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## ABSTRACTS

### Tamás Attila Hajnáczy: Gypsy/Roma Identities, Voices, and Agency between the Late Nineteenth Century and the Second World War

In the period between the end of the nineteenth century and the outbreak of the Second World War, there were three main linguistic groups of Roma in Hungary: the Hungarian Gypsies (Romungros), the Boyash, and the Vlach Roma. The Roma population did not live in isolation among the Hungarian majority: processes of their integration and of linguistic and ethnic assimilation were highly varied, resulting in a broad range of identity patterns. For cultural, structural and economic reasons, historical sources have been preserved mainly from Gypsy musicians belonging to the Romungro group. In their case, it is possible to articulate “Roma voices,” examine their agency, and explore their identities in greater depth. The identity of Gypsy musicians was shaped by their Roma heritage, as well as their attachment to their occupation and Hungarian identity. In the period under study, the identity of Gypsy musicians was not static; it changed dynamically, in dialectical relation to both major political events and social changes.

### Fruzsina Jankó: The Cup and the Goblet: The Story of the Christening Gifts of a Transylvanian Primor Clan

The study describes the modern scientific material analyses of a silver cup from 1655 and a silver goblet from 1936, providing an insight into their present functions in the life of the family. Originally, both keepsakes functioned as christening gifts, handed down through many generations. The cup’s first owner was Péter Zágoni Jankó III (1655–1690), while the goblet belonged to András Zágoni Jankó (1936–1944), who endured the atrocities of the Second World War. Enlisting the expertise of a museologist specializing in ecclesiastic art as well as a physicist / materials scientist, the study examines the goldsmithing techniques of both artifacts. Through a 2024 interview with key informant Tamás Jankó (András’s brother, born 1945), it traces various segments of aristocratic attitudes inherent in the objects across historical periods, as well as the family members’ thinking and emotions concerning these objects to this day. The two objects have retained their original symbolism, while their roles have changed over time as they became commemorative “family heirloom.” The paper concludes with a brief discussion of modern christening gifts in the Christian church tradition.

## András Keszei: Objects, Material Culture, and Historiography

Sidestepping the investigation of revolutions and the dynamics of productive forces, the growing appreciation of material culture is better understood through recognizing the inextricable connection of everyday life to the objects that surround it. According to this perspective, our lives unfold not just *among* objects, but *through* them, to the point that the functioning of society is unimaginable without them. In daily life, objects and people intertwine in chains of action making the material world—fashioned by human goals and intentions—an indispensable element of both individual and social functioning. Applying scientific categories, dichotomies such as nature versus society or animate versus inanimate impose an artificial division on areas that are inseparable in the processes of life.

Thus, after the Material Turn, the objects around us have emerged from their passive role. They are no longer seen merely as ornamental or passive bystanders to actions, the outcomes of which – admittedly, usually through human use – they help shape. Viewed in this way, our objects are understood more as “external agents” of human thought than as inanimate entities. For historiography, this principle means that objects are no longer considered merely as exhibits that support arguments to bolster hypotheses or enhance historical accuracy. Instead, they are independent – even central – subjects of analysis.

## Kata Szathmári: Use-Wear Analysis of Medieval Bone Skates

From the Bronze Age onward, tools of broadly similar appearance made primarily from metacarpal and metatarsal bones of large ungulates appear in various archaeological periods. These tools are lightly worked, with carved bone ends, and occasionally feature various holes. Researchers have been debating their function since the nineteenth century. The dominant view in research identifies these artifacts, particularly those with a flat surface on one side, as bone skates, while some suggest that certain pieces might have served as sled runners or fishing net weights.

The present study examines bones from medieval and early modern archaeological contexts and ethnographic collections. Skating on bones is known from ethnographic literature, medieval and early modern written records, as well as visual sources. The aim was to make it possible to determine whether the bones recovered from archaeological contexts were indeed used for skating as described in historical sources, or if other functions could be attributed to them. The use-wear analyses chosen for this purpose involved comparing traces on archaeological finds with those on ethnographic objects under a stereomicroscope. The methodology of experimental archaeology was enlisted to ensure the reliability and acceptance of the results. The experiment involved creating wear traces by

sliding bone on ice to establish the skating function of the original pieces. The results of the investigation enable the classification of the examined bones into functional groups based on their original use.

### Kinga Veress: Hungarian Food Packaging across a Century of Consumer Culture – Design Theory, Historical Outline

This study examines the place and epistemological role of twentieth-century Hungarian food packaging in the nation's culture. Its main research question is how used food packaging – considered a “banal object,” in the “waste” phase of the product consumption cycle – transcends its original function and acquires cultural and symbolic meaning. The research explores how these objects integrate into the epistemological frameworks of art history, design culture, sociology, cultural anthropology, material culture, and consumer research studies. Moving beyond these contexts, it also examines the professional considerations and historical sources that inform how food packaging displayed in museum collections as “authentic objects perceived as testimony to reality” (*musealia*) can be interpreted as carriers of value.

Drawing on the author's PhD research, the study presents examples of “everyday design” and the world of commercial objects. It focuses on Hungarian pop-cultural items that gained widespread recognition through consumption and, upon assuming a new role in the museum context, contribute to the understanding and in-depth analysis of their original consumer environment. The analysis interprets consumption as symbolic cultural activity and the analyzed packaging as complex sign systems reflecting design thinking. In doing so, it presents the multifaceted design perspectives of branding and communication design with the aim of research methodology representation.

