in Soviet Estonia: “As we know, in the Soviet Union every kind of work is rewarded.” In this conference it was decided to pay the volunteer folklore collectors for their work. After World War II, Estonian folklorists needed to adapt to the new political situation and prove the usefulness of their profession. The distribution of monetary awards shows the clash between the officially preferred folklore and the materials that the folklorists actually found to be most valuable for the field. In the presentation, the author compares the protocols of meetings and resolutions with the accession files and the files of the evaluation commission of the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The folklorists had quickly learned the parlance of the Soviet colonial system, but the values remained similar to the pre-Soviet times.

Kaisa Langer’s Ph.D. thesis about the folkloristics in Soviet Estonia during the Stalinist period is in its final stage. She has worked as an archivist in the Estonian Folklore Archives, and the work with the large folklore collections made her curious about the different regimes of knowledge that shaped the content and organization of the archives.
This paper is an observation of changes in the Lithuanian folk music tradition in Soviet times. It describes Lithuanian folklore movement, which included the exploration of local history, revival of traditional culture, activities of folk music ensembles, reconstruction of ancient singing styles, etc.

In the beginning of the 20th century, the folk music tradition in Lithuania was still transmitted from generation to generation, but in the second half of the century it was continued by the participants of the folklore movement and was studied and promoted by intellectuals. Preservation of folk music in the urban environment involved not only folk singers, musicians, and dancers, but also academic circles. Accordingly, Lithuanian folklore movement was initiated by the scholars at the Vilnius University.

This paper discusses, firstly, the question why the first-generation urban residents took part in the folklore movement so actively? Migration of people from villages to towns in the Soviet time had a psychological impact: people felt longing for their rural homeland and expressed it in poetry and song, or tried to subdue it by taking part in the ethnographic expeditions or folklore ensembles. In this way the first generation of urban residents were trying to define their new identity.

Another question is how the polyphonic songs sutartinės survived? When Lithuania was occupied by the Soviet Union, the families of the sutartinės singers suffered from repressions. The efforts of particular families in the folklore movement to restore the ancient style of singing proved to be insufficient, and in the second half of the 20th century it was replaced by the post-traditional.

Austė Nakienė is ethnomusicologist. Her research interests lie in Lithuanian folk songs, archival sound records, folklore movement, traditional culture in the urban environment.
National or Soviet, Modern or Ancient Songs? Ambivalent Meanings of the Performances of Traditional Song by Laine Mesikäpp at Soviet Estonian Festivals

Laine Mesikäpp (1915–2012) was a well-known Estonian stage performer of traditional oral song. A major part of her career as a singer fell into the Soviet period, although it took off in the independent Republic of Estonia. The most visible and also politically most clearly targeted part of Laine Mesikäpp’s activities was performing songs at the all-Estonian dance festivals. During the Stalinist period, compositions by Laine Mesikäpp constituted a part of the Soviet folklore created upon the commission of the central power.

The author will shed some light on the interpretations of Laine Mesikäpp’s performances by questioning what the performances meant to her and to her listeners at different times. Aesthetic evaluations made by Laine Mesikäpp’s contemporaries are intertwined with ideological assessments. Possible interpretations can be described through the ‘familiar–foreign’ dichotomy within the socio-political, generational and cultural-historical perspectives. As regards the meanings Laine Mesikäpp herself attributed to her activity, assumptions can be made by looking at her position in relation to the premodern and the ‘non-modern’ aesthetics of traditional performance, in connection with her attitudes towards decolonial national values and Soviet ideology.

Janika Oras is ethnomusicologist. Her research interests lie in Estonian and Seto traditional singing culture – music, poetics, historical performative practices, traditional singers, contemporary singing practices, and the history of folklore collecting in Estonia.
GATIS OZOLIŅŠ

The Dievturi Movement in Latvia under the Soviet Regime

The movement of Dievturi was formed in the late 1920s as an alternative combination of Christianity and ‘new nationalism’. The participants of the Dievturi movement developed Dievturība as a national religion based on Latvian folklore. After the occupation of Latvia by the USSR in 1940, the Dievturi movement was terminated. Legal activity of Dievturi was possible only in exile. The Dievturi movement in Latvia gradually resumed its activity at the end of the 1980s on the basis of the folklore movement.

