UNDERSTANDING PLANNING AS A CULTURAL-RELIGIOUS PRACTICE: A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF THREE CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS' ROLES IN MINORITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN ROMANIA

A Dissertation

by

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Submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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May 2021

Major Subject: Urban and Regional Sciences

ABSTRACT

Planning with ethnic minorities burdened under the "cross of history" poses many challenges for settler nation-states. These challenges are tied to identity, culture, historic context, the public representation of local interests, erosion of civil rights, and territorial and spatial disputes. This is further complicated when religion or religious institutions operate in a position of power in a perceived secular state at the level of an ethnoregion.

There is a significant lack of conversation regarding the role of religious institutions in these historically fragmented ethnic minorities, their community building efforts, and the relationship to planning and community development in the U.S. and abroad. Because of this gap, it is difficult to fully understand the role that religious institutions may play in local to regional community development processes. This study is a first step in filling that gap.

This qualitative dissertation study used a grounded theory approach to systematically analyze three Christian denominations' roles in Hungarian ethnic minority living in Romania. The three denominations are the Unitarian, Roman Catholic, and Reformed Churches. Materials examined included bulletins between 1989-2019, newspaper articles, archival records, and interviews collected during 2019. The results of this dissertation bring attention to the Churches' work in the cultural-historical context of their ancestral land. This study shows the actively lived and experienced religious

ethno-spiritual practices and processes that fuel (1) the cross-scale roles (village to region) of denominations, and (2) the role of priests at the village level that translates into community and/or spatial aspect changes within the village, such as community building, social capital, and community cohesion. Finally, this study presents (3) a cultural-religious practice approach to planning and the incorporation of a new language to understand such an approach.

DEDICATION

Édesapámnak és Édesanyámnak.

(To my Sweet Father and to my Sweet Mother)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Jourdan, and my committee members, Dr. Roberts, Dr. Jamal, and Dr. Wunneburger, for their guidance and support.

I would like to thank my advisors, Dr. Dawn Jourdan, and Dr. George O. Rogers, for their advisory roles and guiding me during the course of this study, providing me feedback that left their mark on this study, and pushing me to grow and evolve. I thank Dr. Forster Ndubisi for his mentorship over the years.

Finally, but not lastly, I am thankful for my family and friends without whom this work could not have happened: my husband, father, mother and sister. Their emotional, spiritual, and mental support kept me going during the six years of my engagement with the subject.

I thank local scientists and historians Csaba Gidó and Attila Gidó for their expertise and support over the course of the research. Further, I thank Katalin Virlics, the Palágyi family, Mónika Biró Tódor for their knowledge and assistance during the IRB approval process. I thank Faber and Sandy McMullen, and Cassandra Bridges in Navasota, Texas, for giving me mental, emotional and spiritual support. I thank my pastor, Faber McMullen, for providing me many times with robust feedback and guidance in understanding the Biblical Scripture and the meaning of Christian communities. I thank Kat McMullen for her friendship, creative feedback, and editorial

input over the course of the study, and for her prayers and encouragement. I thank Sabra Helton for her hard work and input in editing parts of this manuscript.

I thank my department head Shannon Van Zandt, as well as Thena Morris, and Demetria Davis, for their assistance and support over my graduate studies. I am grateful for graduate assistantships and scholarships I received from the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning and Texas A&M University.

I thank You, Lord, for standing next to me, holding me up and carrying me.

CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

Contributors

This work was supervised by a dissertation committee consisting of Professor Jourdan [advisor], Professors Roberts and Wunneburger of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning, and Professor Jamal of the Department of Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences.

Dr. George O. Rogers contributed to this dissertation during the pilot study, and Dr. Forster Ndubisi has provided valuable insights at the beginning of the study. All other work conducted for the dissertation was completed by the student independently.

Funding Sources

The study had no funding source.

NOMENCLATURE

#	Indicates interviewee numbers
CGT	Classic Grounded Theory
CI	Convergent Interview
EU	European Union
HHCHs	Historic Hungarian Churches
község	A Romanian administrative unit encompassing a number of villages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Through the case study of the Székely ethnic Hungarian minority, this dissertation examines the role of identity, culture, and religion in community development in an ethno-regional context. A cultural practice approach to planning is presented through the involvement of the Hungarian Historic Churches [Roman Catholic, Hungarian Reformed, and Unitarian] in Hungarian communities living in Romania. They build community by focusing on ways that transcend spiritual-spatial-mental dimensions and produce "lived spaces" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 362) in an ethno-regional context. The studied region is a "fractured region" (Yiftachel 2006, 298), with many historical burdens of the past that continue to affect the present. In "production of space" (Lefebvre 1991, 16) ethnicity, and culture, land attachment to ancestral land as "sacred" and religion plays a major role. This dissertation study provides stepping blocks for collaboration between religious advocacy grassroot entities and formal local governance efforts by understanding planning as a cultural-religious practice. It also contributes to community development scholarship on ethnicity and identity (Wilson 2015a), sociological understanding of religion as practice (Ammerman 2020), and understanding planning as cultural practice (Porter 2010).

This study grew out of a pilot study that I carried out during the summer of 2019 where I was looking for answers to rural decline that I observed through direct (e.g., personal experiences, members of family), and through indirect observations (e.g.,

literature, news). In the last three decades, villages went through major changes; while many were declining, some were transforming. The Hungarian population of Romania has been rapidly declining due to emigration, aging, and low birth rates in both urban and rural settlements (Gyurgyík 2008).

The main outcome of the pilot showed that collaboration and dialogue are needed between the planner and the local stakeholders, while the basic preconditions for planning need to be addressed. Preconditions include trust in government, public participation, active citizenship, distribution of power, and a solid legal framework. Locally, and especially in rural areas, there is no administrative, or social infrastructure to meet these criteria and most people do not formally participate as stakeholders. Place and land attachment, ethnic identity, and faith provide resilience for communities. At the same time, informal value-based networks and religious congregations could provide the necessary local infrastructure for planning.

The preconditions are also very hard to meet, as Romania has about 10,408 villages that are ranked "category 5" settlements (lowest rank) (Benedek 2006, 180). In many of these villages, the last remaining formal institution is the Church, as many educational and health facilities have been closed and integrated into larger units. Clusters of about a dozen "category 5" villages are grouped into a "község." A "*község*" is usually run by a mayor and other employees representing the state, with the mayor's office actually housed inside of a "category 4" village (there is a total of 2,686 "category 4" villages, Benedek 2006, 179). On rare occasions, a "*község*" of category 5 villages can stand alone, as its own "*község*." In both situations, priests serve the villages, usually

with one priest serving one or two nearby villages' congregations.[1] The number of congregations in villages may depend on the population size of the village. It is not uncommon that entire villages belong to mainly one denomination.[2]

The last remaining formal institution in Hungarian villages is the Church. The continuous fading and decay of social infrastructure and closure of schools due to depopulation have left village communities alone. This couples with the fading of Székelyland, a distinct cultural-ethnic region inhabited with dominantly Hungarian ethnic Székelys, Roma, and Romanians. The Church had a continuous institutional presence in villages and day-to-day activities throughout many institutional changes. In recent decades, due to depopulation in villages, many schools have been closed. School and Church, the priest and the teacher have been key figures in village life. Local priests, whether as individuals or through their Church bodies, serve village communities by stepping in and acting as community event organizers, teachers, and many other roles. One of the interviews documented the key role of teachers and priests:

> *#19: XY village, …. always had a priest that was a part-time serving priest; and surviving many-many things … like the years of communism, in 2006 a handful of people decided that it will become*

1. The argument was established based on historic and current ethnicity, and denominational database compiled by Varga, Árpád E., and Erdélyi Adatbank. n.d. "Erdély etnikai és felekezeti statisztikái a népszámlálási adatok alapján, 1852-2011. Varga E. Árpád 2002-től kiegészített adatsorai" [Transylvania's ethnic and denominational statistics based on the census, 1852-2011, with data supplement to Varga E. Árpád' 2002 onward]. Adatbank Erdélyi Magyar Elektronikus Könyvtár (database). Transindex (distributor). Online. https://nepszamlalas.adatbank.transindex.ro/. See footnotes no. 37-41.

2. This argument was based on my review of historic maps (mapire.eu), and statistics (see footnote 1). Illustrated maps created by Austro Hungary depicts Transylvania's settlements based on the 1910 census data of Hungary. The map was created in 1918 (Bartos-Elekes 2016).The historic maps were digitized and georeferenced (Mapire. (1918) n.d. "Magyarország felekezeti térképe - vallások 1910 körül (1:200 000)." Retrieved from https://maps.arcanum.com. https://maps.arcanum.com/hu/.

> *independent [from the other village] and asked for a priest for its own, and provide a living space [for the priest] because it did not have a residence for a priest. The building where we at now, this was the school that ceased to function in 2006. We live where the teacher's residence [used to be], there were two classrooms up front…and the people said [in the village] that 'nor a priest, or a teacher in a village, than [that village] is doomed to death [se papja se tanítója ha nincs egy falunak akkor halálra van ítélve] and they formulated, that if the school is closed, and we don't have a teacher, we are going to become independent and have a priest.*

Considering the extensive number of villages in the country, representation of each requires a massive number of professionals. It puts financial and human resource burdens on local offices. Regional approaches are in place, but those do not fix local needs and professional expertise is not likely to be available, or not carried out uniformly among the diverse regions of the country. Hungarian minority leaders think regional and local development initiatives of the Romanian government are oppressive, and represent the Romanian majority without being adequately receptive to the needs of historically embedded minority communities. This is demonstrated in a policy initiative to protect "national regions"[3] in the European Union. The policy has been initiated by the Szekler

3. Szekler National Council. n.d. "For the Rights of National Regions, through European Means." European Movement for Protecting National Regions. Accessed April 28, 2021. https://www.nationalregions.eu/en/8-news/7-for-the-rights-of-national-regions-through-european-means.

National Council[4] through the European Citizen's Initiative. The "Cohesion Policy for The Equality of The Regions and Sustainability of the Regional Cultures"[5] calls for:

> The cohesion policy of the EU should pay special attention to regions with national, ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic characteristics that are different from those of the surrounding regions.
> For such regions, including geographic areas with no administrative competencies, the prevention of economical backlog, the sustainment of development and the preservation of the conditions for economic, social and territorial cohesion should be done in a way that ensures their characteristics remain unchanged. For this, such regions must have equal opportunity to access various EU-funds and the preservation of their characteristics and their proper economical development must be guaranteed, so that the EU's development can be sustained and its cultural diversity maintained.[6]

This policy and more than a million signatures[7] indicate that in this ethnic minority culture, religion, ethnicity, and a collective identity are important. Members of the Hungarian minority hold strong beliefs about the landscape, which provides continuity, a source for identity and heritage. Further, the emotional and mental baggage

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4. The Szekler National Council is a citizen initiated self-representative group that advocates for the rights of Székely (Szekler) people and for the autonomy of the historic region of Székelyland. The Council works on the principle of "direct democracy" and is structured around the historic administartive units of Székely "székek" (pl., chairs; discussed more in depth in Chapter IV) (Székely Nemzeti Tanács [Szekler National Council]. n.d."Magunkról" [About Us], under "Miért vagyunk és mire Vállalkozunk?" [What are we and what are we willing to do?]. Statement was published in 2003. Accessed April 4, 2021. https://www.sznt.org/hu/magunkrol/bemutato). Historically, Székely villages and cities were self-regulating units with their own rules and regulations that were established by the respective local community (see Imreh 1973, 1983).

5. European Union Citizens' Initiative. n.d. "Cohesion Policy for the Equality of the Regions and Sustainability of the Regional Cultures." European Union (official website). Accessed April 2, 2021. https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/initiatives/details/2019/000007_en.

6. European Union Citizens' Initiative. n.d., under "Objectives."

7. European Union Citizens' Initiative. n.d. "Cohesion Policy for the Equality of the Regions and Sustainability of the Regional Cultures." European Union (official website). Accessed April 2, 2021. https://eci.ec.europa.eu/010/public/#/initiative.

that comes with such beliefs is an influential force in shaping or dispersing communities further. In the case of the Hungarian community, what Ammerman (2020) describes as "lived religious practice" plays out in many instances.

This study also brings focus to the importance to the roles of collective memory, the collective brokenness, the shared past-driven pain, fragmentation of families driven by talent drain, communism; and finally, the hard task of remining in many villages when schools get closed. Lack of formal social and physical infrastructure makes one rely heavily on the youth and family members. The institution of Church and its local representation remains a key institution in Hungarian communities, especially in village-communities, as rural communities lack human, social, and economic capital, as well as infrastructure for carrying out successful planning efforts.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THE ROLE OF CULTURE, IDENTITY AND HISTORY IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

2.1.1 Community Development

Community development [CD] initiatives are common ways to empower, bring socio-economic development, build participative democratic societies, strengthen social capital (Andrews et al. 2012; Wilson 2015a), tackling poverty in Black inner-city neighborhoods (Abiche 2004), and issues regarding religion and race (Alex-Assensoh 2004). The meaning of community development in practice is contested and broad (Carlon 2020). This allows for a broad application by various entities from Churches, neighborhood organizations through national state programs (see Andrews et al. 2012). Despite CD's wide application, Wilson (2015b) argues, that "the relationship between identity, culture and community development is immeasurable" (1) and "planners and practitioners of community development often ignore these connections in their homogenizing development initiatives" (1). Identity, regardless of whether it is based on national, ethnic, location or professional character, plays important roles in development project outcomes. In these contexts, culture and identity are not separated (Ibid., 1). Kretzmann and McKnight's (1996) approach to CD is an asset based (ABCD) model, where the

> community development strategy starts with what is present in the community, the capacities of its residents and workers, the associational and institutional base of the area - not with what is absent, or with what is problematic, or with what the community needs. (27)

The central argument of the "asset-based community development" (Ibid., 27) that it is "relationship driven" (27) and communities need to be built from the inside out. Further, the challenge for CD professionals is to continuously build and rebuild relationships among members of the community and their institutions (27).

Kihl (2015) adds to the asset-based approach and brings territorial approaches to community development into focus. This "territorial approach," (Kihl 2015, 13) is needed where there is a strong local culture, and the social bonds that are created between community members are significant community assets:

> Community development practitioners need to understand the importance of local culture and the existing social bonding capital as very strong community assets. These assets should always be considered and weaved into proposed projects to ensure the strongest opportunity for success. This approach – a territorial approach – is gaining increased recognition as a best-fit model to support "bottom-up" approaches to community development. (Ibid., 13)

Social bonds form through

> race, economic status and nationality…. Social bonds create a platform for interest and engagement in community development activities. Uncovering a common area of interest for change within these communities requires the practitioner to develop their own social assets with community members, to be seen as someone with a genuine interest in change within that community. (Ibid., 12)

2.1.2 Planning as Cultural Practice: Historicizing Planning in Post-socialist and Ethnic Minority Context

The importance of culture is emphasized not just in community development, but in planning. The conceptual boundary of planning and its practice has been widening, and challenged in the past decade and half, to incorporate new meanings of planning as cultural practice and "seeing planning as a cultural practice makes it become specific to particular peoples, life views, times and spaces" writes Porter (2010, 2). Porter (2010) argues that planning needs to pay attention to its own historic context where planning as a discipline and professional practice evolved to its present form.

There are many ethnic minorities worldwide that are distinctive from the majority of a population, and struggle to fight dominant national agendas that economically, socially, and culturally fail to recognize such distinctiveness (Yiftachel 2006). These power struggles result in "fractured region[s]" (Yiftachel 2006, 298) where minorities get mobilized (Ibid.). This gives way to ethnoregional struggles, or "ethnoregionalism" (Yiftachel 1999, 289) as Yiftachel defines it: "The mobilization of ethnic struggle *within* a nation-state, aiming to channel resources to specific ethnic territories, attain ethnic rights, preserve or rebuild ethnic identity, and challenge the state's political structure" (Ibid., 289). Planning practitioners who work with community development programs need to be well equipped to understand the sensitive nature of ethnic and cultural meanings and interests. In this effort, as this dissertation study explores, the Church can take an active role in ethnic minorities, and religion, ethnicity and an ethnoregion can be realized through community development activities.

Understanding planning as a cultural practice extends the conceptual boundaries of planning by considering cultural and historical scenarios and contexts where planning meant to unfold. This can be well understood through the contrast of countries that were never under socialism, as opposed to those that were. Historically, community development projects were fighting the slums, and were later fueled by the failures of modernity's rational positivist planning approach of "form follows function" approach (von Hoffman 2012; Allmendinger 2009). The technical expert of modernity failed at incorporating human values into planning (Ibid.). The "production of space" (Lefebvre 1991, 16) many times was accompanied by the cleaning of historic-cultural context and was disconnected from its audience, for example e.g., Le Corbusier's influence on urban design (see Hall 2014, chap. 7) urban renewal programs and cleaning of inner-city neighborhoods and "slums," (Laurence 2006), the New Deal and Robert Moses' influence in New York (Hall 2014, chaps. 5, 7 and 9).

Planning and the democratic institution-based planning profession are, as Porter (2010) expresses, a "cultural artifact"[8] of the colonial states and their colonials. Historically, in these states, the first half of the 20th century was dominated with positivists' rational and systemic planning approaches that placed control and prediction forefront to value and belief, including religion (Friedmann 1987; Allmendinger 2009). Romania and Hungary are less frequently understood as post-colonial states, but these

8. Libby Porter cites "cultural artifact" from Sharma and Gupta (2006, 5). Sharma, Aradhana and Akhil Gupta. 2006. "Introduction: Rethinking Theories of the State in an Age of Globalization." In *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, eds. Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta. Malden, MA: Blackwell. However, the argument should be attributed to Porter (2010).

geographic regions were part of the Hungarian and Ottoman empires that later were influenced by USSR socialist ideologies.

The past century caused many changes in the administrative boundaries of Central and Eastern Europe because of WWI[9], and the dismantlement of former Yugoslavia.[10] These events shifted borders, divided or reunited nations and ethnicities. Power was distributed in a very complex way.[11] Grassroot, bottom-up civic and state funded community development efforts were emerging in societies with democratic public participation earlier (von Hoffman 2012) than in socialist [currently post socialist, post-communist] countries. In the latest, socialist ideologies, and centuries long ethnic-nationalistic struggles blocked and oppressed free will, and participatory, grassroot-bottom-up activities (see Bárdi et al. 2008; Demeter 2014). In socialist countries, like Romania, urbanization did not happen until the 1950s and later (Demeter 2014).

The modernist technical planner and professional expert's approach persisted in socialist countries much longer than in the colonialist and the colonials in general (Demeter 2014; Hall 2014, chaps. 6-7). In socialist countries, grassroot, bottom-up initiations were oppressed, while in postcolonial states, movements similar to Jane Jacobs' or the civil rights movements demanded a more cultural-historic understanding

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9. "Treaty of Trianon: World War I." n.d. Encyclopedia Britannica. Last updated May 28, 2020. Accessed March 20, 2021. https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-of-Trianon.

10. "Yugoslavia: Former Federated Nation, 1923-2003." n.d. Encyclopedia Britannica. Last updated November 5, 2020. Accessed March 20, 2021. https://www.britannica.com/place/Yugoslavia-former-federated-nation-1929-2003,

11. "Treaty of Trianon," n.d.

of urban space, racial justice, and the incorporation of the public and the lay-person knowledge, as opposed to expert-gained knowledge (Jacobs 1961; Allmendinger 2009). Thus, the 1960s brought more inclusive planning approaches to incorporate human values with their cultural contexts. Among them, collaborative, participative and advocacy approaches have been broadly discussed and applied (Allmendinger 2009). During this time in USSR countries, the city was a form of a laboratory for testing spatial expression of socialist ideologies through regional and city planning theories (Metspalu and Hess 2018; Drėmaitė 2019).

The socialist homogenization of urban form and the cookie cutter socialist approach to housing estate planning was at its prime in Romania in the 1960s to 1980s when the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu rolled out his urbanization and industrialization plans (Demeter 2014). City planning and design were guided by socialist ideology and centralized, top-down guidelines to homogenize class differences and reflect it spatially (Fisher 1962). The "communist model city, socialist model capital, socialist town and socialist village" (Hajdú 2013, 20) were envisioned and carried out by the careful transection of science, by the " 'classics' works' [of] Marx, Engels, Lenin and especially Stalin" and centralized plans (Ibid., 20). The unit of socialist policy implementation was the family (Ibid.). Creativity, which is self-expression as many see it, was boxed into "faceless" and "mundane" mass housing projects at the Soviet microraion level (see Hess and Tammaru 2019; Krivý 2016). The character and function of microraions were predetermined uniformly. Design was bounded by predetermined rules (Fisher 1962). The urban form did not reflect various

expressions of individual thought, but centralized, socialist ideologies that were reflected in same appearance, function-based design, and no or minimal artistry (Metspalu and Hess 2018; Treija and Bratuškins 2019). Housing estates were to disconnect resident from history and context (Metspalu and Hess 2018).

In Romania, the massive urbanization and industrialization meant access to more social and health services, but at a very high price of forced relocation and the dismantlement of land ownership and planned destruction or bulldozing of many villages (Demeter 2014). A planned secularization and eradication of the social, religious, and cultural-traditional fabric was planned and unfolded in phases (see Bárdi et al. 2008, chap. 6). Atheist and secular socialist ideologies were promoted and Churches, priests and their Church members were frequently limited and persecuted (Punger 1992; Bárdi and Papp 2008). Nicolae Ceaușescu in 1988 announced the "settlement systematization plan" (Hajdú 2013, 24) that was to be executed by 2000,[12] and accomplished in three phases (Ibid., 24). The systematization would lead to the elimination of 7-8 thousand villages, both Hungarian and Romanian, and the resettlement of inhabitants to urban cores (Ibid.). Village destruction plans caused opposition and demonstration in Budapest, Hungary, in 1988, and diplomatic ties eroded further between Hungary and Romania.[13] The 1980s brought severe restrictions for the Hungarian minority including

12. Iskola Alapítvány, and RMDSZ. 2020. "VII Rész" [Episode VII]. In *"Magyarok Romániában – 100 év történelem"* [Hungarians in Romania – 100 years of history]. Historic Documentary Series. Expert Bárdi Nándor. Produced by Zoltán Attila Gál. Accessed March 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8JMfRkihk4. The entire series can be accessed through ezer100.ro.

13. Ibid.

the termination of Hungarian TV and radio programs, the closure of Hungary's consulate in Kolozsvár (Cluj), removal of Hungarian ethnic editors, and discontinuing the majority of Hungarian publications.[14]

The timeline and the activity of a couple of Reformed Pastors in 1988 and 1989 was critical that fueled the fall of the communist regime in December 1989. A Reformed priest, János Molnár drafted a four-pointed memorandum that he openly read on September 6, 1988, in front of priests gathered for a meeting in Arad.[15] László Tőkés, also a Reformed Priest, contributed to the memorandum and supported it. While the memorandum was received as a "good idea," and was supported by the priests, in the files of the Romanian Secret Service of the time called "Securitate," it was recorded as a threatening activity against the communist regime.[16] Tőkés continuously resisted and were openly outspoken against the communist regime's Romanization efforts including the Hungarian ethnic minority, Church and village destroying agendas; and the persecution of priests and believers (Punger 1992). His life was threatened, and were attacked among other atrocities (see Punger 1992). In secret, a Canadian broadcasting team made a "forty-minute interview with Tőkés" (Ibid., 31) that "was broadcast [in Hungary] on July 20, 1989" (31) and were "watched … by millions" (Ibid., 31). People

14. Ibid.

15. Molnár, János (interviewee). 2020. "VII Rész" [Episode VII]. In *Magyarok Romániában – 100 év történelem"* [Hungarians in Romania – 100 years of history]. Historic Documentary Series. Expert Bárdi Nándor. Funded by Iskola Alapítvány and RMDSZ. Produced by Zoltán Attila Gál. Accessed March 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8JMfRkihk4. The entire series can be accessed through ezer100.ro.

