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**“The Anthropology of Value and Tradition: Changing Identities in a
Nomadic Society in South-Ethiopia”**

2015-2018

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First and foremost I would like to express my gratitude to the OTKA scientific board to trust me with this grant.

In this study I described that the moment of cultural encounter between African hosts and Western guests is a fundamental yet empirically under-researched aspect of anthropology. Although assumptions made around encounters draw upon useful conceptual approaches still few long term empirical studies have been undertaken on the specific cultural contexts of tourism encounters and on the hosts' thoughts about them in an African context. Heritage, tradition or authenticity is given in time and fixed in space. In my research I demonstrated that the Mursi cultural reflexivity contains creative performances, a creation of a Mursi realism wherein ethnic identity, symbols, social life are presented and maintained partly for the sake of the tourist gaze and partly as a constant self-reflection. In most of my project publications I dealt with the question of the different images that local people present for their visitors, images that carry complex cultural meanings. These multi-layered implications are particularly evident in the Mursi society which still lacks an established locus of formal state control, formal institutions of tourism, and a functioning civil society. My argument was that the Mursi metaphorically encompassed their visitors in Solbu and Babuttinya, and tried to persuade them that their performance is part of their everyday life. They used diverse tactics to enchant the tourists, altering their skin and faces. Here, the socially and politically weak mobilise the mysterious power that Western tourists attribute to them in terms of a marginal society within the state. What we see is the struggle of the weak within the state. This art requires a productivity and creativity. I described that producing a new economy of performance and politics of dealing with strangers while demarcating and defending Mursiness is a constant force of reflecting on the changing social and natural environment. People persistently negotiate their cultural and social categories of self and other. In my publications I tried to describe this process.

I. Year:

The project took three years. In the first year of the research there were two major goals proposed in the research plan. The first one was to prepare and conduct the fieldwork in southwestern-Ethiopia. This was carried out entirely, a forty days long anthropological fieldwork was conducted in the target research area from 23 July until 26 August, 2016. The fieldwork was successful as I was able to complete the necessary interviews and observations on the research topic. I was also able to update my data on the current situation of the ongoing Ethiopian development programmes that influence the Mursi everyday life. I followed up the current state of the tourism industry in the area, conducted interviews with some of the officials in Jinka and Hana towns, people who are responsible for the Mursi development and security issues. I stayed mostly with my former host families in Butinya but also went to Dargush and Dirikorro to meet people and talk to them about my research questions.

The fieldwork, both from financial and professional point of view, went according to my original plan and was very successful. In this first year I have given six full length papers.

1. I participated in an international conference and gave a paper in English: 2016. June 9. Studying Tourism in Africa: an Interdisciplinary Endeavour. 4th Pécs African Studies Conference, University of Pécs. http://www.africa.pte.hu/?page_id=1281

2. I was an invited speaker in a seminar series in Switzerland: 2016 May 25. Native Performances: Tourism in South-Ethiopia. «Penser (par et avec) le tourisme» - thinking (through and with) tourism, seminar series, Université de Lausanne, Etudes de Tourisme, Switzerland.

3. I have given a paper in a Hungarian anthropological conference: 2016. May. 6. “A Box Full of Spirits” – tévzés a dzsungel közepén Dél-Etiópiában. Előadás. Szimbíózis Napok. Budapest.

4. I was a keynote plenary speaker in this conference: 2015 Oct. 9. Turizmus és transzformáció. Plenáris előadó az V. Turizmusföldrajzi szimpóziumon. Kodolányi János Főiskola és az MTA CSFK Földrajztudományi Intézet szervezésében. Budapest.

5. I was also an invited presenter in this international conference: 2015 Oct. 14. Some Thoughts on the Position of Anthropology in Hungary, The Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences-European Association of Social Anthropologists, Making Anthropology Matter Conference. Prague. <http://www.easaonline.org/agm.shtml>

6. Also, I was invited to give a paper in this seminar series in Hungary: 2015. Sept. 25. Súrlódások-Turisták és nomádok interakcióinak antropológiája Dél-Etiópiában. Meghívott előadó, A Pécsi Tudományegyetem Interdiszciplináris Doktori Iskola és a Néprajz – Kulturális Antropológia Doktori Programja szervezésében. Pécs. http://btk.pte.hu/esemenyek/surlodasok_turistak_es_nomadok_interakcioinak_antropologiaja_del_etiopiaban

The other proposed aim for the first year was my publications. Here I have successfully done all the proposed texts and also wrote up some extra article drafts and submitted them to different scientific journals.

1. I have written up the first draft of the Foreword (1500 words) and Introduction (8000 words) for my book in English on the Mursi. I have also started to edit and rewrite the already existing chapters of the book. After my first phase of my fieldwork I started to incorporate my new findings into the text.

2. I have written up a major Introduction chapter (8000 words) for an edited book on Tourism and Transformation (Turizmus és transzformáció, edited by Veronika Lajos, István Povedák and Tamás Régi).

