Anna Klára Andor
PhD in History;
research fellow at the Budapest City Archives
PhD vēsturē;
pētniece Budapeštas pilsētas arhīvā
E-mail / e-pasts: andorannaklara@gmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0003-1095-5874

DOI: 10.35539/LTNC.2025.0057.08

Diametrically Opposed? Survival and Revival Chances of an Interwar Folk Culture Movement Under Communist Dictatorship in Hungary

Diametrāli pretēji? Starpkaru perioda tautas kultūras kustības izdzīvošanas un atdzimšanas iespējas komunistiskās diktatūras apstākļos Ungārijā

Keywords:
folk culture,
folk heritage,
nation-building,
folk ensemble,
Gyöngyösbokréta

Atslēgvārdi:
tautas kultūra,
tautas mantojums,
nācijas veidošana,
folkloras ansamblis,
Gyöngyösbokréta

Summary During the interwar period, Hungary had a well-established movement dedicated to preserving and showcasing peasant culture. Known as *Gyöngyösbokréta* (Pearly Bouquet, 1931–1948), it was initially framed as a tourist attraction but soon developed into a campaign to protect the enduring cultural heritage of the peasantry. For political and nation-(re)building purposes, it was supported by the government, regarded both as a source of "cultural supremacy" and as part of the revisionist program of a country reduced to a fraction of its former size. Under the communist regime (1945–1989), however, the leadership not only prohibited continuation of this heritage work but also introduced a new program: communist folk ensembles, designed to be "diametrically opposed" to *Gyöngyösbokréta*.

This article examines the consequences of the communist dismantling of earlier frameworks for presenting folk heritage, as well as the strategies used by the eliminated movement and its members to survive and revive. It also explores how communities engaged in safeguarding folk culture – in Hungary and abroad – adapted, and how their practices evolved under uncertain sociopolitical conditions. A key finding is the movement's resilience in Vojvodina (today's Serbia), where it adapted and persisted within a non-democratic system as a festival that continues today.

Kopsavilkums Starpkaru periodā Ungārijā pastāvēja zemnieku kultūras saglabāšanai un popularizēšanai veltīta kustība, pazīstama kā *Gyöngyösbokréta* (Pērļu pušķis, 1931–1948). Sākotnēji tā tika veidota tūristu piesaistei, bet drīz vien pārtapa zemnieku kultūras mantojuma saglabāšanas kampaņā. Politisku un nācijas veidošanas mērķu dēļ kustību atbalstīja valdība, jo kustība tika uzskatīta gan par "kultūras pārākuma" avotu, gan par valsts revizionistiskās programmas sastāvdaļu. Tomēr komunistiskā režīma laikā (1945–1989) partijas vadība ne tikai aizliedza turpināt šāda veida tautas mantojuma saglabāšanu, bet arī ieviesa pilnīgi jaunu programmu: komunistiskos folkloras ansambļus, kas apzināti bija "diametrāli pretēji" *Gyöngyösbokréta* kustībai.

Rakstā tiek pētītas sekas, ko radīja komunistiskā režīma īstenotā tautas mantojuma saglabāšanas un prezentēšanas sistēmas nojaukšana, kā arī dažādās stratēģijas, ko likvidētā kustība un tās dalībnieki izmantoja, lai pašsaglabātos un atjaunotos. Rakstā pētīts, kā kopienas, kas iesaistījās tautas kultūras saglabāšanā – gan Ungārijā, gan ārvalstīs –, pielāgojās un kā to prakse attīstījās nenoteiktajos sociālpolitiskajos apstākļos. Viens no pētījuma galvenajiem atklājumiem ir kustības noturība anektētajā Vojvodinas teritorijā (mūsdienu Serbijā), kur tai izdevās pielāgoties un pastāvēt nedemokrātiskā sistēmā festivāla veidā, kas turpinās mūsdienās.

Introduction

My paper explores the survival of the principles and the continued activity of the actors of an erased folk culture movement in communist Hungary, as well as these actors' role in its revival. To illustrate the different scenarios of survival and revival of the silenced movement of interwar Hungary, I have structured the paper in three main sections. In the first part, I provide an overview of the movement's development and transformations, including examples from present-day Serbia, where the movement was able to adapt and endure, and I discuss a still-existing festival that serves as a testament to its lasting legacy.

This study is based on extensive archival research in the fields of ethnography, tourism, dance, and theatre, complemented by local historical sources, press materials, oral history interviews, and fieldwork. As no comprehensive history of the *Gyöngyösbokréta* movement and its continuities has yet been written, my aim here is to reconstruct its historical trajectory and to outline its various forms of survival and revival. Given the scope of this article, I focus on documenting and contextualizing the movement rather than pursuing comparative or theoretical analysis, with the intention of providing a foundation for future research on the place of *Gyöngyösbokréta* in Hungarian and European folk history.

The First Attempt to Systematically Preserve Folk Culture in Hungary: *Gyöngyösbokréta* (1931–1948)

The period following the First World War was marked by a quest for identity and a return to the past, which manifested in Hungary's (re)discovery of its folk culture (Gönyey [n.d.]: 1). This was not the first instance of revisiting folk traditions in Hungary, as the Millennium Exhibition of Budapest in 1896 had already showcased peasant life and customs. At the turn of the 20th century, the Ethnographic Museum and the Ethnographic Society also organized displays of folk tradition, but these were intended for professional audiences rather than the broader public (Györffy 1939: 82). However, beginning in the early 1920s, the Metropolitan Tourist Office of Budapest – mainly in response to the financial crisis – sought to create summer attractions, especially around August 20, the national day celebrating the country's foundation. For this purpose, the Office decided to organize folk art shows (Volly 1977: 350).

Béla Paulini (1881–1945), a former journalist, became the organizer of peasant customs presentations after achieving remarkable success in 1929 with his folk

Figure 1. The Atkár *bokréta* group on stage. OSZMI TA HGy34, legacy of Béla Paulini.

opera *Háry János*, performed at the Opera House by peasants from his village, with music composed by Zoltán Kodály.[1] Even then, ethnographers advised him to present the peasants' original customs rather than staged folk plays. With their assistance, Paulini began searching for villages where traditional customs – related to weddings, harvests, and other celebrations, such as Christmas or Pentecost – as well as local dances and children's games were still practiced, and where folk costumes continued to be worn.

For the celebration of the foundation of Hungary, Saint Stephen's Day in Budapest in 1931, Paulini invited the first of twelve village groups to showcase their folk customs, which included dances, traditional plays, and songs. This was the first *Gyöngyösbokréta* presentation, which was thereafter held annually. Each participating group, known as a *bokréta*, comprised approximately eight couples (sixteen people) from a single village and was usually led by a local teacher, cantor, priest, or notary. In Figure 1, a *bokréta* group is depicted during the annual Budapest performance, with the group's leaders visible in the background.

It is worth noting that all group members were peasants or farmers, and each group presented its own local dances and traditions. With the guidance and critical approach of ethnographers, *Gyöngyösbokréta* – beyond its touristic function – also aimed to preserve the nation's endangered folk heritage. The government soon

1 Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967) – Hungarian composer and ethnomusicologist.

recognized its potential, granting these peasant groups a representative role in constructing national identity (Ujváry G. 2012).

The name *Gyöngyösbokréta* is itself a symbol drawn from Hungarian folk culture. In addition to referring to a component of men's traditional costume – a beaded hat ornament – the word also connotes a bouquet of beautiful flowers, serving as a metaphor for *Gyöngyösbokréta*'s assemblage of vibrant, colorful traditions from many locales.

Indeed, by bringing Hungarian culture to the surface and by presenting it to the public, the *Gyöngyösbokréta* presentations soon gained traction and state support. In 1934, Paulini established the National Hungarian Bokréta Association with the backing of national authorities. The political leadership recognized that the peasants' folk presentations could serve as instruments of nation-building and of revisionist politics concerning the Hungarian territories lost at Trianon.[2] Thus, in addition to publishing its own journals and promoting performances in as many forums as possible, *Gyöngyösbokréta* was widely covered by Hungarian media outlets (Ujváry F. 1984). In some years, it gained national importance and developed into a movement. As a result of the immediate popularity of the first performances, as well as extensive broadcasting and advertising, more than a hundred *bokréta* groups – with 4,000 to 5,000 peasant members in total – joined the Association, and it attracted supporters from across all social classes (Debreczeni 1956: 100; Pálfi 1970: 126–127).

