SYMPOSIUM

Observations on the anthropological study of the living adult Hungarian population

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ABSTRACT The anthropological studies of the past 50 years carried out on the living adult Hungarian population in chronological order is discussed. Based on the communications, the author comes to the conclusion that the research was restricted to the areas between the Danube and Tisza rivers, and east of the River Tisza. The examination of the living adult Hungarian population was not carried out systematically, so general conclusions that would apply to all Hungarians cannot be drawn. The number of persons examined was approximately 25-30,000.

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KEY WORDS

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The studies carried out on adults in the period between the establishment of Hungarian anthropology (1881) and 1947 was summed up by Malán (Malán 1947). The main events and characteristics of this kind of research in the first half of this century will be outlined in the following based on his work.

The anthropological study of the living Hungarian population dates back to 1735, when Mátyás Bél made apt remarks on the physical and mental constitution of Hungarians living in Csallóköz. Then in 1822 János Csaplovits wrote about how anthropological characteristics vary in different parts of the country. After several minor studies, Móric Steinburg published the cephalic index of 54 Székelys from Udvarhely (Transylvania) and 69 Hungarians from the Alföld in 1875.

After this, the abundant study of the height of conscripts followed. Relying on these data, Sámuel Scheiber found Hungarians the shortest (161.9 cm) of all nationalities, based on which he suggested that Hungarians are related to the Finnish.

The first survey illustrated with photographs were carried out at the end of the last century and the first years of this century by János Jankó, Károly Pápai, János Kovács, István Lázár and Vilibald Semayer. They studied Székelys, people living around Szeged and near Lake Balaton.

Especially the photos of the study by Jankó led to severe attacks by Ottó Herman. Notably Gyula Sebestyén, Vilibald Semayer and László Dobsa were involved in this controversy. This inspired Semayer to try to discover what the charac-

teristic types of Hungarians are. In his opinion Ugric, Turkish and Tartar features are the most typical of Hungarians. Although this debate had a productive effect on Hungarian anthropological research, as a sad result of it, János Jankó passed away in July 1902, at the age of 35.

The anthropological studies thought promising by Jankó and co-workers were suspended for a little while, and were taken up again later by Lajos Bartucz, student of Aurél Török's, in Borsod, Csongrád, Arad, Fejér, Somogy and Nógrád counties, in Göcsej-Hetés, Nagykunság and near Lake Balaton. He published his results during the 1910s. These examinations, however, were limited to few individuals, and there were even fewer data on women in proportion to men. Progress was marked by the fact that in addition to height, several other characteristics (arm-hole, other measures of body and limbs, colour and morphology of hair, physiognomic characteristics of face) were noted.

Another 20 years had to elapse before Bartucz published new data. These were based on more individuals and characteristics. Bartucz summed up his results in his book "The Hungarian man", published in 1938.

In the '30s, however, the extremely racist head of the Department of Anthropology in Budapest, Lajos Méhely, began studies in a completely different direction. These studies' new feature was that they examined the population of a village in greater number, but their aim was not the determination of major characteristics.

During the few years of existence, scientists at the Department of Anthropology founded in Kolozsvár in 1940 put an emphasis on the examination of the Székely population.

At the end of the '30s, the students of Bartucz, Imre Lipp and János Nemeskéri began the metrical and morphological investigations, in the course of which they examined the

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population of a settlement. It meant a methodological progress that the research was extended to a large amount of individuals with more criteria, from new points of view. Among Nemeskéri's initiatives (Nemeskéri 1938, 1938a, 1939, 1941, 1942), the examination of the population of Ivád with complex methods is especially outstanding, and took several decades (Nemeskéri 1953).

After this, Béla Balogh and Lajos Bartucz carried out investigations in Nagykunság region. Béla Balogh, and later Mihály Malán extended the examination of attributes to dermatoglyphs. This meant the involvement of new features in research. Miklós Fehér's examination of 12,000 footprints again gave a new colour to research objectives.