3. I have submitted an article (3000 words) for Néprajzi Hírek on my latest fieldwork results.

4. I have written up a scientific article (4500 words) on the topic: anthropological fieldwork, submitted to the journal Ethno-Lore. This is my contribution to a workshop organized by my host institution.

5. I have written and submitted a book review on Csaba Mészáros: Tekintély és bizalom book to the ethnographic journal Tabula.

II. Year

The second year of the project also progressed according to my initial working plan. The only alteration from the original working plan was that (because of the unstable political situation in Ethiopia) I had to postpone my fieldwork to the following year.

In this year I have participated in nine (9) international and national conferences, I was invited to major international institutions to give speeches and keynote-lectures. Namely:

2016. Sept. 23. A terepmunka mint mágia. Paper presented at the “Terepmunka” workshop at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Ethnology, Budapest. Hungary.

2016. Oct. 26. Kinship, leadership and friendship: Relating to strangers among the Mursi in South-Ethiopia. School of Oriental and African Studies. Department of Anthropology and Sociology. Seminar Series. Invited Speaker. <https://www.soas.ac.uk/anthropology/events/anthropology-departmental-seminar/26oct2016-kinship-leadership-and-friendship-relating-to-strangers-among-the-mursi-in-south-ethiopia.html>

2016. Nov. 21. The Anthropology of Heritage and Tourism: An Ethiopian Case. Invited Speaker to the 70th anniversary of the Institute of Ethnology, Slovakian Academy of Sciences (Ethnology in the 3rd millennium: topics, methods, challenges conference). Smolenice Castle, Slovakia. <http://uet.sav.sk/?q=en/cultural-heritage-kulturne-dedicstvo>

2016. Nov. 5. The Magic of Things. Presentation at Anthropology of Encounters, the biannual conference of the Hungarian Cultural Anthropology Association, Szeged, Hungary. <https://sites.google.com/site/makatinfo/makat-esemenyek/vandorkonferenciak/encounters2016>

2016. Nov. 11. Invited discussant to the panel “Who is in? Who is out? The categories of tourism and migration, and the dynamics of socio-political inclusion and exclusion.” at the Anthropology in a World of Exclusion: Commonalities, Disciplinary Perspectives, Annual Conference of the Swiss Anthropological Association. Lausanne.

2017. Mar. 7. Traditional Games in Africa: The History and Politics of Mancala in Ethiopia.

Invited Speaker for the Workshop: „Are you Game: Origin, Transformation and Culture of Games” Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest. <https://medievalstudies.ceu.edu/events/2017-03-07/traditional-games-africa-history-and-politics-mancala-ethiopia>

2017. April. 5. Ethnicity and tourism in Africa at Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences International Symposium 2017. Budapest.

2017. May. 12. Az emberi test antropológiája. Társadalom és esztétika. Szimbiózis Kulturális Antropológiai Fesztivál.

Budapest. <http://szimbiózisnapok.antroport.hu/program.php?aktprog=808>

2017. June. 8. Földessy Edina: Torday Emil kongói gyűjteménye. Introduction of a museum catalogue. Organized by the Hungarian Ethnography Association in the Museum of Ethnography, Budapest. <http://www.neprajzitasasag.hu/?q=node/1785>

All these public lectures were entirely or partly based on my current research results, or in one way or another I referred to my research in all speeches.

I was also involved in one major conference organization at the Hungarian Cultural Anthropological Association biannual conference in Szeged, Hungary, where I took a major role in designing both the theme of the conference and the organization of the conference. Here I did not only give an individual paper but also opened the conference.

I have donated ethnographic objects to two major Hungarian museums from my research field. This was also related to my research area of heritage. One of them was the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest (an African shoe) and the other was the Hungarian Geography Museum, Érd (several ethnographic objects from Africa).

Also, in this year I have published the following research articles, book chapters:

- 2017 A turizmus és társadalmi változás kapcsolatának néhány antropológiai és szociológiai értelmezése. In: *Turizmus és Transzformáció Régi, T.-Rátz T. Michalkó, G. (szerk.).* Orosháza;

Budapest: Kodolányi János Főiskola; MTA CSFK Földrajztudományi Intézet; Magyar Földrajzi Társaság, pp. 11-27.

- 2017 Rejtélyes kőpadlók Kelet-Afrikában: antropológia és régészet találkozása. In: *Élet és Tudomány* LXXII (2): 41-43.

- 2016 A terepmunka mint mágia. In: *Ethno-Lore*. A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Néprajztudományi Intézetének Évkönyve. XXIII. 299-310.

- 2016 Antropológiai terepmunka Dél-Etiópiában. In: *Néprajzi Hírek*, a Magyar Néprajzi Társaság tájékoztatója. 45(2):41-47.

- 2016 Szibéria mint periféria – egy afrikanista értelmezése. In: *Tabula* (eISSN: 2064-7190) 17: p. 10.