16. Ibid.

along the Romanian – Hungarian border were able to capture the signals of various TV programs from Hungary, and allow them to see the interview in Romania (Ibid.). A part of the secretly broadcast interview was published by *Hitel* magazine in their August 1989 issue, under the title "Itt Tőkés László beszél [László Tőkés Speaks Here]" (Punger 1992, 31nn26). In the interview Tőkés addressed the major points discussed above and expressed it as:

> What we Hungarians in our ultimate danger emphasize is that here we talk about the last, or the last-but-one phase of a process. The fact of the matter is that gradually and in a planned way they have over these recent decades smashed our institutions, our culture, and our school system. They have made an onslaught against every possible aspect of our ethnic life , and now it is the Churches' turn, both the Roman Catholic and the Reformed, for these two make up the totality of Hungarians . . . In the past decades they have succeeded with the Romanization of the Transylvanian towns where we Hungarians or the Germans were in the ethnic majority . . . Some 3 to 5 million of Romanians were settled here in Transylvania, all of them from the trans-Carpathian area . . . Only the villages remained intact, because the Romanians from the Regat region never liked to settle down in villages ... Now the target is the villages themselves, in order to undermine and dissolve the relatively integrated, ethnically healthy Hungarian communities. To this end the reorganization of villages, the resettlement and mingling of the population, are both excellent strategies. When we sent a letter, a memorandum and petition to the Bishop asking him to intervene for us in the village question, we all were summoned to the Bishop's office. There was an inspector from the State Office for Church Affairs, and with him Bishop Laszlo Papp, who spoke eloquently in defense of the plan of "systematization." He even told us that it would be helpful if some of our Churches would be closed down and its people resettled. "There is no need to be sad about the demolition of the Churches," he said, "for it is not the stones that are important but what is going on in the Church. (translated by, and quoted in Punger 1992, 31)

The regime-corrupted and controlled Reformed bishop, László Papp, superior of Tőkés, along with Ceaușescu and the secret service called "Securitate" wanted to

"silence" him (Punger 1992, 32). He was suspended during the summer of 1989 (Bárdi and Papp 2008). Tőkés "in an open letter entitled 'Siege of Temesvár,' dated October 6, 1989" (30) makes his case public (Punger 1992). He also sent a letter "on October 15, 1989" (32) to Nicolae Ceaușescu asking for justice (Ibid.). These moves against the regime were brave and bold, but threatened his life (Ibid.). By October 1989 he gained international attention (Ibid.). Meanwhile, in many other European countries were experiencing protests and socialist regimes fell, including the fall of the Berlin Wall in early November; meanwhile the Romanian communist regime was not reacting to international events.[17]

Tőkés' actions were retaliated and resulted in the "order [of] his eviction'" by the city court of Temesvár "on October 20th, 1989" (Punger 1992, 32). Tőkés resisted and "barricaded himself in the manse [his resident]," (Ibid., 32) where his parishioners acted as "bodyguards" against his eviction (Ibid., 32). On December 15, 1989, the police formally took a move to remove him, and "200-300 parishioners who formed a human chain around" (33) his manse to block the evacuation (Ibid.). He was forcefully taken and as more people joined in solidarity, both Germans and Romanians, a demonstration unfolded in the city of Temesvár.[18] The regime forcefully reacted killing about one-

17. Bottoni, Stefano (historian). 2020. "VIII Rész" [Episode VIII]. In "*Magyarok Romániában – 100 év történelem"* [Hungarians in Romania – 100 years of history]. Historic Documentary Series. Expert Bárdi Nándor. Funded by Iskola Alapítvány and RMDSZ. Produced by Zoltán Attila Gál. Accessed March 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYgEhBb77Ts&t=4609s. The entire series can be accessed through ezer100.ro.

18. Iskola Alapítvány, and RMDSZ. 2020. "VIII Rész" [Episode VIII]. In *"Magyarok Romániában – 100 év történelem"* [Hungarians in Romania – 100 years of history]. Historic Documentary Series. Expert Bárdi Nándor. Funded by Iskola Alapítvány and RMDSZ. Produced by Zoltán Attila Gál. Accessed March

hundred demonstrators.[19] This spilled over to more protests across other cities and escalated into the fall of communism in December of 1989 joining other regimes that fell during this period.[20]

This dissertation study enters the scene here, at the fall of communism of 1989 and the three decades that followed, through the lens of role taking of the three Historic Hungarian Churches in community development and its significance for planning. We can understand this connection through the Churches' "social production of social spaces" (Porter 2010, 45) and planning as cultural practice (Porter 2010). In Porter's (2010) conceptualization of planning as a cultural practice, she builds on Lefebvre's theory of "perceived-conceived-lived triad" (Lefebvre 1991, 40). Lefebvre (1991) explained this triad "in spatial terms" (40) where "perceived" relate to "spatial practice," "conceived" to "representations of space," and "lived" to "representational spaces" (40).

Porter (2010) used the triad as an analytical tool for conceptualizing "the social production of (social) spaces" (45) and planning as cultural practice. "Perceived space" (Lefebvre 1991, 38; Porter 2010) relates to physical space and patterns (Ibid.); "conceived space" (Lefebvre 1991, 355) to "mental space" (Ibid., 3; Porter 2010), the remaking of space by "scientists, planners," (Ibid., 30) or "by knowledge and power," (Lefebvre 1992, 50; Porter 2010) and the "administering [of such] spaces" (Porter 2010,

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2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYgEhBb77Ts&t=4609s. The entire series can be accessed through ezer100.ro.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

15). "Lived space" (Lefebvre 1991, 362) relate to the "everyday lived experiences, and the expression of the social in spaces" (Ibid., 15[21]). Porter (2010) defined planning as the "social practice of spatial ordering, and more specifically, the modern form of that practice in the West: state–based land use or spatial planning" (2).

This lived nature of "production of spaces" (Lefebvre 1991, 16) is well articulated by Yiftachel's (2006) conceptualization of "fractured region" (298). Here, the settler ethnic majority, [he uses settler ethnocarcies] attempts to change and weaken the "territorial contiguity" (298) of minority groups, e.g., the case of Palestine Arabs in Israel, with planning, economic, religious or by other means. This gives way to ethnoregional struggles, as he defined it "ethnoregionalism" (Yiftachel 1999, 289). The case of Israel/Palestine Arabs discussed by Yiftachel (1999, 2006), and the Indigenous people of Australia discussed by Porter (2010) show the relevance of culture, where people closely tie land and landscape to spiritual-religious practices, land attachments, and to sources of identity (Yiftachel 2006; Porter 2010). This attachment can be well perceived in Hungarian communities, where it went as far as fueling the overthrow of communist dictatorship. It is within the richness of this cultural knowledge that we begin to understand the role of planning practice within an ethnoregionalist paradigm. The Hungarians' case in Romania was described by Yiftachel as an example for

21. The review is done by Porter (2010) after Lefebvre (1991); Soja, Edward W. 2000. *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Region*s. Oxford: Blackwell; and Healey, Patsy. 1997. *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. Hampshire, UK: Macmillan Press. I find it important to follow Porter's (2010) interpretation (through the literature) of the "perceived-conceived-lived triad" (Lefebvre 1991, 40) as it gets incorporated into the meaning of planning as cultural practice.

ethoregionalism (1999, 2006). In Romania, "ethnoregionalism" (Yiftachel 1999, 289) in the early 20th century surfaced as Transylvanianism (Nagy 2014). The concept was recorded in 1910 (Dózsa 1910), and later, after the Treaty of Trianon, encompassed a mobilization effort on a *geographic-spiritual-cultural-ethnic* ground for a regional autonomy for Hungarians in Romania (Kós 1921), recently conceptualized as a formal "national regions" request for a "cohesion policy for the equality of the regions and sustainability of the regional cultures."[22]

Many approaches to planning, such as advocacy (Davidoff 1965), participatory, collaborative, and communicative planning (Innes 1995; Healey 2005; Innes and Booher 2018) challenge the positivist framework built on colonial ideology. These approaches address power issues and equal representation of voices. Porter (2010) suggests that planning practices associated with these are still too rooted in their colonial cultures as they continue to reinforce the conceived production of space and its planning culture. (Porter 2010). Political violence (Sousa et al. 2013), oppression (Prilleltensky 2003), and struggles, like dual minority stress (Ajayi and Syed 2016), structural violence and economic oppression in conflict zones can have psychological impacts affecting human wellbeing (Hammad and Tribe 2020). The "psychology of religion and place" [PRP] (Counted and Wats 2019a, 5) as a most recent perspective and approach, has been

22. European Union Citizens' Initiative. n.d. "Cohesion Policy for the Equality of the Regions and Sustainability of the Regional Cultures." European Union (official website). Accessed November 30th, 2020. https://eci.ec.europa.eu/010/public/#/initiative.

examined in a series of studies (Ibid.). Counted and Watts (2019b) discuss the key attributes of "psychology of religion and place" (Counted and Watts 2019a, 5) as

> (1) The relational experience between two, or more, entities;
> (2) The spiritual experiences in sacred places with connections to the past;
> (3) Experiencing the sacred in natural environments; s
> (4) Spaces where identity and attachment are formed;
> (5) Resilience and meaning-making in places of religious significance.
> (Counted and Watts 2019b, 323)

2.2 RELIGION, PLANNING AND FAITH-BASED (FB) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In the context of community development, faith comes into perspective more frequently through faith-based organizations and their faith-based communities. The position of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in both European and U.S. society centers around social issues and the FBOs' role to extend charity (Beaumont 2008). In Europe, faith-based communities' influence unfolds on a scale of local to national governments (Davis 2009; Stan and Turcescu 2011).

Faith-based organizations in the U.S. include Churches, mosques, synagogues, and other faith-based organizations that do community development and are organized into three categories (UI and Vidal 2001). These three categories are "(1) congregations; (2) national networks … and (3) freestanding organizations" (Ibid., I). The second category "include national denominations, their social service arms (for example, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services), and networks of related organizations

(such as YMCA and YWCA)" (Ibid., I). The freestanding religious organizations are not congregations or national networks and are formed apart from the first two (Ibid., I).

The African American Church in the U.S. had an important role in the evolution of community development (Frederick 2003). In the 1970s and 1980s, Churches in general had important roles in urban settlements, for example, in "West Garfield Park in Chicago, the Lutheran Church in 1979 started a community development organization called Bethel New Life" (von Hoffman 2012). Von Hoffman (2012) explains, "The name [of Bethel New Life] expressed the hope that these organizations brought to the depressed and abandoned inner-city neighborhoods" (34).

Over the past decades, the U.S. federal government provided funds for CD, including through FBOs, to fuel the establishment of community development projects and organizations across the states (von Hoffman 2012). U.S. faith-based community development organizations "have grown significantly because of the 1996 U.S. Welfare Reform bills and President George W. Bush's faith-based initiatives" (Tarpeh and Hustedde 2020, 4). As a result of this call, "religious leaders have responded to these needs as well as social and economic inequalities by becoming 501 c(3) nonprofit organizations" (Ibid., 3). Additionally, the role of faith-based community development organizations intensified "by the decrease of federal government outreach for social services outreach and development work which has created a need for non-government organizations to fill in the gaps" (Tarpeh and Hustedde 2020, 3). In Europe and the U.S., faith-actors may "enter into multiagency and sometimes progressive alliances with other actors (community groups, trade unions, etc.)" (Beaumont 2008, 2029) and become

"politicized in neo-liberalizing welfare systems" (Ibid., 2028). Further, Frederick (2003) labels community development as "government by proxy" (30). This type of government "describes the crucial relationship between the federal government and the third parties that ultimately administer programs" (Ibid., 30). In the U.S., the separation of Church and state is grounded in the American Constitution. This division of power causes challenges to faith-based community development as government by proxy. (Frederick 2003).

The Urban Institute and Vidal's report about the role of FBOs in community development, prepared two decades ago for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, defines CD as asset building (UI and Vidal 2001). The report defines asset building as development that "centers around housing and community economic development but also includes developmental efforts, such as job training, to prepare residents for more productive lives" (Ibid., I).

FBOs can take on cross-scale activities (local, national, and international), and this is well illustrated by Davis (2009), who discusses the largest UK-based anti-poverty FBO called "Caritas." Caritas spans through all the European Union (EU) member states and employs more than "600,000 paid staff," as well as "520,500 volunteers in Germany, Spain, France, and Turkey" (Ibid., 379). Caritas had "$5.5 billion global net worth" in 2009 (Ibid.). It is the EU's largest voluntary sector with "1.3 million beneficiaries in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovenia, and Serbia" (Ibid., 379). Additionally, Caritas has the largest amount of influence in the EU of any Christian-based organization (Ibid.). The European Commission cooperated with Caritas

Europa (an "umbrella body for all of the official national Catholic social welfare and development agencies in Europe"; Davis 2009, 381) in the CONCEPT project to improve policy making (Ibid.). Davis mentions Romania, where Caritas was "involved in national strategy design" (Ibid., 384). The case is important because it was "the first time that any civil society body had engaged in such a fashion with government policy development. This was a risk for both Caritas and the Romanian government" (Ibid., 384). Davis (2009) demonstrates the versatile nature of Caritas and its adaptive capacity to quickly change its practice in each country. It adopted to many state governmental and policy structures. This exhibits intergovernmental cooperation with a "civil society network" (Davis 2009, 379) that is faith based (Roman Catholic) (Ibid.). Somewhat similarly, Habitat for Humanity is a widely known example of an FBO involved in community development that is based in the U.S. (UI and Vidal 2001). Habitat for Humanity crosses national borders and works with low-income individuals and communities to construct homes, educate, and revitalize neighborhoods, among other projects.[23]

Two decades ago, the roles of faith-based organizations in community development were among "the least well-researched" (UI and Vidal 2001, 1). Despite FBOs wide occurrence and activities faith-based organizations (Clarke and Ware 2015) and FB community development organizations' work not well understood (Tarpeh and Hustedde 2020) in contemporary times. A Google Scholar search of the keywords of

23. Habitat for Humanity. n.d. "Our Work." Habitat for Humanity (official website). Accessed March 28th, 2021. https://www.habitat.org/our-work.

"faith-based community development" resulted in 393 hits as of March 17, 2021. The Routledge "Handbook of Community Development: Perspectives from Around the Globe," by Kenny et al. (2018) has no chapter or study devoted to the discussion of community development carried out by or associated with faith-based communities and/or organizations. In his review of CD history in the U.S.A., von Hoffman (2012) only briefly touches on Churches and does not discuss faith-based community development as a distinctive category. Churches are frequently listed as examples of service providers, charity organizations, or NGOs who do community development, but are not discussed or examined in depth.

Clarke and Ware (2015) reason that the lack of discussion of FBOs is because they are "embedded within communities" and have "fewer external agents and [they are] more 'organic' to the community" (38). The Urban Institute and Vidal (2001) found most FBOs inadequately prepared and lacking the resources to successfully carry out CD activities or spend government funds appropriately. They conclude that "much more research and exploration is needed to build the base of useful knowledge" (Ibid., II). The lack of FBOs' inclusion within discussions in the international development literature, including community development, could be explained by the fact that FBOs remain "to position themselves outside the development sector" (Clarke and Ware 2015, 38) and are "more closely aligned with the religious body to which they are affiliated [than with CD]" (38). However, this can be due the way scholars conceptualize the work of FBOs.

The lack of adequate discussion of FBOs as a distinct category calls for more studies and investigations that would cross disciplines and engage with the subjects of

faith, religion, and FBOs in ways other than those which seem to dominate current research approaches. Faith-based CD research is dominated by an approach that focuses on terms of outcomes and asset building in the areas of social and public infrastructure. This focus may be explained through a common way of conceptualizing how FBOs function like other CD organizations, as Frederick (2003) discusses: "proxies" (30) that "provide services" (32) and act instead of governments (30). For example, the Community Capitals Framework (Emery and Flora 2006) is a widely used framework for researching community development outcomes and asset buildings in terms of "natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built capitals" (Ibid., 20).

The reviewed literature signals a tendency to reposition (Beaumont 2008), reintroduce, and reconstitute (Schwenkel 2018, 528 "reconstitution") faith into planning, but solutions and approaches vary by state and the dominant economic and institutional structure. In the 21st century, urbanization continues in many European cities and planners need to tackle new urban tensions. Problems occur as cities diversify and demand increases for the use of urban and public space (see Peach and Gale 2003; Gale 2008; Greed 2020). Furbey and Macey (2005) conclude that government led urban regeneration and neighborhood renewal policy in the United Kingdom now includes a "place for faith" (110).

In the U.S. and Europe, the "contemporary role of FBOs in urban social issues reflects changing state–civil society relations wrought by the neo-liberalization of urban space" (Beaumont 2008, 2029). Through this process, "in a myriad ways" (Ibid., 2029) new opportunities and "spaces" open up for FBOs because "the state reformulates its

role in welfare provision in the urban context" (2029). This is "often contradictory and politically and ideologically contrasting" (Ibid., 2029). The contemporary role of FBOs "assumes a more service delivery role as state functions are contracted-out" (Ibid., 2029).

Davis (2009) challenges the UK's "locked" perception of religion as solely a congregational institution that is motivated by faith and acts on a local level (385). His analysis deepens the meaning of FBOs (Church, NGOs etc.) as institutions that can work above local levels, such as discussed through the case study of Caritas. Davis (2009) reasons that organizations do not have to be managed solely by "believers," but can also be managed by those who "belong" (Ibid.). Brouwer's (2009) theological analysis of Dutch missional Churches calls for a more ecological approach and argues that local congregations need "a differentiated and empirical, informed perspective on culture" (56) to be able to maintain existence as missional congregations. This can be explained by mass arrivals of migrant refugee groups that are more religious or different in religion from natives of the Netherlands. According to the Pew Research Center, out of the Netherlands' total population, 7.1% of the population is estimated to be Muslim.[24] The majority of Netherlands' population is projected to become religiously unaffiliated[25] by

24. Hackett, Conrad. 2017. "5 Facts about the Muslim Population in Europe." Table, under "Estimated size of Muslim population in 2016." Pew Research Center (official website). November 29, 2017. Accessed March 27, 2021. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/29/5-facts-about-the-muslim-population-in-europe/.

25. Religiously unaffiliated population "includes atheists, agnostics and people who do not identify with any particular religion. However, many of the religiously unaffiliated do hold some religious or spiritual belief" (Pew Research Center. 2015. "Appendix C." In *The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050*. Religion & Public Life. April 2, 2015, under "The Religiously Unaffiliated," 233.

2050.[26] Germany and France had substantial estimated Muslim population in 2016, specifically "5.7 million Muslims in France (8.8% of the country's population) and 5 million Muslims in Germany (6.1%),"[27] and UK had 4,13 million (6.3% of the country's population).[28] In England and Wales, the estimated Muslim population rose from 50,000 to 1,600,000 in just 40 years (1969-2001) (Peach and Gale 2003, 479, table III), while the number of places for worship rose from 7 to 614 (Ibid., 479, table III). The estimated Sikh population increased from 16,000 to 340,000, and Sikh places of worship rose from 3 to 193. The Hindu population rose from 30,000 to 560,000, and places of worship increased from 1 to 109 (Ibid., 479, table III). These numbers show an increase in demand for places of worship and a change in the societal fabric that Peach and Gale (2003) express as the "British planning process, dedicated to preserving the traditional has engaged with the exotic" (469).

Approaches to planning need to be broadened like Porter's (2010) proposal of planning as cultural practice for "lived spaces" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 362), which is more aligned with "conceived spaces" (concept by Ibid., 355; Porter 2010). Also,

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Accessed April 1, 2021. https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2015/04/PF_15.04.02_ProjectionsAppendixC.pdf. The full length of the reports can be accessed through https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/.

26. 49.1% of the total population by 2050 is projected to affiliate as religiously unaffiliated; in 2020 the projected Muslim population was 44.3%, and the projected Christian population was 47.3% (Pew Research Center. 2015. "Religious Composition by Country, 2010-2050." Religion & Public Life. April 2, 2015, under "Netherlands." Accessed April 1, 2021. https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projection-table/).

27. Hackett 2017, para. 4.

28. Ibid. Table, under "Estimated size of Muslim population in 2016."

scholars and planners need more interactive and elastic ways to capture the dimensionality of "production of space" (Lefebvre 1991, 16) as cultural and religious practice. The recent contribution of Ammerman (2020) of approaching religious practice as a form of social practice can guide this change. She bases her approach on the practice theory of Bourdieu (1990) and Schatzki (2001), and lived religion research (Orsi 1997). Ammerman (2020) proposes the seven dimensions of "embodiment, materiality, emotion, aesthetics, moral judgment, narrative, and spirituality" (19) in which religious practice can be examined. Ammerman (2020) points out that sociological approaches have failed to understand "much of the religion we see" (7). The issue is not just religion's "messiness" but also religion's conceptualization as "fixed, unitary" (McGuire 2008, 12), or "coherent" (12). Little attention was given to the historic and cultural contexts where religious meanings and their definitions came to be (Ibid.). Religion is produced by culture, and historic power struggles are rooted in its definition (Ibid.). In the late 1990s, scholars started paying more attention to religion as practiced, experienced, or simply lived (Orsi 1997). Now, more than two decades later, much work has been done under the umbrella term of "lived religion" (Ammerman 2020) to understand religion, including spirituality, in the everyday walks of life. McGuire (2008) explains religion as the result of historical and sociocultural struggles in the past and present, while people are continuously changing the meaning of religion.

This dissertation argues that the ignorance of religious-cultural practice within planning [as a sociological discipline] is mainly due to a static, inflexible conceptualization of what planning and a planners' role are, a conceptualization that is

still too rooted in a colonialist view of planning with the resulting planning being a cultural artifact (Porter 2010, 16). Planning as cultural practice is not broadly discussed in the literature.

In summary, this dissertation applies a cultural practice approach to planning. I argue that the Hungarian Historic Churches' involvement in Hungarian communities produces "lived spaces" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 362), in an ethnic-regional context. Their involvement builds community through the focusing of efforts to transcend spiritual-spatial-mental dimensions. In "production of space," (Lefebvre 1991, 16) ethnicity and religion play a major role. Further, members of the Hungarian minority [both members and non-members of the Church] *directly* (i.e., self, family), *indirectly* (i.e., Church, media), or in a *mixed* form influence and advocate for "human social experience" (Ammerman 2020, 9) through "embodiment, materiality, emotion, aesthetics, moral judgment, narrative, and spirituality" (19). The *indirect process* (or activity as lived) at the level of the religious institution can be captured by the theoretical building blocks introduced by this dissertation: *ethno-spiritual figuration*, and *defragmentation* of *the House Divided (House Undivided)*. The seven dimensions of *direct* and *mixed* human social experience as lived religious practice are articulated through local individual cases [as interviews]. The psychological aspects of social experience embedded "by design" in the ethno-spiritual figuration process will be articulated in context. This can also help to capture the meaning of this dissertation's proposed new approach to planning, which is planning as cultural-religious practice. Further, these theoretical building blocks add to Yiftachel's concept of

"ethnoregionalism" (1999, 289; 2006) and "fractured regionalism" (Ibid., 1999; 2006, 159).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

In summary, this case study is a bricolage of interpretive-social constructivist, and "soft" positivist (Madill et al. 2000) approach. A substantive theory was generated with classic grounded theory (CGT) that "emerged from the data" (Glaser and Strauss 1967, 46) and then, it was triangulated with convergent interviews (CI), the literature, and the review of the relevant historical context. A discussion of differences and similarities between CGT and CI is provided.

I adopted the position of "researcher-as-bricoleur-theorist" (Denzin 2012, 85) who "works between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms" (85). As I describe below, CGT is not rooted in any paradigms, and from the competing schools of thought that try to explain its roots, I assumed the "soft" positive position of Madill et al. (2000). The findings of the CGT analysis are both articulated and interpreted with convergent interviews (triangulated). The CGT analysis resulted in a substantive theory that was developed further after the triangulation process, which can be described by Charmaz's (2008) constructivist grounded theory.

The interpretive paradigm, with a social constructivist orientation, was utilized for convergent interviewing, and for qualitative triangulation. Interpretive-social constructivist approach has a "relativist ontology (there are multiple realities) [and] a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings" (Denzin

and Lincoln 2005, 24). The findings are interpreted for the audience of community development professionals and planners.

3.1 METHODOLOGY

Neuman (2006) describes three main approaches of social science as: positivist, interpretive, and critical. Further, "philosophical assumptions about the purpose of science and the nature of social reality" guide these approaches (Neuman 2006, 104). This study uses convergent interviewing, CGT, and triangulation. Convergent interviewing can be rooted in an interpretive-social constructivist paradigm (Mehr 2018), while CGT's roots are very contested. Triangulation in qualitative case study research fits the interpretive-social constructivist criteria, as "triangulation can help to identify different realities" (Stake 2005, 454) and improve validity by providing different perspectives of the researched phenomena (Rothbauer 2008). The approach is used here to interpret, and co-create understanding among data sources and methods.

Interpretive approach studies examine the way people interact and analyze "socially meaningful action" (Neuman 2006, 88) in systematic ways to understand and interpret the social world that people create, and the way they maintain it (Ibid.):

> Interpretive social science is concerned with how people interact and get along with each other. In general, the interpretive approach is *the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds.* (88)

Grounded theory (GT) is mentioned as both a method and a methodology by Glaser (2016), and Strauss and Corbin (1990), and Corbin and Strauss (2008, 2015). Sbaraini et al. (2011) note that there are "four main types" (2) of established GT approaches, plus one that is "emerging" (2):

1. "Barney Glaser's 'Classic Grounded Theory' " (Ibid., 2) (CGT), based on the classic work of Glaser and Strauss (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for qualitative Research*.
2. "Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin's [1990] '*Basics of Qualitative Research' "* (Ibid., 2): *Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (Straussian).
3. "Kathy Charmaz's" (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory* (student of Strauss) (Ibid., 2).
4. "Adele Clarke's [2005] postmodern *Situational Analysis": Grounded Theory after the Postmodern Turn* (student of Strauss) (Ibid., 2)
5. Barbara Bower and Leonard Schatzman's (2009) *Dimensional Analysis*; Schatzman "was a colleague of Strauss and Glaser in the 1960s and 1970s" (Ibid., 2).

The philosophical orientation of GT approaches remains contested and evolved based on different schools of thought. The classic GT methodology of Glaser and Strauss (1967) was explained as having roots in symbolic interactionism (legacy of Strauss) and pragmatism (Oktay 2012). Glaser and Strauss' approach of GT diverged

and was reflected in Strauss' book of *Basics of Qualitative Research*,[29] co-authored with Juliet Corbin. The constructivist approach to GT was laid out by Charmaz (1990), who was one of Strauss' students (Oktay 2012). Glaser argued against Charmaz's constructive approach to GT, emphasizing that such constraint goes against the very tenet of the GT methodology, which is to remain unbounded (Glaser 2012). Glaser gives a similar argument for Strauss and Corbin's approach (1990; Corbin and Strauss 2008, 2015). Corbin, in the fourth edition of *Basics of Qualitative Research*, notes that Strauss divorced from Glaser's approach and proceeded to a more pragmatist and interactionist view. Age (2011) positions the Glaserian (classic) GT methodology to have elements of positivism, hermeneutics, and pragmatism. The Straussian approach is established as post-positivist and symbolic interactionism (Kenny and Fourie 2015), or pragmatist and symbolic interactionist by the authors themselves (Corbin and Strauss 2015). Charmaz's constructivist approach was placed as having roots in phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Charmaz 1990; Kenny and Fourie 2015).