The racial composition of Hungarians was debated by several scientist (Aurél Török, Vilibald Semayer, Béla Tóth, Ottó Herman, Ármin Vámbéry, Ferenc Pulszky, etc.). Data on the distribution per cent of races among Hungarians was first published by Bartucz, and these figures were taken over in abroad, too. Balogh also dealt with this question, and practically identified himself with Bartucz's views.

For a good fifteen years after World War II, Hungarian anthropologists did not even make an attempt at the anthropological examination of the adult population. Anthropology, as a field of science, did not enjoy great popularity because the results in the racial distribution of nations were used for barbarous purposes by politicians. Members of the older generation must remember a Soviet film entitled "Everyday fascism." In this film its makers wanted to express that anthropological investigations carried out on adults are not for verifying variability but of purity. This film was a powerful weapon against anthropology.

Among other causes, this also played a part in the slow commencement of ethnical anthropological investigations in the second part of our century. To fund these investigations was hardly possible, and their execution was based mostly on chance.

In the 1960s, however, the writing of monographs on local history was revived, especially in Tiszántúl region. Their editors – Antal Juhász, ethnographer; Gyula Nagy, director of the museum in Orosháza; and Ferenc Szabó, director of the Archives in Gyula – recognised that a work on a settlement will not be complete if it only contains data on geography, flora and fauna, history and ethnography. Such a volume provides lots of useful pieces of information on the past, animate and inanimate environment of the settlement, but none about the people, who bring history and culture into being. But anyone, without any profound biological or even anthropological knowledge, can notice that the population of each settlement is different. This variability is closely connected with the history of the inhabitants.

The above mentioned editors, therefore, provided an opportunity for the Department of Anthropology of the József Attila University in Szeged to study the adult popu-

lation of the settlements in question, and based on this, to give the anthropological description of the inhabitants and to determine their characteristic attributes (races). That is how the examination of the adult population of Tápé, Orosháza, Békés, Vésztő, Gyoma, Öttömös and Szegvár was carried out (Farkas 1976, 1998; Farkas and Hunya 1983; Farkas et al. 1977; Farkas and Lipták 1965, 1970, 1971, 1973; Farkas and Varga 1973, 1982). Relying on the data of registers, demographic changes can also be traced.

Another very important and far-reaching collection of data was carried out by the self-educated Gyula Henkey. He did his investigations fanatically, sparing no pains and with tireless industry – partly helped by his colleague – first in the region between the Danube and Tisza rivers (Henkey and Kalmár 1982, 1984; Henkey 1961, 1961a, 1962, 1962a, 1962-63, 1963-64, 1966, 1967, 1979, 1981, 1987, 1989, 1973, 1973a, 1974, 1974a, 1975a), and later in more distant territories (Henkey 1972, 1975, 1976, 1978b, 1985, 1987-88a, 1990, 1992, 1992a; Henkey and Kalmár 1979, 1981, 1982a). His precise measurements and perfect photographs greatly contribute to enabling future generations to form a notion about present-day Hungarians. His interpretation, and especially his overrating the occurrence of the Turanidan race is debatable, though.

All these data made it possible to publish synthesised works on a certain ethnographical group, population of a given area, or all Hungarians (Henkey 1978, 1978a, 1990, 1994, 1998; Henkey and Kalmár 1979, 1984a; Farkas 1978, 1980, 1985; Farkas and Kovács 1980). The similar work at the Department of Anthropology of the Kossuth Lajos University in Debrecen must not be forgotten. Under the leadership of Mihály Malán, the investigations among the Barkós, in Hajdúság and in NE-Hungary were very fruitful. Unfortunately these have not been processed yet.

In addition to the aforementioned studies, several other anthropologists (Katalin Szilágyi, András Kelemen, Andor Thoma) carried out such collections of data.

Adding up these initiatives, the number of examined adults now counts around 25-30 thousand.