The news of *Gyöngyösbokréta* reached the territories annexed by the Treaty of Trianon via radio, and many *bokréta* groups were subsequently formed in Upper Hungary (today's Slovakia), Transcarpathia (today's Ukraine), Transylvania (today's Romania), and Vojvodina (today's Serbia). They continued to use the name *gyöngyös bokréta* even under non-Hungarian administration, but officially joined the Association only after the re-annexation of these territories to Hungary under the First and Second Vienna Awards.[3]

For these Hungarian minority populations, the movement embodied their

---

2 As Hungary was on the losing side in the First World War, it was required to pay reparations, as stipulated in the Treaty of Trianon. As part of this settlement, and due to the redrawing of borders, Hungary suffered enormous territorial and demographic losses, losing 71% of its territory and 63.6% of its population (Gyáni 2021: 42; Vardy 1983: 21).

3 First Vienna Award (2 November 1938) returned to Hungary the region of Upper Hungary in southern Slovakia, which had a predominantly Hungarian-speaking population. Second Vienna Award (30 August 1940) granted Hungary approximately two-thirds of the long-disputed Transylvania from Romania. Nevertheless, the 1947 Paris Peace Treaties nullified these awards, resulting in the re-annexation of these territories to the successor states.

enduring sense of national belonging. Once they were recognized as formal members, they played a unique role in the *Gyöngyösbokréta* celebrations, epitomizing the unity of all Hungarians (Paulini 1940; Kende 1936).

The state-sponsored *Gyöngyösbokréta* presentations, which – through increasing government support – soon developed into a movement, operated across a variety of sectors. For example, the organizers sought to establish new national holidays inspired by the folklore depicted in the *Gyöngyösbokréta* performances. In addition, *bokréta* groups participated in major cultural events attended by dignitaries such as Italian King Victor Emmanuel III and German Reich State Secretary Franz Schlegelberger (Unknown 1937; Zehery 1941). The Bokréta Association also performed abroad – in Vienna, London, Hamburg, Cannes, and Brussels – as a representative of Hungary (Ujváry F. 1984: 31).

Despite its rapid expansion, many people disapproved of *Gyöngyösbokréta* and its treatment of the peasantry. While there were protests against the presentation of peasant culture as a tourist attraction, it was nevertheless the first time that folk customs were publicly displayed – a major step toward the preservation of folk culture, albeit one with notable shortcomings. In the eyes of intellectuals, the image that *Gyöngyösbokréta* performances presented of village life to tourists was exaggerated and misleading.

But for the peasantry, however, participation in *Gyöngyösbokréta* represented a pragmatic opportunity for cultural advancement. As the movement gained popularity, it offered peasants a chance to travel. Many villages sought to participate and attempted to make their performances more appealing, sometimes compromising the authenticity of traditions in order to secure the opportunity to travel to Budapest or abroad. This often provoked local conflicts over participation, as inclusion brought the privilege of travel. While critics emphasized the movement's political dimension, for most participating peasants it primarily offered a chance to present their traditions and temporarily escape the constraints of rural life, rather than to engage in party politics.

Since Paulini and the local *bokréta* leaders lacked ethnographic expertise and pseudo-traditions could have negatively impacted both heritage preservation and the tourism industry, ethnographers were asked to verify the authenticity of the performances. Furthermore, because only peasants who presented their own traditions were allowed to participate in the movement, some questioned its exclusionary nature.

The staging of folklore (and its commodification for tourism), the question of ethnographic authenticity, its use for political propaganda, and the movement's impact on the peasantry were constant targets of criticism. Ethnographers,

writers, politicians, church figures, and local leaders expressed their opinions on *Gyöngyösbokréta* and its influence, although most supported the initiative and sought to help it preserve traditions. Paulini was also eager to discuss these issues openly, as the movement itself was the first in Hungary to attempt to foster a positive image of the country while combining heritage preservation with tourism promotion.

One of Paulini's major critics, choreographer Elemér Muharay (1901–1960), had already challenged the principles of *Gyöngyösbokréta* in the 1930s, particularly regarding the staging and authenticity of traditional dances. This was the moment when the controversies surrounding the direction and future of the folk dance movement began (Muharay 1935: 45).

Annulment and Survival of the Movement in Hungary (1945–1948)

Despite the critiques, the movement continued to grow until it dissolved in the wake of the Second World War, Paulini's death, and the establishment of the new regime. As a result, the annual *Gyöngyösbokréta* performances in Budapest were cancelled in 1944 (Unknown 1944).

Even before the communists seized power, the movement was facing dire circumstances by 1945, which were further exacerbated by the implementation of a new cultural policy. The Soviet paradigm of "constructive" folk art staging was emulated, as was the case in all people's democracies (Felföldi 2018: 27; Abkarovits 2012: 153–154). The press soon adopted this model:

> We have before us the results of folk-dance culture, which has been raised to a very high level among the Soviet peoples, and we must aim to approach them [..] Folk dance is one of the most striking and widely effective ways of realizing a national culture in form and a socialist culture in content (Szentimrei 1949).

In hindsight, it is apparent that the "socialist theater movement continued many of the traditions of *Gyöngyösbokréta* and created an organizational framework for the involvement and training of young people" (Paládi-Kovács 2004: 5). This narrative was also transmitted to the younger generation: Hungarian dancers and singers participating in the World Youth Festival in Prague[4] in 1947 echoed this sentiment, stating, "We want to follow in the footsteps of the Russian Moiseyev group. We see

4 The World Youth Festival was established by socialist-leaning NGOs – the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and the International Union of Students (IUS) – to promote "peaceful" socialist internationalism and Soviet culture in a "cultural Olympics" format. The first festival was held in Prague in 1947, and thereafter it took place every other year in various Eastern Bloc cities (Koivunen 2014: 125).

them as a role model, and they have been admired by Hungarian audiences when they were visiting Budapest" (Unknown 1947b).

International events, such as the aforementioned Youth Meeting, were held with the participation of communist countries, where folk dance and music was performed under Soviet control (Felföldi 2018: 34). While in the Soviet bloc during these decades such performances represented a controlled and obligatory form of artistic expression, in other geopolitical contexts folk culture was used as a means of protest or rebellion. From the 1970s onward, a similar development occurred in Hungary with the *Táncház* (dance-house) movement, which favored the authentic practice of folk art over staged performances (see Abkarovits 2012; Stavělová, Buckland 2018).

The slogans of progress and education were used to emphasize the importance of the peasantry and its role in the new cultural policy. This narrative was applied across all fields and was also expected to manifest in the performing arts, alongside popular education through radio and the "cultivation" of peasant intellectuals (Bóka 1946). Although socialist newspapers had already appeared during the Horthy era (1920–1944), it was uncommon for them to attack *Gyöngyösbokréta* on ideological grounds. As mentioned earlier, the movement was severely criticized for its exclusivity, as only peasants were allowed to participate, excluding members of other social classes.

On the other hand, the communist newspaper *Kanadai Magyar Munkás (Hungarian Worker of Canada)* harshly criticized the movement very early on: "The art of the Hungarian people is prostituted by the lords for their own profit and they brag about it as if it were their own art. But it is absolutely none of their business" (Unknown 1934). A similar narrative reemerged after 1945: the movement was condemned for promoting "the lords' friendship for the people", for turning folk culture into exploitation and entertainment, among other critiques (Gyertyán 1951; Barsi 1957; Kardos 1954: 418). Even János Manga, an ethnographer and the director of the Institute of Popular Culture, emphasized the gentry's exploitation of the peasantry (Manga 1958).

During the period of the communist takeover, events continued at the local level from 1945 onward, where *bokréta* groups kept performing without endorsing any political message. Yet, until the 1948 ban, they also participated in political events (Unknown 1945c; Unknown 1948). For instance, at events organized by the *Kisgazda Párt* (Smallholders' Party) (Unknown 1945b), *bokréta* groups also performed at activities organized by the *Szociáldemokrata Párt* (Social Democratic Party) and its Youth Group (Unknown 1945a).

Although the "people", "as a basis of reference and legitimacy", were staged in spectacular political performances under the new regime, *Gyöngyösbokréta* could

not for a long time be accepted, as it was seen as embodying the continuity of the pre-1945 order (Csukovits 2011; Volly 1991: 114).

The St. Stephen's Day procession commemorating the foundation of the Hungarian state, which traditionally included the annual presentation of *Gyöngyösbokréta*, was also abolished as a national holiday. Because of its ecclesiastical character and ideological message, it was incompatible with communist cultural policy and was replaced first by the New Bread Day and, from 1949 onward, by Constitution Day (Szabó 2009: 90–91). Nevertheless, not everything could be completely eradicated: for instance, several elements and expressions from the harvest celebrations of the former *Gyöngyösbokréta* festivities survived (Vámos 2018: 32).

