

ETHNOSEMIOTIC RESEARCH IN HUNGARY

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Ethnosemiotic research in Hungary began in the late nineteen sixties. It was during this period that representatives of the humanities, primarily from the disciplines of philosophy, linguistics, aesthetics and film theory, began to adopt a new approach in their investigation of various cultural sign-systems. From the beginning, Hungarian anthropologists attended interdisciplinary conferences on semiotics. The two decades that have elapsed since then have allowed us to review their efforts and their results.

Before outlining the systematic research of the last couple of years, I would like to draw attention to some ideas and work which belong to the prehistory of Hungarian (ethno)semiotics. Work produced during the interwar period is rarely mentioned; even more rarely quoted are works written during the 19th century and earlier periods, although every new field of research needs to find its antecedents in the history of science. This is what I shall attempt to do in the following pages. Furthermore, I will also examine a number of works on sign and communication-theory which address general questions, works which have a relevance for Hungarian ethnosemiotics.

The prehistory of Hungarian semiotics

Studies dealing with the history of semiotics take the reader into the late medieval world of European medicine. Medical semiology¹ evolved from the science of describing the symptoms of diseases, it was in this field that it was first conceptualized. A distinguished figure in the history of Hungarian medicine is Ferenc Pápai-Páriz (1649–1716), a Transylvanian. His view was doubtless conditioned by contemporary medical semiology, as evidenced by the descriptions of diseases in his famous work *Pax Corporis*, “the peace of the body”. To quote an example:

"On apoplexy"

The origin, the nature and the causes of apoplexy are the same as those set out above in my discussion of falling sickness — the only difference being this, that, whereas falling sickness affects the whole body, apoplexy affects only some parts of it.

Those afflicted by the malady lose their ability to move, their sensation and consciousness, only their breathing remains; though the latter, too, is invariably affected, sometimes to a greater and sometimes to a lesser degree.

ITS SIGNS: the signs of the disorder include a sudden collapse of the patient, accompanied by a heavy snoring sound; the face is often contorted, with tears running involuntarily; the mouth opens wide, the eyes are closed or remain open; there is frequently foaming at the mouth, though, in a particularly severe stage, it can be fatal even without any froth and snoring sound...

ITS MEANINGS: In this disorder, the better the breathing, the more hope there is; otherwise, there is little hope indeed. Sometimes indeed, the breathing is so faint as to lead one to give up the patient for dead; in such cases you should apply this test to see if he is alive: put a vessel with some water in it on his chest; if the water moves, it is a sign of his still breathing, even if faintly. Or hold a mirror to his mouth: if he is breathing, the mirror will dim...

ITS REMEDIES: Since this malady is most severe, it swiftly kills its victims; wherefore it calls for urgent help. In these maladies in case of an attack, the patient must be vigorously shaken and rocked forthwith; his hands and feet should be rubbed vigorously, and his tender part should be out in good time; there is no need to drain much blood, the object being merely to facilitate its flow; yet, if the patient is full of youthful vigour and is of a sanguineous constitution, copious bleeding is recommended..."²

The "signs", "meanings" and "remedies" of diseases may be regarded as anticipating the tripartite division of modern semiotics — syntactics, semantics and pragmatics. It is important not to forget that Pápai-Páriz wrote the introduction to his book in 1687.

At the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, particularly in Transylvania, the intelligentsia maintained constant and lively contact with Western Europe's intellectual centres, including the most important universities like Göttingen and Utrecht. Transylvania, though not what one might call a paradise for men of learning, nevertheless often produced spectacular works simultaneous with the achievements emanating from well-known Western European centres. Examples of such figures include Farkas Bolyai and his son János Bolyai, who made their mark primarily in the field of mathematics, the formulation of the theoretical questions of non-Euclidean geometry as their enduring contribution. Less well-known, however, has been János Bolyai's theory of signs and communication. Hundreds of handwritten pages by the younger Bolyai remain in the Teleki Library of Marosvásárhely. Some of his ideas on sign theory dating from around 1823 are preserved here. These are marked by great discrimination and close detail:

“We can communicate to others our thoughts, feelings and wishes — in general, our intellectual state — not only by dint of palpable, visible or audible signs, but also by such proper notice which may be perceived by any sense organ...

...signs covering all possible instances and therefore generally useful on their own as well, can be perceived or touched or felt; there are written and kinetic signs — the latter being used by the deaf-and-dumb for communication; and finally, there are audible sonant signs, such as those used in speech; indeed, the sounds of instruments or singing could also perform the same function by substituting musical notes for letters. Yet, whichever signs or symbols we may employ, there can be no doubt wherein the principal value of the sign or symbol lies in this; namely, that the symbol is meaningful, i.e. it is fixed both in relation to ourselves and in relation to others...

Visible signs fall into two categories, namely, (...) they can be permanent or transitory. Writing belongs in the first category. Transitory signs include the various gestures — especially movements of the hand — and the audible signs.”³

The history of Transylvanian scientific writing has shown that János Bolyai's (1802–1860) interest in the science of language was aimed at constructing a comprehensive and, as far as possible, contradiction-free “science of signs”.⁴

It should be noted that in the Transylvania of that historical period, Bolyai was not alone in his interest in semiotics. In the diary of the lesser-known Utopian thinker Lajos Gyulay, we can find some lines relating to semiotics as well: “The word is the sign of the idea, while writing is the sign of the word; and the science of signs is called semiotics.”⁵ — this entry dates from 1835. One of the insights provided by the above passage is that semiotic thinking did have antecedents in Hungary; another is the semiotics had a name as well: it was called “jegytudomány” (the science of marks or signs).⁶

In 1841 a work by András Vandrák (1807–1884), presumably the first anthropological study to be written in Hungarian, was published in Eperjes. Entitled “*Lelekileges embertan, vagyis pszichikai anthropológia*” (Psychological Anthropology), it too contains a definition of the science of signs: “Semiotics is the science of hallmarking ideas or assigning them signs”.⁷

Around the middle of the 19th century, the study of signs was becoming popular. In one of his “preliminary studies in aesthetics”, János Erdélyi, the initiator of Hungarian folklore studies, provided a definition of the concept of symbol: “Because the phenomenon which denotes something does not offer itself as an external to our view, but something else as in the *symbol (symbolum)* where every word points to some meaning and is valid not merely in relation to itself.”⁸ In his collection “*Magyar közmondások könyve*” (Book of Hungarian Proverbs), he applies this approach to phrases and idioms:

“Under the notion of proverbs we include all those short sayings which, in a popularly inherited form, live on as symbolic statements (*sententiae symbolicae*) in oral tradition. It is

therefore, part of their nature that they should readily be understandable by a wide audience without requiring explanation or a mental effort on the part of the listener and that people should, when necessary, be able to use them even though the phrases have long since lost their literal meanings.”⁹ ... “Hence proverbs have symbolism as their theory, with life as their practice. They derive their principle from the former and find their shape in the latter, these two providing the pivots on which the essence of proverbs turns. To put it simply; even if an idea has a symbolic presentation, unless it is accepted in life it will not become a proverb; moreover, it seems a fair assumption to make that the basis of these locutions taken up by life is almost invariably some experience, something that actually happened and which inherently distinguishes the nature of proverbs from consciously invented maxims derived from philosophical reasoning.