Some scholars positioned CGT's philosophical orientation with soft positivism (Madill et al. 2000; Kenny and Fourie 2015). According to Madill et al. (2000, 4), CGT can be perceived as a "soft" positivist approach based on the inherent design of CGT. Glaser and Strauss (1967) exhaustively emphasize that a phenomenon will be discovered

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29. According to Wikipedia Strauss died in 1996. Recent editions bear his name, but editions prior to his death and the edition after his death differ. Editions of the book after 1996 represent Corbin's view. 1st edition 1990; 4th edition, 2015. Info of death: Wikipedia. n.d. "Anselm Strauss." Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia. Last edited February 6, 2021, at 21:55 (UTC). Accessed April 30, 2021. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anselm_Strauss.

objectively through the CGT process, and via non-relational interaction with the data. Madill and her colleagues (2000), building on this inherent design of CGT, explain that soft positivism assumes that "research is essentially a process of revealing or discovering pre-existing phenomena and the relationships between them" (Madill et al. 2000, 4). This is the approach that I adopted. Glaser (2016) argues that the CGT method has been used widely as a "no preconceptions method" (5) and methodology; and over 40 years, he made many arguments against remodeling the methodology:

> over the last 40 years and over 35 books I [Glaser] have put out much energy and many books to establish and grow the GT methodology and keep its perspective pure and safe from remodeling. As a result, it is spreading throughout the world as a no preconception concept generator of conceptual theory methodology. It suits a methodology for the PhD dissertation, since it automatically provides the desired original contribution required for the PhD. (8-9)

Further, the CGT approach helps with "*discovering theory* [emphasis added to discovery, and its concepts]" (Glaser and Strauss 1967, 9) that "*fit and are relevant* [emphasis added]" (Glaser 2012, 28). This very "discovering nature" of the methodology places Glaser's philosophical approach to knowledge generation on the positivist side. Glaser does argue for an objective approach, but as Urquhart (2013) points out, when Glaser and Strauss laid out the classic GT methodology in 1967, they "made no claim about the correct epistemology" (Ibid., under "Myth 4"), and the GT methodology is "orthogonal" (Ibid.). Corbin[30] in Corbin and Strauss (2015) notes that at the time the GT

30. Ibid.

methodology was laid out and published in 1967, Strauss did not formulate that he had roots in symbolic interactionism. The classic GT, to some extent, is rooted in symbolic interactionism because of Strauss' involvement.

As Urquhart (2013) explained, the CGT methodology does not have a predetermined philosophical worldview. In summary, the classic GT may be positioned as soft positivist (Madill et al. 2000; Age 2011), or having roots in symbolic interactionism (at the influence of Strauss) and pragmatism. Glaser (2012) emphasizes that the classic GT produces theories that "*fit and are relevant* (Ibid., 28; Glaser and Strauss 1967); this describes a pragmatic approach, which as he admits, can include [that I interpreted it] as a tiny amount of constructivism (Glaser 2012).

3.1.1 Convergent Interviewing (CI) versus Classic Grounded Theory (CGT)

There are "key similarities between the two approaches but also" (Driedger et al. 2006, 1147) several "distinct differences" (1147). Convergent interviewing (CI) "is an interviewing technique, it is also a methodological approach to qualitative research, just as grounded theory is both a methodological and theoretical approach" (Ibid., 1147).

Prior the interview process and formulating a research question, it is suggested to consult the literature for CI, while CGT stresses the opposite. The CI process is not limited to interviews, but can be used between other types of datasets (Dick 2017), similar to CGT (Glaser and Strauss 1967). CI has predefined steps for data collection, while the classic CGT is unbounded of such constraints (see Dick 2017; Glaser and Strauss 1967). CGT has no predetermined respondent pairing schema, while CI does. Thus, data collection is different, but data analysis has some similarities. Dick explains

the process of data analysis between interview pairs and the formulation of questions as "analogous to constant comparison in grounded theory" (Dick 2017, 14). I argue that this should not be confused with the entire method, as it means the *specific way of comparing* codes (CGT), or comparing agreements/disagreements "constantly" to identified codes (CI). He also did not specify which "type" of grounded theory that he meant. To me, the statement refers to constant comparison only.

CGT relies heavily on detailed memo writing and theory generation to retain objective observation and assist the "write-up" phase as an objective source of data. Dicks' (2017) convergent interview method suggests writing short notes and reports with bullet points. Theoretical sampling is not described as part of the CI method; thus in essence, only the method of the "constant comparison" is analogous with CGT.
The act of comparing one code to previous ones, and formulating subsequent questions, is indeed similar in both CI and CGT, but the constant comparison is just one element of these approaches.[31] Regarding similarities of the data analysis between the two, my views, after carrying out both, are the following:

- In CI, the interviewer—in this case myself—was actively present, facilitating discussion, but this was not the case with CGT, where I remained an objective analyst.

31. I have spent much time thinking about this and the two methods deceptively look similar, but they are not. They root in different paradigms.

- In CI, the opening broad question was the same in each interview. An emergent story began to appear from the very first two interviews. Questions were formulated to facilitate discussions in the next pair of interviews, to probe agreements and disagreements with the previous interview pair(s), and with the emergent story. I was an active listener, provided explanations, and shared personal experiences to reach deep interviews. I showed empathy, made eye contact, and so forth. I was not just a "disinterested observer." This process was repeated after each pair of interviews.[32] As I looked for agreements and disagreements, I gradually reduced the scope, considering the literature.
- While I analyzed the bulletins with the CGT, I coded everything that was related to the broad research question, line by line. I did not have a preset schema as I did with CI. I "constantly compared" one appearing code to another code, and one incident to another one. I remained distant from the data. *These comparisons were based on the code's, or incident's nature, or of its similarity to another code—not on whether there were agreements or not among incidents and codes. To me this poses a distinctive nature of what is being "constantly" compared*, and I did not see this discussed in the literature. *The two processes' inherent natures are different. Both compare and categorize, which are also fundamental to human nature, but the difference is in how and what is being compared.* So,

32. Pair refers to how the participants were lined up to achieve maximum diversity of samples, further explained below. I was the sole interviewer where I compared each interview to the previous one and to the emergent interpretation or "story." It is further explained below.

rather, the question is: ***what and how does the researcher compare?*** In CI, the "nature" of what is being compared is *imposed* on the researcher. The researcher knows that she has to look for consensus over a theme, or find convergence. CGT does not look for a "consensus," but rather looks for what appears from the data. The nature of ***what*** is researched is not imposed on the researcher.

3.1.2 The Rigor of Research Findings

Neuman (2006) explains *"validity* and *reliability* [that] are usually complementary concepts" (197), and Morse (2015) that "are often intertwined" (Morse 2015, 1213). The achievement of reliability is "inherently integrated as processes of verification in the attainment of validity" (Ibid., 1213). Neuman (2006) captures validity as "truthful" (196), and "authenticity" (196), meaning "giving a fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of someone who lives it every day" (196); and reliability as "dependability, or consistency" (196). Miller (2008) explains that there are many approaches to evaluate the " 'soundness' or 'goodness' " (909) of a qualitative study, frequently referred to it as validity (909). These frequently depend on the chosen "research methodologies and paradigms that guide … [the] research project" (Miller 2008, 909).

The "constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities)" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, 24), and that the researcher and "the respondent cocreate understandings" (24). Results are presented in terms of *"credibility, transferability, dependability* and *confirmability* [that] replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (Ibid., 24). Further,

"validity, reliability, objectivity, and generalizability [are replaced by] notions such as *trustworthiness, credibility, authenticity, transferability, and plausibility* [emphasis added]" (Miller 2008, 909). Both [italicized] sets of terminologies are dominantly based on the classic work of Lincoln and Guba (1985a), who provided *techniques* for evaluating the trustworthiness (qualitative equivalent of rigor) of qualitative research rooted in naturalistic inquiry. These techniques are for each criterion area:

> Credibility: (1) activities in the field that increase the probability of high credibility: (a) prolonged engagement, (b) persistent observation, (c) triangulation (sources, methods, and investigators); (2) peer debriefing, (3) negative case analysis, (4) referential adequacy, (5) member checks
>
> Transferability: (6) thick description
>
> Dependability: (7a) dependability audit, including the audit trial
>
> Confirmability: (7b) confirmability audit, including the audit trial
>
> All of the above: (8) the reflexive journal. (Lincoln and Guba 1985b, 328, table 11.2)

Morse (2015) questions the four decades of adoption of the techniques listed above, and argues for retaining the classic terminology of social scientific rigor over Lincoln and Guba's (1985b) and Guba and Lincoln's (1989) terminology such as "*credibility"* for "*internal validity*," "*transferability*" as "*external validity, or generalizability*," "*dependability* [as] *reliability*," and "*confirmability* [as] *objectivity*" (quoted in Morse 2015, 1212-1213). Morse argues that the techniques to establish trustworthiness (or rigor) as provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985a) and Guba and Lincoln (1989) have not been questioned, but rather are used as "checklists for the

evaluation of qualitative research, and as indicators for a qualitative study's "worthiness" (Morse 2015, 1212).

Morse's (2015) argument raises further points that are worthwhile to consider for fledgling qualitative researchers such as myself. She argues that despite their universal application, the techniques' usefulness are not critiqued, and she clarified what (or how many) strategies are appropriate to a certain type of inquiry. She questioned whether they are actually beneficial and improve the quality of the research, as they can "change the final product" (Ibid., 1212). For example, in unstructured interviews, Morse (2015) recommends thick description to improve validity, as it provides "more opportunity for replication of data" (1220). The abundance of data usually results in the "overlap" of content, which "enables the researcher to see replication … and contributes to internal reliability" (1218).

Considering the competing views of this matter, I agree with Morse (2015) and Neuman (2006) that validity and reliability are "complementary" (Neuman 2005, 197) and interwoven in a study. Further I am leaning toward Morse's (2015) critique of trustworthiness techniques, or strategies, and the use of them as "indicators" of sound research, as they are "particular to certain types of interviews or sampling strategies" (Morse 2015, 1213).

After this overview, I conclude that it is important to consider underlying paradigms, methods, and their inherent designs for any reliability, and validity claims, as I describe below.

This study is a bricolage of interpretive-social constructivist, and soft positivist approaches. The two methods exhibit some overlapping features, as discussed in section 3.1.1, though they are rooted in different paradigms.

Classic grounded theory's (CGT) philosophical roots remain contested (as thoroughly explained above), and are argued as being objective (Glaser and Strauss 1967), but it was never laid down as a positivist approach, nor a non-positivist one (see Glaser and Strauss 1967). The methodology, and the method, was a response to the gap between theory and empirical research during a time when testing theories, rather creating them, and verification rather than discovery, dominated sociological research, as articulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967):

> What is required, we believe, is a different perspective on the canons derived from vigorous quantitative verification on such issues as sampling, coding, reliability, validity, indicators, frequency distributions, conceptual formulation, construction of hypotheses, and presentation of evidence. We need to develop canons more suited to the discovery of theory….
>
> ...Although our emphasis is on generating theory rather than verifying it, we take special pains not to divorce those two activities, both necessary to the scientific enterprise. (viii)

Glaser and Strauss (1967) argued for CGT as a sound method for moving away from verification and generating substantive, or formal, theories that are relevant. Through a systematic process of objective analysis of data, emphasis is on discovery rather than verification. I find that the many contestations, and reflecting on my analysis and interaction with the data, places it as a soft positivist approach.

Convergent interviewing has a built-in authentication process, and as content develops and builds, it is authenticated in subsequent interviews through continuous probing of the content and of the emerging "theory (or interpretation, diagnosis, or evaluation)" (Dick 2017, 12). This procedure improves credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the findings. Respondents themselves authenticate the content and data "from their lived experience" (Dick (2017, 14). The emergent theory is checked (probed) by interviewers. Dick (Ibid.) explains:

> Because in each interview you are probing for exceptions, you continue to challenge your emergent ideas. These are the steps that allow you to claim, at the end of the research or diagnosis, that your conclusions or hypotheses are valid. You have derived them carefully from the data. Informants who understand the situation from their lived experience have interpreted the data. The conclusions have survived multiple and vigorous attempts to disprove them. (14)

While I was conducting the convergent interviews, respondents added the content, but when it was necessary, I contributed to the facilitation of the conversation, including discussing my encounters with the Székely-Hungarian community as a native, interpreting content from previous interviews of the same methods (i.e., explaining the content for probing, terms, European Union grants), or interpreting content from the literature. In contrast, while I was analyzing the bulletins, I remained objective and distant because there was no interaction with respondents—only with text in the form of bulletins and newspaper articles. I did not interpret what codes were emerging or their meaning, but I let the data "speak" and coded everything that answered the broad research question. The codes emerged from the data and were categorized based on their

properties, contents, and so forth. These steps are outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The core concepts emerged as non-relational and separate from my interpretation. This process resulted in a substantive theory. I consulted the literature only after the generation of the substantive theory. I proceeded to the next phase, which can be described as interpretive-social constructivist because the findings are contextualized and interpreted for their applicability to community development and planning, and I articulated how locals explained social reality in their answers. I triangulated the findings with the convergent interviews, historic records, and the literature.

As I unfold it in the following chapters, and as a concluding remark, I believe my study fits Neuman's (2006) three criteria for establishing validity:

Criteria 1: "Truth claims need to be plausible" (197, box 7.3) meaning

> …that the data and statements about it are not exclusive; they are not the only possible claims nor are they exact accounts of the one truth in the world …. They are powerful, persuasive descriptions that reveal a researcher's genuine experiences with the empirical data. (197, box 7.3)

Criteria 2:

> …A researcher's empirical claims gain validity when supported by numerous pieces of diverse empirical data. Any one specific empirical detail alone may be mundane, ordinary, or "trivial." Validity arises out of the cumulative impact of hundreds of small, diverse details that only together create a heavy weight of evidence. (197, box 7.3)

Criteria 3:

> …Validity increases as researchers search continuously in diverse data and consider the connections among them…. Validity grows as a researcher recognizes a dense connectivity in disparate details. It grows with the creation of a web of dynamic connections

> across diverse realms and not only with the number of specific that are connected. (197, box 7.3)

3.1.2.1 Critique of CI and CGT Methods

My critique is that Dick (2017) says that CI can be used for theory development, but I believe the method is not robust enough to do that, as core elements of theory development were not being explained by him. CI is an efficient and powerful interviewing technique for exploratory studies, where prior consultation of the literature is indeed crucial. CGT provides a robust method for theory development, including "finding" core concepts, their properties, and the relationships among them. Dick (2017) does not talk about how the researcher can identify core concepts, and other substantive elements of a theory. I think CI can help the researcher to create a "diagnosis," evaluate, and describe. It is an efficient tool to capture different perspectives and social realities that can improve the validity of a study. CI does not provide enough ways for substantive theory development, where concepts can be developed and relationships can be identified. Rather, it is the active participative involvement of the respondent (Dick works with action research) that propels a diagnosis of a question that should be taken to another level for the purpose of developing a new theory. In my study it fits the purpose of providing various perspectives of the social reality.

3.1.3 Personal Statement

This dissertation study is categorized as social constructivist. The study was carried out in three major steps, in which I engaged with the data in two different ways. In qualitative studies, the researcher's personal experience and position in society in the

context of the research topic gains importance. Thus, my ethnic identity, my religious faith, and my attitude toward the Romanian state (oppressor-oppressed) is relevant.

I am a member of the ethnic Székely-Hungarian minority. I grew up in the study area, where I was exposed to the minority's intellectual, cultural, religious, and historic past and present. My *identity* was shaped by the cultural heritage that we call European. I read French, Russian, German, and English thinkers from an early age, and I lived in a predominantly white ethnic community that, despite being multicultural (Roma, Romanian, Saxon), remained closed—maybe due to assimilation fears. I was a member of a minority.

This brings me to the second topic of my position of being one of the "*oppressed*" and my attitude toward the "*oppressors*." I started this study from a position as a member of an "oppressed" community, an identity that I gradually shed. This happened in the following way. In 2017, I was looking into a quantitative study of cultural landscape change that was more ecological in nature. At the time I started my study, I had lived for nearly a decade in the United States. During this time, my knowledge of my cultural-ethnic roots was not challenged much. I reviewed social ecological studies, mainly focusing on post-communist landscape change due to institutional changes, and adaptive cycles of social ecological systems, among others. I studied spatial metrics, modeling, and remote sensing methods, all of which were very quantitative in nature. After this time, I was introduced to the concept of individual (personal) resilience. I saw the relevance of human developmental literature as I observed and read studies in the literature about people who experienced many stressful

events, from land reinstitution processes to communist oppression. As part of a preparation to my preliminary exam, I needed to review the literature on institutional changes of the Transylvanian region, which exposed me to new literature on Transylvania. I also reviewed literature related to land abandonment and rural decline, from which I learned more about how Hungarians failed to give autonomy rights to Romanians, and how the Romanians did the same once they became in charge, while they also persecuted Saxons. History repeated itself; only the players were different. I was challenged by the literature I was reviewing to expand my boxed view of my own people of the Székelys and Hungarians and acknowledge that they were oppressors as much as Romanians. I also learned how both ethnicities oppressed their own kind. At this point, I saw both ethnicities the same: hurt and defensive, and one not better than the other. This view of mine continues to the present day. People were not equal with their respective institutional systems at certain times in history. Both ethnicities served as both the victims and the oppressors at various times in history.

My *religious position* was that, as a Christian, I reasoned that both Romanians and Hungarians failed to embrace other ethnicities and peacefully live together as Christian teachings instruct. Rather, both ethnicities chose continuous fights, bloodshed, and "we were here first" arguments. One should also be careful not to generalize, as not everyone is the same, and while there are differences, there are also many exceptions. It is structural, top-down oppression, but both ethnicities have tremendous pain. I believe they are hurt and each carry their ancestors' pain, including the offenses and wrongdoings the earlier generations endured. I think one should be cautious calling it

nationalism on either side; it is collective pain. Maybe a small percentage are "purists" who just one kind, but in general, people want to be left to live and thrive, respectfully, and with dignity. Nationalist remarks can make the problem worse. I came to realize that it was a very heavy personal weight to be in a continuous defensive position; however, it is difficult to change ingrained positions of people. Ethnic disputes have been surfacing more and more as rights being demanded.

I am a member of the Unitarian Church; however, my faith has changed drastically, leading to a baptism in 2019. I believe that Jesus was resurrected in his body, while Unitarians do not believe this. It is an important difference. I am not associating myself with any of the three denominations discussed in this study, but I perceive myself as Christian.

By the time I carried out the pilot study and began collecting interviews, I went through a process that I can describe as a detoxification and shedding of an identity that was based on the 1,000-year-old ethnic struggles and experienced realities since my birth, or examples of oppression in my environment. Changes that shocked me were that I started seeing Romanian as a beautiful, melodious language, seeing the Romanian colors of the flag together not as "dirty colors," and seeing Romanians as optimistic and beautiful people. I realized that the land is the homeland for Romanians as much as it is to me. Today, I think that these types of ethnic struggles are the same everywhere in the world. I see what is in Transylvania as a miniature representation of what is happening in the world at large. My pain was the pain of millions around the globe.

The second step was after the interviews were completed. I rigorously analyzed and interacted with the data in an objective and non-relational way. I used bulletins, newspapers, and the collected interviews to develop a theory. The interviews were used to confirm the core concepts — a process that can be described as checking for saturation. For example, I checked for the process of *ethnospiritual figuration*, or for *defragmenting activities*. I did not look into perceptions of people, and I did not engage with the data through my personal experience. Rather I performed a present/absent analysis of the core concepts. There would have been possible instances to engage, but I did not. While I collected the interviews, I had no knowledge of the core concepts or the theory developed by CGT. *This is what I could describe as the first phase of the GT analysis that provided the core concepts, attributes, and interlinking properties of the theory* in a non-relational way.

The third step was a process of triangulation and crystallization. I placed the already-developed theory in context with the interviews. This falls under the social constructivist understanding of co-creating reality because I explained multiple perspectives of priests, mayors, and my understanding of planning for planners. The theory developed with CGT was further refined by using the literature from community development, lived religion, and planning. This process can be captured as *constructivist grounded theory development*, the second phase of GT analysis. Here I developed the theory and introduced it as a form of community development that is performed through cultural-religious practice.

My personal experience mainly facilitated deep interviews collected in 2019, aiding me to gain the trust of interviewees and help them to connect to the research questions. Based on these interviews, my observations, and experiences of the study area, the role of priests in villages showed significance. This observation helped me to formulate the broad research question for the CGT. I emphasize that the analysis, from this point, was not interactional with the data, as with the CI interviews. I did not switch course in the analysis because I was familiar with some information discussed. I followed the method. It was a topic that I could carry out given my financial constraints, gap in the literature and faculty expertise, and it later became even more relevant as COVID-19 restrictions lasted during the rest of my studies.

Charmaz (2008) reasons that users of CGT utilized "limited social constructivism" (399). However, Glaser (2012) argues against social constructivism. These positions run in parallel "universes" that do not meet through researchers' agreements. These kinds of disagreements led Glaser and Strauss in the 1960s to seek solutions in a different way, and their approach was revolutionary; Charmaz herself (student of Strauss, Sbaraini et al. 2011) was looking for more. Charmaz, Glaser, and Strauss were more alike than not as all three of them "revolted" against what was prescribed for them. I take inspiration from these examples. I agree with Denzin (2012) that we need the "researcher-as-bricoleur-theorist" (85) position where one can work "between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms" (85). Further, as Denzin (2012) asks and expresses: qualitative researchers should not engage in "paradigm wars" (84), rather they should "get back to the task at hand, which is

changing the world" (85). As doctoral students, we go through a long six-year process that transforms us, and we develop our own understanding of reality, whether in the light of existing literature, or our agreement or disagreement with certain "schools of thought." The paradigms and positions of what have been "constructed" for us by the time we enter the scene of academia is something that we might agree, or disagree with.

Madill et al. (2000) captures research as "essentially a process of revealing or discovering pre-existing phenomena and the relationships between them" (4). I took this stance for the first part of theory development (CGT analysis), which was further developed in light of community development and planning literature - what Charmaz (2008) captures as social constructivist grounded theory development. Personal observation and experience can launch positivist research, not just qualitative research. I am trained to do quantitative ecological studies. I may observe processes in nature through experiencing them, but this does not mean they will define my entire study. As humans we observe; we are curious beings that lead us to discoveries. Nobody discovered/invented the "ultimate car," and "the ultimate painkiller." They discovered one that functions given conditions and circumstances. Similarly, my findings of CGT captured one phenomenon that can be tested on site, given certain circumstances and conditions. This was constructed further, reasoned further, and developed further for a specific audience of planners and community development professionals.

3.2 HISTORIC HUNGARIAN CHURCHES (TÖRTÉNELMI MAGYAR EGYHÁZAK) – HHCHS

The three studied Historic Hungarian Churches are the Roman Catholic, Unitarian, and the Reformed Churches of Romania who had continuous presence prior to Romania's acquisition of Transylvania in 1920. This acquisition and the historic context are discussed in Chapter IV. The fourth Church is the Evangelical-Lutheran Church, which is not discussed in this study due its very low membership, and lack of time.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, 93% of the Hungarian minority belonged to the three Historic Hungarian Churches (Bárdi and Papp 2008). The Reformed Church has two administrative districts [in Transylvania] with a center in the cities of Nagyvárad and Kolozsvár. The Unitarian Church has one with a center in Kolozsvár[33], and most members of the Roman Catholic Church belong to four districts with a center in Szatmár, Nagyvárad, Temesvár, and Gyulafehérvár.[34] More than half of the Hungarian Roman Catholics belong to the Gyulafehérvár district (Bárdi and Papp 2008). The last one elects an archbishop, and has an archdiocese rank.[35]

Regarding geographic-institutional representation of the three denominations, there are some unique differences. The Roman Catholic Church reports to the Vatican,

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33. This is the city where I acquired my undergraduate degree.

34. Some Hungarian speaking members also belong to a district with Iași and Bucharest as centers, but these are not within the boundaries of the study area.

35. Gyulafehérvári Római Katolikus Érsekség. n.d. "A Gyulafehérvári Főegyházmegye érseke." Accessed April 3, 2021. https://ersekseg.ro/hu/node/81.

and the four districts can have more or less mixed [Hungarian-Romanian] members. Given that most of the Romanian population is Eastern Orthodox, the Church remained mostly Hungarian, especially in the Gyulafehérvár district.

The Unitarian Church has one district in Romania and six subdistricts (*egyházkör*). Each of these subdistricts have smaller units. Hungary's Unitarian Church was united with the Unitarian Church in Romania; it is collectively called the Hungarian Unitarian Church (*Magyar Unitárius Egyház*).[36] Finally, the Reformed Church in Transylvania has two main districts, where one is called the Transylvanian Reformed Church-Disrict (*Erdélyi Református Egyházkerület)*[37] consisting sixteen subdistricts (egyházmegye), and the other one is called the Királyhágómelléki Reformed Church-District *(Királyhágómelléki Református Egyházkerület)*[38], with nine subdistricts. Each subdistrict can be further divided. Each main district has an elected bishop *(Reformed – 2 bishops, Unitarian – 1 bishop, Roman Catholic– 4 bishops).* The Fanziscan Order here is discussed as an Order that "belongs" to the Roman Catholic districts (some reference will be given to this in Chapter IV).