In 1946, despite all the difficulties, members began to reorganize the Bokréta Association, which had been left without leadership following Paulini's death (Mohácsi 1946). The Association was officially re-established that same year. The fact that there was still public interest in joining the movement suggests that it retained considerable appeal among the wider population. In 1946, a folk exhibition was held, and *bokréta* groups participated in the Szeged Bread Festival and an event organized by the Salgótarján Women's League (Unknown 1946c: 2).

The largest event after the re-establishment was the *Országos Parasztnapok* (National Peasants' Day) in 1946, where various *bokréta* groups were once again allowed to perform in Budapest, as they had between 1931 to 1944. The Peasants' Days were organized by the *Parasztszövetség* (Peasants' Association), and the idea for the event was inspired by the mass rallies of the communists (Unknown 1946b). The Smallholders' Party, which was to enter a coalition with the Communist Party following the 1945 elections, wished to "show at a mass meeting in Budapest that they had at least as much social background as the Communists and could convince their electorate to take part in large-scale national events" (Vida 1976: 215).

The original plan was to hold the Peasants' Days around August 20, when many peasants traveled to the capital. However, the communist leadership, which viewed the gathering unfavorably, refused to authorize it, and the event was instead held from September 7 to 9 (Czettler 2002). One of the fabricated reasons given was that modern industrial and agricultural machinery could not arrive from the Soviet Union by August 20. In the end, an industrial-agricultural exhibition was included as part of the event, and it was hailed as a "historic achievement" that peasants were no longer sent to Budapest "to see *Gyöngyösbokréta* and fireworks, but to see new wine presses, fertilization, and quality production" (Unknown 1946e).

The Communist Party mobilized every resource to ensure that as few people as possible came to the event from the countryside, as the scale of the Smallholders' Party's gathering was viewed with suspicion. Consequently, Communist leaders

deemed it appropriate for Party leader Mátyás Rákosi himself and Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy to speak at the event (Czettler 2002). The organizers' ability to mobilize hundreds of thousands of participants alarmed the communist leadership, which at the time did not yet exercise absolute power, and the performance of *Gyöngyösbokréta* at this political event ultimately led to the communists' growing resentment toward the movement.

However, *Gyöngyösbokréta*'s participation in the event was not only a political surprise – and an unpleasant one for that matter – but it also provoked discontent from choreographer Elemér Muharay, Paulini's rival in shaping the direction of folk dance preservation and presentation. In his trenchant critique, Muharay identified both the legitimization and revival of a bygone system and the lack of progress in the spirit of *Gyöngyösbokréta*. Unsurprisingly, his article also discussed the folk ensemble he had recently founded, which he considered the foundation for a new form of tradition preservation to replace *Gyöngyösbokréta*.

Muharay had been experimenting with the staging of folk traditions and dances in various projects since 1938 (Unknown 1938a; Sima 1939). The principles guiding these projects – the forerunners of the later folk ensembles – were rooted in the artistic concept of making folk art accessible to a broad audience (Pesovár 1999: 55). The following passage from Muharay's article – which I have chosen as the motto of this paper – succinctly summarizes his ideological stance:

> The concept of the folk ensemble is diametrically opposed in content to the concept of *Gyöngyösbokréta*. The meaning of folk ensemble is the cultivation and modern development of folk cultural values and strengths and the preparation for the reception of higher culture. The most important thing in folk ensemble work is that it seeks that this folk tradition interacts with the higher culture (Muharay 1946).

The article did not go unheeded. First, ethnographer and musicologist János Bartók (1912–1992) fully endorsed the criticisms already expressed and went even further, emphasizing that the leaders of *Gyöngyösbokréta* lacked sufficient ethnographic knowledge to preserve traditions authentically (Bartók 1946). Bartók, like the journal *Köznevelés* (Public Education), highlighted that the collection and presentation of folk traditions should soon be undertaken by a national organization of trained professionals (Unknown 1946a).

The emphasis on distinguishing *Gyöngyösbokréta* from the newly established folk ensembles remained consistent throughout the first decades of their existence, especially in the press (Unknown 1946d; Boldizsár 1951). Professionals – such as dance teachers and choreographers – also expressed negative opinions against *Gyöngyösbokréta* until the early 1950s.

Two of the last events in which *Gyöngyösbokréta* participated were, first, the *Fölszállott a páva* (Fly, Peacock, Fly) dance event, organized by István Volly, and

second, the centenary cultural competition in Gyula, both held in 1948. In fact, after the war, the latter was the only dance event that could legitimately be regarded as a national gathering (Maácz 1977: 17–18). It brought together the traditional peasant groups that had previously achieved great success within *Gyöngyösbokréta* and the newly formed urban, factory, and student groups (Gyapjas 1958). Thus, *bokréta* groups and folk ensembles coexisted at the time, and in many places the *bokréta* itself was transformed into a youth ensemble (Kaposi 1999: 69).

The ensuing press controversy revolved around the presentation of staged folk traditions by the ever-multiplying ensembles. In the columns of the Catholic journal *Új Ember* (New Man), harsh criticism was leveled at the folk ensembles for their lack of progress, claiming that their quality was equal to or even worse than that of the former *Gyöngyösbokréta*. Since this criticism originated from the right-wing, the left-wing *Igaz Szó* (True Word) responded by denouncing the article for devaluing the cultural work of socialist associations (Gereblyés 1948). This exchange illustrates that the entire debate was political in nature.

By that time, however, folk ensembles had little to fear, as in 1948 the new regime officially banned the Bokréta Association. Although *Gyöngyösbokréta* had collected more than 200 variations of 75–80 different dances and 35–40 plays (Pálfi 1970: 146), as well as traditions from an almost-lost folk heritage, neither the press, political publications, nor the ethnographic profession were permitted to shed a positive light on the movement.

Thus, the official survival of *Gyöngyösbokréta* lasted only until this point; yet even after the regime's ban, opportunities for its revival gradually began to emerge.

Revival possibilities (1948–1989)

Revival in Hungary The seemingly hopeless situation following the ban was further aggravated by the launch of a smear campaign against *Gyöngyösbokréta* on both political and educational fronts (Poór 1951: 23). By the 1950s, local *bokréta* groups – already functioning as folk ensembles, which in itself could be seen as a form of survival – were often subjected to harsh criticism for their performances (Körmendi 1950; Heltai 1964). Due to their prior political involvement, they were labeled as chauvinist-nationalist, capitalist, fascist, and culturally supremacist – accusations that were not entirely unfounded given their participation in various political events (Sas 1960: 139; Zoltán 1959: 35).

The *coup de grâce* came when communist leader Mátyás Rákosi, in a 1949 statement, cited *Gyöngyösbokréta* as a negative example:

> [In] the past, the village and the city were at odds with each other. In the past, the village had only garbage and dross from the urban culture; the culture of the village could reach the city only along the degenerate way of *Gyöngyösbokréta* (Rákosi 1949).

Thus, the *Gyöngyösbokréta* movement did not align with the principles of the new political system, nor with those of the newly established folk-dance movement (*néptáncmozgalom*), which was built on entirely different foundations. *Bokréta* groups were therefore either forced to cease their activities or to join the Muharay folk ensembles (Borbély 1996: 10). In many cases, *bokréta* groups formed the basis of later traditional ensembles,[5] some of which also commemorated the movement through their chosen names (Váradi 2015).

Népi Ének-, Tánc- és Játékegyüttes (The Folk Singing, Dancing and Playing Ensemble) – Muharay's first folk ensemble – made its debut at the National Theatre on March 4, 1946, eighteen months before the Peasant's Day performance (Unknown 1946f). Following this example, local folk ensembles were established across the country. The aim of these folk ensembles was to promote the idea of making folk culture accessible to all (Péterfi 1946), to "represent and develop folk culture to the highest degree accessible to the amateurs", from which performers could even progress to professional status dancers in the newly organized Hungarian State Folk Ensemble (Muharay 1985). Figure 2 illustrates the artistic, choreographed, and professional character of a performance by *Magyar Állami Népi Együttes* (the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble).

In the meantime, the *Táncszövetség* (Dance Association), which had been in planning since 1945, was established in 1947/48 as a central body aimed at coordinating scholarly dance collection, stage performances, and the professional and ideological oversight of the communist dance movement (Zsolnay 1951). News reports about the ensemble – assisted by Russian choreographer Igor Moiseyev – regularly emphasized the contrast between *Gyöngyösbokréta* and the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble (Unknown 1951; Fodor 1963). A 1951 source characterized this contrast as follows: "To falsify the voice of the people: that was the goal of *Gyöngyösbokréta*. To reveal the voice of the people: that is the aim of the State Folk Ensemble" (H. Gy. 1951).