Every figure of speech, if it has some idea behind it, is in fact a symbol. All the traditional wisdom of primitive peoples was expressed in symbols, indeed nothing more characteristic could be said about early humanity than that it tended to feel truths before it knew them.”¹⁰

Not only did the work, published in 1851, see the process of symbol-formation clearly, it also attended to the social embeddedness of tropes and idioms which possess symbolic meanings; today it might be said that Erdélyi was also interested in the pragmatic side of the use of signs.

Arnold Ipolyi (1823–1886) in his great work “*Magyar Mythologia*” (Hungarian Mythology), devoted a special chapter to symbols. He listed the signs, omens and symbols figuring in folk belief and explained what each was supposed to mean.¹¹ His examples suggest that he instinctively anticipated the modern approach which views mythology as a system of signs.

The beginnings (in the first half of the 20th century)

In the interwar period, alongside the various trends of European science, the demand arose in Hungary for the formulation of a theory that would embrace the entire domain of human behaviour. Hungarian linguists — primarily Zoltán Gombocz and Gyula Laziczius — started to feature in their works the structuralist and presemiotic ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure and the Prague circle of linguists.

In 1944, Zoltán Rezessy finished his manuscript entitled “*Közléstudomány*” (The Science of Communication),¹ which as regards its object, sought, above all, to define political journalism as a science in its own right. At the same time, it was a pioneering work of Hungarian semiotics. In the chapter called “*Jelalakzatok*” (Patterns of Sign),² he defined the elementary forms of communication, the concepts of *jel*, *jelvény*, *jelzés* (sign, emblem, signal) and *jelkép* (symbol), after which Rezessy considered the manifestation of different types of signs, hence it is one of the first (though not *the* first) typologies of signs produced in Hungary.

An interesting personality, active during the interwar period of the Hungarian artistic avant-garde, was the philosopher Valéria Dienes, a translator of Bergson. She formulated a comprehensive theory to record the sign-system of movements. Her theory of symbols developed on the basis of her analysis of the world of signs of dance and eurythmics. Had it been recognised, it might have provided some valuable insights for ethnography as well.³ In the field of pedagogy, Sándor Karácsony, a disciple of Gombocz, recognized the importance of the sign-systems governing culture. In his opinion, the distinctive world view of the Hungarian language — including its frequent use of coordinative structures — determines the fundamental features of “the Hungarian habit of thinking and feeling”.⁴ In his books, marked by a powerfully expressive style, an understanding of the use of signs and symbols is the basis of pedagogy. Karácsony holds the view that the life of the community is made possible by the combined use of language; as a system of signs, and art; as a system of symbols.⁵

In a book published in 1942, Gábor Lükő, a student of Sándor Karácsony, scrutinized the systems of symbols used in folk art. Far from limiting his inquiries to decorative folk art, he also considered the poetics of folk songs as well. Lükő continued his studies on the subject and in 1957, under the title “Images and symbols in Hungarian folk poetry”, he delivered a lecture to the Hungarian Ethnographical Society. In his book “*A magyar lélek formái*” (Forms of the Hungarian Psyche), he enunciated what amounts to an early program of the stages of ethnosemiotic analysis. In spite of the intervening years his ideas remain essentially valid:

“When dealing with folk art, folk poetry and folk music, we are led to ask the same three questions, which — on the analogy of language — pertain to semantics, syntactics, and phonetics. The meaning of art is figurative, i.e. symbolic and universal, and it is invariably based on the original, single meaning of the sign (word or image). It is the relationship of these two that we have to examine if we are to acquaint ourselves with the system of symbols used by our people. The manner of relating symbols to each other is the syntactic problem of art; while the technical elaboration of them is akin to the phonetic problems of language. In trying to master foreign languages, studying merely their phonetics is not enough: we have to get to grips with their syntax and semantics as well, if we are going to understand them.”⁶

In the 30s and 40s, several studies rich in data were written about the world of objects of traditional folk culture. It was stated that, in the course of social use, certain objects (e.g. the engagement presents)⁷ acquire symbolic meaning, and have an important role in regulating the life of communities (see marks of property and boundary-indicators⁸ or dress and costume marks with distinctive

features).⁹ In 1941, Ákos Szendrey published in the journal *Ethnographia*, an article under the title “*A magyar nép jelnyelve*” (The Sign-language of the Hungarian People).¹⁰ Despite the suggestive title, it dealt only with gestures and was no more than a simple enumeration of data, written under the influence of other, earlier publications dealing with gesture-language.

Éva Putz, a young Hungarian researcher wrote about a wedding which took place in the northern part of Hungary. Though dating from 1943, her work displays — even by today’s standards — a surprisingly modern semiotic approach.¹¹

Concerning the history of the beginnings of Hungarian ethnosemiotics, there are a few works that include valuable cultural historical material and address, among other topics, the old “Hungarian” language of flowers.¹² Other studies scan the material signs that were in use during the course of the past centuries: sign-boards, guild-emblems, and house signs.¹³

In “*Jelek könyve*” (The Book of Signs), published in 1941, a body of rich historical material supplements the series of books that appeared prior to the War. A translation of an English work, “with occasional Hungarian examples added”, it contains all types of signs, “as were used by the peoples of prehistoric times, antiquity, early Christianity, and the Middle Ages”.¹⁴ From an ethnographical standpoint the last pages are most interesting since they show old Hungarian marks of property and sign variants used by different members of one family.

The fifties is also regarded as part of semiotic prehistory. It was the decade which saw the launch of a new journal published by the Ethnographical Museum: *Index Ethnographicus*, which ran a series of articles under the summary title “The ethnography of expression”. The authors explored the use of signs found in folk culture, appending a rich collection of examples. The series did have antecedents: in 1941, Béla Gunda had already published a paper under the title “*A kereszt, mint mágikus jel az agyagedényeken*” (The Cross as a Magic Sign on Earthenware Vessels), which he continued by enumerating “the magic signs protecting the house”.¹⁵ Also relevant are two articles by József Csaba,¹⁶ one of which discusses the use of the symbol of the cross in a shielding and protecting role. Later a review of the literature on the subject led him to an examination of the use of symbols so evident in folk art.