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36. Magyar Unitárius Egyház. n.d. "Egyházkörök és egyházkerület." Accessed January 18, 2021. https://unitarius.org/egyhazkorok-es-egyhazkerulet/.

37. Erdélyi Református Egyházkerület. n.d. "Címtár." Accessed January 18, 2021. http://reformatus.ro/cimtar.

38. Királyhágómelléki Református Egyházkerület. "Címtár." Accessed January 18, 2021. http://www.kiralyhagomellek.ro/cimtar.php.

As of March-April 2020 the local representations of the three denominations showed 176[39] localities for Unitarian, 997[40] localities for Reformed, and 478[41] for Roman Catholic. Localities can be villages and cities, and frequently, at the village level we see one or two denominations. Priests frequently serve one populated village, and one less populated one. This was confirmed during my interviews of respondents #1, #16, #19.

3.3 STUDY AREA

The study area (Figure 1) is bounded by the institutional boundaries of the three Historic Hungarian Churches, which mostly represent the historic boundaries of Transylvania (including the Partium and Bánság) belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to 1920. In this historic-geographic space, the discussed Hungarian minority and the affiliated, but distinctive, group of Székelys form an ethnogeographic region, or ethnoregion. This ethnoregion is called Székelyland. Székelys are Hungarians,

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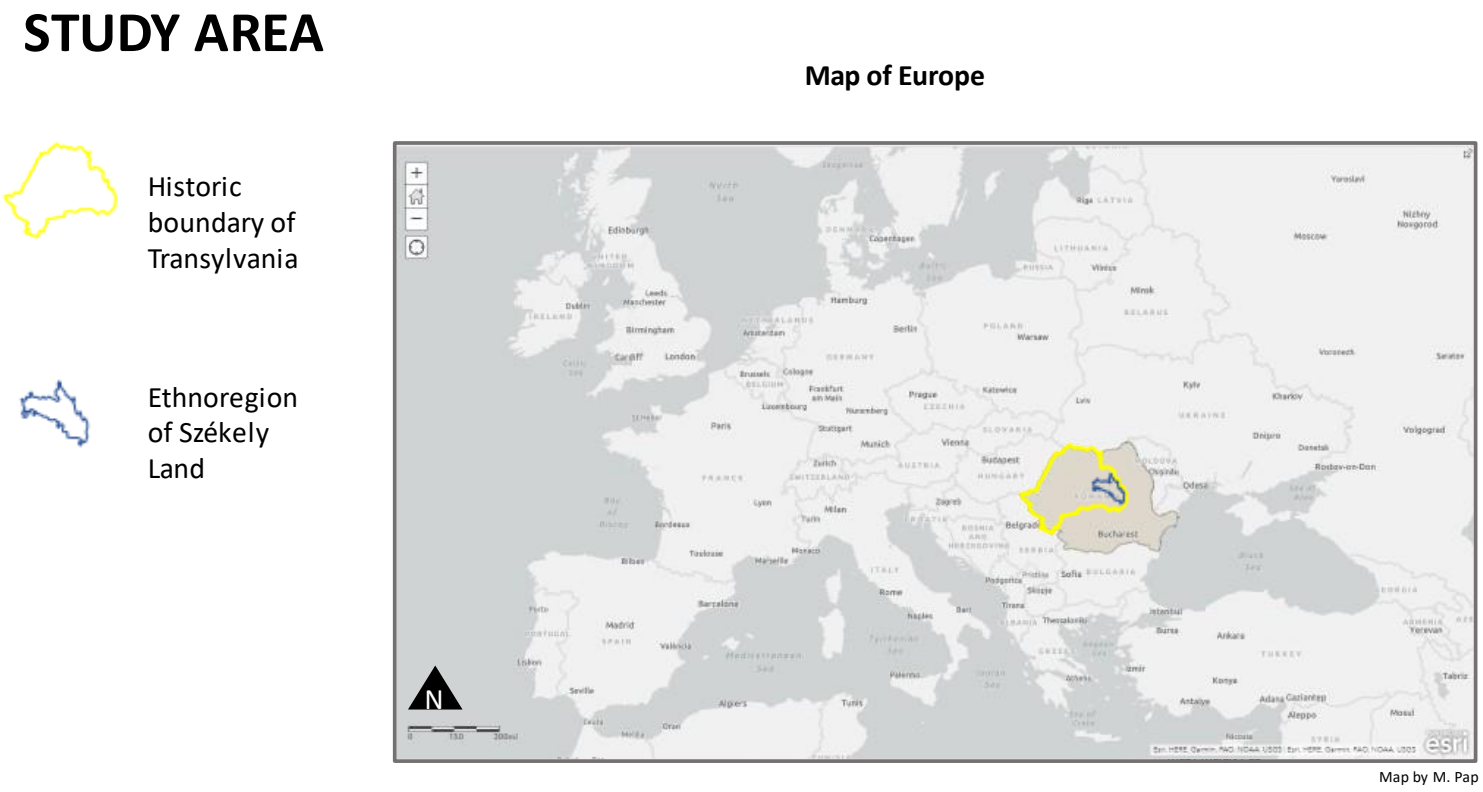
39. Magyar Unitárius Egyház. n.d. "Egyházkörök és egyházkerület." Accessed March-April 2020.

40. Erdélyi Református Egyházkerület. n.d. "Címtár." Accessed March-April 2020. http://reformatus.ro/cimtar; Királyhágómelléki Református Egyházkerület. "Címtár." Accessed March-April 2020. http://www.kiralyhagomellek.ro/cimtar.php.

41. Gyulafehérvári Római Katolikus Érsekség. n.d. "Címtár." Accessed March-April 2020. https://ersekseg.ro/hu/foesperesikeruletek; Nagyváradi Római Katolikus Egyházmegye. n.d. "Plébániák." Accessed March-April 2020. http://www.varad.org/hu/plebaniak/; Temesvári Római Katolikus Egyházmegye. n.d. "Területi felosztás." Accessed March-April 2020. https://gerhardus.ro/hu/puspokseg/foesperessegek/; Szatmári Római Katolikus Egyházmegye. n.d. "Főesperességek és esperességek." Accessed March-April 2020. https://www.szatmariegyhazmegye.ro/plebaniak/.

frequently referred to as Székely-Hungarians. The roots of this distinction, and the historic and geographic space are thoroughly discussed in Chapter IV. Convergent interviews were collected in Hargita County. The county is one of the few counties, where ethnic Hungarians constitute the majority of the population. The county's total population was 310,867 in 2011 with 85.2% of the total population being Hungarian, 13% Romanians, and 1.8 % Roma (Erdélystat n.d., table under "Népesség, Etnikumok"). According to the Romanian 2011 statewide census, the ethnic composition of Romania was the following: "16,792 million (88.9%) Romanian. … 1,227 million (6.5%) Hungarian … 621,6 hundred thousand (3.3%) Roma" (INS 2014, 10). The rest were "50,9 thousand Ukrainian" (10); "36 thousand Germans" (10); "27,7 thousand Turkish" (10); "Russian-Lipoveni 23,5 thousand and 20,3 thousand Tartar" (10). The remaining ethnicities were under 20,000 in population (Ibid.). The total resident population was "20.121,6 million"; and "18.884 million provided ethnic affiliation data" (Ibid., 10).

Figure 1 Boundaries of the Study Area



3.4 METHODS

3.4.1 Method I: Convergent Interviewing

3.4.1.1 Why Convergent Interviewing?

I chose convergent interviewing for a few reasons. First, I wanted to go beyond the literature's dominate explanations of the causes of rural decline e.g., rural to urban migration, the ills of communism regarding village policies, emigration and loss of labor, the role of infrastructure, and rate of land abandonment. Second, many of the peer-reviewed studies were large-scale spatial change studies and did not appropriately emphasize the ethnic make-up of the region. My experience and visits to the region also showed rapid, year-to-year changes, where I observed great variability between settlements and regions of Romania. Simply, I wanted a finer resolution of insights to local dynamics and social realities. The method is designed to search for agreement and disagreements efficiently, and the number of respondents could be as low as twelve (Dick 2017), which was feasible for a summer international trip, with very limited resources.

3.4.1.2 The Interlinked Process of Data Collection and Analysis

Dick's (2017) convergent interview method uses in-depth interviews. Convergent interviewing has a "structured process and initially-unstructured content" (Dick 2017, 1). Dick (2017) explains the structure in that interviews are completed in pairs, but not at the same time. All interviews start with one "broad question" (6), and the collected data is interpreted and processed after each pair of interviews. "Sub questions" can vary

between interview pairs. The heart of the method lies in gaining an informed insight of local context by starting with a broad context (in our case, rural change and decline through making decisions) and narrowing it down through:

1) a systematic process of pairing respondents (based on a sampling criteria),

2) identifying agreement and disagreements among interviews, and lastly,

3) through cross-checking for causes on agreements and disagreements among interviewees.

The units of analysis were individuals' decisions, and their perceptions of community members, family members' decisions, village community as a whole, and village change.

This process allows researchers to see a "narrative" framed by the research question. In this study, this frame was understanding drivers of rural decline, including Székely villages, cultural landscapes, and their communities, through people's decisions and choices regarding self, family, and community, including aspects of institutional, demographic, and social change. A total of 16 themes were recorded and probed for convergence, and divergence (Appendix A). These themes were used for triangulation and were incorporated throughout the study (with appropriate reference to the study). The study was reviewed and approved by the Texas A&M IRB's Human Subject Research Protection Program as minimal risk research.

3.4.1.3 Research Question

The broad research question was:

> *What are some of the key decisions that you and your family (or community) have made (in the past 20 to 30 years) that have influenced the way you (they) live and the way (they) you manage your (their) land?*

A set of interviews "closing questions," which differed from Dicks' method, were asked; these were requested to be added to the study by the IRB to reduce the broadness of the study so that it could be approved. Interview closing questions were:

1. *"What were the reasons of the _____ (identified) decision?"*
2. *"Why do you think people abandon their land in your community?"*
3. *"Can you identify any special outcomes of their decisions?"*
4. *"In your opinion what makes a community strong?"*
5. *"In your opinion why do rural communities decline in Romania?"*

The closing questions frequently turned out to be asked during the interview, and not as "closing" questions.

3.4.1.4 Interviewee Recruitment and Sampling

A maximum diversity of sample, based on a selection criterion, was compiled through involving local experts and through snowball sampling. I am native to this area, and I also served as a local expert. Interviewees were recruited from ages eighteen and above. Inclusion and exclusion are based on residency, age, and kinship (prospect to inherit lands in the studied villages), or involvement with rural communities, specifically:

1. Individuals who live in villages in Hargita County, Romania.

2. Individuals who hold land but do not live in the villages anymore.
3. Individuals who are first, second, and third generations of individuals in categories *1* and *2* above.
4. People who work as teachers, priests, and/or serve the community in various ways.
5. Individuals aged 18 and older.

A total of nineteen respondents were interviewed, and sixteen interview sessions were conducted,[42] which was reported in the literature to be a reasonable number (Dick 2017). Eighteen respondents were audio recorded, as audio recording was optional to participate. Three interviews were done with three married couples. Individuals voluntarily gave consent. Both females and males were interviewed. The initial aim was to conduct more than sixteen interviews, but due to the married couples' contributions, the reference in the literature, constraints of time needed for IRB approval, and the researcher's ability to be on the field, the study did not allow for more interviews.

42. One was excluded for not signing a consent, and resulted an informal discussion that was not used. Consent form was never mentioned as the atmosphere of the interview indicated that it would be better for the interviewee if he/she would be excluded. There was a sort of "hostility" that did not allow meaningful dialogue, and I judged to exclude and pose no risk or harm to the individual as instructed by research protocol and IRB.

3.4.1.5 Respondent Pairing

Table 1 Pairs of Respondents

Pair	# ID	Occupation, landowner status
1st	**11**	Elementary school teacher in a "község," small-sized land holding, permanent city dweller, house owner in a village.
	2	Representative of a local council, medium-sized land holding, farmer, resident of a village.
2nd	**7**	Mayor of a "község," small- to medium-sized land holdings.
	26a, 26b	Elderly married couple, small to medium land holdings, farmers (aged 85-90).
3rd	**19**	Unitarian village priest, villager, large Church land holding.
	21a, 21b	Young married couple, young farmers (aged 25-30), small- to medium-sized land holding, dairy farmers.
4th	**9**	Family business owner, small land holding, villager.
	31	Dairy farmer, large land holding.
5th	**28**	Family consultant, therapist, child protection professional, social worker, city dweller.
	32a, 32b	Small land holding, permacultures, city dweller.
6th	**1**	Unitarian priest in a city, serves a couple of small rural Unitarian congregations.
	17	Rural development professional, civic actor, works with grants, villager, small, or small to medium land holding.
7th	**14**	Dairy farmer, villager, small to medium land holdings, retired rural development professional, handcrafted cheesemaker.
	5	Civic actor, grant writer, new village resident, small land holding.
8th	**16**	Reformed priest, dairy farmer, large Church land holdings.
	29	Civic grant writer, active community builder, small land holding, villager, works in a city.

I tried to match interviewees based on the types of work they carried out (Table 1). For example, I matched interviews with a priest and a local innovative farmer in which the priest speaks of community and the farmer about himself. During the interpretation, I

was looking for agreements and disagreements in decisions at the individual and community levels. This is done to achieve a "maximum diversity of sample" (Dick 2017, 9).

3.4.1.6 Transcription

At the time of the data collection, the obtained interviews were not intended to be transcribed, for a couple of reasons. First, I was collecting the interviews to provide me with local contextual information of the study area, which could help me narrow my dissertation topic. Second, per Dick's (2017) recommendation of the overall benefits of transcribing the interviews, where "the added protection that a transcript provides is less necessary with a process such as convergent interviewing that continually challenges emerging hypotheses" (Ibid., 17). I chose the method because it was described as efficient, with inbuilt rigor, and it fit my scope. Data interpretations happen on site, and the [on-site] transcription process would substantially make that interview process difficult (Ibid., 17). Transcription takes time, and slows down the "concurrent process" (after Dick 2017, 17) of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Ibid., 17). I would have been unable to carry out the transcription on site and finish the data collection. Dick further explains, that the added "protection that a transcript provides is less necessary with a process such as convergent interviewing that continually challenges emerging hypotheses" (Ibid., 17).

I transcribed the interviews after my return from the field to provide my committee with a better review process, as all interviews were conducted in Hungarian. As I worked on the CGT analysis, it also became more evident that the interviews, in the

form of quotes, could illustrate the findings of the RIDD theory. I illustrated the meaning of community, the fragmented nature of the region, and the dimensionality of *ethnospiritual figuration* through quoting village pastors, community actors, and villagers' perceptions. The literature has examples of transcribing the interviews (see Hegney et al. 2007).

Transcription was carried out using an online automatic transcription service through *sonix.ai*. Interviews were uploaded and automatically transcribed. The transcribed texts then were corrected and rechecked second-by-second and line-by-line. It resulted in a total of 620 single-spaced pages of transcribed text, with an estimated 280–300 man-hours. Transcription consisted of frequent replaying of the content and checking for clarity and accuracy. Only a small length of audio recording (< 5 minutes) was inaudible. Parts of the interviews and the quoted text were translated to English by the researcher (Pap, G. 2020), as well. Google Translate (Hungarian to English) was used to facilitate more rapid translation of the text. As with automatic transcription, it was read and rewritten line-by-line, or corrected as required with the assistance of an online dictionary, Dictzone.com.

This process further facilitated my familiarization with the data and conceptualization of converging and diverging topics and their narratives. In the field, convergence and divergence were followed to saturation. However, maturation of the concept continued through transcription and translation, and the write-up process.

3.4.1.7 Field Reports and Notes

Notetaking, and audio-recording, during the interview, per Dick (2017), is not suggested, rather he advises a "memory system" (11) and the writing of short notes after each interview. I refer to summaries of interviews as field reports, which are based on the notes (field notes) and audio recordings that were taken during the interview. I judged the adoption of the memory system too risky for potentially losing meaningful content. The importance of audio recordings was emphasized by a local expert, who was a historian, and whose feedback suggested recording interviews. The literature documented this type of diversion from the method (see Hegney et al. 2007). Audio recordings were optional, and all interviews were recorded except the first one (#11).

The first through sixth interview pairs have on-site handwritten field notes. The first four pairs of interviews have hand-written field reports. The writing of field reports was discontinued after the fourth pair of interviews for several reasons. Summaries for the length of these interviews was excessively time consuming. There was a narrow time window (four weeks) for the overall project, due to travel and to IRB approval. This time frame included all activities, including recruitment, interviews, and summaries. Furthermore, the summaries became redundant once convergence was developing. Questions, and emergent and converging themes were instead recorded as bullet points. I continued taking brief notes, but focus was given to maintain eye contact and sustain interest in the discussed topic, to reach "deep" content. All physical copies of field notes and field reports were digitized, then destroyed.

3.4.2 Method II: Classic Grounded (CGT) Theory

3.4.2.1 Why CGT?

My choice of CGT as a method was not a simple one, rather the outcome of a long process. I restrict my explanation to a few key elements. A quantitative study was not feasible, as land parcel data and household data was not available. The geocoding and digitization would have not been guaranteed due to contested land parcel ownerships, boundaries, and labor-intensive work. My own experience with the studied region is that "numbers" on records may not represent the facts and would have projected a distorted reality. Additionally, the acquisition of official data would have been very circumstantial, and securing approvals would not have been guaranteed. Not having a research fund, I had to give up this uncertain route.

The pilot study showed an institutionally unreliable landscape, corruption, and a tendency to work and get things done "under the table" through traditional-cultural means. This was paired with my review of the peer reviewed literature that social local-level details are missing regarding land abandonment—consequently rural decline. I found most studies to be insensitive to ethnicity, reducing it to categorical groups. I was not happy with the vast literature I reviewed, as it did not much discuss the Church's role in rural communities. These papers were reviewed prior to convergent interviewing (pilot study), and were focused on post-socialist, post-communist landscapes (e.g., cultural landscapes, land abandonment). I also reviewed hundreds of articles as a graduate research assistant, or as a result of required readings.

In all of my encounters in my six to seven years of graduate school, I just barely came across the topics of religion, faith, and Church. Respondents from the convergent interviews indicated that priests are important, along with their positive impact on villages. I knew villages were exhibiting very different qualities. I asked why? Do priests have a role? I saw an opportunity to explore. After the pilot study, I reviewed the literature on faith-based communities and faith-based organizations as I was planning a PAR study, but it could not be executed.

Briefly, CGT provided me with what I needed in the hectic landscape of the studied region: an empty sheet of paper with the research question on it. There was just too much "going on" in this region, and at the same time not, or it just seemed that something was happening, such as minority rights, which are given on paper but are not enforced. I knew I was choosing the right method, as the social-cultural-ethnic ground of the study also provided a fresh context to explore. Looking back in retrospect, after hundreds of hours of work, the analysis provided a theory that "fit" and was "relevant," as Glaser argued himself. To decide to explore the topic unbounded but remain objective was the right choice.

3.4.2.2 Research Question

The broad research question that launched the analysis was:

> *What roles did three Christian denominations have in minority [Székely-Hungarian] communities after the collapse of communism in Romania, and its transition to the European Union between 1989 and 2019?*

3.4.2.3 Data, Data Collection and Analysis

In CGT, data collection, analysis, and writing are *one complex*, with each element happening almost simultaneously; therefore, detailed documentation is necessary. Grounded theory can use many types of data, including observations and interviews, but "just about any type of written, observed or recorded material can be used, including videos, journals, diaries, drawings, internal documents and memos, memoires, Internet postings, and historical records" (Corbin and Strauss 2015, 7). I predominantly used Church bulletins, complemented with newspaper articles and interviews that were collected in 2019. Thus, the bulk of the data were in the form of texts, whether they were reported activities in bulletins, interviews in a transcribed format, or the memos that were written during the analysis. The units of analysis were bulletins, newspaper articles, individual interviews, the three denominations in the study boundaries of historic Transylvania in Romania, and the ethnoregion of Székelyland (see Figure 1).

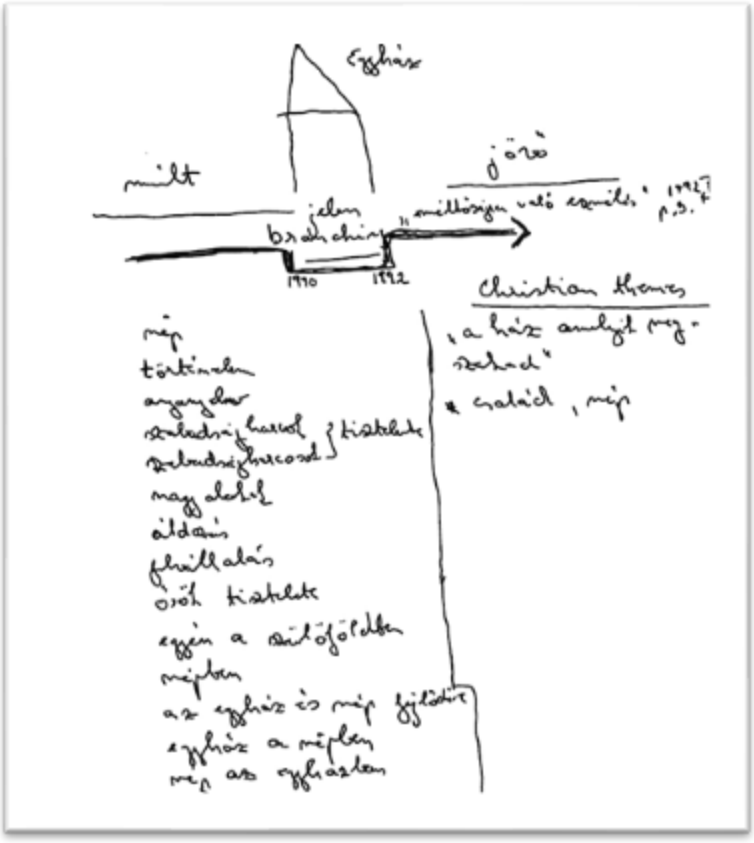
Data collection was not predetermined, nor was the data that was used. The data selection and collection were followed as is outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in that it was based on the emerging theory and remained unplanned:

> Beyond the decisions concerning initial collection of data, further collection cannot be planned in advance of the emerging theory (as is done so carefully in research designed for verification and description). The emerging theory points to the next steps—the sociologist does not know them until he is guided by emerging gaps in his theory and by research questions suggested by previous answers. (47)

The three denominations regularly publish their official bulletins in which they report on their involvement with their members, local to regional communities, and on the work they do. The attached table in Appendix C highlights the official denominational bulletins that were analyzed, and highlights availability for the three-decade period. Newspaper articles were searched within *szekelyhon.ro, erdely.ma, hargitanepe.ro, uh.ro, maszol.ro, Transindex.ro*, and through Google Search, where the source is indicated, if cited. Table 2 outlines more details about this process, regarding what years denominational bulletins were used, and what codebook versions they relate to. Unitarian Church bulletins were openly available in a downloadable digital format until 2017. All copies were downloaded from the online library. The full access to the Unitarian bulletins titled "*Unitárius Közlöny*" [Unitarian Bulletin] and a complete availability of digital copies launched the analysis by using *Atlas.ti*. Each copy was downloaded in a PDF format from 1990 through August 2017. The rest of the bulletins and the years used during the analysis is outlined in Table 2.

The classic GT outlines key steps of this method to be constant comparison, theoretical sampling, memo writing, and a "write-up" process based on the memos and codebooks (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Prior to deciding on the classic version of the grounded theory I did a training analysis. This was mainly due to my inexperience with open coding. It was useful for me to gain practice in open coding, which included the coding of Unitarian Church bulletins, in which each article was coded in the context of the roles of the Church.

Figure 2 Memo May 25th, 2020



The first categories were identified based on the topics discussed in the articles. This practice analysis was followed by a more focused and grounded analysis of bulletins for the years 1990-1992, in which articles were read and coded into categories (*Codebook v.1*).

The analysis, after the practice analysis, included:

1. Formulating and finalizing the broad research question based on some prior knowledge and observation (the broad theme of "the roles of the Church in communities" was also the practice analysis' theme).
2. Open coding of Unitarian Bulletins and the Reformed Bulletins of "*Harangszó*," constant comparison, memo writing, and reducing the scope of the analysis by identifying the core category group of "*Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging*." This was followed by the discovery of the core concept of *ethnospiritual figuration* (see *Codebooks v.2* and *v.3* in Appendix B). Memos were handwritten but mostly typed. The use of both languages was common to ensure quick recording of emerging information (Figure 2).
3. Theoretical sampling to see if the core concept (*ethnospiritual figuration*) would work in analyzing Reformed and Roman Catholic bulletins for years that were different from the initial years.
4. Reducing the scope of the initial research question by asking: *How does ethno-spiritual figuration happen, and what sort of role is this?* This led to the discovery of the second core concept of the "*House Divided* (Undivided House)," and the discovery of relationships between the core concepts captured by the three *defragmenting activities* that the Churches do. *Codebook v.4* and *codebook v.*5 resulted during this process of constant comparison and writing memos.
5. Reaching saturation and cross-checking among denominations.