Despite the unfavourable conditions and the official view on the Dievturi movement in the Soviet period, the original ideas of Dievturi were still alive in Soviet Latvia. They circulated amongst the people sharing common viewpoints and values. In many families they were handed down from generation to generation. Beginning with the 1970s, part of this knowledge started gradually circulating within a broader field of knowledge. Despite the fact that the Dievturība doctrine and their teaching and ritual practices were not further developed during the Soviet period, the early Dievturi ideas continued existing, and upon the revival of the movement, people made Dievturība not only a formal duty, but also the place where knowledge and memories were transferred. Consequently, the researchers’ standpoint, which excludes the Soviet period from the Dievturi movement history, should be reconsidered.

Gatis Ozoliņš is a co-author of the collective monographs on Latvian folkloristics in Latvian (2014) and English (2017) and Collections of the University of Latvia at the Archives of Latvian Folklore in Latvian (2019). His main research interests lie in the history of folklore studies, Neopaganism, cultural heritage, regional folklore studies, Latvian mythology.
RADVILĖ RACĖNAITĖ

The Study of Lithuanian Mythology in the Soviet Period

The paper is aimed at presenting an overview of the study of Lithuanian mythology in the Soviet period. After World War II, the research on Lithuanian mythology was first of all influenced by non-academic factors, namely, the Soviet occupation, emigration of the leading scholars and regulations imposed by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism and Scientific Atheism. Numerous popular publications based on the Communist Party line and distinguished by an anti-religious propaganda were published. The academic research in the fields of Lithuanian folklore and mythology studies was also ideologically biased.

On the other hand, the Soviet ideology prompted to popularize culture and the everyday life of the labour masses. The ethnographers were supposed to do research on the material and spiritual culture of the workers and peasants while the folklorists were expected to analyse Lithuanian folklore as a form of poetic creation of the people. Quite unexpectedly, these regulations formed a sort of ideologically secured milieu for the study of Pre-Christian Lithuanian religion and mythology.

Radvilė Racėnaitė has published a monograph and more than 20 articles in Lithuania and abroad. Her main research interests lie in the field of Lithuanian folk narrative, the interaction of oral folklore and written creation, relics of the Pre-Christain Baltic worldview in late Lithuanian folklore, Soviet and modern urban folklore.
Handicraft at the Intersection of Folk Art and Commodity in the Soviet Union (1930–1953)

This paper examines the connections between industry and folk art during the Stalinist period. By the 1930s, the concept of the kustar’-edinolichnik (the independent artisan) was demonized as an outdated type unfit for the future of Soviet industry. Yet, despite the rhetorical aversion to small-scale production, the Soviet Union not only produced craft objects in the form of hand-made carpets, embroideries, and furniture but also made use of de facto independent arrangements outside the state infrastructure as a way to fulfil the demands for consumer goods. It examines the arguments that tied folk heritage to a specific type of manufacturing, namely domestic, handicraft production. These arguments are especially striking when juxtaposed against the patterns, designs, and forms of folk art. In the postwar period, various commentators that spoke on the importance of preserving folk art traditions remarked on the necessity of domestic production or at-home work to continue the heritage of folk crafts. My paper examines the connections that were made between the forms of labour and production and folk heritage. In doing so, it questions the nature of preserving folk tradition in the Soviet Union.

Sohee Ryuk is a PhD candidate at the Columbia University. Her research interests lie in the intersection of commodity production, national cultures, and craft. Her dissertation explores folk art and textile products of the Soviet period in Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus.
The author’s research over the past decade or so has focused on ethnic interactions in contemporary Estonia: how the Estonian state imagines and seeks to manage its internal diversity, how state policies are put into practice on the ground, and how people of diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds coexist on a daily basis. The author landed on this topic when doing her PhD in the United States. The author had entered the graduate school with the plan of continuing her prior research on the historical-geographic method and how it had accommodated both nationalist and international aspirations in folklore studies and beyond; however, was strongly advised to pick another, ‘sexier’ topic.