Sándor Dömötör studied the symbolic decorations of wooden graveposts, and earlier he had produced an attempt at a theoretical summary, under the title “*A jelkép, mint néprajzi fogalom*” (The Symbol as an Ethnographical Concept).¹⁷ Imre Dankó collected from folk customs and the lyrics of folk songs data relating to the symbolism of the apple, making his study an important contribution towards an understanding of the symbols of folk songs.¹⁸ On the

same subject, pioneering work was done by Zsuzsanna Erdélyi, who studied a peculiar mode of the use of symbols in Hungarian folk poetry (i.e. the colour symbolism of folk songs), and who managed to identify the symbolic meaning of particular colours in Hungarian folk songs.¹⁹ Over ten years later, Erdélyi reported in the pages of *Ethnographia* the results of her researches which had taken a new direction, focusing on the medieval motifs found in archaic folk prayers. One section of this study treats the symbolism of prayers²⁰ and Christian light symbolism (e.g. the "golden temple"), which are recurring elements in these texts. Exploring the symbolism of prayers is an inexhaustible treasure trove of material for further research in the attempt to discover more about the older strata of Hungarian folk belief.

The study of other branches of folk culture also convinced researchers that it was possible and worthwhile to look for signs in decorated objects. Edit Fél and Tamás Hofer wrote: "The human figures in folk art and their movements have a symbolic meaning. It is precisely this symbolic meaning that renders the laconic portrayals so powerfully expressive. The peasant mode of portrayal brings out individual, personal features, while preserving and accentuating other features, attributes, and gestures. Certain attributes, some kind of sign-system, constantly recur in portrayals, distinguishing the human types."²¹ This quotation demonstrates that one can look for a sign-system in visual folk art as well.

Index Ethnographicus contains publications of varying lengths²² that review the hallmarks and property marks to be found on various objects and implements. The marks of ownership used in Hungary to brand cattle were reviewed and reported — as exhaustively as possible — by Ernő Tárkány-Szücs.²³

The first two decades of Hungarian ethnosemiotics

At the end of the 60s (in the academic year of 1968–69), Vilmos Voigt announced a special course in semiotics at the Faculty of Humanities of Budapest's Lóránd Eötvös University, and opened a new chapter in the history of Hungarian ethnosemiotics. In addition to the general introductory lectures, students were also treated to semiotic analyses of particular phenomena of culture. The Department of Folklore at Budapest University can thus claim to have been the first in Europe to provide lectures on ethnosemiotics as part of the regular course of study. In 1970 for example, an entire semester was devoted to presenting Soviet semiotic research into folkloric and mythological texts.¹ Authors of later publications were among those who attended these first lectures.

If our picture is to be accurate in terms of the history of scholarship, it should be mentioned that research into ethnosemiotics in Hungary was pioneered by

those linguists — in particular, György Szépe, Ferenc Papp, and János Petőfi S.² — who had already been regularly reporting on American and Soviet semiotic research and the fundamental methods of sign-theory. A man who played a special role in the history of international semiotics was the Hungarian-born Thomas A. Sebeok (or Tamás Sebők), who also had a major influence on the research being carried out in Hungary; not least through one of his articles published in the early 60s, focusing on the role of coding (analog and digital codes) in the development of signalling behaviour.³

The development of Hungarian ethnosemiotics was given a great boost by the fact that in these years, a whole string of essential foreign works appeared in translation.⁴

After these antecedents, or perhaps as a result of their works, two articles appeared simultaneously in 1971, both articulating the ethnosemiotic method as a program of research. In Vilmos Voigt's opinion, during the onset of semiotic research the idea had occurred that the system of cultural signs could be visualized on the model of the system of language. Individual ethnographical phenomena are expressly semiotic in nature and therefore ethnosemiotics helps us analyze and understand the essence of an ethnic group, the traditions characteristic of a people.⁵

The other paper was published under the title "*Jegyzetek az etnográfiai szemiotikához*" (Notes on Ethnographical Semiotics).⁶ The author proceeded on the assumption that the communicative phenomena of peasant culture could be understood as sign processes, and hence the methods of semiotics are applicable to them. In the course of his discussion of the theoretical questions, he defined the stages of (ethno)semiotic analysis. Hoppál produced examples to demonstrate how he had succeeded in revealing the system of interconnections existing between elementary signs. To describe the discipline concerning itself with the sign processes of ethnographical phenomena, he proposed (and coined the term in Moscow in November 1969) the name *ethnographic semiotics*, or *ethnosemiotics*⁷ for short.

The clarification of the theoretical and methodological questions of ethnosemiotic research in Hungary were greatly assisted by the setting up, in 1972, of the Work Committee for Semiotics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the launch of a series of offprints entitled *Szemiotikai Tanulmányok / Semiotic Studies*, in which over a hundred booklets have been published to date. It is one of the fundamental principles of research in the social sciences that, for each discipline, a scientific meta-language needs to be formulated. This language is a lexicon of theoretical terms — one that provides exact definitions of the concepts constantly used in individual fields, so that in the course of the concrete analyses, one can operate with these clearly defined terms.

In Hungarian research, that purpose was served by a whole series of theoretical overviews, as well as by surveys on the history of scholarship. We should mention above all, the studies of Vilmos Voigt, in which he focused on the relationship between folklore and semiotics, as well as the questions of social semiotics and the semiotics of culture.⁸ His writing "*Szemiotika és folklór*" (Semiotics and Folklore) is a particularly significant compendium of the history of the problem; in it he includes under ethnosemiotics all ethnically oriented semiotics and all ethnology with a semiotic interest. He affirmed that good ethnosemiotics and folkloristic semiotics was an intrinsically valid social science,⁹ which identified areas of social utilization.

The task of defining the place of semiotics in general, and ethno- and cultural semiotics in particular, was assisted by studies addressing the history of scholarship tracing the genesis of ethnosemiotics¹⁰ and by a number of independent volumes. Books devoting themselves to communication theory were the first to feature ethnosemiotic criteria,¹¹ followed by comprehensive works on semiotics, works with a theoretical basis.

Vilmos Voigt's¹² book was originally written as an introduction to social semiotics; it was, however, the first systematic work in Hungarian to explain the basic notions of the science of signs and the history of its emergence, from the beginnings to its rise in prestige in the 20th century and, finally, to the centres of semiotics active in our own days. The author is equally familiar with the aspirations of the Tartu-Moscow semiotic school and those of American semioticians, as well as Western European achievements. Finally, Voigt considers the areas, subjects, limits and the future of semiotics. The work is indeed, an essential Hungarian ethnosemiotics primer.

The work of Péter Józsa¹³ represents a major contribution to Hungarian cultural semiotics. Józsa was a researcher with a prodigious capacity for work; it was via his study of social communication, the forms and modes of manifestation for social consciousness, that he came upon the complex of questions of structuralism and, subsequently, of semiotics. As a man with a critical appreciation of the ideas of Lévi-Strauss, he explained (in a posthumously published book) that the structuralism of the French scholar holds the foundations of a theory of social semiotics. Józsa was convinced that the analysis of social sign processes could lead to laying the groundwork for a Marxist theory of social consciousness.

Csaba Andor, in his book dealing with research on culture and called "*Jel – Kultúra – Kommunikáció [Interdiszciplináris szempontok a kultúrakutatásban]*" (Sign – Culture – Communication [Interdisciplinary Considerations in Research into Culture]),¹⁴ applied criteria involving several academic disciplines. His work

provides a cultural semiotics based on information theory, with ample illustrative material and an ethnosemiotic analysis of festivals.