Table 2 outlines these five steps, the data sources, and the resulting codebooks. The codebooks are attached in Appendix B. The codebook has five versions; each version

was compared to the previous one based upon appearing codes (categories, subcategories). *Codebook v.1* was a result of the practice analysis.

Table 2 Documentation of The Five Steps

Name of Bulletin	Compare what to what	Purpose	Years	Reasoning	Result
Unitarian Bulletin (*Közlöny*)	open coding began		1990, 2000, 2010 (monthly)	training run	**codebook v.1**
Unitarian Bulletin (*Közlöny*)	Codebook v.1		1990,1991,1992	began analysis as per CGT	**codebook v.2**
Reformed *Harangszó* (The Sound of the Bell)	Codebook v.2		Not available online before 2010; did year 2010		**codebook v.3 codebook v.4**
Catholic *Vasárnap* (Sunday)	codebook v.4	saturation check	2011-2016 Archive was automatically searchable for these years. Year 2008-2010 was not. Reformed was for year 2010 and the one-year difference is not important as per method	added few properties	**codebook v.5**
Reformed *Üzenet* (The Message) 6/3/2020	codebook v.5	saturation check	2013-2020 offline as PDF Autocoded: *Kisebbségi* (minority), A*nyanyelv* (mother tongue), *megmaradás* (to remain-persist) by scrolling and reading	Cross-checking by autocoding keywords for committee: **saturated**	codebook v.5 no change

Table 2 Continued

Name of Bulletin	Compare what to what	Purpose	Years	Reasoning	Result
Catholic *Vasárnap* (Sunday) 6/3/2020	codebook v.5	saturation check	Nov. 2008-2010, online, partly searchable, check articles by title, reading article and keyword *Kisebbségi* (minority), A*nyanyelv* (mother tongue), *megmaradás* (to remain-persist) by scrolling and reading	Cross-checking by autocoding keywords for committee: **saturated**	codebook v.5 no change
Reformed *Harangszó* (The Sound of the Bell) 6/3/2020	codebook v.5	saturation check	2011-2020 offline as PDF	Cross-checking by autocoding keywords for committee: **saturated**	codebook v.5 no change
Unitarian Bulletin (*Közlöny*) 6/3/2020	codebook v.5	saturation check	2011-2017 offline as PDF *Kisebbségi* (minority), A*nyanyelv* (mother tongue), *Megmaradás* (to remain-persist) by scrolling and reading	Cross-checking by autocoding keywords for committee: **saturated**	codebook v.5 no change

3.4.3 Triangulation, as a Process of Crystallization

"Triangulation in qualitative research" usually means a "multimethod approach to data collection and data analysis" (Rothbauer 2008, 892). It can mean a diverse use of data source, method, theory, or investigators (Ibid., Neuman 2006). Triangulation helps one understand the same phenomenon from different viewpoints (Neuman 2006) and can be used to reduce research bias caused by using one single method (Rothbauer 2008,

892). Triangulation permits the analysis of the same phenomenon by different methods, which is in this case was the Historic Hungarian Churches' roles in the ethnic Székely-Hungarian community.

This was done by placing the findings of the CGT (RIDD theory) in context with (1) the collective findings of the convergent interviews, (2) individual perceptions of individuals captured by the convergent interviews, (3) current, reported activities in the region (e.g., village community, minority rights, Church activity) through news sites, and (4) and a cultural and historic background check based on selected historical records, reports, and databases. The CGT findings were documented in memos and codebooks (Appendix B), and the emergent theory's "write-up." These were triangulated with CI results in the form of converged and diverged interview answers, and themes. There were 163 unique themes that were documented, and these are listed in Appendix A. These themes have been woven into parts of this study, with appropriate reference given to interviews as numbers (e.g., #19, Table 1), or the information shared is referred to as the result of convergent interviews.

Since I am a native to the study area, where I developed a strong ethnic identity, this six years of exploration has been at times challenging and demanding on me to expand my perspectives and the types of materials I review. Triangulation, in this manner, was somehow a process that I would capture with Richardson and Adams St. Pierre's (2005) concept of "crystallization" (963), which was "praised" by Denzin and

Lincoln (2005) and reiterated by Denzin (2012).[43] Crystallization grew out of triangulation, and I interpreted it as a more fluid extension of it, one that is more adept and fitting to current societal problems, social justice, and transformation. Lastly, it also fits the purpose of this research subject of "restorative justice" (Denzin 2012, 86), where I would add therapeutic transformation.

Crystallization, as Denzin (2012) captures through the lens of recent research, is "multiple forms of analysis and genres of representation [that] are combined into a coherent text" (84), and it "seeks to produce thick, complex interpretation. It uses more than one writing genre. It deploys multiple forms of analysis, reflexively embeds the researcher's self in the inquiry process and eschews positivist claims to objectivity" (84). With a degree in natural sciences, the simple fact that science—like medical sciences, biological and ecological sciences, or simply "cars run, and airplanes fly"—I am convinced that there is an objective reality and natural law that can be discovered "out there." Thus, I do not agree that I need to "eschew" positivist claims to objectivity, and not provide room for objectivity. I share the meaning of Denzin's (2012) cited words above in the sense that the final product of the research, in this case this dissertation manuscript, needs to fill a room and not just the "gap in the literature"; it needs to add meaningful, fit, and relevant content to the communities under analysis. I share Denzin's (2012) view that we need to go beyond various "paradigm wars" (84) and provide a

43. It was published in the *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. I was able to acquire Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) 3rd edition; the most recent one was too expensive, and I could not get it through the library. This also reminded me what critical theory scientists press, that our research also depends on our ability to acquire resources.

"discourse that does not play word games with itself, in methods-centric ways[44]" (Denzin 2012, 85), and have a "moratorium on mixed methods talk about designs and typologies and get back to the task at hand, which is changing the world" (Ibid., 85).

3.4.3.1 Data and Data Source for Triangulation Other than CI, and CGT

Being a native to the study area, I utilized my network of researchers with whom, over the past twenty years, I developed personal and professional relationships (long-time friends became locally accomplished researchers, past teachers), and whom I contacted and asked for reference. I used secondary data from the region's trusted online databases. Secondary data included statistical reports of ethnic, denominational, and total village population prior to 1918 to present day. For example, this was important to establish and to support my local knowledge of villages, and triangulate respondents' answers provided for ethnoregional differences; villages and their denominational dominance varies across ethnogeographic regions and within regions. Villages may belong to one denomination (smaller villages, and some villages in some regions), or to one-to-three denominations (large villages).

I reviewed remotely accessible correspondence of Church leaders and Transylvanian Hungarian thinkers prior to 1989, and territorial and regional communications in the form of research papers and reports. I cross-checked local experts' (or researchers') profiles, where I searched for information regarding the findings of the substantive theory (after the CGT analysis) including the three types of

44. Denzin makes this quoted argument after Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber. 2010. *Mixed Methods Research: Merging Theory with Method*. New York: Guilford Press.

fragmentation activities I found. I also used the secondary data sources and types for my historic review of the region to triangulate the findings of the grounded theory analysis with the convergent interviews on territorial fragmentation, or track some Church activities reported in bulletins. This database is collectively called *Adatbank: Erdélyi Magyar Elektronikus Könyvtár,* [Databank: Transylvanian-Hungarian Electronic Library], through *Adatbank,ro*. This database is a substantial platform for tracing local activities of local, and some international, researchers who focus on this area. The detailed ethnographic bibliography compiled by Albert Zsolt Jakab and listed on the *Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság* [Kriza János Ethnographic Society] website, and the society's publications were other sources for triangulation. The review of these databases led me to contact researchers through e-mail, or through the message function of Academia, and ResearchGate. Upon my requests, I acquired PDF versions of book chapters. In general, this form of data acquisition was successful, with the exception of one case.

I used my own collection of ethnographic studies, monographs, and locally relevant sources—an outcome of dutifully acquiring them over the years, and my attachment to them—that I brought with me to the United States. These pieces were frequently listed on websites but were not readily accessible at the time. It would have been impossible, or very hard to get local publications like Imreh (1973, 1983); nor could I have acquired it through the *Get it for me* services of the Texas A&M Library System. This service was halted for months during the COVID-19 pandemic. I searched the *Hathi Trust* database and the *Magyar Elektronikus Könyvtár* [MESZK] [Hungarian

Online Library] database for relevant information, such as ethnographic regions and Transylvania's history. I used the keyword search function through Google to find particular information that I saw reported in an interview or in the bulletins. For example, I looked up Sapientia University's history this way, as it was reported that the private university was founded as a result of the three Hungarian Churches' work (that I was not aware of despite my contacts who work at Sapientia University).

I used historic military surveys of the Austro-Hungarian Empire that were created in the late eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century. These military maps were digitized, geocoded and were accessible through *Mapire.eu*. This very detailed map, can be considered a piece of art today, and illustrates spatial information down to the village and even house level (it is drawn). This helped me to see the territorial boundaries of some villages, and their territorial changes over the centuries, (1780s to present day), as I was able to overlay them with the most recent satellite imagery and confirm that that many villages remained intact over the centuries, indicating more sprawl around cities. This extensive research provided me a broad view of the subject matter, but also informed me about the need to conduct multilingual research and not rely solely on English peer-reviewed standards, but to let in "local" standards. I believe this is a form of triangulation as well, comparing multiple sources.

3.4.4 Constructivist Grounded Theory

Charmaz (2008) developed what we know as "constructivist grounded theory" based on the GT work of Glaser and Strauss (1967). She wrote that the "original conception of grounded theory [by Glaser and Strauss] assumed a social constructionist

approach to the empirical world. Like other social scientists of the time, they adopted a more limited form of social constructionism" (Charmaz 2008, 399). While she states that the GT is social constructivist, this conception of the GT has been fought by Glaser (2012). After the triangulation, the theory developed by CGT was developed further to be captured with a "heavier" constructionist approach of Charmaz. Through the results of the triangulation, and in light of the literature, the theory is spelled out in its most developed form.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 A HISTORIC REVIEW OF CHURCH, IDENTITY, LAND, AND ETHNIC (MINORITY) RELATIONS IN THE STUDY AREA

The history of the Hungarian Historic Churches and Székelyland cannot be separated from Transylvania's history (see Köpeczi et al. 1986, vols. 1-3). "In the nation building myths of both Romania and Hungary the province of Transylvania held a central place" (Gallagher 2005, 23), and current territorial ethnic disputes between Hungarians and Romanians date to the settlement of the three *natios* in Transylvania, and Romanians' emancipation from "subjects" to a ruling society that defines present-day Transylvania (see Evans 1924; Verdery 1983; Cartwright 2001). There are territorial claims based on settlement theories that result in "we were here first" ethnic disputes.[45] Some occupation theories of the region are based on historic records and archeological findings, and some are not.[46] *Székelys* and *Hungarians* had a continuous occupation since about 896 A.D (Köpeczi et al. 1986, vol. 1). Székelys are frequently distinguished as Székely-Hungarians who are considered to be Hungarians, but their origin remains contested (Ibid.). The main theory based on written and archaeological findings describe

45. Author's comment and experience.

46. Ibid.

them as a remnant tribe of the Huns, which Hungarians found in their current territories (Ibid.). The seven Hungarian nomadic tribes that settled in Hungary and present-day Transylvania is dated to A.D. 896 (Bakay 2004). The leader of the unified seven Hungarian tribes, István [birthname Vajk] founded the Hungarian Kingdom on the basis of Christianity, becoming the first king of Hungary (Ibid.). It is said that old beliefs were persecuted however there is an emerging dispute regarding this detail centering around the Hungarian cultural historian Lajos Szántai's work, Bakay (2004) and others.[47] The Historic Hungarian Church [as Roman Catholic Church] and the Hungarian Kingdom [state, and consisting of Transylvania] was interwoven from its contraception (see Köpeczi et al. 1986, vol. 1).

Saxons were invited by King Géza II of Hungary in the twelfth century to defend the Eastern borders of Transylvania (Köpeczi et al. 1986, vol. 1). There are no disputes regarding their origin.

Romanians' origin is highly contested between Hungarians and Romanians, giving way to territorial right claims in ethnic disputes (Verdery 1983). In local contexts, and in my experience, Romanians uphold the continuous occupation of Daco-Roman theory, while Hungarians argue that Romanians have no written and archeological records that could prove their claim. International and local (HUN and RO) researchers discuss this disagreement (see Köpeczi et al. 1986, vol. 1; Evans 1924, chap.1; Verdery 1983, Intro.). The Daco-Roman continuous occupation traces Romanians' origin to

47. Author's comment and experience.

descendants of Roman soldiers and to the residents of Dacia (Evans 1924). The Roman emperor Trajan in A.D. 107 occupied Dacia, which at the time was the "center of Dacian life" (Ibid., 3) and laid "at Sarmizegetusa, in the South of the modern Province of Transylvania" (3). Dacia was evacuated by the Romans in A.D. 275 (Ibid.). Historic records of Dacia and the presence of the Romans is acknowledged by both Romanian and Hungarian scholars. However, the millennia-long lacking records of Romanian occupation of Transylvania, written or archaeological (Evans 1924) questions the Daco-Roman continuous occupation theory and the Romanian settlement claims.

Romanians appear in the twelfth century in written records (Köpeczi et al. 1986, vol. 1). The debate about the records is continuous, and in this study, I do not claim or support any theory over the other. Whether Romanians, as Vlachs, were tribal remnants of Roman-Daco people (see Evans 1924), or settled shepherds "who came into Transylvania," as many Hungarians believe in, is not the focus, or importance of this study. Settlement stories gain importance in the discussion of ethnoregional activities, as a mobilization, seclusion force (see Yiftachel 2006).

The work of the Historic Hungarian Churches and their involvement through their congregations and the larger Hungarian community has crossed the kingdoms and empires of the Hungarians, Ottomans, and Habsburg through the present day of Romanian rule (Köpeczi et al. 1986 vols. 1-3).

Two of the three Historic Hungarian Churches were founded at a time when Transylvania, as a Principality with its historic borders, was a semi-autonomous vassal

state of the Ottoman Empire (Ibid. vols. 1-2; Verdery 1983). This period of 165 years was very significant for the cultural-religious landscape. Verdery (1983) explained:

> During the 165 years of Transylvania's relative independence, the regions' already complicated social structure developed the final complexities that have brought despair ever since to politicians, and scholars….There is no single way to characterize this complex social system, for at different times in history different categorizations have been employed by the residents and their observers. (83)

The Church and its religious expression represented not just spiritual, but territorial, cultural, and intellectual desires of multiethnic Transylvania (see Köpeczi et al. 1986, vols. 1-3). The formation of the current religious landscape of Székelyland dates to the Reformation that reached the Transylvanian Principality in the early sixteenth century, disrupting the 500-year dominance of the Roman Catholic Church. Reformation brought the foundation of the Hungarian Reformed and the Unitarian Churches (Verdery 1983).

The social and cultural life of the Transylvanian Principality was dominated by the three autonomous *natios* of Székelys, Hungarians, and Saxons, who had established regional territories dating back to the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. The three *natios* and subjects made up Transylvania's social system, which can be distinguished by "territory, jural privilege, religion, language and class" (Verdery 1983, 83). The Hungarian [Magyar] *natio* were in the Magyar Counties (two-thirds of the land area), the Székely *natio* in Székelyland (one fifth of the land area), and the Saxon *natio* in the Saxon Lands (one fifth of the land area). The first two were Hungarian speaking

jurisdictions, while the last one was German. These jurisdictions had internal rules that consisted of layered social groups (see Verdery 1983; Imreh 1983). Saxons were mainly Lutheran, Székelys were Unitarian, Reformed and Roman Catholic, and Hungarians in the Magyar Counties were Roman Catholic and Reformed (Verdery 1983). Unitarianism was most dominant in Székelyland. The growing population of Romanians were mainly Eastern-Orthodox, and had no *natio* level privileges. They had no rights and were mostly in a "subject" role, referring to "dependent cultivators-serfs and cottars" (Verdery 1983, 86), and some "free smallholding peasants" (Ibid., 86; Evans 1924). The Roman Catholic Church was the dominant religious institution influencing public life and state affairs in all three *natios* up until the 1500s (Sebess 1921).

A landmark act in 1568 provided a "general" religious tolerance for the practice of religion without the fear of repercussions "because faith is God's gift" (Köpeczi et al. 1986, 1:509). This edict by English speakers is frequently referred to as the *Edict of Torda*[48], which was enacted in the city of Torda by Zsigmond János, Prince of Transylvania. It was the result of a gradual move to reduce the persecution of people spreading Protestantism, and also a political move with a complex socio-economic background (discussed in Köpeczi et al. 1986, vol.1). This edict allowed the free practice of the new protestant faiths (Reformed [Calvinist], Lutheran [Evangelical], Unitarian). The Principality, at this point, had three *natios*, and four state religions, with the fourth

48. Wikipedia. n.d."Edict of Torda. The Free Encyclopedia. Last edited February 17, 2021, at 02:45 (UTC). Accessed April 3rd, 2021. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edict_of_Torda.

being Roman Catholic (Verdery 1983, Köpeczi et al. 1986 vols. 1-2). The Eastern-Orthodox religion was not part of the edict and remained a "merely tolerated creed"[49] (Verdery 1983, 84). The three *natios* remained intact territorially, where the Romanian population slowly started to outnumber both the Hungarians and the Saxons, fueling more power changes in coming centuries (Köpeczi et al. 1986, vols. 2-3).

The three Churches occupied the economic, social, and cultural stages in all three *natios*. Romanians remained mainly Eastern-Orthodox, and their cultural activities and education remained less developed, until the Habsburg rule in the eighteenth century (Köpeczi et al. 1986 vols. 2-3; Gallagher 2005).

The Principality of Transylvania lost its (relative)[50] independence that lasted between 1526-1711 (Köpeczi et al. 1986 vols. 2-3). From 1690, the Habsburg Empire's (Austrian) influence and rule threatened the region. Saxons (as German speakers) and Romanians (having limited rights) favored this change, expecting more rights from the Habsburg Empire. The subject population of Romanians (serfs and some free peasants with limited rights) slowly exceeded that of Hungarians in many parts of Transylvania, except Székelyland, where the Székely population remained closed and fairly intact in space, and through time (see Verdery 1983; Köpeczi et al. 1986, vols. 1-3; Bárdi et al. 2008).

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49. In later years and centuries, the status of the Eastern-Orthodox religion changed that is discussed elsewhere (see Verdery 1983; Köpeczi et al. 1986 vol. 2-3).

50. As a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire. Discussed somewhere else, refer to the cited resources.

Many fights, bloodsheds, and revolts mark the end of the seventeenth century and the couple of centuries after. Transylvania gradually lost its independence to Habsburg rule, through the dismantlement of the *natio*s (Köpeczi et al. 1986, vols. 2-3). The three *natios*' territorial and *natio*-based privileges, and dominance, was under continuous attack as the Habsburg absolutism aimed to centralize its power in all its territories (Ibid., vols. 2-3). The three *natios*' administrative, military, and individual rights were gradually eroding due to this centralized control (Ibid., vols. 2-3). In the Székely *natio*, Székely cities and villages had self-governing privileges and were allowed to enact their own rules for their own communities (see Imreh 1973, 1983). These rules could change from village to village (Ibid.), and covered all aspects of life from how to treat neighbors and manage the land to how to use community resources (Ibid.). These privileges were attacked and taken away, heavy taxes were imposed, and general, central rules started replacing unique, local-level rules (Ibid.; Köpeczi et al. 1986 vols. 2-3).

Censorship, centralized governance, the burden of taxes, and the serfdom upon the peasantry all contributed to the "*1848-as Magyar Szabadságharc*" [Hungarian Freedom Fight of 1848] (Ibid.). While it was suppressed by the Habsburgs, it is remembered now in present day, every year on March 15.[51] The revolution demanded serfs to be freed, equal rights to all citizens (as *natios* could have been oppressing their own kind), the establishment of a Hungarian state within the Habsburg Empire (Verdery

51. Author's comment and experience.

1983, 185), and the establishment of a free press, among others, declared in what is called the *12 pont* (12 points).[52]

While Hungarians were fighting for individual rights, Romanians fought to acquire "citizenship for their *collectivity*, since that was what they had been denied" (Verdery 1983, 191). While "the meaning of *natio* had changed" (Ibid., 191) under the Habsburg rule, it still remained relevant, and Romanians wanted to make their "'nation' jurally equal to others with whom it had not been equal when 'nations' were jural" (191). They wanted collective rights, and it was difficult to accept the "Hungarian revolutionary promises that Romanians had nothing to fear in a new Hungarian state, where each individual would be the equal of every other citizen" (Ibid., 191). Romanians asked for autonomy in return for their support, which the famous Hungarian freedom fighter and political figure, Lajos Kossuth, was not willing to agree with. They sided with the Habsburgs, but there are complexities to this historical detail (see Verdery 1983, 184-195).

The practicality of the Romanian autonomy in Transylvania, as a compact spatial territory, would have been difficult, considering that their population gradually expanded in the *natios* of Hungarians and Saxons (not the Székelys), and they grew into a more cohesive population in those areas by occupying larger spaces.[53] The explanations and

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52. Magyarország Kormánya [Government of Hungary]. n.d. "A 12 pont, avagy 'Mit kíván a Magyar nemzet'?" [12 Points, or, 'What does the Hungarian nation demand']." Accessed January 14, 2021. https://marcius15.kormany.hu/a-12-pont-tortenete-2013.

53. Author's comment.

theoretical debates over how the Romanian "settlement" happened in these territories is where ethnic disputes frequently unfold, "under we were here first" debates.[54] Kossuth had an assimilation agenda; he saw the movements of Romanians, who were on the road to becoming a nation and feared an overtaking, as the Hungarian population was being outnumbered by other ethnicities, including Romanians, and were at the risk of becoming a minority[55]. Kossuth said, "We must hasten to magyarize[56] Croats, Roumanians and Saxons, for otherwise we shall perish" (quoted in Verdery 1983, 189). The revolution was suppressed, and Romanians remained under oppression but could enjoy more rights than in the centuries before.[57]

While change was plenty, a slow, but certain "emancipation" of the Transylvanian Romanian population unfolded. New Habsburg legislations allowed Churches to self-organize and run their institutions on their own language (German, Hungarian, Romanian) (Köpeczi et al. 1986, vols. 2-3). From 1867, Hungary and Austria were functioning as dualism. In this setting, the emperor was the Hungarian king. Hungarians enjoyed more favorable rights and relative autonomy from the centralized Habsburg rule. Transylvania was unified with Austro-Hungary, which also brought more favorable rights for the Romanian population and their Eastern-Orthodox Church (Ibid.).

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54. Author's comment.

55. Author's comment. Kossuth's will to assimilate non-Hungarians is also a topic of much debate. I reside with Verdery (1983, 19) that "The more I have read of Transylvanian history, the more convinced I have become that an objective rendering of this history is almost impossible."

56. Assimilate, make something, someone Hungarian.

57. Author's comment.

Romanians by the end of the nineteenth century were the largest ethnic group who were denied autonomy (at various times) by Hungarian leaders, who also made "energetic and ultimately unsuccessful attempts … to assimilate them [Romanians]" (Gallagher 2005, 23). Just a few decades later, the twentieth century brought *three major events* for Transylvania, moving the oppressed (Romanians) to an oppressor status (Hungarians, Saxons). The first event, known as Treaty of Trianon, was signed by the Allies of WWI (Verdery 1983, 266; Gallagher 2005, 28-29). Austro-Hungary was territorially broken up and Transylvania was unified with the neighboring Romanian Kingdom (Verdery 1983, 266). This meant that "Romania acquired 31.5% of the territory of Hungary" (Gallagher 2005, 29). This event brought major change to the three *natios* and their religious institutions.[58] Hungarians were the minority, and Romanians the majority. Romanian became the official state-language that many Hungarians did not speak. Romanization, assimilation, and disintegration of the Hungarian social and cultural infrastructure followed, along with a takeover of administrative roles (see Bárdi et al. 2008, chaps. 1-3). Hungarian institutions were detached from their financial means, including the Church (Bárdi and Papp 2008). They lost many of their intellectual centers and financial support for cultural-social activities (Ibid.).

Communist and socialist ideologies were spreading. While Romanians outnumbered Hungarians and Székelys, most landholding and properties were still

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58. I omit discussing the Saxon *natio* that suffered great losses. The discussion does not fit the scope of this dissertation. The Saxon heritage almost entirely disappeared in its authentic form. After 1989 some Saxon city centers and villages were restored, e.g., Szeben (Sibiu). Germany sponsored many projects (Author's knowledge and experience).

controlled by them.[59] Székelys were usually smaller land holders, while the Hungarian nobility owned a large number of forests, arable lands, and buildings.[60] In the newly formed Romanian state, Transylvania had a strong Romanian population but limited control over the land.[61] Private land holdings, buildings, and Hungarian institutions were taken before, during, and after WWII (see Köpeczi et al. 1986; Bárdi et al. 2008). Briefly, the Hungarian and Székely populations under the new Romanian rule were left with broken spirits, and detached from their cultural, administrative, and religious centers, the land they fought for throughout centuries, and their financial means. They had to reorganize and reposition themselves in the new Romanian state. The broken nature of the psychological and mental state of many leaders can be traced in personal letters of Church leaders, writers, doctors (compiled by Cseke and Molnár 1989).