A 1951 memorandum also reveals how the members of the Kapuvár *bokréta* and the local community experienced the banning of the movement. It describes not only how the folk-art presentations were undermined by the new cultural policy but also how the ban on *Gyöngyösbokréta* brought negative changes to the peasants' everyday lives:

---

5 Zsámbok. https://Zsambok.Asp.Lgov.Hu/Nepi-Egyuttes [Accessed: 21.12.2025.].

Figure 2. Hungarian State Folk Ensemble, 1954. Source: https://hagyomanyokhaza.hu/hu/node/6853 [Accessed: 21.12.2025.].

> The folk attire, dances, and music of the Kapuvár *Gyöngyösbokréta* were not only showcased at the renowned *Gyöngyösbokréta* events organized by Béla Paulini but also remained a vibrant part of the village's everyday life. Traditional attire was prominently displayed during numerous church and religious festivities in the village [..].
>
> The consequences of the ban were severe, leading to a growing number of individuals disengaging from *Gyöngyösbokréta*. To compensate for the scarcity, proponents of the Communist dictatorship, who themselves lacked traditional attire, endeavored to compensate for this deficiency. During certain festivals, they tried to borrow clothing from local *kuláks*,[6] who were naturally reluctant to lend them. Having learned from past experiences, the *kuláks* kept the clothing stored away – garments that are now considered irreplaceable [..].
>
> The once-vibrant cultural celebrations, characterized by the wearing of traditional costumes and accompanying most village weddings, have since disappeared (Open Society Archives 12846/52).

Folk dance performances thus became compulsory, and people were, in effect, exploited – echoing the practices of the previous regime – while the communist discourse claiming to promote the peasantry proved to be mere propaganda. It is no coincidence, therefore, that in many former *bokréta* settlements, traditions and customs died out during these years. Although open criticism of the work of folk

6 Kuláks: kulaks, wealthy peasants.

ensembles was scarcely possible, a few articles attest to the fact that the much-heralded progress and development were largely illusory (Kónya 1954).

There was a two-tier attitude on the part of the communist leadership toward the position of local *bokréta* leaders. In non-democratic regimes, the ruling party assigns all state offices to its members. The aim of the communist regime after 1945/1948 was to create a new stratum of intellectuals, and many teachers, notaries, religious figures, and *bokréta* leaders were removed from their positions (Volly 1991: 114). In *bokréta* circles, this was the case for some leaders, who were not allowed to continue their activities in their localities and were transferred to distant municipalities (Pap 2003: 42). In several cases, however, *bokréta* leaders were honored during the socialist period, which is quite striking: some were recognized with the award for folk artists, the *Népművészet Mestere Díj* (Master of Folk Art Award).[7] In addition, László Kovács, a cantor-teacher and founder of the *bokréta* in Tura, was awarded the Kossuth Prize, the highest honor of the Hungarian state, in 1954 (P. P. 1972).

Obviously, the award was not for *Gyöngyösbokréta*, but these examples show that people associated with the movement were not persecuted as much after 1953 because of their *Gyöngyösbokréta* past. In the new regime following the 1956 revolution – the Kádár era – which brought a loosening of state control in all areas, the movement came under less criticism. From the 1970s, as cultural policy was further relaxed, and even more so after the Transition in 1989 (Takács 2016: 24–25; Pataky 1964), the movement was reassessed at both local and national levels (Böjte 1978; Kováts 1989; Minárik 1989). In 1956, László Debreczeni (1903–1986), an expert on the preservation of historical monuments, suggested that it was worth clarifying what was known about the movement and published extracts from some of its documents (Debreczeni 1956: 99–104).

From the 1960s onwards, the movement was mentioned only occasionally in newspapers. Articles and reports on dance groups and village life from that period still tended to describe it disparagingly (Tüskés 1965). However, when former *bokréta* members were interviewed, the movement inevitably took on a more positive tone, as these participants recalled *Gyöngyösbokréta* with fondness and nostalgia (Vincze 1956; Rab 1963).

---

7 The Masters of Folk Arts possess the vast knowledge of long-established folk activities and have the power to influence those with whom they interact with. The masters are examples to all because they preserve the values and processes of traditional artistry. Each year, the state recognizes ten individuals (seven prior to 2004) as Masters of Folk Arts. These masters are honored either made prominent works of art or have had life-long dedication to artistic activity. (https://nesz.hu/english/the-masters-of-folkarts/ [Accessed 21.12.2025.]; Nagy 2021: 21–23; Felföldi, Gombos 2001: 131).

Figure 3. *Gyöngyösbokréta* couple from Kapuvár in festive attire, 1941. Museum of Ethnography, Photograph Collection. Photo by István Szendrő.

In 1970, the first comprehensive scholarly paper devoted entirely to the movement was published by dancer and choreographer Csaba Pálfi (1928–1983) (Pálfi 1970). From that point onward, professional opinion began to reassess the movement, and it has since been argued that the Hungarian folk-dance movement as a whole – across its various periods – as well as folk-dance research, benefited greatly from *Gyöngyösbokréta* (Pesovár 1977; Vekerdi 1985: 709; Dégh 1988: 593; Martin 1980–1981: 241–243; Maácz 1977: 17; Bakonyi 1959; Dömötör 1960: 26).

Dance experts emphasized that "despite some negative political traits, it has passed on a very valuable heritage. Wherever there was a *bokréta* group, folk dancing has usually been preserved" (Novák 2002: 91). Folk ensembles have also been able to develop mainly where there has been a continuity of staged tradition-keeping over several decades, usually as successors to *bokréta* groups (Héra 2002: 55). Figure 4 depicts former *bokréta* participants serving as subjects of research and filming in the late 1970s.

The shift in professional opinion also had a local impact: in the 1980s, several local historical studies on the movement were published (Ujváry F. 1984; Fercsik 1981; Galambos 1989; Sitkei 1989). In 1982, a film was produced about

Figure 4. Research and filming of former *Gyöngyösbokréta* participants from Szeremle. Collected by Mrs. Sándor Manno, 1979, BTK ZTI. TF39238.

Gyöngyösbokréta in southern Hungary, entitled *A Bokréta* (*The Bokréta*), featuring some of the surviving former members and their descendants (Unknown 1982).

Press analysis also indicates that the idea of reviving *Gyöngyösbokréta* was repeatedly raised not only at academic and institutional levels but also in newspaper readers' correspondence. In 1956, *Tolnai Napló* (Tolna County Journal) published the first article on the topic, entitled "Where Have the Koppányszántó *Gyöngyösbokréta* Gone?", in which old *bokréta* members were interviewed to emphasize the continued value of the *Gyöngyösbokréta* practice. The article opened with the question: "If this association was a national asset in the past, proclaiming popular culture at home and abroad, why shouldn't it be a national asset today, proclaiming popular socialist culture?!" (Kovács 1956)

Many similar suggestions appeared in the following decades. Ethnographer István Volly, who had been involved in organizing *Gyöngyösbokréta* performances in the interwar period and remained one of its most committed advocates, was still convinced in 1990 that it was time to revive the movement. Together with the leaders of 10–12 groups of old *bokréta* he planned to stage a performance in Budapest in August, but the event did not materialize due to lack of funding. Nevertheless,

there was parliamentary support for organizing a major *Gyöngyösbokréta* show the following year (Volly 1991: 114–115).

Even if the long-discussed renewed *Gyöngyösbokréta* event never came to fruition, local communities started implementing an increasing number of commemorative initiatives, such as the erection of a statue (1999) and a regional dance-hall assembly (2008) organized in cooperation with associations from former *bokréta* settlements in the area (Csurgónagymarton 2008: 16). *Gyöngyösbokréta* was also incorporated into the curricula of dance education institutions in the 2010s.[8]

A musical folk play illustrating village life at the dawn of socialism, *A baranyai gyöngyösbokréta* (*Gyöngyösbokréta* of Baranya County), was staged in 2019 (Urbán 2019). The State Folk Ensemble and the Hungarian Heritage House jointly organized the *Új Bokréták Fesztivál* (New Bokrétas Festival) in Jászberény, which "expressed our living traditions and recalled the atmosphere of the former *Gyöngyösbokréta* performances."[9]

Revival/Survival Overseas In keeping with the spirit of the interwar *Gyöngyösbokréta*, Hungarian minority communities overseas organized folk tradition performances in the United States and South America. During the interwar years, some Hungarian communities – such as those in Cleveland and São Paulo – began to stage their own *Gyöngyösbokréta* events, imitating the customs and dances of *bokréta* groups in Hungary (Unknown 1941). In other cases, such as in Venezuela and Argentina, the movement experienced a revival: from the 1950s and 1960s, scouts and local associations learned and performed dances under the name *Gyöngyösbokréta* (Unknown 1967).