We tried to list all collections of data after World War Two, so that we can form a notion about the volume of ethnical anthropological investigations over the past 50 years (Table 1). When compiling the table we relied on those publications in which the place of examination (settlement) and the number of individuals are unequivocally indicated. In all probability this list does not contain all places of examination, as from some communications it cannot be told. Among these are investigations in villages in west Transdanubia, in Tiszántúl (territory east of the River Tisza), in Felvidék (Upper Northern Hungary), etc. (Henkey 1998). In this table we only listed the total number of males and females above 23.

The total number of items in the list is more than 25,000,

Table 1. Hungarian ethnical anthropological examinations in the past 50 years

Researcher, year of	Settlement	Sample size
publication	Settlement	Sample size
Nemeskéri, 1953	Ivád	523
Thoma, 1957	Szabolcs	249
Malán, Kacsur, 1961 Henkey, 1961	Biharkeresztes Szeremle	451 484
Henkey, 1961	Fülöpszállás	500
Henkey, 1961	Kecskemét and environs	485
Henkey, 1962	Homokmégy	485
Henkey, 1962	Nagybaracska	415
Henkey, 1962-63	Szabadszállás	507
Henkey, 1963-64	Foktő Orosháza	291 2001
Farkas, Lipták, 1965 Henkey, 1966	Szakmár	535
Henkey, 1967	Fajsz	460
Kelemen, 1968	Dömsöd	891
Farkas, Lipták, 1971	Tápé	725
Henkey, 1973	Bugac	207
Henkey, 1973	Dunapataj Jászdózsa	459 462
Henkey, 1973 Farkas, Varga, 1973	Vésztő	903
Bodzsár, Eiben, 1973	Mezőkövesd	164
Henkey, 1974	Jászboldogháza	281
Henkey, 1974	Lajosmizse	610
Szilágyi, 1974	Turricse	542
Henkey, 1975	Bükkszék	410
Farkas, Hunya, Varga, 1975	Gyoma	1457 302
Henkey, 1975 Henkey, 1975	Gyöngyöspata Jászszentandrás	343
Henkey, 1975	Karcag	315
Henkey, 1975	Mátraderecske	165
Henkey, 1978	Kunszállás	307
Henkey, 1979	Öregcsertő	181
Henkey, 1979	Drágszél	144
Henkey, 1979 Henkey, 1979	Kalocsa Ordas	392 126
Henkey, 1979	Dunaszentbenedek	102
Henkey, 1979	Uszód	135
Henkey, 1979	Géderlak	201
Henkey, 1979	Miske	293
Henkey, 1979	Bátya	327
Henkey, 1979	Dusnok Pétervására	347 218
Henkey, Kalmár, 1979 Henkey, Kalmár, 1979	Bodony	135
Henkey, Kalmár, 1979	Egerbocs	126
Henkey, Kalmár, 1979	Mikófalva	120
Henkey, Kalmár, 1979	Felsőtárkány	277
Henkey, Kalmár, 1979	Szilvásvárad	220
Henkey, Kalmár, 1979	Domoszló Nagyrádo	202 110
Henkey, Kalmár, 1979 Henkey, Kalmár, 1979	Nagyréde Boldog	233
Henkey, 1981	Hajós	367
Henkey, 1982	Csépa	330
Henkey, Kalmár, 1981	Túrkeve	561
Henkey, Kalmár, 1981	Tiszasas	104
Farkas, Hunya, 1983	Békés Kiakun laghéna	548
Henkey, 1984 Henkey, 1984	Kiskunlacháza Kunszentmiklós	235 255
Henkey, 1984	Szank	442
Henkey, 1984	Orgovány	60
Henkey, 1987	Katymár, Csávoly	211
Henkey, 1987-88	Cece, Nádasladány, Körösheg	gy,
	Őriszentpéter, Kemenes-	004
Hankey 1990	magasi, Ostffyasaszszonyfa	891 226
Henkey, 1990 Henkey, 1992	Babócsa, Bolhó Nagykörü	592
Henkey, 1992	Segesd	120
Farkas, 1998	Öttömös	145
Farkas, 1999	Szegvár	243
Total:		251/18