In the interwar period, Hungarian intellectuals—represented by religious leaders, priests, writers, architects, teachers, and doctors among other educated individuals—actively engaged in open dialogue to build a regional identity and find ways to remain (see Kós 1921; Cseke and Molnár 1989). For example, Károly Kós, locally respected Hungarian architect, ethnographer, and writer, in a self-published pamphlet with two other authors (Kós 1921) gave voice to the pain of the Székely-Hungarian minority under the new Romanian nationalist rule (as the results of the Treaty of Trianon signed by the Allied Powers of WWI):

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59. Author's comment.

60. Ibid.

61. Author's comment.

> Somewhere they signed something, somewhere they bargained for something, somewhere they distributed something; somewhere an open door was slammed to keep it locked forever. Where we clung with our own strength, with a thousand years of work and we cut every step with our own muscles and mind, we irrigated with our [Hungarian, Székely] blood the desolate rock [the hard past, millennia fight to keep Transylvania intact]: they [Romanians, cosigners of the Treaty] threw us down. We know why [it was a result of a lie and organized betrayal]. (Kós 1921, 1)

The pamphlet was censured by the authorities, and Károly Kós walked to villages spreading the word. In 1921, people gathered from thirty villages in the spirit to self-organize as a minority:

> the publication did not receive permission to be distributed, but Károly Kós visited the villages of Kalotaszeg, and on the first Sunday of June 1921 in Bánffyhunyad the people of 30 villages gathered in the spirit of minority self-organization. The ... pamphlet became the source of both political and literary Transylvanianism.[62] (Balogh 1994, s.v. "Kiáltó Szó," 9-10)

Kós (1921) led the formation of a new regional identity under Transylvanianism, where Romanians, Hungarians, Saxons, and other groups (e.g., Jews, Gypsy) could co-exist (as an imagined state) and live together[63] (see also Nagy 2014). He further gave voice to autonomy claim, addressing it as "Big Romania," which became big by gaining Transylvania:

> I cry out [shout out] openly and boldly to Romania, that enlarged through us [as Transylvania, 1000-year-old legacy of Hungarian heritage]: we, citizens of Romania who are of Hungarian race, have Hungarian faith and

62. This part is important as I speak about Yiftachel's "ethnoregionalism" (Yiftachel 1999, 289, 2006) and the national region's initiative.

63. Author's comment.

> Hungarian language, want national autonomy, in the possession of which Big Romania will gain reliable citizens. (Kós 1921, 5)[64]

Kós published this work when many people started to emigrate to Hungary and the Americas (Cseke and Molnár 1989). He and the other two authors "broke the passivity of the Hungarian leading circles, rejected the refugee-like repatriation [of Hungary], and called on Hungarians, who were becoming minorities in Romania, to take political action in order to realistically integrate into the new situation" (Balogh 1994, s.v. "Kiáltó Szó," 9). The institutions of the Historic Hungarian Churches joined this call and took on a key role in sustaining the Hungarian minority's heritage, identity, and language. According to Bárdi and Papp (2008) the Hungarian Churches' work between the interwar period was defined by Christian socialism ideology. The Hungarian Churches constituted "the most comprehensive and independent social institutional system" (Ibid., 278) for Hungarian communities that were detached from Hungary, including Transylvania (Ibid., 278). Their institutional strength was weakened by administrative rearrangements. For example, The Roman Catholic Church had to report to Bucharest, and the representation as a Vatican-centered institution was led by Romanian speaking leaders and priests (Ibid.). The 1921 land reform took away 85% of the Hungarian Churches' total land property (the total was about 370,000 Jugerum), which drastically reduced the financial means for the entire Hungarian community (Bárdi and Papp 2008, 281).

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64. The translation was challenging from Hungarian to English (Author's Comment).

The Churches' work was centered around local priests, teachers, and key leaders such as Sándor Makkai, Bishop of the Reformed Church of Transylvania (Cseke and Molnár 1989). His decade-long legacy (1926-1936) resulted in building five hundred Churches and schools (Makkai [1936] 1989). His public involvement with the Hungarian minority and the Romanian authorities exhausted him mentally, physically, and emotionally (Ibid.; Cseke and Molnár 1989). He was an inspiring public figure. In 1936 he resigned and immigrated to Hungary, and he later expressed his view that the fate of "minority" by categorical definition is an impossible fate, as the individual can never escape the category, and will remain oppressed (Ibid.). It can only be possible where the "minority" category disappears (Ibid.). This loss shattered both the Reformed and non-Reformed communities (Makkai [1936] 1989; see letter communication in Cseke and Molnár 1989). WWII was approaching, and for a brief period of time, Hungary regained parts of Transylvania but was taken back to Romania once again (Köpeczi et al. 1986, vol. 3).

The second key historic event of the twentieth century was due to the emergence of socialist and communist ideologies. According to Demeter (2014), the Communist Party's main goal was industrialization and urbanization as a road to a civilized and modernized Romania. At this time, the country was still underdeveloped (Ibid.) and in 1950 only about 25.6 %[65] of the population lived in urban areas. Between 1945 and 1962

65. United Nations. 2018. "File 21: Annual Percentage of Population at Mid-Year Residing in Urban Areas by Region, Subregion, Country and Area, 1950-2050." In *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. POP/DB/WUP/Rev.2018/1/F21. Online Edition, s.v. "Romania." Accessed May 1, 2021. https://population.un.org/wup/Country-Profiles/.

Romania was set to roll out its plan to transform its agrarian society and economy based on the Soviet model that brought collectivization (Bárdi and László 2008, see also Cartwright 2001 chaps. 4-5; Verdery 2003, chap. 1; Hajdú 2013) atheist propaganda and ideology (Bárdi and Papp 2008). This process consisted of two main steps. First, the 1945 land reform's (March 22, 1945, Bárdi and László 2008, 235) goal was to erase [the remaining (see Verdery 1983, chap. 6)] feudal inequalities and distribute land to those who had no land holdings (Bárdi and László 2008). According to Bárdi and László (2008), distributed land was mainly previously held by Hungarians (75-80%) (235) who were the "abandoners (absentees)" or "escapers" (Ibid., 235; see also Cartwright 2001, chap. 4:52) during and after WW II (Cartwright 2001, chap. 4). Second, in 1949 collectivization started (Bárdi and László 2008, 235) and this collectivization process involved the creation of large state farms [that aimed also to defragment the landscape consisting small land holdings] and strengthen socialist ideology (Ibid.). People with capital, e.g., land-owners with land [frequently peasants with few hectares] were taken and sent to work camps (Cartwright 2001, chap. 5; Verdery 2003, chap. 1:39-47). The socialist plan meant the creation of massive collective state farms and getting rid of villages, and increased control over human decision-making and free will (Bárdi and László 2008).

The Communist Party in the 1960s-80s started mass urbanization and industrialization as a national policy (Demeter 2014, Introduction and sec. II.). This included the planned destruction of villages of a certain size (Hajdú 2013, 24), relocation of the rural population into newly built social blocks (Demeter 2014, sec. II. 2. and II. 3.)

and mass employment at new factories (Ibid.; Bárdi and László 2008, 234). It also brought major Romanization and a planned assimilation for Hungarians (Demeter 2014, Introduction, sec. II. 5. 2., and sec. II. 3. 1.; Novák 2008, 276). Urbanization was successful in many parts of Transylvania (Demeter 2014, "Introduction" and sec. II) and by 1989, Romania's urban population had climbed to 52.5 %.[66]

Communist urbanization "attracted" the younger generation.[67] This "attraction" was also a result of planned disintegration of traditional-cultural bonds and mass secularization efforts[68] (see also Bárdi and László 2008, 234-235; Bárdi and Papp 2008, 271, 281-282). I was seven years old when the communist regime fell. I remember many secularizations and propaganda rituals we had to perform, while I observed village life at my grandparents' house. Social changes were caused by the Communist Party's deliberate effort to weaken religious and minority groups (Demeter 2014, Introduction, sec. II. 5. 2. and sec. II. 3. 1; Bárdi and Papp 2008).

The collectivization and dismantlement of the land ownerships were traumatic for many people, and were expressed by my interviewees as a first-hand experience through a tie to a family member (#21a, #21b). Uncertainty, intimidation, anger, conflicts, mental and physical abuse, and spying all contributed to psychological and mental distress [69](Ibid.). Individuals had no free will, and free decision-making was

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66. United Nations 2018, "File 21," s.v. "Romania."

67. Author's comment.

68. Ibid.

69. Author's comment and experience.

eradicated for the collective good. The word "collective" and "cooperatives," according to the convergent interviews, still have negative connotations attached to them. Interviews conducted by local ethnographers and anthropologists shed light on the uncertainty of daily living conditions.[70] The following quote explains, as the communist officials were looking for the interviewee's father, who hid because he did not want to sign a "voluntary" agreement of putting his land into the collective. He was intimidated and searched after. The quote, as quoted in Fekete-Deák (2016):

> The organizers [communist officials at the local level] came to us in untold times, sometimes middle of night, … early morning, and they were looking for my (sweet) father to sign the paper. I was a small girl, and they asked me where your father is. I pointed into the direction where I just saw my father to hide. The organizers were looking for him but of course my father was not there any longer. (34, [transl. from Hungarian to English by Margit Pap])

The Saxon *natio* suffered great loss, and "between autumn 1944 and 1945, approximately 80,000 able bodied ethnic Germans were deported from Romania to the Soviet Union" (Cartwright 2001, 51). Further, Cartwright (2001) reports a study "conducted into the fate of the Volksdeutch by the German Federal Ministry" (52) who reported that "more than 10,000 [of these people] did not return" (quoted in Cartwright 2001, 52) and "of those who did come back, almost 50% moved to Germany or Austria" (Ibid., 52). This was "in addition to about 200,000 who moved to Germany, [and] between 1940 and 1943, 375,000 Romanian Jews were deported" (Ibid., 52); about

70. See studies done and compiled by the Kriza János Ethnographic Society, http://www.kjnt.ro/hu.

"177, 000 ethnic Hungarians, and 61,000 ethnic Bulgarians were forcefully displaced from their homes" (summary by Cartwright 2001, 52). According to Gallagher (2005) as a result of the 1978 Bonn agreement with the Romanian dictator, Ceaușescu, "about 12,000 Saxon a year had left for West Germany" (81). The German government paid "DM 10,000" for each Saxon individual who was "allowed to leave" the country (Ibid., 81). One of the interviewees (#7) also noted this detail that Saxons had to sign an agreement and leave everything behind. The Saxon *natio,* their heritage, and culture rapidly disappeared and decayed, and empty abandoned Saxon [and Hungarian] land and homes were left for grabs (Cartwright 2001).

The nearly sixty-years long communist rule influenced the Churches' work, and the influence was not uniform. The 1940s brought severe restrictions for the Churches, that were somewhat eased after the death of Stalin in the 1950s and 1960s (Bárdi and Papp 2008).

The Hungarian Historic Churches suffered great loss and were under constant attacks, in which atheist ideologies were forced on people. The state monitored and interfered with religious institutions (Bárdi and Papp 2008). People who were not willing to give up their faith were frequently persecuted and jailed, and priests frequently suffered martyrdom (Ibid.). Religious memorials and the holidays of Easter and Christmas were prohibited, and attending such events were considered an unloyalty to socialist ideologies (Ibid.). People attended these events in secret and in familial settings. This was somehow eased after Stalin's death (Ibid.). Despite these restrictions the Hungarian Churches were the remaining key institutions for the Hungarian minority, for

their cultural heritage and language (Ibid.). Attending church events or expressing belonging to a Church equally demonstrated belonging and attesting to being a Hungarian (Ibid.).

The Roman Catholic Church was not willing to give up its ties to the Vatican, and accept communist rhetoric. The Catholic Church became more and more organized by an underground activity (Bárdi and Papp 2008). The leader of the Hungarian Roman Catholic Church, Áron Márton, was imprisoned and given a sentence of lifelong forced labor (Ibid.). This was later reduced to a home-based sentence (Ibid.). Between 1948-1960, 130 Roman Catholic priests were imprisoned or forced to live in various locations, in enclosed spaces (Ibid., 282). Despite the communists' persecution, new priests and church leaders were elected (Ibid.). After the death of Stalin, persecution and control softened, and the Churches could function more openly, but still under strict rules (Ibid.).

The Protestant Churches agreed to more state control and experienced somewhat less harsh treatment (Bárdi and Papp 2008). Their priests were not persecuted in great numbers before the 1950s, but were more thereafter (Ibid.). In 1989, the Reformed priest László Tőkés and his planned state-led eviction case (discussed in Chapter II) escalated into the fall of communism in December of 1989.[71]

The third key historic event was the fall of communism in 1989, when land properties, in a limited capacity and including Church-owned property, were given back,

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71. Iskola Alapítvány, and RMDSZ. 2020. "VIII Rész" [Episode VIII]. In *"Magyarok Romániában – 100 év történelem* [Hungarians in Romania – 100 years of history]. Historic Documentary Series. Expert Bárdi Nándor. Funded by Iskola Alapítvány and RMDSZ. Produced by Zoltán Attila Gál. Accessed March 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYgEhBb77Ts&t=4609s. The entire series can be accessed through ezer100.ro.

but tension remained, and continues. The democratization process, followed by the preparation and status of becoming an European Union member state have brought changes to ethnic Székely and Hungarian minority. This period of time encompasses three decades. In the following chapters the study's findings, regarding this time period, is presented through the discussion of the classic grounded theory analysis, convergent interviewing, and triangulation (process of crystallization).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, 93% of the Hungarian minority belonged to the three Historic Hungarian Churches (Bárdi and Papp 2008, 282). The Reformed Church has two administrative districts [in Transylvania] with a center in Nagyvárad and Kolozsvár (Ibid., 282). The Unitarian Church has one with a center in Kolozsvár, and in the Roman Catholic Church, most members belong to four districts with a center in Szatmár, Nagyvárad, Temesvár, and Gyulafehérvár (Ibid., 282). More than half of the Hungarian Roman Catholics belong to the Gyulafehérvár district (Ibid., 282).

As of March-April 2020, I reviewed the local representations of the three denominations[72] that showed 176 localities for Unitarian, 997 localities for Reformed, and 478 for Roman Catholic. Localities can be villages and cities, and frequently, at the village level we see one or two denominations. Priests frequently serve one populated village, and one less populated one. This was confirmed during my interviews with respondents #1, #16, and #19.

72. See footnotes no. 1-2, no. 36-41.

In the twenty-first century, Romania is a postsocialist and post-communist country, where "only 8%" of the population "has a non-religious (*secularized mentality*) (Gog 2006, 47). Further, Romania is among the "most religious countries of both Eastern and Western Europe" (Gog 2006, 51) despite communism's atheistic ideologies. Gog (2006) explains it as:

> One of the most religious countries of both Eastern and Western Europe, in spite of more than half of a century of forced atheization and ideologization of the public sphere.... The religious mentalities are strongly dependent of a specific socio-anthropological background: one that has a strong lack of modernization, i.e., a high rural sector, low educational capital, weak industrialization. Romania is one of the most religious countries in Europe precisely because it has one of the least modernized social systems on the old continent. (51)

Gog's (2006) analysis is plausible; however, I am inclined to disagree with this dependency, or its magnitude, arguing that religious mentality is high in Romania because of low modernization, and secularization is higher in modernized and more developed Western Europe, or one could take it even further to the world leader—the United States.

According to a 2014 study done by the Pew Research Center,[73] in every ten Americans "roughly seven-in-ten" (para. 2) identifies herself/himself as some type of Christian, and 5.9% as non-Christian, for example 0.9% as Muslim (under table "Christians Decline"). The rest, 22.8%, are unaffiliated ("atheist 3.1%," "agnostic 4%,"

73. Pew Research Center. 2015. "2014 Religious Landscape Study." America's Changing Religious Landscape. Religion & Public Life. May 12, 2015. Accessed August 26, 2020. https://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/.

and "nothing in particular 15.8%"; from table under "Christians Decline"). Gog's analysis (2006) of the post-communist Romanian population found five typologies along four dimensions (religious belief, institutional expression, practical behavior, and the denial of all other three/secular): "traditional religious mentality -40%, …liberal religious mentality -19% …, non-belonging religious mentality -14%, … non-traditional religious mentality -19%, … and secularized mentality -8%" (Gog 2006, 46).

Both Gog (2006) and the Pew Research Center[74] note that more people tend to not affiliate with any institutional body of Church. This is also highlighted in the interviews I conducted where some people noted (#7, #14, #32a and b[75]) that they expressed attributes like not agreeing with the Churches' heavy involvement with political parties, preaching and not doing the work, or not having "wise elders" in the institutional body of the Church. Most members of the Hungarian Historic Churches gain affiliation through parental-familial inheritance of one parent's religion, a custom still widely practiced.

74. Pew Research Center, 2015. "2014 Religious Landscape Study."

75. Numbers refer to interviewee numbers.

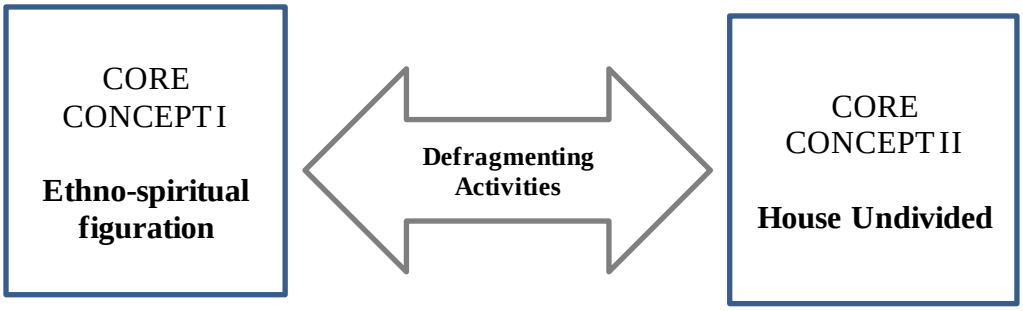
4.2 RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION DRIVEN DEFRAGMENTATION (RIDD) IN HISTORICALLY DIVIDED ETHNIC COMMUNITIES AS A FORM OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

4.2.1 Results of the Classic Grounded Theory Analysis

The CGT analysis resulted in a substantive theory. Based on its characteristics I call it "The Substantive Theory of Religious Institution Driven Defragmentation (RIDD) in Historically Divided Ethnic Communities." The substantive theory is the following:

> *The work of the minority Churches in their congregations (local), and in the larger ethnic Hungarian community (region) work to defragment the "House Divided," and they do it through ethno-spiritual figuration. They work towards a "House Undivided," in terms of the Hungarian soul, conscience and the spatially bounded ethnic block.*

Figure 3 Core Concepts of the RIDD Theory Based on *Codebook v.5*

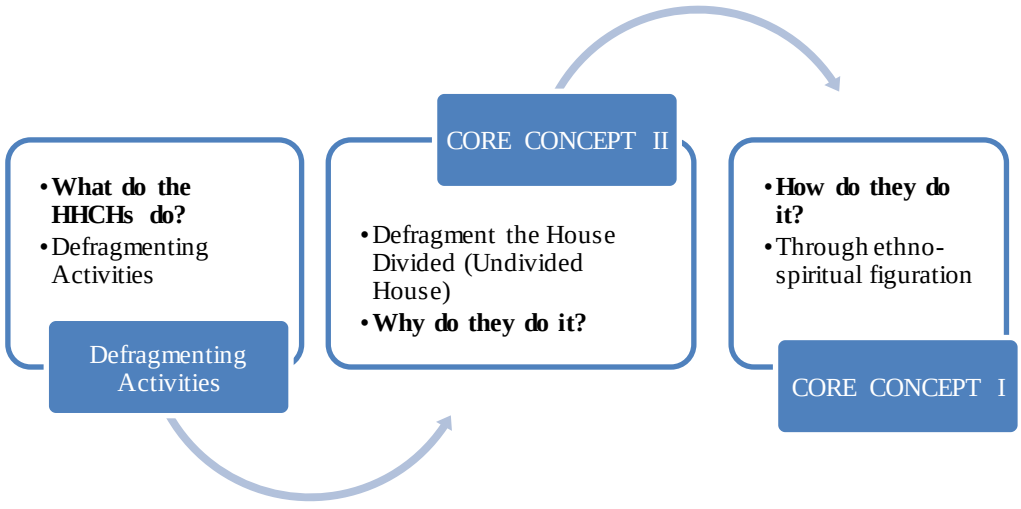


I illustrate the theory through the key elements of the substantive theory *core concepts, their properties, and the relationships among them* (Neuman 2006). These theory elements emerged through the analysis and are illustrated in Figure 3.

I found that the easiest way to comprehend the theory is to answer three simple questions (Figure 4). While not always clear-cut, answering these questions helps with comprehension:

- What do the Historic Hungarian Churches do (this also refers back to the broad research question)?
- Why do they do it?
- How do they do it?

Figure 4 The Logic of RIDD Theory



The historic review of the region helps explain the region's territorial segregation of the "*natios"* and Romanians. While Székelys are considered to be Hungarians, historically and culturally, they are a distinct group, and the most intact group of the three historic *natios* discussed above.

Ethno-spiritual figuration can be understood as a form (or approach) of cultural-religious practice, to preserve and build the Hungarian community, ensuring it from further fragmentation in terms of space, community, family, membership, minority, and the Hungarian nation. Ethno-spiritual figuration emerged as the Church's response to fragmentation. I found this throughout the three decades for all three denominations. As codes were appearing for all three denominations throughout the three decades (see Table 2), I found that it is a general approach not bounded by a specific time period, state level institutional changes, and fluctuations. The roles that the Church took were bounded by *the history of the community and the larger Hungarian ethnic minority, and nation.* The Church engages in activities that are rooted in a geographic and historic space. The grounded theory analysis showed that while institutions, borders, and regimes change, the Church keeps battling with the same issues: fragmentation in territory, human rights, property, and population, as the Hungarian minority is continuously shrinking. The Biblical reference to the "House Divided" captures the second concept of the theory, the "defragmentation of the House Divided (Undivided House)." It emerged after looking more into *how and why* ethno-spiritual figuration happens (ESF).

> But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand." (Matthew 12:25, New King James Version)

The meaning of "one house" should be understood symbolically as a metaphor expressing the cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic (Hungarian language), and common historic past, and burdens bounded by the ancestral land—frequently referred to locally as the *ezeréves határ*, meaning the "one-thousand-year-old border". This "house" that was "one" historically got divided, and continuously gets further divided, or fragmented, for reasons explained in earlier chapters.

In the Hungarian language, "church" is translated to *egyház* literally meaning "one (*egy*) house (*ház*)," first appearing in Hungarian written records in 1193 and 1372 (*Jókai kodex*). Etymologically *egy* roots back to the archaic *igy* meaning *szent* (saint), translating into *szent ház* (saint house). It meant saint house, or the building of the Church (*templom*) and not "one house" (Zaicz 2006, s.v. "egyház"). However, in the contemporary, it means the local Church and its village congregation; it can also have the universal meaning of "all the believers of Jesus Christ," frequently referred to as *Anyaszentegyáz* (mother-Church, or mother-saint, -one, -house). In this study's context, and in its conceptual meaning of the RIDD theory, the "House" means:

1. The institutional body of each of the three denominations, and the people who belong to that religion.
2. The Hungarian nation as "one house."
3. A congregation community as "one house."
4. A village community as "one house."
5. A family as "one house."

The etymology of the word *egyház* (Church, one body of Believers, saint house) does not intentionally parallel with the Biblical reference of an "Undivided House," but beautifully resonates, in an intuitive way, as the unified house stays one and undivided.

Ethno-spiritual figuration (Core Concept I) is complex, with ethnic and spiritual elements. This concept answered the question: "How does the Church do the defragmentation activities in communities?" Ethno-spiritual figuration has several key characteristics, which appeared as codes converging into categories that are used to defragment the Hungarian minority. The cause of this fragmented nature was discussed in the historic overview above. In this theory, the "fragmented" minority is conceptualized as the "historically Divided House" (Core Concept II). Codes such as landscape (*táj*), village (*falu*), homeland (*szülőföld*), to remain-persist (*megmaradás*), tradition (*hagyomány*), memory, remembrance (*emlék, megemlékezés*), values of Christ (*krisztusi értékek*), faith of ancestors (*ősök hite*), and respect of ancestors (*ősök tisztelete*), indicated the ethnic and spiritual attributes of this concept (*ethno-spiritual figuration*). They transcend three "dimensions":

1. *lelki-szellemi*[76] (spiritual-soul),
2. physical/spatial (land, landscape, ancestral land, ethnic block, the thousand-year border), and
3. emotion and mind.