These overseas *Gyöngyösbokréta* groups typically performed at local Hungarian scouting or religious events. While not only *Gyöngyösbokréta*, but also scouting and other civic organizations were banned in Hungary in 1948, for members of the Hungarian diaspora these associations provided a sense of belonging and helped preserve Hungarian customs (Papp Z. 2008: 173).

> We Hungarians, old, new, and young, watched the successive scenes, our eyes brimming with tears. [..] It was as if we were at home in the good old days, in happy Hungary, seeing the 'proposal', 'harvest festival', 'Pentecost tradition', 'Palóc wedding', and 'corn husking' (Lendvay 1960).

---

8 https://tinyurl.com/dance-education-Hungary-2013 [Accessed 21.12.2025.]; https://www.nive.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=449&Itemid=101 [Accessed 21.12.2025.].

9 https://hagyomanyokhaza.hu/hu/mane/program/uj-bokretak-fesztival [Accessed 21.12.2025.].

Thus wrote a reviewer about the 1960 Pittsburgh performance of the Scouts' *Gyöngyösbokréta*. Most of these gatherings were regarded as vital in strengthening Hungarian identity among the diaspora (Unknown 1971). Moreover, residents of the host countries – Americans, Venezuelans, Argentines – were also eager to attend these events, which offered them an opportunity to learn about Hungarian culture (Unknown 1960: 4). In the 1950s, the Hungarian Cultural Association in California also had a group named *Gyöngyösbokréta*, whose dancers participated in the association's balls and events, performing Hungarian village harvest festival traditions (Unknown 1957).

In Cleveland, a *Gyöngyösbokréta* group was established in the 1930s, modeled after the Hungarian groups, and remained active until the 1970s. The importance of the Cleveland events is demonstrated by the participation of Hungarian *bokréta* groups from across Central and South America (Lendvay 1964).

Both in the interwar period and after 1945, Hungarian communities overseas faced difficulties in preserving their traditions, as neither suitable instructors, nor musical materials, nor folk costumes were readily available.[10] The Hungarian community in Argentina formed a large *Gyöngyösbokréta* in 1958, but in addition to these challenges, a newspaper article noted that it was difficult for second-generation Hungarians to learn and perform folk customs they had never seen firsthand (Szeleczky 1958). Nevertheless, *Gyöngyösbokréta* groups and gatherings continued to operate, and there were also instances of Hungarian minorities from different countries overseas organizing joint meetings.

Revival in Vojvodina, Serbia *Gyöngyösbokréta* also served as an instrument of nation-building intent and revisionist politics during the interwar period. In the territories annexed under the Treaty of Trianon – Upper Hungary (Slovakia), Transcarpathia (Ukraine), Transylvania (Romania), and Vojvodina (Serbia) – *bokréta* groups were formed during the re-annexation period. These groups were officially permitted to join the Bokréta Association only after the return of these territories to Hungary under the Vienna Awards. Nevertheless, tradition-preserving activities under the name *Gyöngyösbokréta* had already been organized among these Hungarian minorities from the mid-1930s onward.

It is therefore understandable that in these regions, as well as among the diasporas in North and South America, the movement and its transmission acquired different meanings. István Volly, who had been involved in the (post)life

10 In the 1960s, for example, performances by the *Gyöngyösbokréta* dance group in Caracas, Venezuela, had to be called off because the tape recorders containing the appropriate music were lost, see Unknown 1964.

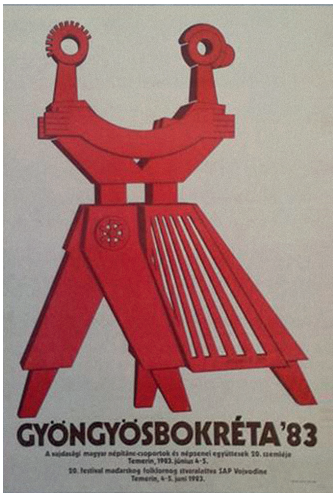

Figure 5. Poster (in Hungarian and Serbian) of the 1983 *Gyöngyösbokréta*. Institute for Hungarian Culture in Vojvodina.

of *Gyöngyösbokréta* since its inception, noted in 1990 that "it is interesting that from the 1940s to the present day, the villages in Bácska[11] have kept the name of *Gyöngyösbokréta* and held meetings in Yugoslavia, even when the name was censored in Hungary" (Volly 1991: 113–114).

It is "interesting" because the movement was banned in Hungary, the motherland, and "interesting" because Yugoslavia was also under a communist regime during those decades, where Hungarians were a minority. "Interesting", but not self-evident, since in the case of Transylvania and Upper Hungary we cannot speak of a similar revival or survival. Maintaining and reviving the traditions of the movement was by no means an easy task. After the Second World War, it also ceased to exist in Vojvodina, but its revival was initiated soon afterward, in the second half of the 1940s (Cs. Tóth 2018; Csorba 1947: 102; Kalapis 1948). At the local level, *bokréta* groups continued their performances in the following decades (Kiss 1945; Nagy 1947; Zabosné Geleta 2010: 275; Tomka 1967).

In 1969, the leaders of the several former participating municipalities re-launched the *Gyöngyösbokréta* gatherings. In the first few years, the event was held in the same municipality – Gombos (Богојево/Bogojevo) – and since 1972 it has become a touring festival, with a different municipality serving as host each year (Dautbegovics 2013). (For example, in 1983 it was held in Temerin; see Figure 5 poster.)

---

11 *Бачка* is a geographical name in Serbia referring to the territory of the former Bács-Bodrog county, the northern part of which belongs to Hungary (15%) and the southern part to Vojvodina (85%), with a significant Hungarian minority.

The popularity of the movement is demonstrated by the fact that by 1985 there were already around 2,000 participants, and the celebration of Hungarian folklore traditions had crossed the borders of Vojvodina and even those of the country itself (Hajdú 1986). Clearly, these were no longer local, tradition-preserving events, but gatherings of folk-dance ensembles that presented not only the dance heritage of their own settlements but also that of other Hungarian regions. However, as a minority initiative, the survival of this movement was not without challenges – authenticity being the main concern – so a professional jury was invited to evaluate and assist with the productions (Bodor 1999: 73).

Thus arises the question of how this minority movement in Yugoslavia managed to persist under a communist regime, especially since it was not the case in Hungary. A closer examination of Hungarian-Yugoslav relations during this period provides valuable insights.

Tensions between Hungary and Yugoslavia escalated following the annexation of Vojvodina into Serbia, a constituent part of Yugoslavia. The 1920 Treaty of Trianon delineated new borders, resulting in thousands of Hungarian citizens residing within Serbian (later Yugoslav) territory. Consequently, the Hungarian government expressed concern for the welfare of the Hungarian minority. Beginning in 1938, negotiations between Hungary and Yugoslavia led to the signing of the Treaty of Eternal Friendship, ratified on February 27, 1941 (Olasz 2014: 68; Erdős 2018: 31–32).

Nevertheless, Hungary's involvement in the German invasion of Yugoslavia on April 11, 1941, undertaken to reclaim Vojvodina – resulted in the abrogation of the treaty (Romsics 2020: 189). Following its defeat in the Second World War, Hungary was once again compelled to pay reparations. Under the terms of 1947 Paris Peace Treaty, Hungary was required to revert to its pre-1938 borders, thereby relinquishing the territories reannexed under the two Vienna Awards, including Vojvodina (Farkas 2004: 9).

From then on, the Hungarian government's foreign policy strategy was guided by the principle of gradualism, as it progressively sought to reestablish diplomatic relations, particularly with the democratic countries of the Carpathian Basin. Among these, Yugoslavia was the first to normalize the relations with Hungary, despite the complex historical circumstances and the sensitive issue of the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina (N. Szabó 1999: 57).

Vojvodina is a unique region, as it always aspired to a degree of autonomy – a goal that predates the disintegration of historical Hungary. Movements for self-determination were first launched by Serbs living in Hungary during the 1848 revolution. Over time, this aspiration for autonomy strengthened and gradually shifted its

Figure 6. The 50th *Gyöngyösbokréta* Festival in Gombos, Vojvodina, 2013.
Institute for Hungarian Culture in Vojvodina.

focus from the Serbian population to the "economic, cultural, civilizational, and ethnic characteristics of the territory and its inhabitants" (Korhecz 2010: 53), which came to be regarded as essential elements of Serbia within the Yugoslav framework. Vojvodina gained autonomous status under Tito's regime – after Yugoslavia was established as a socialist federal republic in 1945, led by Marshal Josip Broz Tito (1944–1980) – beginning in 1946 (Grove 2018: 6; Bjelica 2020: 151; Tóth 2018: 10–11).