Total:

25148

65% of which were gathered by Gyula Henkey. The number of adults examined is undoubtedly more than 30,000, but as we have already mentioned – there is no telling as to the exact figure. It is an impressive number, especially if we take into consideration the difficulties that arise when conducting ethnical investigations. First, only volunteers can be examined. The "handicraft" method of a few decades ago, when the anthropologist visited his subjects going from house to house, is only a thing of the past. We can also only smile at the notion, which older anthropologists still alive were also taught, that the person being examined should have no clothes on, if possible. One or two decades ago the compulsory pulmonary screening provided an opportunity to talk a lot of people there – with sufficient help – into giving his consent to participating in an ethnological anthropological study. Fifteen years ago such examinations could be carried out in co-operatives and factories. Today local celebrations, fairs, different organisations or similar occasions provide a chance for carrying out anthropological investigations. Nevertheless, in our modern lives the circumstances are not favourable for ethnical studies - with personal liberties and liberalism so much in the limelight, and above all, with the spread of all kinds of different and so-called scientific views of questionable value. To these are added the knowledge that people acquire (for example pieces of information on genetics), which sometimes may serve as a ground for misunderstanding (they might think of affiliation case).

If we would like to draw a conclusion from these studies, we would find the following.

It is unfortunate that these studies were not co-ordinated by any anthropological institute or association. All of them were carried out on an ad-hoc basis, all researchers experienced the difficulties that came with them, and without doubt, the examinations could only be realised with a great deal of sacrifice on their part.

As a result of this, if we take a look at the distribution of settlements examined on the map of Hungary, we get a rather unbalanced picture. There are some geographical and ethnic territories which have been investigated thoroughly (the region between the Danube and Tisza rivers, Tiszántúl, NE-Hungary), but there are ones that have been totally neglected (Transdanubia). From our 19 counties, the settlements of six have been completely left out from ethnical studies. These are: Zala, Veszprém, Tolna, Komárom, Győr-Sopron, Baranya. We cannot tell the number of subjects in Nógrád, Fejér, Vas and Somogy counties. True enough, in these counties there have been only few people examined. In the case of the rest of the counties, the number of people examined are the following: Bács-Kiskun 9,308, Békés 3,909, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén 164, Csongrád 1,113, Hajdú 451, Heves 3,041, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok 2,888, Pest 1,126, Szabolcs 791.

As it turns out from the number of items, the best investigated county is Bács-Kiskun, relatively a lot of persons were

examined in Heves, Békés, Csongrád and Pest counties, while in the case of other counties, the number of settlements and individuals examined is negligible. How well the persons examined represent the whole population of the county is a different question. If we want to identify these studies with ethnic groups, then we can say that they were focused on Kuns, Palóces and Jászes. The studies involving the most individuals were definitely connected to Gyula Henkey and his Kecskemét residence, the ones in Csongrád and Békés counties with monographs on local history and the Department of Anthropology of the József Attila University in Szeged.

The studies were carried out haphazardly, not following the rules of sampling (randomness, the representation of the population, the proportion of sexes and ages). Applying these criteria is no way an easy task. But, as a result of this, we cannot draw correct conclusions that would be relevant to the whole Hungarian population.

Another problem arises from methodological differences. Although the characteristics examined by each researcher are in many respects similar, there are alterations, too. Some authors preferred morphologic, others metric attributes. There are very few observations as to physiological characteristics. These latter were studied mainly by Miklós Pap, but are limited to a small geographical area. Some researchers were interested in more, others in less characteristics.

The third problem may be the difference in evaluation methods. Grouping based on age is not uniform, which is especially conspicuous when drawing the upper limit for the age of youth. In these cases the results can be compared only to a certain extent. Methodologically, the greatest difference is in the definition of types, character groups and race. Pál Lipták – based mainly on findings from excavations – worked out his taxonomic method. This, however, cannot be applied to the living population point by point. Moreover, there is a very significant difference between Gyula Henkey and other authors in the proportional representation of the Turanoid race, which belongs to the Europo-Mongoloids, in the present-day Hungarian population (Farkas 1978). Therefore, the results of these taxonomic analyses practically cannot be compared.