76. *szellemi* in Hungarian has an intellectual-spiritual meaning

In my memo, I recorded that *"Ethnospiritual figuration is complex, has key categories and subcategories with their own properties, and it roots back to the 'house divided,' and the quality of the undivided house."*[77] It is reasoned that *"the [a] divided house cannot stand"* as a result of *"historic events, such as the Treaty of Trianon, [that] divided the nation, Church, and community. Division led to community fragmentation."*[78] The codes recorded and documented in *Codebook v.1* through *v.5* were the

> *key categories, and properties that define ethno-spiritual figuration [that] point towards how to stay undivided, toward a "homeostasis" of undividedness. The reference is not always directly tied to the famous Biblical quote, [but rather] it shows itself as a basic norm for the Church to take on such role.*[79]

Codes aggregated around three defragmentation goals and translated into "defragmenting activities." These defragmenting activities, discussed below, linked the two core concepts. It has three main activities (subcategories):

1. *Defragmentation of Hungarian conscience, Hungarian soul, and mind (defragmenting activity),*
2. *Historical defragmentation (defragmenting activity),* and
3. *Local and diasporic spatial defragmentation (defragmenting activity).*

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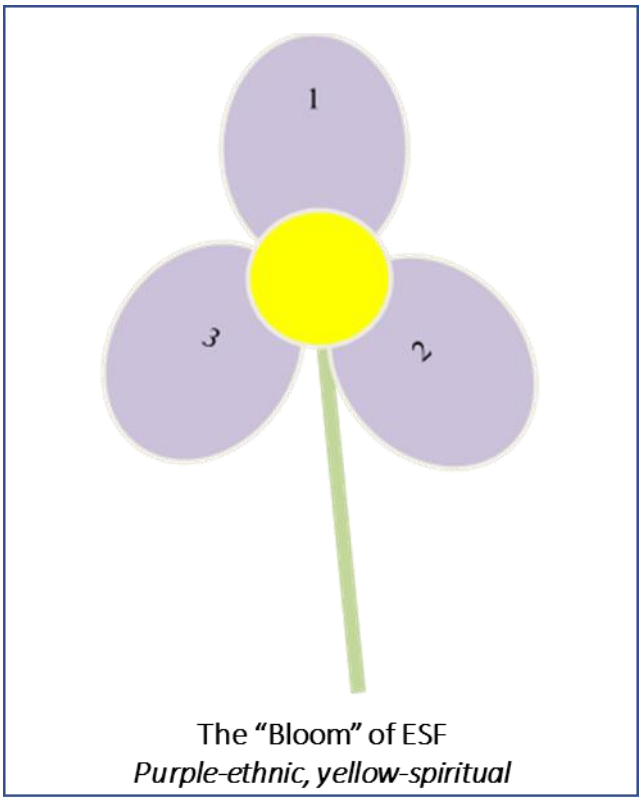
77. Pap, Margit Gitta. 2020. Research Memo. May 31, 2020, 9. In the Author's possession.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

These defragmenting activities were carried out through ethno-spiritual figuration for the "Undivided House." These activities had ethnic and spiritual-religious attributes. The three defragmentation activities showed ethnic characteristics, while *spiritual Biblical Scripture-based, faith-based activity (4)* transcends all three subcategories of defragmentation. Ethno-spiritual figuration (ESF) is played out as a lived act and emerges through these activities both as ethnic and spiritual for this specific reason to defragment.

Figure 5 The "Bloom" of Ethno-Spiritual Figuration (ESF)



The "Bloom" of ESF (Figure 5) is simply aimed at illustrating the three ethnic defragmentation activities (purple petals, 1-3) and the spiritual Biblical Scripture-based, faith-based activity (yellow center, 4), as it transcends each of the other three ESF is the stem and unfolds like a "bloom," through ethic and spiritual elements.

4.2.1.1 Ethnic and Spiritual Attributes and Activities Based on *Codebook v.5*

Based on the codes documented through *Codebook v.1* through *v.5* (see Appendix B), the bullet points below are the codes or categories found to describe the attributes of the ethnic and spiritual components. The HHCHs engage in ethno-spiritual figuration to build community out of duty, and as a survival strategy where religious scripture-based faith is ***used together with the three defragmentation activities***.

Spiritual Biblical scripture-based, faith-based activity has the attributes of:

- Biblical character building,
- Biblical community building,
- Scripture-based reasoning,
- Continuity providing,
- Giving strength to join forces (strengthening),
- Dutiful, undertaking,
- Embracing, remaining, persistent,
- Travels a long and laborious road,
- Starts from a small background and place and evolves to success, and/or service place where success is brought,
- Loving and peaceful,

- Believing,
- Engaging in dialogue,
- Appreciates eloquent speaking, acting/doing, not bragging or being pessimistic and sad,
- Being patient—Christ-like, and
- Takes testimonies, and is frequently autobiographic (*tanuságtétel*).

In my memo, I recorded that the Church

> "consciously takes on the work against division caused by historic events, and current issues of disappearing community in terms of [Hungarian] soul (*magyar lélek*), [Hungarian] consciousness (*magyar tudat*), space as countryside and land, homeland, birthplace."[80] It does it "by advocating and strengthening characteristics such as: *kötelességtudó* (dutiful); *felvállaló* (undertaking, embracing duty); *nehézség ellenére megmaradó* (remaining despite hardships); *hosszú és fáradságos utat bejáró* (travels a long and laborious road); *kitartó* (persisting); *összekötő erőt átadó* (strength-giving to join forces)."[81]

The attributes of the three defragmentation activities define the activities the Church does.

i) Defragmentation of the Hungarian Conscience,[82] Hungarian Soul, and Mind

The category group captures activities that places the protection and care for the Hungarian "mother tongue" as a key short - and long-term goal. The mother tongue is

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80. Pap, Margit Gitta. 2020. Research Memo. May 31, 2020, 15-16. In the Author's possession.

81. Ibid., 15-16

82. *magyarságtudat* (Hungarian consciousness, conscience)

key to ethnic Hungarian identity, and expression happens through language. Care for the mother tongue (*anyanyelv ápolása*) is achieved through education, maintaining schools, maintaining radios, and various children, and adult camps (i.e., folk dance). The Churches maintain schools and higher education facilities. The Church's existence also depends on Hungarian-speaking members.

One prominent example that I was not aware of is that the leaders of the Hungarian Historic Churches in 2000 founded the Sapientia Foundation that is governed by a nine-membered board of trustees. This foundation initiated the establishment of the private Sapientia University. The university is funded by the Hungarian government and by the students who enroll. The university is located in three cities where there is a significant Hungarian population (Csíkszereda, Marosvásárhely, Kolozsvár). There are key decision-makers among the board of trustees, for example, the Reformed Bishop of the Transylvanian Reformed District, Béla Kató, was reported to serve as the president of the trustees from 2003 (Sapientia 2020, 18). The university has a wide variety of degree programs. The 2020 report (Sapientia 2020, 1) indicated 31 undergraduate majors offered with an enrollment of 1,125 students, and 12 masters majors with an enrollment of 291 students (Ibid.).

Examples of activities are listed below where through ethnic- and scripture-based means the community is being built:

1. Operating Hungarian schools and colleges
2. Supporting literary work
3. Community-building through singing

4. Organizing and engaging in pilgrimage
5. Organizing and engaging in cultural programs, camps for families, children, etc.
6. Praising and supporting eloquent speech (*ékesszólás*) of members and priests
7. Operating a missionary radio in Hungarian that is politics and commercial-free (Roman Catholic)
8. Promoting the idea of large families, to have more Hungarian children
9. Comparing the countryside's saline soil (*szikessége*) with local intellectual/spiritual (*szellemi*) richness (This richness can be represented by important figures born in such countryside. It is done to give courage that a tough environment can make a person resilient and still able to achieve her goals)
10. The intertwining of Hungarian folk beliefs and Christian traditions
11. Pressing the importance of Reformation and its influence on Hungarian literature and culture
12. Referencing the "Holy Scripture" and "Word"
13. The idea that is sinful to not protect the mother tongue

ii) Historic Defragmentation

This category has ethnicity-based activities that show efforts to strengthen the territorial-spatial strength of the minority, as a community, by partaking in autonomy efforts. The nature of this work may be captured by the persecuted Roman Catholic

Bishop and icon, Áron Márton, who said that the Church's involvement in politics "*is not about politics, our life is at stake here. And we got the right to a human life from God."*[83] It is a non-politically initiated necessary activity, to survive as a minority. Historic defragmentation of the Church had the following attributes:

1. Partaking in autonomy efforts
2. Non-politically initiated political activity, to survive as a minority
3. It can be captured by the quote: "*This is not about politics. Our life is at stake here*" (Áron Márton)[84]
4. Evoking the memory of historic figures
5. Promoting childbirth and large families
6. Tolerant and open
7. Warning that self-protection should not lead to self-isolation
8. Tolerant to migrants and refugees
9. Calling to fight indifference
10. Calling to vote and be involved
11. Engaging and active in institutional organizations across "historic" space
12. Raising the minority to a "European level"

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83. In Hungarian: "Ez nem politika. Itt az életünkről van szó. S az emberi élethez az Istentől nyertünk jogot" is a broadly used quote by the Churches originating from the Roman Catholic bishop Áron Márton wo was persecuted by the communist regime (see Bárdi and Papp 2008, 281-282). The cited source was recorded in the speech of Tőkés, László. 2016. "Itthon Európában: Voltunk, vagyunk, leszünk." Published in "Hitel." Accessed March 28, 2021. https://www.hitelfolyoirat.hu/sites/default/files/pdf/09-tokes.pdf.

84. Ibid.

13. Partaking in ecumenical services, asking for dialogue among Eastern-Orthodox-Roman/Greek Catholic/Protestants
14. Is evoking the memory of historic figures, strong leaders, people who made the community proud in science, art, etc.
15. Distrusting toward nation-states like "Hungary" and "Poland"

a) Institutional Unification of the Reformed and Unitarian Church Across State Borders

The Unitarian Church of Hungary and the Unitarian Church of Romania started an institutional reunification process in 2010 that was concluded in 2012. Today, they are known as the Hungarian Unitarian Church. The two Churches suffered losses after the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, and were forcefully separated in 1968 under the Romanian communist regime (Márkus 2012). The act is an important move as the Church defragments institutionally, while it also reflects the will to remain as a "Hungarian" Church.

The Reformed Church also engages in activities across the border, in collaboration with other Churches, where a significant amount of Hungarian minority and members of the Church remain. The Reformed Church in Romania is part of the Hungarian Reformed Church (*Magyar Református Egyház*), which should not be confused with the the Reformed Church of Hungary. The Hungarian Reformed Church unified the nine countries' Reformed Churches and their members of the territories lost to the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, and the Churches that may reside in the United States, and other foreign countries. The unified body respects the member Churches' unique constitutions, while it also has a commonly agreed-upon constitution that defines its role

and activities (Magyar Református Egyház, n.d.). The unification process occurred in stages from 2009 to 2013 (Ibid.). Part of the Church is the Generális Konvent, which was formed in 2004 and encompasses leaders of Churches from the "facturerd region." According to the Hungarian Reformed Church, it is "a joint representative body of the Reformed Churches in the Carpathian Basin. Its main task is the preparation of the common constitution and common laws, their enforcemnet in the coordination of common affairs, and the work for unity.[85] The Generális Konvent takes a strong stand for protecting minority rights, among others.

These examples show activities across the borders as cooperative and sibling-like work to strengthen their institutions and the Hungarian communities. The following codes appeared as attributes to this defragmentation activity:

1. Morality-based and cross-border national cooperation
2. Exemplifying Hungarian awareness (*magyarságtudattal példázodó*)
3. Joining forces (*összefogó*)
4. Cooperative and sibling-like

i) Local and Diasporic Spatial Defragmentation

This category captures local-level activities and attributes that unfold in locally, in local space:

1. Village reunions

85. Magyar Református Egyház. n.d. "Mit tudunk az egységünkről?" Accessed January 19, 2021. https://www.reformatus.hu/magyar-refomatus-egyhaz/mit-tudunk-az-egysegunkrol/.

2. The ability of the community to know, understand, and evaluate itself (community-level self-reflection and self-knowledge)
3. Self-knowledge and understanding of the community are important in addition to historical knowledge and tradition (*közösség önmegismerése, önértékelése*)
4. Giving recognition to local historic events, art, prominent figures of literature, science, etc.
5. Exemplification (*példázódás*)
6. Church buildings as symbols of remaining-persisting (*megmaradás*), local infrastructure renovations
7. Reference to one's birthplace and its remoteness and/or isolation
8. Love of the Székely village, or birthplace (local space)

The "bloom" of ethno-spiritual figuration with the four elements can be captured in the following quote written by Gábor Jakab, a Roman-Catholic priest, with a rank of the Chaplain of His Holiness (*pápai káplán*). He wrote an article in the Roman Catholic bulletin of *Vasárnap* (Sunday) in 2012, for celebrating the Roman Catholic Church's radio. The reader can capture the Biblical scripture-based spiritual-religious elements, interwoven with ethnic ones, and how they are aimed at providing a shape, a figure. He uses elements listed above like autobiographical storytelling and describing how one from an impoverished background can reach his goals. In this case we learn about his birthplace of the village of Farkaslaka, and the reputable writer from this village named Áron Tamási. He lists other figures, like Ferenc Deák, a prominent Hungarian figure and

politician who lived in the nineteenth century and was Minister of Justice in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[86] Jakab mentions Deák as the "*haza bölcse*" (Jakab 2012, para. 7) translating it into "wise man of the motherland" (the motherland/the land one belongs to, as *haza* also means "home," referring to the collectivity of Hungarians across the borders of historic land). Jakab talks about the "*Mária Rádió – Erdély*" (para. 1) and mentions the media's importance in modern missionary work, as an institutional approach. He expresses the importance of *Erdély* (Transylvania), and how through the radio, the weakened communities of the Hungarians can be built at home and can be connected across borders. The radio is politics- and commercial-free and broadcasts programs twelve hours a day in Hungarian (Ibid). Jakab (2012) wrote:

> *I was reminded of the well-known writer of my native village, Áron Tamási, who writes: "Transylvania has always stood alone, like a huge, sad pine that works a miracle in a storm." His people also stood and standalone while the world becomes a world. In Transylvania, also called the Fairy Land, the Székelys saved the Hungarians with their outstanding mental and physical work and significant population growth. Unfortunately, most of their descendants today do not see their ancestors as examples to follow in this regard, and many have renounced the sacrifice that comes with child blessing. What can be done with a people who give up their worldview of life as a blessing and their future successors? Ferenc Deák, the sage of the homeland, said: What autocracy [önkény] takes, can be recovered, but what someone voluntarily gives up, it is lost for forever.* (para. 7)

86. Wikipedia. n.d. "Deák Ferenc." Last updated January 27, 2021, 14:17. Accessed April 3rd, 2021. https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/De%C3%A1k_Ferenc_(igazs%C3%A1g%C3%BCgy-miniszter).

In the same bulletin article, Jakab also talks about South Transylvania, a region he perceives as having been "left behind," and highlights a quote from a Hungarian poet named Sándor Csóori, emphasizing that where the Churches "fell on their knees" (Jakab 2012, para. 7) as a sign of decay, the nation will do the same. He delicately touches on the Hungarian-Romanian ethnic differences, and "we were here first" mentality. He further explains Áron Márton's locally known, somewhat "famous" quote, that Transylvania was not lost because of the Romanian soldiers but because of the Hungarian mothers, who chose not bear children (Ibid.). I found the Roman Catholic Church's position to be the strongest on childbirth.

Áron Márton, who was a bishop and was severely persecuted by the communist regime, is an iconic and leading figure of the Hungarian Roman Catholic community, regarding perseverance, remaining in and attesting to the Christian faith, but also to remain faithful to the Hungarian minority. In the quote we see attributes of ethno-spiritual figuration, such as talking about the naturalistic beauty and richness of Transylvania and the "peaks" (Jakab 2012, para. 7) of Hargita, a mountain in the Eastern Carpathians, and an iconic place for the Székelys. Then he endorses and advises activities similar to the plans of a locally known Franciscan Brother of Csaba Böjte. These plans are named as *"Tündérkert Projekt"* (Fairy Garden Project) ((para. 7) and *Szent István Plan* (St. Stephen)[87] (para. 7). Böjte's figure became known for his attitude of "doing what he preaches," acceptance, tolerance, loving care, and optimism. His work

87. The first king of Hungary, introduced in this chapter, who founded the Hungarian Kingdom.

and standing regarding Roma orphans, and strong voice regarding migrants, refuges, and minority rights (discussed more below) is also frequently reported in the news. In the quote, Jakab emphasizes that Transylvania's future needs people similar to Böjte, who are not pessimistic, gloomy, and loudly boasting of the historic past, and of Hungarian "greatness," but who are optimistic and take positive action:

> *Although the landscapes of Transylvania are beautifully romantic, the mountain ranges are rich in mineral resources and natural energy sources, the peaks of Hargita are inviting from abroad in our songs, the cultural diversity of Transylvania is unique. I recommend the proposals of Brother Csaba Böjte, the ones formulated in the Fairy Garden project and the St. Stephen's plan. As for the future of Transylvania, you need people who are not gloomy, other times thoughtless and loudly boasting, but takes positive action.* (Jakab 2012, para. 7)

Jakab calls for optimism and mentions Trianon, the painful event that placed the ethnic group in a minority status and fragmented the nation. He articulates further that after one hundred years of the painful event of the Treaty of Trianon, Churches still have Hungarian services. He calls for remaining as a Hungarian community with Hungarian services. The writing is spirited, eloquent, and well-stated. He himself calls for protecting the mother tongue, quoting the "greatest Hungarian" István Széchenyi, known for his nation-building work, who said "*a nation lives in its language"* (para. 8):

> *Let us examine the slogan of Maria Radio in Transylvania that suggests optimism: 'A ray of light for your soul'. What does this mean here and now? [It means] that by the grace of God we still live, and we are. That, in our Churches, almost a hundred years after Trianon, the Biblical Word and holy song are still spoken/sang in Hungarian. That we can cling spiritually to the entire world with our words transmitted through the waves of the ether, we can gain spiritual joy*

> *for others and thereby build our weakened communities. With thought-provoking thoughts, we not only nurture but also maintain our souls that are hungry and thirsty for spiritual nourishment. Through our songs and through prayers we can think of our near and far loved, we can feel with them in their struggles and sufferings. If we strive for it, we can learn more thoroughly, and then we can nurture our sweet mother tongue, continuing to be aware, following the [footesteps] of Széchenyi, the 'greatest Hungarian' who died 150 years ago, [and said] that 'the nation lives in its language.' Therefore, radio presenters should pay more attention to learn the Hungarian language more thoroughly and cultivating it [more]!"* (Jakab 2012, para. 8)

In summary, defragmentation can be seen in activities that are intellectual, spiritual and/or space based. Most of all, ethno-spiritual figuration can be grounded in the geographic region or in local space, such as in a village, a landscape, or other ethnographical or historic region. Most times it is interwoven and rolls out one element after another (it blooms).

4.3 TERRITORIAL APPROACH TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The definition of community development (CD) given by the United Nations is "[a] process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems" (quoted in Carlon 2020, 8).[88] This definition is generalized and does not specify CD "as a practice, profession, or discipline" (Ibid.), while many definitions, such as the one broadly applied by the International Association for Community Development (IACD), define it as a "practice-based profession and an academic discipline" that

> promotes participative democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality and social justice, through the organization, education and empowerment of people within their communities, whether these be of locality, identity or interest, in urban and rural settings. (IACD 2016, under "About IACD," para. 3)

Taking on the broad and generalized understanding of community development provided by the United Nations as an act of coming together and acting to achieve change, we can approach community development with new perspectives. In opening to new perspectives, the following questions emerged: do we have a time constraint on "coming together"; how many times; where and how; does it have to conclude? Acting upon a pressing issue can be imagined along a continuum through a continuous engagement, or it can be sequential and reappearing (meeting to meeting). These

88. I was unable to find the original quote in the United Nation's database, or any definition for community development. I found this definition frequently cited and linked to a broken UN source, that was likely deleted, or removed.

questions are worth considering in postcolonial planning approaches and "no business meeting" environments.

The way people "come together" to "take collective action" and generate solutions are not set in stone, especially in a virtually and digitally expanding world. The idea of formal meetings as a way of coming together is certainly not the only way. There are ways of "coming together" as part of pilgrimages, village reunions, congregational women's clubs, building "cultural barns," making handcrafted cheese, or taking off flags per court orders.

On January 10, 2021, people gathered in Gyergyóremete, where the commune's (*község)* recently re-elected mayor, Laczkó-Albert Elemér, carried out the Bucharest High Court of Justice's decision (*bukaresti itélőtábla*), regarding three of the five flags displayed in front of the new building of *Községháza* (House of the *község*). According to the decision, three flags had to be taken down (out of five): the flag of Hungary, the Székely flag, and lastly, the flag of the community. The short gathering was a heartbreaking event; people shed tears and lighted candles (Székelyhon TV 2021). While the flags were about to be taken down, the mayor asked "*And whose is the house now? Whose is the country…and…whose is the big world? Flags in the wind!*"[89] (Ibid.). While the three flags were taken down, the predominantly Roman Catholic community quietly prayed the Lord's Prayer three times, and the Hail Mary three times (Gergely 2021).

89. The video was transcribed and translated by the Author. Transcription is in the Author's possession. Transcribed on January 13, 2021.

The mayors' voice broke as he was talking and peacefully conforming to the will of the court. In his short speech, he reaffirmed that the community found the decision discriminative, and suggested that the community should prepare for further possible rulings, including the Romanizations of the local newspaper titled "I am able" (*Képes vagyok*), and for the Hungarian sign of *Községháza*, to be taken down. The case has weight, because as the mayor expressed it, it is discriminative (Székelyhon TV 2021). The legal discussion of the case extends the scope of this dissertation. However, it is worth considering the commentary to the court's decision from an independent Romanian journalist, Sabin Gherman (2021), who makes several contrasts with other, predominantly Romanian localities, where community (e.g., city) flags were allowed to be displayed. His commentary briefly can be explained as Romania's inability to embrace its ethnic diversity, while millions go abroad (or emigrated) to work and expect to be accepted[90], but the Romanian state cannot do the same at home for all of its citizens (Gherman 2021).

The mayor expressed that fifteen years ago, when the new building of the *Községháza* was inaugurated, five flags were displayed in a respective order. The mayor expressed that they "*consciously [placed] the Romanian flag [first]*" because they "*live in Romania*," and they "*respect this country*" and "*abide by its laws*"[91] (Székelyhon TV 2021), they placed the European Union flag, to represent the political-economic

90. Author's comment and experience.

91. The video was transcribed and translated by the Author. Transcription is in the Author's possession. Transcribed on January 13, 2021.

community to which the state belongs. Third, they placed the flag of the Hungarian Nation, where the flag does not represent the state of Hungary, but the Hungarian speaking nation; fourth, the Székely flag, representing the ethnic community to which community members belong; and fifth, the local community's unique flag (Ibid.). The community is predominantly [almost 100%] Székely Hungarian. While the community complied with the court's order, they are confident that they "*did not offend anyone"* (Ibid.) (meaning Romanians), and they have the right to display their national symbols. The mayor reinforces that they, as a community, "*will remain*" (Ibid.), and the light of the candles were not a symbol for a burial, but represent the "*flame of self-awareness"* (consciousness) (Ibid.). Finally, while not directly, he answers the question of "*Whose is this house now*?" by confirming, "*We are at home … this community here is ours*" (Ibid.). These last lines also refer to the millennia-long presence of Székelys—they did not just appear at this space, but the space is theirs. The mayor said:

> *The flags are hauled down, and we comply with the court's decision. We disagree, we stress it, and we remain. The essence [what is important] does not change, the candles … they do not mean that we are burying someone or something. They represent the flame of self-awareness [consciousness], here and now, and we are not in the way of anyone. We are at home, and the space here is ours, this community here is ours.* (Székelyhon TV 2021, 2m 39s[92])

This case is a most recent example that succinctly demonstrates the way a community defines itself through the symbology of flags, their orderly placement, and

92. See footnotes no. 89 and 91.

the reasoning behind such placement (first to fifth, above). It is an example of lived cultural-religious practice performed through the mayor, and the people who gathered. The cultural and ethnic fine details are embedded and were expressed.

Cultural-religious means are interwoven and embodied in ethical and moral messaging, delivered not just by the spoken words, but in the fine nuances of what was not spoken, or how the words were spoken. The aesthetic of the three flags—the beauty—is lost, and pride and emotion are surfaced, yet suppressed, by the court's decision. God is called upon, along with Virgin Mary, the protector of the Hungarian Nation and the Székelys, while reiterating that this "*space is ours*," "*the community is ours*" (Ibid.) and the will of staying strong in identity, and as a community, is expressed. This community, despite the legal and nationalist pressures, signals a will to remain as a "unified House." They came together and have a will to remain and unite in heart, spirit, and mind within many spatial territories, the community, the Székely ethnic region, Hungarian nation, Romania, and the European Union. However, the bonds to each are not the same.

Understanding actors, leaders of communities, and stakeholder interests through their embodiment of "lived religious practices" (term by Ammerman 2020) can extend our understanding of (community) planning and community development through cultural-religious means. Székely village communities frequently coincide with one or two village congregations, meaning the entire village is one big congregation (#5, #19, #16, and many others), or two. In the case of larger villages, smaller communities can form (#1, #29).

4.3.1 Fragmented Regions and Communities

The territorial approach to community development, and Porter's (2010) cultural approach to "conceived," "perceived," and "lived spaces" (concepts by Lefebvre 1991; see pages 38, 40, 355 and 362) deemed to be relevant as a landscape of fragmented communities appeared from the convergent interviews. The results broadened my understanding of the communities where the Church actively rolls out many activities.

The GT analysis identified three types of "defragmentation" activities: (1) defragmentation of the Hungarian sense/conscience, Hungarian soul, and mind; (2) historic defragmentation; and (3) local and diasporic spatial defragmentation. The convergent interviews provide a spatial and contextual boundary where the emerged theory can be more thoroughly examined: the Székely rural village, community, landscape, and the Székely ethnoregion. There were villagers, civic actors, priests, farmers, and administrative/institutional leaders among the interviewees (Table 1). The interviews provide a different context and lens to analyze the findings of the GT analysis, improving the validity of the findings based upon the earlier discussion in Chapter III, and the three criteria of Neuman (2006).