Although there were atrocities committed against the Hungarian minority in the early years (Mák 2014: 174–178), Tito's communist leadership declared that "Yugoslavia distinguishes between the Hungarian people and the former Hungarian reactionary leaders" (Unknown 1947a), implying that Hungarians were accepted as members of Yugoslav society.

Because Yugoslavia was characterized by ethnic diversity and a multitude of national communities, the country's leadership provided space for minorities, including the Hungarians in Vojvodina, under the slogan of "Brotherhood and Unity" (Grove 2018: 6; Ördögh 2017: 36). In accordance with this principle, minority policy granted constitutional rights such as the use of one's native language and the establishment of independent institutions; however, in practice, these measures also

served assimilationist aims (Gruber 2018: 143). To emphasize interethnic solidarity, the closing celebration of *Gyöngyösbokréta* often featured performances by groups representing other nationalities in Yugoslavia, and occasionally even by ensembles from abroad (V. K. M. 1972).

In 2021 and 2023, I attended the *Gyöngyösbokréta* festival, and during my second visit I conducted a questionnaire to explore how much participants knew about the festival's origins and what the event meant to them. I collected 50 responses from participants representing different age groups, genders, and roles. The evaluation of the questionnaires revealed that none of the respondents knew exactly when *Gyöngyösbokréta* had first been held, although some dated its beginnings to the 1960s–1970s, close to the time of its revival in Vojvodina. It came as a surprise to nearly all respondents – except for two – that the festival's origins dated back to the 1930s.

When asked, "What does participating in the festival mean to you?", respondents confirmed what had often been expressed in the press: that it is the most popular cultural event strengthening Hungarian identity (Questionnaire 2023). In conclusion, despite challenges, since its beginnings in the 1930s and its revival in the 1970s, the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina has preserved the *Gyöngyösbokréta* movement more faithfully than in Hungary, and today hosts its largest annual celebrations.

Conclusion

Gyöngyösbokréta (1931–1948) was the first movement in Hungary dedicated to the preservation of folk songs and traditions. Even though the communist regime did everything possible to suppress it – introducing a new model for preserving and presenting folk culture through state-organized folk ensembles – there were always ways to sustain the memory and practices of the movement. A short sentence in a 1968 newspaper article encapsulates the entire debate about the opposition between *Gyöngyösbokréta* and folk ensembles: "From preservation of tradition to performing art" (Szántó 1968).

As this quote suggests, *bokréta* groups – like local traditional ensembles that carried forward the principles of *Gyöngyösbokréta* and continue to thrive – focused on preserving and performing their community's dances and customs in their authentic form. In contrast, folk ensembles depend on choreographers who adapt these traditions and local dances for stage performance. Yet without the first phase – the act of preservation – the second cannot exist. *Gyöngyösbokréta* and local traditional ensembles could survive without staged adaptations, but the reverse is not possible.

The movement experienced both survival and revival not only in Hungary but also among Hungarian minorities overseas and in Vojvodina, Serbia. Although Yugoslavia was likewise governed by a staunch communist regime, the "Brotherhood and Unity" made it possible to revive *Gyöngyösbokréta* in the form of an annual folk-dance festival. In conclusion, the history of *Gyöngyösbokréta* demonstrates the resilience of cultural heritage and the capacity of communities to sustain – and, where necessary, to revive – their traditions even under adverse political conditions.

References

Primary sources

Bakonyi, István (1959). Jókedv és vidámság, őszinte baráti kollektíva. *Egyetemi Lapok*, 05.12., p. 4.

Barsi, Imre (1957). Az elmúlt idő nyomában. *A Hét,* 26.05., pp. 22–23.

Bartók, János (1946). Gyöngyösbokréta, népi együttes, hagyományőrzés. *Szabad Szó*, 22.09., p. 6.

Bóka, László (1946). Mi a kultúrbotrány? *Haladás*, 05.09., p. 7.

Boldizsár, Iván (1951). A Gyöngyösbokrétától a kultúrversenyig. *Magyar Nemzet*, 25.03., p. 1.

Csorba, János (1947). A falusi ifjúság új arca. *Híd*, No. 11(2), pp. 101–104.

Csurgónagymarton. Available: http://www.csurgoikisterseg.hu/index.php?page=page&id=19 [Accessed 04.04.2023.].

Dautbegovics, Zoltán (2013). A Gomboson megrendezésre kerülő Gyöngyösbokréta és a Durindó elé. *Magyar Szó*, 04.06., p. 9.

Dr. Martin György Alapfokú Művészeti Iskola Pedagógiai program (2013). Available: http://tinyurl.com/dance-education-Hungary-2013 [Accessed 04.04.2023.].

Fercsik, Mihály (1981). A hagyományőrzés múltjáról. *Pest Megyei Hírlap*, 09.08., p. 4.

Fodor, Lajos (1963). Magyar Salzburg? *Élet és Irodalom*, 31.08., p. 8.

Gereblyés, László (1948). A mi kultúránk. Válasz az "Új Ember"-nek. *Igaz Szó*, 01.07., p. 2.

Gyapjas, István (1958). Két népitáncos találkozó. *Népművelés*, 01.05., p. 1.

Gyertyán, Ervin (1951). A kultúra népe. *Népszava*, 13.06., p. 4.

H. Gy. (1951): Állami Népi Együttes nagysikerű bemutatkozása. *Szabad Nép,* 10.04.

Hajdú, Anasztázia (1986). Régi gyöngyök új foglalatban. *Magyar Szó*, 02.06., p. 7.

Heltai, Nándor (1964). A tanyaház vendégkönyve. *Petőfi Népe*, 20.08., p. 5.

Kalapis, Zoltán (1948). Az iskola a község kulturális életének központja. *Magyar Szó*, 31.01., p. 5.

Kende, Ferenc (1936). A Gyöngyösbokrétánk mérlege. *Kalangya*, No. 6–7, pp. 380–387.

Kiss, Imre (1945). Levél a szerkesztőséghez egy szombori magyar ifjúsági előadásról. *Ifjúság Szava*, 20.11., p. 4.

Kónya, Lajos (1954). Kultúránk nemzeti jellegéről. *Irodalmi Újság*, 05.06., p. 3.

Kovács, József (1956). Hová lett a koppányszántói gyöngyösbokréta? *Tolnai Napló*, 13.07., p. 4.

Kováts, Dániel (1989). A mikóházi népi együttes tanulságos története. *Észak-Magyarország,* 09.01., p. 4.

Körmendi, Judit (1950). Szatmárököritó egy falu, amely még nem heverte ki a fasiszta "kultúrmunka" nyomait. *Művelt Nép*, No. 1(6), pp. 12–13.

Lendvay, József (1960). A clevelandi cserkészek népi Gyöngyösbokréta csoportja Pittsburgban. *Képes Világhíradó*, 01.06., p. 12.

Lendvay, József (1964). A kilencedik Cserkésznap Clevelandben. *Képes Világhíradó*, 01.10., pp. 5–6.

Manga, János (1958). Néphagyományaink és népművészetünk. *Magyar Nemzet*, 16.03., p. 8.

Masters of Folk Arts [n.d.]. Available: https://nesz.hu/english/the-masters-of-folkarts/ [Accessed 02.04. 2023.].

Minárik, Lajos (1989). Lassítani a gyorsan múló időt. *Népújság*, 19.04.

Mohácsi R., Ferenc (1946). Emlékezés a Gyöngyösbokrétára. *Demokrácia*, 18.08., p. 4.

Muharay, Elemér (1935). Magyar forma a magyar színjátszásban. *Kelet Népe*, 11.11., pp. 44–47.

Muharay, Elemér (1946). Feltámadt a Gyöngyösbokréta? *Szabad Szó*, 15.09., p. 4.

Muharay, Elemér (1985). A népi ének-, tánc- és játékegyüttes 1947–48. évi munkaterv vázlata. *Táncművészeti Dokumentumok*, No. 10(1), p. 146.

Nagy, Vince (1947). Horgosi "Gyöngyösbokréta". *Magyar Szó,* 11.04., p. 6.

Open Society Archives 12846/52 (1952). Free Europe Radio. Hungary Culture M.J. VIII–7034/c, 07.10. The folklore group "Gyöngyösbokréta" in Kapuvár.