In addition to the works of individual authors, a whole string of collections of studies were published which I shall now enumerate in the chronological order of their appearance, with the studies contained in them to be reviewed later under subject headings. The first collection of studies on semiotics appeared, under the title "*Jel és közösség*" (Sign and Community)¹⁵ in 1975 and afterwards virtually every year a fresh volume was issued enriching the scientific literature available in Hungarian. For example Vol. 87 of *Ethnographia* (1976) devoted an entire issue to ethnosemiotics.¹⁶ During the ensuing years the Institute of Popular Education and the Committee for Semiotics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences published several volumes, including "*Jel és jelentés a társadalmi kommunikációban*" (Sign and Meaning in Social Communication – 1977)¹⁷ and "*A társadalom jelei*" (The Signs of Society – 1978)¹⁸. On the occasion of the semiotic conference held in Budapest in 1979, several volumes were published in English: partly original studies and partly reprints, research reports and summaries of the lectures¹⁹ and each volume contained studies on ethnosemiotics. Two symposia focusing on the semiotics of art were also published: one of them contains the material of a Hungarian–Soviet conference on the semiotics of literature,²⁰ with the other collection features excerpts (under the title "*Etno-art és [nép]művészet szemiotika*" (Ethno-art and Semiotics of [Folk] Art) from Soviet research exploring the sign-systems of folk art.²¹

In the same years (prompted, to some extent, by the research being carried out in Hungary) ethnosemiotic papers by Hungarian authors appeared in Transylvania and Novi Sad in Yugoslavia.²² In Hungary, the Ethnographical Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences published its first thematic volume containing semiotic analyses of folklore texts.²³ Distinguished among the Hungarian semiotic publications is a volume featuring the material of the international conference on semiotics held in Tihany. Published in 1981, under the title "*Kultúra és szemiotika*" (Culture and Semiotics),²⁴ the volume is a worthy finale to the first decade of Hungarian semiotics. Over a hundred studies, several special volumes by about fifty authors, is obviously not the kind of thing one can dismiss as merely a scientific "fashion". It is probably closer to the truth if one says that, in the 70s, ethnosemiotics was one of the most organized and in its methods, the most carefully considered scientific trends in ethnographical research in Hungary. A considerable group of researchers, proceeding on the same theoretical premises, investigated diverse areas of culture. In the following, I shall review these analytical ethnosemiotic studies, categorizing them according to their topics.

The world of everyday life signs

The world of phenomena of everyday communication, with its rich stock of signs and its multiplicity of symbols, is an inexhaustible area of ethnosemiotic inquiry. A monograph by Béla Buda, now printed in several editions,²⁵ provides authoritative theoretical guidance on the regularities of direct human communication. A whole series of studies describing the sign systems of particular localities were published: including gestures,²⁶ the language of hand signs used by workers in a factory in Ózd,²⁷ and the semiotics of greetings²⁸ and conversation.²⁹ The role of slogans, catch phrases and advertising in everyday life was analyzed by Péter Egyed.³⁰ Studies were made of the conventional sign-systems of car drivers³¹ and tailors,³² the symbols of splashboards and tattooed designs,³³ as well as the significance of signals given by village bells.³⁴ There were also treatises containing semiotic descriptions of games, sports³⁵ and other forms of entertainment.³⁶

Inquiry into the patterns of the use of space also began, producing the first Hungarian studies on proxemics aimed at exploring the rules governing the functioning of that thoroughly hidden sign-system.³⁷

A regular feature of day-to-day pastoral life on the Alföld, the Great Hungarian Plain, was a variety of special sign-systems used by the shepherds. It was during research trips he made to the Great Plain that Béla Gunda noted the signals used by shepherds. Already in the early 70s, he had completed two ethnosemiotic articles. The first entitled "*Pásztorok és jelek*" (Shepherds and Signs)³⁸ provides a wealth of accurate observations including commentary on the role of silence. Another study was devoted to love signals.³⁹ In the region around Nádudvar, József Szabadsfalvi collected data on the signals given by means of sweep-wells. To quote:

Sign 1: the well-sweep is let up, so that the water bucket is set on the rim of the well, where the shepherd stands when drawing water. *Meaning*: Look out, an official person has arrived.

Sign 2: the well-sweep is let up with the handle, so that the bucket dangles empty. *Meaning*: a call for help because a great misfortune (a death) has occurred.

Sign 3: the bucket, removed from the handle, is placed on top of the well-sweep. *Meaning*: the water of the well is not fit to drink (because for instance, an animal died in it).

Sign 4: the water bucket is on the rim of the well, with a kerchief or a woman's apron tied on the tip of the handle of the well. *Meaning*: a woman is staying in the shepherd's quarters; she has done the washing and has also been willing to provide some sexual services.⁴⁰

The sign-systems used in the daily routine of old peasant life also included cattlebrands, boundary marks and property signs. The types of signs used in branding cattle were examined by Ernő Tárkány-Szücs, whose articles have already been mentioned.⁴¹ The family property signs that cattle were branded with indicated the boundaries of landed property. In two studies, Lajos Takács examined social gestures possessing value signs. In one of the articles, recalling the history of a European legal custom as practised in Hungary, he described the custom of the "presentation of the clod", regarded as a sign of entrance into possession. The other article addressed an old custom: that of "suffering the whip lash treatment", the essence of which was that the young man who was beaten remembered, even decades later, the scene of his humiliation, the particular part of the fields where he was whipped.⁴² A third study he wrote also dealt with a historical-ethnosemiotic subject and described the old boundary marking idols.⁴³

On the sign-systems of objects, Imre Gráfik devoted an entire series of studies to analyzing signs indicating ownership. In one of his first articles, he proceeded on the assumption that in folk culture the transaction and direction of socially important actions involve a multiplicity of sign-systems,⁴⁴ which include marks of ownership. Gráfik's fundamental objective was to try and interpret in semiotic terms (relying on the material and the results of earlier research) the sign-system we use in daily living. In the first section of the study, he addressed the role of property, as a category to be denoted in the historico-social development of mankind. In another study, he discussed the regularities of the internal system of the transmission of information performed by property signs, with special regard to property marks used within families. Using the mathematical apparatus of information theory (entropy analysis), he tried to identify the patterns whereby, within particular families, the original family property mark might change through use by individual family members.⁴⁵ The studies by Gráfik are a major contribution not only to ethnosemiotics, but also to historical ethnographical research, in its traditional sense.⁴⁶

At this point, we should mention two brief but all the more interesting articles published in the Kolozsvár-based annual "*Korunk Évkönyv*" (Yearbook of Our Times), both of them dealing with the signs seen on sacks. Béla Kabay wrote about the property-indicating role of stripes woven into sack fabric,⁴⁷ and in another study he analyzed the "coding principles of stripe-writing", stating that "ethnosemiotic tradition is nothing other than the aggregate of the customs of sign usage that have proved optimum in the course of time".⁴⁸ Transylvanian researchers provided a model description of how this microcosm of distinguishing property marks came into existence in peasant life; it is described how the

fact that one wagon, used to carry wheat from several farmers to the mill, created the need for identification of sacks and their contents.