Taxonomic analysis of the present day population is very problematic. The intermingling of the inhabitants of settlements is so extensive that so-called pure types can hardly be found. In the case of each ethnic group we can find a character that is peculiar for the settlement, but it is not certain that it can be identified with any race described by a taxonomic method. Therefore, today's ethnical investigations cannot primarily aim at the determination of taxons.

One can take metric traits as the basis for further evaluation and comparison. The authors used the Martin and Saller method without exception, so the results are suitable for defining biological distance or relationship by comparing the data with the appropriate biometric methods.

We must also mention that studies on physiologic and genetic character of the population are rather sporadic (Malán 1969). These were mainly carried out by anthropologists in Debrecen, especially Miklós Pap. It would be imperative to investigate the characteristics of the large population of gypsies, as their mingling with the rest of the population is getting more extensive. Tamás Tauszik and Gyula Henkey also suggested such studies, but the intention of the former was misinterpreted, so he had to give up his project. In our opinion, however, these studies undoubtedly have a prospect in many respects. It is still a question, though, what the chances of their realisation are.

Finally we have to mention that Henkey, in connection with the ethnical investigation of Hungarians, studied the aboriginal inhabitants of Felvidék (969 males and 1,006 females), 47 males and 57 females in Kárpátalja (Ruthenia), 292 Székely males and 279 females, and 26 males and 28 females from Moldva. In five villages near the town of Ruse (NE-Bulgaria) he involved 163 Tartar males and 80 females in his metrical and morphological studies.

The question that remains is that based on the previously outlined Hungarian ethnical anthropological studies, what theoretical conclusions can be drawn as to the future.

First, we are almost too late to fully investigate the anthropological character of Hungarians. So we must not abandon this plan. At the same time, taking precedence over other fields of anthropology, we must try even harder to find all the opportunities that would promote our case.

The co-ordination and recognition of the significance of ethnical anthropological work would be of principal importance. The population of Hungary has mingled to a large extent due to several causes. The reorganisation of agriculture in the '50s and the introduction of co-operatives resulted in the migration of a great number of people from villages to towns in order to make a living. Predominantly men headed for towns, especially the capital, from great distances. The improved means of transportation facilitated the communication between settlements. So village communities started to dissolve and an extensive mingling of the population took place. It will not be long before the opportunity for studying the more or less homogenous population living in small settlements ceases to exist.

The co-ordination of research must be enforced in the case of research methods as well. Without it, no collection of data is possible.

We must make an effort so that more and more young experts would choose this topic as their field of research. Unfortunately, as it stands, only some old anthropologists are engaged in the anthropological investigation of small ethnic groups and communities.

Conclusions

We can summarise the observations on the anthropological study of the living Hungarian population as the following:

- the different studies never covered the whole territory of the country, so on the grounds of the data available no conclusions can be drawn as to the whole of the population of Hungary;
- some geographical regions and ethnic groups are quite well investigated, while there are places where no studies have been carried out whatsoever;
- collection of data always depended on the current opportunities, a country-wide investigation has not been organised up to this very day;
- there was no generally accepted method for the collection of data, therefore the comparison of different examinations is not possible;
- collection of data was haphazard in time; there were decades when several studies were conducted, and there were ones when only few or even none;
- collection of data, unfortunately, often bears the marks of the contemporary political situation;
- because of the intermingling of the population during the 20th century, it is difficult to collect data based on ethnicity;
- in addition to the population of Hungarian nationality and language, only Henkey (Henkey, 1998) initiated the study of other ethnic minorities living in Hungary (Gypsies, Swabians, Bunyeváces (Catholic Serbians), Sokáces, Slovakians, Germans, Croatians and Csángós).

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