I have also co-edited a book:

Régi, T.-Rátz T. Michalkó, G. (szerk.) 2017. Turizmus és Transzformáció Orosháza; Budapest: Kodolányi János Főiskola; MTA CSFK Földrajztudományi Intézet; Magyar Földrajzi Társaság,

In this year I was also co-editing a book with Veronika Lajos and István Povedák. This became the peer-reviewed bi-lingual volume of the conference organized by the Hungarian Cultural Anthropological association in 2016. For this volume I have not only edited but also wrote a major theoretical introduction chapter on the cultural contact zones, a topic core of my current research theme.

In this year I have finished the first draft of my English language Mursi monograph. This text was submitted to the book series of the Royal Anthropological Institute. So, in the second year I have written up the remaining chapters, and finalized the first draft of the whole book.

In the second year I have also started to write the Hungarian monograph and have finished three chapters and two half chapters. The text, planned to be on ethnographic fieldwork and some related theoretical issues and will be published under the title “Minimális antropológia”.

III. Year:

In the third year the research went according to the initial plans. In the last leg of my fieldwork was carried out in December 2017. This was a successful fieldtrip where I visited my major fieldwork site where I could complete my data set and carry out the remaining interviews. I was also able to visit Northern-Ethiopia, the area which was, from political, economic and cultural aspect, always very influential on the fringe territory I am working in.

In this year I was also able to make a study tour to the Roman Museo Pigorini a Museo Della Civiltà. Here I could not only visit the Ethiopian materials but also meet with experts on Ethiopia. These materials were all incorporated into my publications.

In this year I gave five academic public lectures. One was a plenary on an international conference. Besides these I have given several public programmes at the Sebastiao Salgado exhibition at Múcsarnok, Budapest.

- 2018. Aug. 14. Murszi lányok felnőtté válása (Etiópia). Sziget 2018 / Sátor Határok Nélkül. Néprajzi Múzeum, Budapest, Sziget fesztivál.

- 2018. May 11. A láb esztétikája. Előadás, Szimbiozis Napok, <http://szimbiozis.com/2018/04/16/a-lab-esztetikaja/>

- 2018 May 25. The Problems of Symbols in Africa. Füssi Nagy Géza Memorial Lecture. The 5th African Studies Conference, Pécs, University of Pécs.

- 2018 May 15. Etiópia, alcím nélkül. A Magyar Földrajzi Társaság Turizmusföldrajzi Szakosztálya és a Kodolányi János Főiskola közös programsorozata. Budapest.

- 2017. Oct. 10. Mi a fenét keresek én itt... barangolások érdekes helyeken. Előadás A Magyar Földrajzi Társaság Turizmusföldrajzi Szakosztálya és a Kodolányi János Főiskola közös programsorozata. Budapest. <https://www.kodolanyi.hu/aktualis/rendezvenynaptar/926>

- 2017. Oct. 6. Az „on the footsteps of...” jelenség nyomában. Előadás a VI. Magyar Turizmusföldrajzi Szimpóziumon. Kodolányi János Főiskola. Budapest. https://www.kodolanyi.hu/images/tartalom/File/rendezveny/program_2015.pdf

- 2017. Oct. 28. nov. 4, 11, Az égből származó. Nílus völgyi vándorlások. az első eső öröme. Előadások a Múcsarnokban. Budapest.

<http://mucsarnok.hu/program/programok.php?mid=tMnAojXG2upU4IM5sZqHqz>

<http://www.mucsarnok.hu/program/programok.php?mid=CmvIWCiHTuzAY3QiLQTVrRr>

<http://mucsarnok.hu/program/programok.php?mid=zoEu8iVi0hDJpQybCHFPcj>

Publications:

In this third year I have finished the editing process of „A találkozások antropológiája”-The Anthropology of Encounters” book. This became the first edition of the book series of the Hungarian Cultural Anthropological Association. Besides the editing works I have written the main introductory chapter of the book. (Régi 2017 Kreatív határvidékek: a kontaktzónák antropológiája. In: The Anthropology of Encounters/A találkozások antropológiája. (Lajos V.-Povedák, I.-Régi, T. (szerk.)). Magyar Kulturális Antropológiai Társaság: Budapest.pp. 11-32.)

I have also successfully published my individual monograph titled “Minimális antropológia” by Qadmon Kiadó, Budapest. This book is about the problem of fieldwork and about the Mursi of South-Ethiopia.

I have finished the English language manuscript “How Natives Think? About tourists, for example” and submitted it to the Royal Anthropological Institute book series editor Prof. Jeremy MaClancy. I have already received the positive reviews from the anonym reviewers. They asked minor revisions on the book, which I have completed and resubmitted the manuscript. I believe it will be published in 2019.

Also, I have translated my whole book manuscript from English to Hungarian. I have not only translated but updated and extended this for the Hungarian publication. I have submitted it already to L’Harmattan Kiadó, to Dr. Gábor Vargyas, who is the editor of the “Kultúrák keresztútján” series. The Manuscript titled: “Hogyan gondolkodnak a bennszülöttek? Például a turistákról” will be published in 2019.

My research results were used for my teaching work also. I have several courses where I use the data from my fieldwork site and generally about Ethiopia.

All in all I think this individual project was very successful given the fact that it is a PD-1 scheme where I didn't receive salary and I have to teach/work besides the research activity.