Within the world of material culture, it is clear that a rich body of literature exists on the topic of grave markers found in Hungary, and wooden graveposts, in particular. In 1968, Károly Kós prepared an essay based on extensive field work, which described the individual sections of wooden graveposts, distinguishing the characteristic embellishments of men's and women's graveposts and the symbolic significance of the colouring and the carved signs. In short, he offered a "reading" of the sign-language of wooden graveposts, concluding that finding a key to the sign-language of grave markers, with all its social and cultic implications, was a task yet to be performed.⁴⁹

As if responding to that very challenge, a number of young researchers arrived on the scene almost simultaneously;⁵⁰ in addition to the formal analysis of the sign-language of objects, they were also interested in questions of social background and historical entrenchment, and their work has its basis in ethnosemiotics. Tünde Zentai, for example, reviewed (on the basis of reports by an excellent interviewee) the burial traditions of a village in the Great Plain; Nádudvar, as well as the material relics associated with the wooden graveposts. As regards her methods, she sought guidance from the following as she stated at the outset: "... the group of wooden graveposts and the graveyard may be conceived of as a sign-system which reflects (through the communication of signs by objects, even without any verbal support medium) a definite segment of the relevant community's system of customs and social condition, a portion of which are judged to be important by the community itself."⁵¹

Essentially the same is true of the relationship between the graveyard and society; in the past, the order to be observed at funerals (more specifically, the line-up around the coffin) was still highly important,⁵² whereas today it is scarcely conscious any more, making it necessary to record the order. Nor is the use of symbols conscious any more, warns Gyula László,⁵³ who looks at old funeral customs and their possible meanings through the archeologist's eye. It is vital to unveil the historical data and antecedents in order to provide a critical interpretation of them, as the debate on the origin of our wooden graveposts has not yet been closed.⁵⁴ Some new results were presented during a 1990 symposium held in Nagykovács, which was devoted to the "cult of the dead".⁵⁵

The semiotic analysis of folk customs

Alongside the sign-systems of everyday life, the semiotic description of festivals and festive customs, and the various related folk customs, is also an

interesting task. In the research done in Hungary, the works of Péter Niedermüller displayed an unequivocal semiotic orientation. He scrutinized the custom of "birching", the rites of passage and the semiotic aspects of research on customs.⁵⁶ Anikó Salamon, a Transylvanian folklorist prepared a model semiotic analysis of sign use in a folk custom native to Kalotaszeg. Her work is one of those rare descriptions of customs that interprets events in terms of codes.⁵⁷

Dating from the heroic age of the ethnosemiotic research done in Hungary on customs and usages, are the essays that handle the use of signs and symbols used in the May Day celebrations of the 70s.⁵⁸ They delineated the temporal and spatial structure of the parades and analyzed the dress of the paraders. The study of symbols is a distinct area within ethnosemiotics (these inquiries interface with the research of what is termed symbolic anthropology).⁵⁹ In folkcustoms and often in our daily living, certain actions symbolically gain in value and, as symbols, are reproduced over and over again in the course of social practice. A case in point is *kaláka* (the social institution of mutual help) in Transylvania, which has become a symbol of "collective solidarity".⁶⁰ One can also observe a "switch of roles in our symbols";⁶¹ and particularly in the realm of the phenomenon called "folklorism" where a particular object or work of folk art is often reevaluated, becoming a symbol of folk culture or of folk art as a whole.⁶²

Of particular importance, on account of their paucity, are the analyses that chart the changes in customs, the objects associated with these changes, and the transformation of the traditional sign-systems in Transylvania⁶³ and the Southern regions of Hungary⁶⁴ (e.g. the way in which traditional festive dress is used to indicate family and property status as well as political behaviour). These studies introduce the reader to the material culture of today's village. Katalin S. Nagy was interested in the survival and use, in urban and rural dwellings, of the objects of peasant culture.⁶⁵ In his book, Miklós Hernádi handles the semiotics of objects, the first to do so in Hungarian sociography. He introduces the reader to the study of meanings conveyed by objects, describing how the sign-language of objects functions (e.g. status symbols).⁶⁶ As a sociologist, he had for years been publishing (under the inspiration of ethnomethodology) analyses that tried to explain many phenomena of today's culture in terms of a symbol-creating process.⁶⁷ In his last book, he devoted a lengthy chapter to analyzing celebratory behaviour,⁶⁸ offering conclusions that may, no doubt, prove useful for Hungarian ethnographical research as well.

These essays (Hernádi, S. Nagy) represent a major branch of Hungarian social semiotics, marking in effect, the beginning of (sociologically based) analytical study exploring the sign processes of urban life. Ernő Kunt addressed

the Hungarian peasantry's image of death, faithfully continuing the line of his semiotic analyses. Inspired by system theory, his vision aims to present "dynamic symbolism", using pairs of binary oppositions peculiar to semiotic method to delineate the image of death and time.⁶⁹ This work represents a pragmatic analysis and points the way to the social use of ethnosemiotics.

The world of cemeteries and funerals is inseparable from the worldview as well as the forms of social consciousness. The study of folk beliefs has, from the outset, been in the forefront of structuralist and of ethnosemiotic research in Hungary. Talking of precedents Péter Józsa,⁷⁰ must be mentioned, his Ph. D. thesis was one of the first in the social sciences in Hungary to apply the semiotic method. He proposed in a manner similar to the Marxist theory of economics which uses exchange as a central category, that an up-to-date theory of society should include the concept of sign as its organizing category.

In 1975, a special symposium was held to discuss the interrelationships between the belief system and social consciousness.⁷¹ At the symposium, several speakers underscored the importance of using the concept of belief as a term in the social sciences. The analysis of folk beliefs provides an opportunity to demonstrate the mechanics of social consciousness.⁷² The analyses which applied the semiotic method, served as the basis for the study of mythological systems and for the conception of mythology as a sign-system.⁷³ This idea was first propounded and elaborated by Soviet semioticians and scholars of mythology,⁷⁴ whose methods provided a basis for similar analyses subsequently performed by Hungarian authors in their studies of the myths of Finno-Ugrian and Asian peoples. I have utilized through a body of mythological material, the methodological principles I became acquainted with during my study trips to Moscow. The study in question is one dealing with the mythology of Uralian peoples.⁷⁵ Also on this subject are several essays by Péter Veres,⁷⁶ in which he expounds the theory of binary semiotic oppositions in order to reach ethnogenetic conclusions. His inferences, taking their cue from the semiotic school in Soviet comparative mythology, opened the way to the formulation of an ethnosemiotics with a historical approach: "However skeptical certain researchers may be with regard to the need to study the phenomena common to the cultures of different peoples, the study of this set of questions will become more and more inevitable in historical ethnography. Without a knowledge of the semiotic universals, moreover, it is impossible to explain the mechanism of the internal integrating and external distinguishing function of cultures. In the interest of ensuring the objectivity of historical reconstructions, it is inevitable that we will explore the cultural isomorphisms generated by the dual symbolic classifying system based on binary oppositions."⁷⁷