P. P. (1972). Kutatott, gyűjtött, tanított. *Pest Megyei Hírlap*, 13.02., p. 4.

Pataky, Dezső (1964). Pásztortánccal Aranyostól–Cannes-ig. *Heves Megyei Népújság,* 16.07., p. 4.

Paulini, Béla (1940). A Gyöngyösbokréta karácsonya – erdélyiekkel. *Hagyomány Szava*, No. (1)4, pp. 3–4.

Péterfi, István (1946). Népi ének, népi tánc. *Szabadság*, 06.03., p.4.

Poór, Anna (1951). Mit jelent táncmozgalmunk fejlődésében a téli falusi kultúrverseny. *Művelt Nép,* No. (2)5, pp. 23–24.

Questionnaire (2023). Conducted by Anna Klára Andor in Magyarcsernye, Vojvodina, Serbia at the 59th Gyöngyösbokréta festival, 08.06.

Rab, Ferenc (1963). Barangolás Bogádon. *Dunántúli Napló*, 28.04., pp. 4–5.

Rákosi, Mátyás (1949). *Építjük a nép országát*. Budapest: Szikra Kiadó.

Sas, Judit (1960). A "szabadművelődési" korszak néhány problémája. *Népművelési Értesítő*, No. 1(1), pp. 131–167.

Sima, Ferenc (1939). Új fóti dal. *Színházi Magazin,* No. 2 (49), p. 1.

Sitkei, Béla (1989). Gyöngyösbokréta-történet ezer példányban. *Petőfi Népe*, 28.06., p. 4.

Szántó, Erika (1968). Koreográfia-kiállítás. *Magyarország*, 28.04., p. 27.

Szeleczky, Zita (1958). Argentínai emlékek. *Szabad Magyarság*, 28.12., p. 8.

Szentimrei, Jenő (1949). Hitelesen és szeretettel. *Útunk*, 19.11., pp. 8–9.

Táncos Néptáncos szakmairány, Komplex szakmai vizsga. Emberi Erőforrások Minisztériuma (2014). Available: https://www.nive.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=449&Itemid=101 [Accessed 04.04.2023.].

Tomka, Gábor (1967). Százhúsz dolgos, munkára kész... *Képes Ifjúság*, 14.10., p. 4.

Tüskés, Tibor (1965). Nemzeti táncunknak légyen első jussa! *Dunántúli Napló*, 02.12., p. 5.

Új Bokréták Fesztivál [n.d.]. Available: https://hagyomanyokhaza.hu/hu/mane/program/uj-bokretak-fesztival [Accessed 04.04.2023.].

Unknown (1934). Gyöngyösbokréta. *Kanadai Magyar Munkás*, 02.10., p. 3.

Unknown (1937). Paulini Béla olasz kitüntetése. *Nemzeti Ujság*, 05.06., p. 9.

Unknown (1938). Népszínpadi játékok. *Esti Kurír*, 09.01.

Unknown (1941). Panorama de Folklore Hungaro. *8Órai Újság*, 31.12.

Unknown (1944). Az idei Gyöngyösbokréta – elmarad. *Hagyomány Szava*, No. 5(8), p. 1.

Unknown (1945a). A szociáldemokrata párt magyar dalosünnepe. *Új Dunántúl*, 13.07., p. 3.

Unknown (1945b). Népünnepély Patacson. *Új Dunántúl*, 14.07., p. 3.

Unknown (1945c). Nótadélután a honvédség javára. *Délmagyarország*, 04.12., p. 2.

Unknown (1946a). A napi- és hetilapok nevelőket érdeklő cikkei. *Köznevelés*, No. 2(19), p. 13.

Unknown (1946b). Az Országos Parasztnapok részletes programja. *Kis Újság*, 08.09., p. 3.

Unknown (1946c). Békét és munkát hirdetett Tildy köztársasági elnök a szombati kenyérnapon. *Délmagyarország*, 02.07., pp. 2–3.

Unknown (1946d). Igazi kultúrát a népnek. *Ifjúság*, 27.09., p. 1.

Unknown (1946e). Ipar a mezőgazdaságért. *Haladás*, 12.09., p. 11.

Unknown (1946f). Művészet a Demokráciában. *Demokrácia*, 03.03., p. 8.

Unknown (1947a). Jugoszlávia különbséget tesz a magyar nép és volt reakciós vezetői között. *Szabad Nép*, 15.07., p. 2.

Unknown (1947b). Nem akarjuk a Gyöngyösbokréta útját járni. *Igaz Szó*, 13.08., p. 8.

Unknown (1948). Így ünnepeltek a pécsvidéki bányászok. *Új Dunántúl*, 04.05., p. 3.

Unknown (1951). A Magyar Állami népi ének- és táncegyüttes fellépése. *Új Szó*, 07.06., p. 4.

Unknown (1957). Az Elks Club... *Californiai Magyarság*, 19.07., p. 5.

Unknown (1960). Venezuelai riport. *Képes Világhíradó*, 01.07., pp. 4–5.

Unknown (1964). Caracasi Gyöngyösbokréta. *Képes Világhíradó*, 01.12., p. 31.

Unknown (1967). Utasi Andrásné venezuelai riportja. *Képes Világhíradó*, 01.04., p. 18.

Unknown (1971). 16-ik Cserkésznap. *Szabadság*, 20.08., p. 15.

Unknown (1982). Műsorajánlat. *Délmagyarország*, 10.04., p. 9.

Unknown (2008). Tánctalálkozóval idézik a Gyöngyösbokréta múltját. *Tolnai Népújság*, 12.04., p. 16.

Váradi, Enikő (2015). Derceni Gyöngyösbokréta. Available: https://tinyurl.com/Varadi-Eniko [Accessed 09.01.2020.].

V. K. M. (1972). Népszokások és hagyományok bemutatója. *Magyar Szó*, 08.03., p. 12.

Vincze, György (1956). A kultúrház – az ifjúság háza Kalocsán. *Szabad Ifjúság*, 15.05., p. 4.

Zabosné Geleta, Piroska (2010). *Így zajlott az életem.* Zenta: Vajdasági Magyar Művelődési Intézet, p. 275.

Zehery, Lajos (1941). Dr. Schlegelberger Ferenc államtitkár magyarországi látogatása. *Magyar jogi szemle*, No. 22(17), p. 355.

Zoltán, Aladár (1959). Szentgericei jegyzetek. *Művelődés*, No. 12(5), pp. 35–36.

Zsámbok [n.d.]. Available: https://Zsambok.Asp.Lgov.Hu/Nepi-Egyuttes [Accessed 09.01.2020.].

Zsolnay, László (1951). A népi táncmozgalom kiszélesítésében a fiatalokra nagy feladatok várnak. *Fővárosi Napló*, 02.02., p. 4.

Secondary sources

Abkarovits, Endre (2012). *Negyvenéves a magyarországi táncházmozgalom.* Eger: Molnár Kiadó.

Bjelica, Slobodan (2020). Disputes over the Autonomy of Vojvodina from the Creation to the Breakup of Yugoslavia. *Istorija*, No. 38(1), pp. 147–162. https://doi.org/10.29362/ist20veka.2020.1.bje.147-162

Bodor, Anikó (1999). A néptánc és népzenei hagyományok szerepe a nemzeti identitás formálásában. *Savaria*, No. 22(4), pp. 71–75.

Borbély, Jolán (1996). Arcképek. *Szín*, No. 1(1), pp. 9–15.

Böjte, József (1978). Néptánc – művészet. *Kritika*, No. 7(10), p. 15.

Cs. Tóth, Gabriella (2018). Adalékok a Délvidéken kibontakozó Gyöngyösbokréta mozgalom kezdeti szakaszához (1936–1941). *Létünk*, No. 48(4), pp. 123–139.

Csukovits, Anita (ed.) (2011). *Több nyelven, egy akarattal. Népi és nemzetiségi kultúra a Kádár-korszakban.* Pest Megyei Múzeumok Igazgatósága, pp. 12–13.

Czettler, Antal (2002). Hatalomátvétel "szalámitaktika" útján. Pethő, László (ed.). *Jászsági Évkönyv*. Jászberény: Jászsági Évkönyv Alapítvány, pp. 63–81.

Debreczeni, László (1956). A "Gyöngyösbokréta" aktáiból. *Táncművészeti Értesítő.* Budapest: Magyar Táncművészeti Szövetség.

Dégh, Linda (1988). Folklór és etnikai azonosságtudat. *Világosság*, No. 29(8–9), pp. 590–596.

Dömötör, Tekla (1960). *A színjátszás funkciója falun.* Budapest: Színháztudományi Intézet.