Disciplinary history may well not be the most attractive research topic. Yet it cannot be avoided if we want to understand where we are at and why, and what has brought us here. It is a means of making sense of ourselves. It can be questioned who is this ‘we’ and what or whom it excludes.

An increasing body of scholarship scrutinises the former Socialist Bloc and Soviet Union through the lens of Soviet postcolonial studies, which problematises the relationship between ‘us’ and ‘them’. The author questions what this approach has to offer to the study of the history of folkloristics, and where it might fall short. Moreover, what happens when we draw on other kinds of theoretical attempts to conceptualise quotidian ethnic coexistence, past and present, such as the concept of ‘belonging’.

Elo-Hanna Seljamaa is a senior research fellow at the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore of the University of Tartu and director of the international MA programme Folkloristics and Applied Heritage Studies. She has dealt extensively with the historical-geographic method, Walter Anderson and his law of self-correction. Her current research interests include issues pertaining to ethnicity, nationalism, diversity and management thereof, politics of memory and commemoration, and she is leading a four-year start-up grant Performative Negotiations of Belonging in Estonia funded by the Estonian Research Council. She enjoys collaborating with artists and thinking about overlaps as well as differences between ethnographic and artistic research. Her PhD is from the Ohio State University.
In the light of Soviet postcolonial studies, the author of this presentation will discuss the ideological pressures of the Soviet regime on the aesthetic form and content of Latvian folk ornament. During the interwar period, passion for ethnic visuality had led to intensive advocating for wide uses of folk ornament and formation of mythological interpretation of folk ornament. Under the circumstances of Soviet occupation, restrictions were applied to both the creation and consumption of culture. Consequently, ideas of cultural nationalism were replaced by the methodology of Marxism-Leninism, also in regards to the interpretation of folk ornament. In order to reveal how the process of ideological tuning (Grill 2015) affected folk ornament, the author will zoom into the personal experience and intellectual biography of Latvian artist Jēkabs Bīne (1895–1955) and discuss his work on the folk ornament research.

Digne Ūdre is a researcher at the Institute of Literature Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia and a Ph.D. student at the Tartu University, department of Estonian and comparative folkloristics. She is interested in reflexive knowledge production, the most recent disciplinary history of folkloristics, and the discourse on the national ornament.
After World War II the political system in Hungary changed – the Communist government was established and the Soviet way of life was introduced. The social and cultural life of the country was reformed, new institutions and periodicals were founded in order to archive processes. The Hungarian-Soviet Friendship Society was responsible for implementing Soviet culture in Hungary.

The aims of folklore research also changed, moreover, the folklorists had to reinterpret the concept of folk and folklore. The folklore analysis also had political meaning and was carried out within the set limits as to what could be researched, collected and presented. From the 1950s the folklore of the working class became a highly researched topic. The myth of uniformed working class was part of the everyday communication and political propaganda, so the researchers had to reflect on political expectations. However, the researchers strived to find the connection between the traditional peasant folklore and workers’ folklore, and its conception depended on the notion of folklore. They thought about the workers’ folklore from the historical perspective and tried to find the origin of it.

In this paper, firstly, the author will try to understand the relationship between culture and politics during the early period of socialism in Hungary, called the Rákossist era. Secondly, the author will focus on how the new Communist form appeared in the folklorists’ methods and which topics were highlighted. The author agrees that in this period the folklore of the working class was a construction by the political era.

Gabriella Vámos works at the Semmelweis Museum of Medical History in Budapest. Her main research topic is the workers’ folklore during the early Communist years in Hungary. In her thesis, she examines how the workers’ folklore was invented and presented to the public. Her research interests lie in the exploration of public holidays and how these events were uniformed.
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