Towards a semiotics of texts

Literary theory in Hungary responded fairly quickly (in the late 60s) to the results of structuralism; and given the relatively large number of references in these ground-breaking works to folklore examples, they may justly be regarded as forerunners of textual semiotics in Hungary and more specifically, of folkloristic semiotics. An article by János Petőfi S., dealing with comparative structural analyses, must be mentioned. Presented at one of the very first conferences on structuralism to be held in Hungary, a conference focusing on the models of the forms of social consciousness, his writing articulated some general fundamental principles of textual semiotics.⁷⁸ A few years later, in a study he prepared for a conference on myths, he applied the principles of the theory of texts he had formulated to the analysis of mythological texts, also defining major steps of textual analysis.⁷⁹ In the late 60s, Elemér Hankiss studied the possibilities of using the models of communication theory in folk song research. His conclusions about the character of the literary work as a model are essential for folklore theory and textual analysis. In the case of literary compositions (e.g. poems or folk songs), he notes that the meanings of the linguistic signs used are modified by various communicative factors. Since, in the majority of cases, the poet ("folk singer") has no direct contact with the reader or listener, he is compelled to weave into the poem (or, to put it in terms of semiotics, to "encode") the information relating to the missing communicative factors. This need to encode one's message is an important formative factor of lyrical poetry, and one whose influence is clearly identifiable in the majority of Hungarian folk songs. This point is so much in evidence that, for example, in what is called the "opening image of nature" in folk songs, the listener is prepared by the very first words in the first line, to absorb the message contained in the poem. It can be demonstrated that in folk songs the first intoning lines have a more pronounced rhythmical pattern to them, and that they are more abundantly charged with adjectives, metaphors and other poetic elements than the subsequent lines.⁸⁰ It is worth pointing out that in recent years several essays have been written on the interpretation of the symbolic significance of the "opening image of nature", revealing that it is a symbolic expression of the amorous message hidden in the folk songs.⁸¹

Although Vilmos Voigt regularly called attention to the recent results of folklore theory and analytical practice,⁸² narrative research in Hungary has been rather slow in adopting these principles and theories.⁸³ In the meantime, as a result of the efforts of Ágnes Szemerkenyi and Vilmos Voigt, scholarship received the first exemplary analyses on the material of phrases and idioms.⁸⁴

An entire dissertation was devoted to the semiotic interpretation of the theory of "simple forms", in which Zoltán Kanyó directed his attention to the semiotic analysis of the proverb. I quote from his conclusions, which have a direct relevance for folklore research as well: "These 'simple forms', as folkloric products, rest on social codes and emerge from the opposition between the primary code of language and the secondary code of literature... The key questions of semiotically based paroemiological research are based on how the logical, grammatical, thematic, and poetic aspects can be combined..."⁸⁵ Zoltán Kanyó provided the focus for a highly progressive workshop of textual theory, but he was prevented by his early death from bringing his work to fruition. However, his work has provided the insight that, using recent results, linguistic is an indispensable step in textual theory, one that can provide the basis for an innovative semiotic analysis of folklore texts. Interestingly enough, the work of researchers living outside Hungary may, by integrating the results of text-linguistics and text-theory, provide an important contribution to the further development of narrative semiotics in Hungary.⁸⁶ Semiotically oriented textual theories⁸⁷ promise a better understanding of folk poetry, and of prose narratives in particular, as well as the formulation of the methods for more accurate analysis.

The work of Hungarian researchers living beyond our borders is only partly related to the research going on in Hungary itself. For the most part, they only publish their own results which are quite outstanding even by international standards. Preeminent among them, by virtue of its subject-matter, is a model analysis (complete with samples of texts quoted as illustrations) by the Transylvanian folklorist Gabriella Vöö, which treats the genres of jokes in folk narratives, the structure of the particular types and the role they perform in the life of the community that uses them.⁸⁸

It is especially important to stress here the pragmatic side of textual examinations, which have been rather neglected by Hungarian folklore research. In 1974, I delivered a lecture at a symposium called "*The Poetics and Stylistics of Folklore*". Entitled "*The 'First' Story*", this paper, drawing on the results of the Western European schools of textual semiotics, analyzed a particular group within what are called "cumulative tales", identifying the text-building role of iconic signs in this type of story. By incorporating into the practice of analyzing folklore texts the ideas of what are called the schools of text-theory, which in turn utilize the latest results of linguistics, new vistas in the theory of folkloristics will probably open up, and clear the way for the formulation of a semiotics of verbal texts.⁹⁰

Theory of visual texts and semiotics of folk art

Another development in Hungarian semiotic research was the formulation of a theory of images which features alongside the theory of linguistic texts. Called the "theory of visual texts",⁹¹ it conceived of images as a type of cultural text. Given that it is a theory based on semiotics, its lessons can doubtless be utilized in the course of the ethnosemiotic analysis of folk art. Such endeavours have occurred, though they are rather rare, in Hungarian ethnography.⁹²

Even in works intended to be representative,⁹³ little was said about the symbols of Hungarian folk art and their significance. The rare exceptions include the activity of Mária Kresz⁹⁴ and an article by Erzsébet Valkay,⁹⁵ in which she analyzed the patterns of embroidery in Hungarian peasant needlework made in Kalotaszeg. She also considered the principal motifs, including the written (or pictographic) versions of the sentinel, the tree of life with the ladder, and the disk of the sun. Her paper is an attempt to cast light on some of the distant cultural-historical relationships. Unfortunately, it is also a warning that a mere random assortment of data is far from adequate, unless the author uses a carefully considered methodological approach. On the other hand, it is also true, and this was pointed out by Kincső Verebélyi, that there are still many unresolved questions and theoretical problems in folk art research.⁹⁶ As yet only preparations are being made to issue a catalogue of the motifs of folk art,⁹⁷ although in the past decade, several richly illustrated monographs have appeared; the material is eminently suited for such a record.⁹⁸

In talking of preliminary efforts, mention must be made of the years of enthusiastic collecting work done in Transylvania by Márta Kocsi and Lajos Csomor. Their work resulted in the publication, with hundreds of drawings, of an inventory of the motifs of Székely pottery in Korond and the painted furniture of the Székely region.⁹⁹ The chief merit of the material, compiled in a manner very close to a dictionary format, consists in a wealth of variants, so that the comments offered on the particular signs and symbols are often lost in a collection of unrestrained associations.