Erdős, Márton (2018). Gróf Teleki Pál és a német–jugoszláv krízis (1941). *Hitel*, No. 31(6), pp. 28–38.

Farkas, Péter (2004). A magyar–jugoszláv kapcsolatok történetéhez (1945–1948). *Belvedere*, No. 21(7–8), pp. 9–21.

Felföldi, László (2018). On the Legal and Political Framework of the Folk Dance Revival Movement in Hungary in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century. Stavělová, Daniela; Jill Buckland, Theresa (eds.). *Folklore Revival Movements in Europe post 1950*. Prague: Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, pp. 21–45.

Felföldi, László; Gombos, András (eds.) (2001). *A Népművészet táncos mesterei.* Budapest: Európai Folklór Központ.

Galambos, Sándor (1989). *A Kunszentmiklósi "Bokréta" története.* Budapest: Mezőgazdasági Múzeum.

Gönyey, Sándor [n.d.]. A Gyöngyös-bokréta története. Dóka, Krisztina; Molnár, Péter (eds.) (2011). A Gyöngyösbokréta. Írások és dokumentumok a mozgalom történetéből. *Folkszemle.* Available: https://folkradio.hu/folkszemle/cikk/28/a-gyongyosbokreta [Accessed 23.05.2018.].

Grove, Jelena H. (2018). *From Brotherhood and Unity to Fratricide: Propaganda in Former Yugoslavia.* University Honors Theses. Paper 510.

Gruber, Enikő (2018). A média- és kultúrpolitika alakulása a Vajdaságban. Ördögh, Tibor (ed.). *Variációk autonómiára.* Szabadka: Vajdasági Magyar Doktoranduszok és Kutatók Szervezete, pp. 131–158.

Gyáni, Gábor (2021). *A Nation Divided by History and Memory.* London: Routledge.

Györffy, István (1939). *A néphagyomány és a nemzeti művelődés.* Budapest: A Magyar Táj- és Népismeret Könyvtára.

Héra, Éva (2002). Az amatőr népművészeti mozgalmak helyzetének áttekintése (1990–2001). Kovácsné Bíró, Ágnes (ed.). *Alkotó emberek. Amatőr művészek az ezredfordulón.* 2nd ed. Budapest: Nemzeti Kulturális Örökség Minisztériuma Közművelődési Főosztálya, pp. 50–62.

Kaposi, Edit (1999). *Bodrogköz táncai és táncélete 1946–1948.* Budapest: Planétás.

Kardos, László (1954). A magyar falu szocialista fejlődésének néprajzi kérdései. Szabó, Imre (ed.). *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Társadalmi-Történeti Tudományok Osztályának Közleményei,* No. 5(1–4), pp. 409–453.

Koivunen, Pia (2014). The World Youth Festival as an Arena of the "Cultural Olympics": Meanings of Competition in Soviet culture in the 1940s and 1950s. Miklóssy, Katalin; Ilic, Melanie (eds.). *Competition in Socialist Society.* New York: Routledge, pp. 125–141.

Korhecz, Tamás (2010). A Vajdaság közjogi helyzete Szerbiában, hatalmi szervezete és hatáskörei a 2009 decemberétől hatályos új törvények fényében. *Jog, Állam, Politika*, No. 2(3), pp. 53–76.

Maácz, László (1977). Rábai Miklós szerepe és jelentősége a magyar táncművészetben. *Pesovár, Ernő 1977: Rábai Miklós élő öröksége.* Budapest: Planétás.

Mák, Ferenc (2014). Magyar sajtó a Délvidéken 1914–1989. Apró, István; Paál, Vince (eds.). *A határon túli magyar sajtó Trianontól a XX. század végéig. Fejezetek a magyar sajtószabadság történetéből.* Budapest: Médiatudományi Intézet, pp.165–228.

Martin, György (1980–1981). Szék felfedezése és tánchagyományai. *Tánctudományi Tanulmányok,* No. 11, pp. 239–282.

N. Szabó, József (1999). Magyar-jugoszláv kulturális kapcsolatok a második világháború után (1945–1947). *Világtörténet*, No. 21(1), pp. 56–65.

Nagy, Dóra (2021). Kísérletek hagyományosnak tekintett mesterségek megőrzésére – A Népművészet Mestere díj jogi szabályozása és a Szellemi kulturális örökség egyezményhez fűződő viszonya. MA thesis. Eötvös Loránd University.

Novák, Ferenc (2002). A néptáncmozgalom művészeti irányzatai. Kovácsné Bíró, Ágnes (ed.). *Alkotó emberek. Amatőr művészek az ezredfordulón.* 2nd ed. Budapest: Nemzeti Kulturális Örökség Minisztériuma Közművelődési Főosztálya, pp. 91–100.

Olasz, Lajos (2014). A magyar-jugoszláv "örök barátsági szerződés" politikai fogadtatása. *Délvidéki szemle*, No. 1(2), pp. 66–85.

Ördögh, Tibor (2017). *Vajdaság politikatörténete. Vajdaság 1. Vajdaság társadalmi és gazdasági jellemzői.* Szabadka: Vajdasági Magyar Doktoranduszok és Kutatók Szervezete, pp. 9–40.

Paládi-Kovács, Attila (2004). A nemzeti kulturális örökség fogalma, tárgya. *Rálátás*, No. 5(1), pp. 1–10.

Pálfi, Csaba (1970). A Gyöngyösbokréta története. *Tánctudományi Tanulmányok*, No. 7, pp. 115–161.

Pap, János (2003). Várallyay Gyula és a korabeli Mezőkövesd. *Honismeret*, No. 31(3), pp. 39–43.

Papp Z., Attila (ed.) (2008). *Beszédből világ. Elemzések, adatok amerikai magyarokról.* Budapest: Regio, pp. 27–261.

Pesovár, Ernő (1999). Hagyomány és korszerűség. *Savaria*, No. 22(4), pp. 51–57.

Pesovár, Ferenc (1977). Fejér megye fehér folt? Néptánckutatás Fejér megyében. *Táncművészet*, No. 2(5), pp. 22–24.

Romsics, Ignác (2020). *A trianoni békeszerződés.* Budapest: Helikon.

Stavělová, Daniela; Jill Buckland, Theresa (eds.) (2018). *Folklore Revival Movements in Europe post 1950.* Prague: Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

Szabó, Bence (2009). Elrendelt ünnepek a Rákosi-korszak politikai ünnepei Bács-Kiskun megyei tanácsi és pártbizottsági iratok tükrében. Gyenesi, József (ed.). *Bács-Kiskun megye múltjából, 23.* Kecskemét: Bács-Kiskun Megyei Önkormányzat Levéltára.

Takács, Róbert (2016). A magyar kultúra nyitottsága az 1970-es években. *Múltunk*, No. 61(4), pp. 24–56.

Tóth, Norbert (2018). Mi fán terem a vajdasági autonómia? A Vajdaság Autonóm Tartomány helye a legismertebb kisebbségi autonómiatipológiák koordináta-rendszerében. Ördögh, Tibor (ed.). *Variációk autonómiára.* Szabadka: Vajdasági Magyar Doktoranduszok és Kutatók Szervezete, pp. 10–22.

Ujváry, Ferenc (1984). *Bokréták a Galga völgyében.* Aszód: Petőfi Sándor Művelődési Központ.

Ujváry, Gábor (2012). Pozitív válaszok Trianonra – Klebelsberg Kuno és Hóman Bálint kulturális politikája. *Korunk*, No. 23(11), pp. 70–72.

Urbán, Balázs (2019). Fábián-Benkó: A baranyai gyöngyösbokréta; Kleist: Pentheszileia. *Criticai Lapok*, No. 28(3–4), pp. 11–13.

Vardy, Steven (1983). The Impact of Trianon upon Hungary and the Hungarian Mind: The Nature of Interwar Hungarian Irredentism. *Hungarian Studies Review*, No. 10(1), pp. 21–42.

Vámos, Gabriella (2018). Gyertek el az arató ünnepségre. Felülről szervezett kultúra Sztálinvárosban az 1950-es években. *Kultúra és Közösség*, No. 9(1), pp. 31–42.

Vekerdi, László (1985). Művelődés-eszme és közösség. *Jelenkor*, No. 28(7–8), pp. 707–714.

Vida, István (1976). *A Független Kisgazdapárt Politikája, 1944–1947.* Budapest: Akadémiai.

Volly, István (1977). A Gyöngyös Bokréta indulása (Adalékok). *Tánctudományi Tanulmányok*, No. 9.

Volly, István (1991). A Gyöngyösbokréta múltja és jövője. *Néprajzi Hírek*, No. 20(1), pp. 112–115.