The integrated researches of Gábor Pap¹⁰⁰ on art and education represent a peculiar approach. In his attempt to describe and understand the phenomena of folk art he describes the system of astral symbols. His students apply a manner of pseudo-semiotic approach in trying to understand folk art and folk culture. For example, they address the systematic character of the interior design and furnishings typically used in a Kalotaszeg home and the functioning of these as a "sign-using system".¹⁰¹ Sándor Makoldi and Gizella Pap did an analysis of a set of patterns which regarded the carved and chiselled ornamentation of carved

chests as meaningful symbols, but whose interpretation has, however, produced no unequivocal results so far.¹⁰²

The similar endeavours of Gábor Lükő, including his touch on signs, were addressed earlier. Lükő detected in the ornament on wooden chests, mother and infant protecting symbols.¹⁰³ In the early 80s, he at last had the chance to publish a catalogue of folk art, based on long years of work collecting material in the Kiskunság (Little Cumania) district. Possibly the single most complete thesaurus of symbols published up until then,¹⁰⁴ it offers illuminating material, supplemented by parallels from other, related peoples, making it a potential basis for further research.

A number of analyses aimed at elucidating the significance of particular symbols were also performed on the basis of the methodology of semiotic analysis. The studies in question centred on two signs of erotic symbolism, i.e. the tulip and the heart, which were found to be symbols of, respectively, the feminine and the masculine principle.¹⁰⁵ Vilmos Voigt, in several of his essays, drew attention to the difficulties and the highly complex nature of the historical interpretation of sexual symbolism.¹⁰⁶

This brief resume on the history of research only outlines the bare essentials. Without a deeper critical assessment of the particular papers, we must remain content with a brief survey of the works belonging to the major trends, which also chart the evolution of a scientific concept. The history of the emergence and development of ethnosemiotics in Hungary convincingly proves that, by treating the use of signs as a fundamental fact of social life, ethnosemiotics seeks to provide a theoretical approach encompassing the entire field of culture.¹⁰⁷

Notes

The prehistory

1. Voigt 1977a; 39, and see the introductory study in: Hoppál – Szekfű (eds) 1974: 10–13. In the history of Hungarian semiotics, a special focus is the work of a humanist of European importance, (János Zsámboki) Sambucus 1564. cf. Voigt 1986a: 394.
2. Pápai-Páriz 1984: 42–44.
3. Balog 1979: 11.
4. *Utunk* XXXI (1976):42:8.
5. Benkő 1977: 392.
6. If we apply the foreign term, we should, in compliance with our predecessors' usage, give preference to the form *szemiotika* (semiotics), as opposed to *szemiológia* (semiology), of French origin. On its emergence see Sebeok 1981.
7. Quoted by Gajdos 1979: 181.
8. Erdélyi 1898: 29.

9. Erdélyi 1851: 436.
10. Erdélyi 1851: 439.
11. Ipolyi 1854. The facsimile edition appeared in 1987, with a translation of the foreign-language texts, a detailed subject index and bibliography, which were absent from the original.
12. Hoppál 1975b.

The beginnings (in the first half of the 20th century)

1. Certain chapters of the work, left in manuscript form because of the events of the War, did not appear until the late seventies and the early eighties. Rezessy 1982.
2. Rezessy 1979: 189.
3. Only after the 1974 Tihany conference on semiotics were some excerpts published under the title "*A szimbolika főbb problémái*" (The Main Problems of Symbols) – Dienes 1981.
4. A recent selection of his writings affords an insight particularly into his pedagogical principles. ("The sign-system is the very soul of speech, but articulation is the very body of it, with grammar regulating the relationship between the two.") Karácsony 1985: 48.
5. Karácsony 1941.
6. Lükő 1942: 5–6.
7. Szabó, K. 1933, 1934.
8. Fél 1940, Szabó, T.A. 1940, 1941, Gyórfy 1942.
9. Szendrey 1931, Palotay 1942.
10. Szendrey 1941.
11. Putz 1943.
12. Rapaics 1931, 1932, and Gaál 1932: 49. It is worth quoting his sober, well-weighed ideas: "... on the one hand, even the most diverse flower languages display some striking correspondences; on the other hand, even more striking is the fact that the flower symbolism of folk songs is very close to the work of each author. And I believe it would be absurd even to hypothesize that the "folk minstrels", who were mostly illiterate, might have drawn upon the "scientific" works of Boschius, Camerarius and the others. The converse however, is very understandable and indeed, natural."
13. Hadik 1927, Horváth 1935, Huszár 1961, Csatkai 1971.
14. Szentkuthy 1941.
15. Gunda 1941, 1957.
16. Csaba 1956, 1958.
17. Dömötör 1944, 1960.
18. Dankó 1962.
19. Erdélyi 1961.
20. Erdélyi 1971. The texts were published in a separate volume; Erdélyi 1974.
21. Fél–Hofer 1966: 38.
22. Dömötör 1960; Csaba 1958; Fél 1956; Gunda 1957; Tárkány-Szücs 1958.
23. Tárkány-Szücs 1959, 1965, 1987.

The first two decades of Hungarian ethnosemiotics

1. Hoppál 1975. – On the history of Soviet semiotic researches, Hoppál 1977: 227–286.
2. Szépe 1961, 1969.
3. Sebeok 1964 and his more recent works on the history of semiotics: Sebeok 1976, 1978, 1979, and Sebeok–Umiker-Sebeok (eds) 1986.

4. The selected works of F. de Saussure, A. Schaff, R. Jakobson, Yu.M. Lotman, Yu.S. Stepanov, R. Barthes, U. Eco, V.V. Ivanov and V.N. Toporov have been translated. More important collections of translations: Hoppál-Szekfü (eds.) 1974, Horányi-Szépe (eds) 1975, Hoppál-Vándor (eds) 1977. – A volume of selected essays by Kelemen (1984) contains several writings that have a direct connection with the history of European ethnosemiotic thinking.
5. Voigt 1971a: 577–580.
6. Hoppál 1971.
7. Without trying to overestimate the results obtained in Hungary, it is worth stressing that all this had a pioneering character by international standards. In other countries, the notion and the subject-matter of *ethnosemiotics* were just then being coined. The use of the term was proposed in the same year. A book by the Russian Yu.S. Stepanov (1971) contains a separate chapter under that title; his proposal, however, was ignored by the Soviet ethnographical Establishment. An event which, by contrast, received a greater professional response was the first congress of SIEF, held in Paris in August 1971, where one of the main lectures, itself centred on ethnosemiotics, was given by A.J. Greimas 1973.
8. Voigt 1975a, 1975b, 1976a, 1976b, 1977b, 1978b, 1979c, 1979d.
9. Voigt 1976a: 360, 372.
10. Hoppál 1976, 1977b, 1977c, 1979c, Gunda 1979.
11. Szecskő-Szépe (eds) 1969, Szecskő 1971, and a short monograph presenting the communication system of a village – Hoppál 1970a. For a critical review of the monograph see Voigt 1981b.
12. Voigt 1977.
13. Józsa 1973, 1976, 1977a, 1980.
14. Andor 1980.
15. Voigt-Szépe-Szerdahelyi (eds) 1975.
16. Number 3 of *Ethnographia* (1976) – at the end of the volume (pp. 443–480), there is an ample list on the literature of ethnosemiotics (compiled by Vilmos Voigt).
17. Józsa (ed.) 1977b.
18. Gráfik et alii (eds) 1978.
19. Józsa (ed.) 1979a, 1979b.
20. Barabás (ed.) 1979.
21. Hoppál (ed.) 1980.
22. The volume for 1979 of the annual “*Korunk Évkönyv*”, published in Transylvania, a volume whose essays take their subjects from Hungarian popular life in Romania, runs several intriguing articles on ethnosemiotics. The same applies to No. 3 of 1979 of the educational journal “*Tett*”, a special issue devoted to semiotics. The publications of the Institute for Hungarian Language, Literature, and Hungarian Studies (combined issue No. 12–13, 1979–80. *Újvidék* – edited by Imre Bori) published several papers on ethnosemiotics. It was under the guidance of Vilmos Voigt that the young authors acquainted themselves with the methods of sign-theory, performing the description of particular areas of everyday culture.
23. Hoppál (ed.) 1981.
24. Gráfik-Voigt (eds) 1981. – In the morning of May 27, 1974, a section of the conference held a session under the title “The Sign-systems of Folk Culture”. Chaired by Vilmos Voigt, the session heard an introductory report presented by Mihály Hoppál, who proceeding on Yu.M. Lotman’s definition of culture, emphasized the code-centredness of folk culture. The next task of ethnosemiotics is therefore, to examine separately the individual codes and, at the same time, to explore the system of their interconnections. For a detailed report on the session: Joób 1981.
25. Buda 1979.
26. Hoppál 1972.

27. Vass 1977.
28. R. Hidasi 1975, Papp 1969.
29. Egyed 1976.
30. Egyed 1977, 1980, 1985.
31. Junger 1979–80.
32. M. Takács 1981.
33. Hoppál 1986a, 1987e.
34. Ullman 1980, Tari 1978.
35. Láncz 1979–80, Kövecses 1976, 1978.
36. E.g. telling fortunes by cards: Szuhay 1976, and telling fortunes from the coffee-cup: Reffle 1979–80.
37. Gráfik 1976b, Hoppál 1987f.
38. Gunda 1975.
39. Gunda 1973, 1979.
40. Szabadfalvi 1981, Gunda 1965.
41. Varga 1952, Szilágyi 1978, Tárkány-Szücs 1987.
42. Takács 1983a, 1985.
43. Takács 1983b – his monograph on the marking of boundaries appeared in 1987.
44. Gráfik 1972, 1974.
45. Gráfik 1975.
46. Gráfik 1976a, 1981.
47. Kabay, B. 1978.
48. Meer 1978.
49. Kós 1975.
50. Kunt 1975, 1977, Imreh–Hoppál 1977, Novák 1980, Kunt 1981.
51. Zentai 1972: 305; also relevant here is Dankó 1977.
52. Órsi 1982, Kunt 1982, 1987.
53. László 1982.
54. Kovács 1982, Hoppál 1982c.
55. Hoppál–Novák (eds) 1982.
56. Niedermüller 1978, 1981, 1983.
57. Salamon 1979, 1981.
58. Munkaközösség 1975, 1981. An English-language summary of the results: Voigt 1980b.
59. Hoppál–Niedermüller (eds) 1982.
60. Hajdu 1981: 28.
61. Bodó 1987: 49.
62. On use of symbols in folklorism see Voigt 1978a, 1980a.
63. Oláh Csiki – Oláh 1987, Balázs et alii 1987.
64. Kálózi 1979–80, Silling 1979–80.
65. S. Nagy 1981, 1982.
66. Hernádi 1982.
67. Hernádi 1985.
68. On the same question see Voigt 1981a.
69. Kunt 1987: 47; 73.
70. Józsa 1974.
71. Frank–Hoppál (eds) 1980.
72. Hoppál 1969, 1970b, 1971, 1980b, 1982a. Fejős 1981, 1983.
73. Hoppál 1975b.

74. Cf. Ivanov 1973, 1983.
75. Hoppál 1975a.
76. Veres 1975, 1976, 1981.
77. Veres 1981: 385.
78. Petőfi 1969. – The conference was reported on: Voigt 1969.
79. Petőfi 1978, see his most recent book 1990.
80. Hankiss 1969.
81. Bernáth 1981, 1987, most recently Vargyas 1987.
82. Voigt 1971b, 1972a, 1974, 1975a.
83. Fröhlich 1975, Bihari–Szuhay 1978, Küllös 1972, 1980, Hoppál 1979e, 1979f, Biernaczky 1978, Vargyas 1987.
84. Szemerkenyi 1969, 1972, Voigt 1972b, Szemerkenyi–Voigt 1972, Szemerkenyi 1974, 1975.
85. Kanyó 1975, 1976.
86. Murvai (ed.) 1979, Penavin–Thomka (eds) 1982, Szabó 1982.
87. Petőfi 1978.
88. Vőő 1981.
89. Hoppál 1980a.
90. Hoppál 1977c, 1978, 1979e, 1984b.
91. Horányi 1976a, 1980.
92. Nagy 1975.
93. Hofer–Fél 1975.
94. Kresz 1978, 1979, and Kresz–Szabolcsi (eds) 1973 – this latter is a collection of essays.
95. Valkay 1976.
96. Verebélyi 1979.
97. Verebélyi 1983 – at the session on ethnosemiotics, several interesting lectures were given on non-verbal sign-systems: Imre Gráfik: Non-verbal Communications in Folk Culture; Mária Kresz: Ceramic Forms – Social Functions; László Novák: Verbal Symbol Systems and Object-making Activity; Péter Niedermüller: Social Space and the Rules of Spatial Behaviour in Town and Village.
98. Végh 1947, on embroidery: Varga 1981, V. Ember 1981; Péntek 1978; on wooden graveposts: Nagy 1974, Imreh–Hoppál 1977, Péterfy 1977.
99. Kocsi–Csomor 1981, 1982.
100. Pap 1977, 1978.
101. Máté 1977, Lugosi 1977. Falvay 1984–85, 1986–87. Marcell Jankovics provided a possible explanation of the symbolism of folk tales and of the legend of St. Ladislav – Jankovics 1980, 1987. For an interpretation of “*Cantata profana*” by Bartók: Pap 1988.
102. Makoldi–M. Pap 1982 – this approach was used by Gizella M. Pap 1987 in trying to understand the stock of motifs found on painted Easter eggs.
103. Lükő 1975.
104. Lükő 1982: 287–300.
105. Novák 1976, Hoppál 1983. An expanded treatment of the topic, supplemented with newer data: Hoppál 1990.
106. Voigt 1986a, 1986b, 1988.
107. Hoppál 1992.

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