Two research questions specifically asked the respondents the following:

1. "*In your opinion what makes a community strong?"*
2. *"In your opinion why do rural communities decline in Romani*a?"

Growing up in this region, I experienced that villages located within a three- to ten-mile radius of each other could exhibit very different "strengths."

Figure 6 Székelyland – Historic Administrative Units of "Székek" (Chairs)

The map depicts the historic "Székek" and cities of Székelyland of population size ranging from 150,000 to less than 10,000. Used with permission from Elekes (2011).

There were *szállóigék* [93] that captured the positive and negative characteristics of a community. I learned from an early age that villages in Hargita county were clustered and divided by geographic features, such as watersheds, creeks, and mountains, and frequently captured as a specific *tájegység.*[94] For example, *Nyárád-mente* (along the Nyárád creek), *Nyikó-mente* (along the Nyikó creek). Further, in informal talks, and references to regions, some categorizations of the region did not refer to the current Romanian administrative boundary of the county, or *község*, but to the historic Székely-military based administrative units of *szék* (chair), with subunits of *fiúszék* (Figure 6).

I was taught through my upbringing, and I experienced, that these units could exhibit differences regarding folk-music, folk-dance, local customs, and variations in traditional clothing. The variations were a way to inform people of belonging to a specific region. Pávai's (2005) review of the many classifications of the Transylvania region, or "*nagytáj,"*[95] (22) based on the region's ethnography, folk music, and folk dance[96] concludes that it is geographically, historically, and ethnographically a unified region, "with distinct differentiations" (40) due to ethnic and landscape diversity, and the long segregation of the three *natios* and Romanians.[97]

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93. Literally: flying verbs, likely similar in meaning to "adage" and "dictum."

94. Literally: landscape/countryside unity.

95. Large landscape unity.

96. Ethnography, folk music, and folk dance [*néprajz, népzene, néptánc*].

97. Pávai (2005) uses *"rendek"* that Verdery (1983) discussed as *"natios"*; discussed in Chapter IV.

Within the many defined locally known regions, and the current administrative boundaries of the county we can see distinctive variations. These variations, that I frequently observed myself, are discussed below through the perceptions and experiences of the respondents. The causes of fragmentation are rooted both in the complex history of the region, the ethnic and cultural diversity, the topographic-geographic variability, and modern changes (e.g., globalization, urbanization). My detailed knowledge of the county and the villages enabled me to gain deep contextual information from the respondents.

According to Balassa and Ortutay (1980) the religious make-up of Székelyland also varies by *széks,* (Figure 6) where *Udvarhelyszék* is mostly Reformed and Unitarian, *Csíkszék* is Roman Catholic, *Háromszék* (consists three *széks: Kézdi-, Orbai- and Sepsiszék*) is Reformed and Catholic. They further articulate that these *széks*, can have subunits. Within *széks* smaller ethnic groups—ethnographic landscape units (*néprajzi tájak*)—can be found, which frequently "cross the [historic military administrative] boundaries of the széks." (Balassa and Ortutay 1980, H-42). For example, in *Udvarhelyszék,* along creeks and the river of Küküllő, a number of villages can cumulatively be referred to as "along XY creek." [98] For example, *Homoród-mente,* (along the creek of *Homoród*) and *Almás-mente* (along the creek of *Almás*) (Balassa and Ortutay 1980, H-42).

98. Author's experience coincides with content from the source.

The once-populated and territorial dominance of the Székely and Hungarian *natios,* and their communities, in many places, have gradually decayed and eroded. Hungarian communities in the Székely-Hungarian ethnocultural region of Székelyland went through major changes, and their "strength" varies across space. Hargita county is the most Hungarian-populated county in Romania, where 85.2% of the population is Hungarian (INS 2014a). Important drivers for this spatial variation were noted to be land ownership; tendency to do farming; the ethnographic regions of Székelyland; proximity to cities; topography; road infrastructure; low return of doing agriculture, resulting in abandonment, cost, accessibility and transportation; communist industrialization and urbanization; loss of local labor due to seasonal work abroad; and continuous ongoing talent drain to Western European states.

The literature also discusses many of these causes in the context of land abandonment and cultural landscape change (see Schulp et al. 2019; Plieninger et al. 2016; Griffiths et al. 2013; Kuemmerle et al. 2009), the consequence of communist mass urbanization, and its variability in Hargita county (Demeter 2014). The variability between regions, and within regions, was high. The converging narrative was that current communities suffer from the indifference of the younger generation toward their communities, where only a small percentage shows interest in community involvement and in remaining and cultivating the land. With automatization, one or two farmers can cultivate large tracts of land, while small landholding does not provide people with enough income to start a life and build upon it. Machinery is costly, and only a few can afford it. Many rural villages, especially in *Udvarhelyszék,* are smaller and more fragile

to population loss than villages in *Gyergyószék*, where villages are bigger, and "stronger."

In recent years, due to the EU's Rural Development Program, and its subsidy systems, farmlands have been more cultivated, but the system remains corrupt, and alternative adaptation processes have been unfolding. These findings will be published elsewhere,[99] and only relevant content retained. Large spatial studies do not uncover local adaptation processes. The value of the interviews was in finding out more about local processes. These are discussed in the following five sections.

4.3.1.1 The Role of the Priest in the Village Community and its Relevance for Community Strength

Priests, teachers, and their institutions (church and the village school) are thought to be part of Székely villages. There is a culturally and traditionally inherent aspect of their presence still to the present day. As it was introduced in Chapter I, a Unitarian village priest (#19), in her interview, shared the decision of the handful of villagers who, in the early 2000s, came together to solve a pressing issue of their village community that was believed to be "doomed to death" with the closure of the village school and the loss of the teacher. At the time, the community did not have a resident priest. The community was a long-time Unitarian village and requested a full-time, permanent priest from the Hungarian Unitarian Church who could serve the community. The decision of

99. Pap, Margit Gitta, George O. Rogers, Dawn E. Jourdan, Jake Mowrer, "Pathways to Adaptation: "The Rationality of 'Think Global, Act Local': A Case Study of Székely-Hungarian Cultural Landscapes," manuscript under preparation, 2021.

the villagers to come together and act rooted in both cultural and religious means; the interviewee expressed that "*nor a priest, or a teacher in a village, then [the village] is doomed to death [se papja se tanítója ha nincs egy falunak akkor halálra van ítélve].*"[100] This example brings the role of the priest and church into focus regarding the village. A Reformed priest in another village expressed that (as of 2019) village communities, in general, are "only ruins" of the traditional village communities.

According to local historian Csaba Gidó,[101] the HHCHs founded schools in many rural locations. During the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, these were managed by the empire, but the buildings still belonged to the Churches. For example, the salary of teachers were funded by the empire. After Transylvania was attached to Romania in 1920, the Romanian Kingdom, and later the Romanian communist government took control of these properties and schools. They controlled education and the language that was taught, thus denominational schools [*felekezeti iskolák*] were funded. These denominational schools gradually were obstructed from functioning publicly until they were taken and were not given back. Property disputes between the Church and states are still ongoing[102]. According to Flora et al. (2005) the Hungarian Churches reclaimed 1791 buildings; 113 were restituted in some form, and in 18 cases full or partial access were given (51-52).

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100. Quote by #19.

101. Gidó, Csaba. Local historian Ph.D. Email communications with the Author. March 12, 2021. In Author's possession.

102. Author's comment and experience.

A mayor (#7) who served the same *község* for almost two decades after 1989, answering the question of *"What makes a [village] community strong?"* expressed the importance of a good priest, and collaboration between the Church and the local council was pressed. Community events, organized by the council, were perceived as unsuccessful ways to strengthen and build communities (build community cohesion) permanently. The role of the "good-community conscious" village priests and their community building efforts (#9, #11, #17) were highlighted, showing that they would create opportunities and solutions based on the community's need. Examples included three Unitarian priests—one who started a kindergarten and later got a school bus, and provided solutions based upon the needs of the village, in this case retaining young couples in the village and avoiding their moves to the city (per #17). The second was the Unitarian priest #19, and the third initiated a local kitchen with a cook, who would cook for elderly people and provide people with food from nearby villages, if requested (per #7). These villages are not big in size (the population is about a few hundred and is predominantly Unitarian; exact details omitted per IRB).

4.3.1.2 The Fundamental "Make-Up" of a Village Community and Community Strength

Responses were converging into a narrative that there are differences among village communities, based on their "fundamental make-ups." This was well articulated by the mayor, Unitarian priest #19, and Reformed priest #16. There are villages known locally as "strong" and "weak," and their fame travels by word of mouth and gets passed down through generations. They exhibit locational uniqueness, i.e., occupational excellence such as masonry, charcoal burning, pottery making, and basket weaving,

among others. A mayor (#7) who had a thorough knowledge of the more than a dozen villages in his *község* in his answer remarked that community cohesion (as unity) and strength varies from village to village, not just by the spatial location and by its proximity to a major city, but by the make-up of people in the village.

A village, by this mayor, was described as "*életes*" (capable for life) where the priest was known to be a strong and leading figure. The village was noted as a successful and exemplary figure of community life. This make-up was articulated in the interview with the Unitarian village priest (#19), who pointed to a "fundamental difference" among village communities, and what is perceived to contribute to "weak" and "strong" villages. Weak communities exhibit attributes such as lack of community ties, lack of character, depopulation and aging, no social events, and lack of development in terms of events, economy, social relations, decaying houses, and waning traditions including farming and land cultivation. It intuitively follows that strong communities are the opposite of weak.

Unitarian priest #19, in the quote below, articulates about four villages (XY1-XY4[103]), where three villages are from her own *község* (XY1, XY2, XY3), and one is from another *község* (XY4). The priest contrasts how the four villages have "different make-ups," and are perceived by other locals as strong and weak village communities.

The priest explained that her village community (XY1), and another one (XY2) have "*long known to be good communities*" versus the weak village with "*raggle-taggle*

103. Names are omitted as per IRB protocol.

crowd" (XY3), where the strong communities are known for the good characters of their residents, such as being at the "*forefront of behaving well*" and at "*giving respect*." The priest also contrasts her village community with a colleague of hers, whose village was perceived as fundamentally different (XY4). As she reflected on her decade and half of service to her village community, she noted that her community, despite urbanization and communism, "produced" a handful of people that kept the village going (before her arrival). In the quote below she refers to a subregion of "*along ZZ creek*," and where XY1, XY2, and XY3 villages are located.[104] She articulates that these "dictums" can be very divisive, and the community has a basic, fundamental make-up of people who display similarity in mentality, attitude with leaders, and work ethics, among others:

> *19: I also know my colleague in XY4 village because we graduated in the same year. Her case is that, perhaps… that our communities in their fundamentals are different from [each other]."*
>
> *Gitta: But what is the difference?*
>
> *19: So fundamentally. So, imagine that here along the ZZ creek there are dictums [szállóigék]*[105]

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104. Ibid.

105. Quote continued:

> *that XY1and XY2 village are the two villages that have always been at the forefront in giving respect, so [people from my village] valued superiors at school … the kids … were always at the forefront of behaving well. They were obedient, sensible, skillful kids. XY1 and XY2 villages were those, that is long known to be good communities... [In] XY2 village unfortunately it happened that urbanization really took away most of the people, and [those who remained] at home are old bachelor… there is a little worse, I honestly don't want to now …*

The mayor (#7) noted "*that many little things*" are needed for a community to work. The Unitarian priest's (#19) village was mentioned by the mayor as a strong and exemplary village where the community is good. To my question of "*what makes that community better*?" from the rest in his *község*, he mentioned leading figures, the influencing power of good role models, spending time together at Church and as a community, and "*working and celebrating together*."

> *#7: If a village, a community, if everyone works, then the few who do not want to, who don't feel like it, will get a feel [to work], so there is one like this…That the village community, yes, takes everyone with it … And the other lively village is XY1 village. It is also a bit remote/secluded but there are also many young married people, younger ones, and children. And the village community there is the best in the 'község' [sub-county unit, encloses a group of villages]. There have accomplished a lot.*[106]

> *Gitta: Yeah, they are a bit more remote/secluded [than XY1 village]*
>
> *#19: A little more remote, yes, we were lucky here that [the change, urbanization, communism] could not entirely [take/change the village]. So from two to three generations there were a group [of people] who were here, and vitalized the village [kept it going]. So [these villages] are different. They said about XY3 village that raggle-taggle crowd ["népség"] estate it was, "this kind of serf," and "that kind of serf." So, you can hear that they are such a "wide variety" of people really, really quite divisive, so from the foundations you already have a [village community].*

106. Quote continued:

> Gitta: And is there some particular reason why in XY1 village ... so what ... I understand that the community is better, but what makes that community better?
>
> #7: … where a village community is formed, and it has a couple of leading individuals, it goes [works] that way, and those who are a little weaker they address that, because village community [in general] has great influencing power because in

A respondent (#14) discussed the city of Udvarhely vs. Gyergyó (two cities in the county) that influenced surrounding village communities differently, due to the "make-up of the populations" of the cities themselves and the surrounding villages. The quote captures a "regional affinity" to do business, "entrepreneurial" tendencies vs. not, as it was contrasted between two *széks* of different ranks, *Udvarhelyszék* (main unit) and *Gyergyószék* (subunit of *Csikszéki*; see Figure 6). I grew up in one of the cities that are being discussed, the city Udvarhely, and I am highly aware of this "dictum," which is a well-rooted perception in locals. Similar cases were mentioned in the context of villages as well. The population of the two cities discussed are about 34,000 for Udvarhely and 18,000 for Gyergyó (INS 2014b). The two cities had different urbanization and industrialization rates during the communist regime, which attracted people from nearby villages differently. The villages were more negatively affected in Udvarhely, known for its small business and entrepreneurial layer that "sucked" in people, not just during communism but after, while Gyergyó did not have that. Gyergyó, and the surrounding villages, lost population due to the tendency of going abroad.

> *#14: In the Gyergyó region here, villages are practically much stronger, still, than the city, Gyergyószentmiklós. So, there are big villages here. Well, XZ1 village, XZ2 village are six-seven thousand villages [in population]. Also, [varies] by region too. So, Udvarhely city sucked in the entire region, they moved in the city, there is a sparkling layer of entrepreneurs. Economically, it is going relatively well, but practically this economic prosperity, that in Gyergyó[szentmiklós][107] is much lower, ruined the villages. Here, in*

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the Church [they are together], there is whatever celebration they are together, and so they are constantly day and night together so that the influence is continuous.

107. City in Hargita county.

[Gyergyó region] the mentality is more conservative, the villages have remained here.

4.3.1.3 The Tendency to Go Abroad for Seasonal Work Varies Across Villages

The tendency of seasonally working abroad varies, and was reported for small and big villages, indifferent of their infrastructure, or remoteness. This negatively affects families and children, who frequently are left with a family member, and grow up without one or both parents (#31, #28). Professionals are hard to find, and young high school graduates are already "abroad" in soul (#32a) and find the high school examination useless. Many individuals who take on seasonal jobs abroad go home for short visits. They might invest their money in building a house, or send money back home. The exact long-term outcome of this phenomenon is unknown yet. The presence of the younger generation is felt and expressed as disinterest in land cultivation and community engagement, for reasons of low economic return (#11, #26a, and #26b, among others) and the low respect of employers toward employees (#21a, # 21b, and #28). The mayor (#7) noted that in his *község* 550-600 (out of about 4,000 total)[108] people requested legal approvals to work abroad, and the "season" was not yet over. The mayor did not oppose the high number of workers, as he remarked, it had a positive

108. Varga, Árpád E., and Erdélyi Adatbank. n.d. "Települések." In *Erdély etnikai és felekezeti statisztikái a népszámlálási adatok alapján, 1852-2011. Varga E. Árpád 2002-től kiegészített adatsorai*. [Trasylvania's ethnic and denominational statistics based on the census, 1852-2011, with data supplement to Varga E. Árpád' 2002 onward]." Adatbank Erdélyi Magyar Elektronikus Könyvtár (database). Transindex (distributor). Accessed January-April, 2021. https://nepszamlalas.adatbank.transindex.ro/?pg=telepuleslista&megye=2.

influence as people worked and had income, which they might invest in the form of a "new tractor" or "a newly built room." Respondent #14 noted that, in the *Gyergyó region* (or *szék*) it is not communist urbanization, but the potential of working abroad in countries like Germany, England, and Switzerland that causes a major change in villages and facilitates talent drain: "*But here, too, this process has started, practically only now, people are not going to the city, but people go abroad from the village."* He mentioned that in the Canton of Thurgau, Switzerland, there are seventy young people from a Székely village, which represents about eighty percent of the people in their 20s-30s

> *#16: The Canton of Thurgau, which is the size of Hargita County in Switzerland, seventy young people, between the ages of 20 and 30 work only in the Canton of Thurgau. So virtually 80 percent of the 20- to 30-year-olds are abroad.*

4.3.1.4 Rejuvenating and Transforming Villages

While some villages were aging, others were not. Three respondents (#9, #21a, and #21b) from the same village noted that in their village people did not show a tendency to go abroad, and despite its relative remoteness, youth was substantial in those who remained and worked the land. A couple who worked abroad came home, and invested their money into farming (#21a, #21b, and 32a in a different location). The village was "rejuvenating." This village, which has a priest, was mentioned as not being active with the community, but the role of the priest and teachers were emphasized by the same respondent (#9). As a small business owner, he brings back traditional Székely customs and is actively engaged in his community; his business attracts mostly children

and youth into nearby villages from surrounding areas. On the question of what would be the most important for people in Székely villages, he mentioned the role of priests and teachers, along with providing kids with tools to remain (not go abroad), and the role of local identity:

> *#9: ...creating an opportunity is a big task for the community as well, but above all it is very important ... the kids, to create the conditions for them to be able to remain at home and to stay at home [in the locality, region] ... To raise them to be a sort of a "local patriot"*
>
> *Gitta: To be proud ...?*
>
> *#9: ... to raise a child to be one who does not want to leave [despite anything]"*

In my discussion with him we talked about surrounding villages, which are almost entirely emptied out due to land abandonment, aging and rural to urban migration. One of the villages was mentioned by the mayor as having unattractive bus schedules for commuting and being less accessible. The respondent mentioned that these villages could work if there would "*be a priest, a teacher who would bring them together,"* and who is there:

> *#9: No, no, I think here that a XY village* ***could work if they were in it, there would be a priest, a teacher who would bring them together****. I can proudly say that XY2 is a rejuvenating village.*
>
> *Gitta: I also see that there are a lot of young people.*
>
> *#9: Compared to the aging of the surrounding villages of XY3, XY4, etc. that are aging and dying out.*

4.3.1.5 The Role of Community Events: "*Working Together and Celebrating Together*"

The importance of bringing people together was mentioned by many of the respondents, while the success of such events was perceived differently. Székely villages have long-standing traditions of *Kaláka, Esti fonó*, where people used to come together and work, and share a meal, or dance and sing. A mayor expressed that when events were organized by the mayor's office, it was not enough to build the community. The community has to produce strong figures, without the involvement of the council, who can lead the community and bring them together. Next to that, working and celebrating together is crucial.

> *#7: No, because everyone feels good at events, and that's it, friends and relatives sit in a group, they have fun [as separate groups], and go away [after the event]. So, the situation here is that the village community, like it's the case in XY village, [that] works together and has fun together.*
>
> ...**So, it is absolutely necessary to have fun together in order to work together**. Once the fun, if you have fun, you can be together**.** *But for this [to happen] people are needed, community minded people and not the council, not the militia [...] but leading figures needed from the community who will lead the same community*.

Add to this the role of the Church, and its collaboration with the council could benefit communities, as the mayor expresses in the following quote:

> *Gitta: What makes a community strong?*
>
> *#7: The community could be strengthened by the community cooperation. I understand here the council and the Church.*

A Reformed priest (#16) noted that in his village community, which was also remote, despite the frequency of community events, his continuous engagement with the community seemed unsuccessful to him in making communities more cohesive and stronger. He had alternative ways to engage with people through value networks and "*value communities*" (*értékközösségek,* per #17) outside the boundaries of his community. Despite his love for the village, his remarks regarding the "make up" of the village were pessimistic and "weak" in quality (e.g., tendency for division, exploitation of each other, low intelligence). People with self-proclaimed faith also mentioned interest-based networks, and that would fall under "working and celebrating together." The interviews collected indicate that communities' strength vary across localities, and in instances this strength was associated with the role of teachers and priests. In general, priests and teachers were perceived to be important for communities. Thus, an asset-based community development and territorial approach is important. As one of the respondents expressed, the meaning of community is changing (#14), and while there are many communities, people are still held together by their strong collective identity and are still spatially bounded by the village and the larger ethnoregion, denominational belonging, language, and minority status (#2, #17, and #31).

The lived day-to-day expression of faith and religious affiliation is very diverse and was well articulated through the examples of priests' attitudes toward their communities—for example, living the day-to-day life with them, assisting and helping them, visiting occasionally, and limiting activity to events such as Sunday Church service.

Respondent #14, after three decades of community development experience, comprehensively noted that "*if the mental, inner spiritual resources of people*" are not "*activated,*" and if the community does not produce the investment for community development itself, investments, in general, will not last long and will be done in vain. He worked decades with grants and projects that aimed at developing the region's agriculture and community:

> *#14: The other reason for the difference between the villages, as I see it, is that I am convinced that if we cannot activate the mental, inner spiritual resources of the people, we bring of any investment, [or] capital for infrastructure in vain, it is a barren investment. [That] for a while anyway, so temporarily it seems good, but the community cannot sustain it. So, the community should extract it and build it.*

4.3.2 Ethno-Spiritual Figuration and Territorially Based CD

The GT analysis found that the Church gives shape and builds a figure for the community through ethnic and spiritual means, or ethno-spiritual figuration. Figuration means a process, or approach, to achieve a goal—in this case, to bring members together and defragment the historically divided ethnic minority. The Historic Hungarian Churches (HHCHs) do it through ethnic and spiritual means that aimed to shape the mind and spirit of members to prevent further fragmentation of the Church community and the Hungarian minority that is spatially bounded by the historically divided ancestral land. The layered meaning of division is captured by the Biblical term "of the House Divided," and the goal to defragment the House Divided. Ethno-spiritual figuration is

both an institutional and an individual approach, or process, to achieve a goal, which is the form of the undivided "House."

The work of the minority Churches in their congregations (local), and in the larger ethnic Hungarian community (region) work to defragment the "House Divided," doing so through ethno-spiritual figuration. They work towards a "House Undivided" in terms of the Hungarian soul, conscience, and the spatially bounded ethnic block.

4.3.2.1 The Dimensionality of Ethno-Spiritual Figuration

Ammerman (2020) explains religious practice as a form of social practice, with seven dimensions of "embodiment, materiality, emotion, aesthetics, moral judgment, narrative, and spirituality" (19). Understanding community development through the discussed seven dimensions of religious practice, we can better articulate the Historic Hungarian Churches' involvement in their communities.

1. Dimension of Embodiment of lived religious practices, as Ammerman (2020) explains, "can cast light on the many intersections of power and inequality" (21) because "bodies are always primary sites of regulation and political struggle" (20). Examples of this dimension include the case of the Reformed priest László Tőkés, who was discussed in Chapter II, or the contested graveyard in the Valley of Úz, where the Romanian and Hungarian ethnic communities (as of 2021) fight over where remains of WWI soldiers are buried. The illegal occupation and "official" land registration of the graveyard and

the surrounding property caused demonstrations, and ethnic and legal disputes. The issue has not been resolved as of 2021.[109]

2. Dimension of Materiality is an important aspect of lived religion, where the "material objects" (McGuire 2008, 85) can have a meaning, "literally or metaphorically" (85), when it is used in religious practice (Ibid.). Further, Ammerman (2020) explains this dimension as the "materiality of religious cultural life [that] exists both within officially religious contexts, and beyond, in objects and in spaces" (23). For example, landscapes and buildings can have substantial meanings, in which people experience the sacred and associate religious meaning with them (see Counted and Watts 2019a).

To place it in context, a Reformed priest of a Székely village (#16) expressed that in his day-to-day activities, the source of his strength was the landscape, his animals, and his family. Further, he explained that despite being a "*city boy*," he was "*brought*" to the village by the building of the church (*templom*). Next to architecture, the aesthetics of the building was important, and he learned and grew to appreciate the narrative behind the coffered ceiling in churches—specifically, the knowledge of the "*heavy handed [folk] masters*" who were able to make such ceilings in the past. Székelyland is known for coffered ceilings that can be found in several churches of the Catholic, Reformed, and Unitarian denominations. The *St. Imreh* Roman Catholic Church in Gelence is an

109. Kovács, Attila. 2020. "Szándékos kettős telekkönyvezés: Dormánfalva tudott a közbirtokosságok úzvölgyi tulajdonáról [Intentional double land registartion: the village of Dormán knew about the commons's property in the Valley of Úz]." *Székelyhon*. December 17, 2020. Accessed March 21, 2021. https://szekelyhon.ro/aktualis/szandekos-dormanfalva-btelekkonyvduplazasar.

UNESCO World Heritage building, where such coffered ceilings can be seen.[110] The Reformed priest thus expressed,

> *what is incredibly important to us [*us as himself, and his family*], is the Hungarian culture. So specifically, the church is. So, I am strong with the [building of the] church and the landscape together … The church brought me here. This church.*

3. Dimension of Emotion, or emotional expressions of religion through religious practice, "point toward the relationships and motives that are embedded in the practice" (Ammerman 2020, 23). The Hungarian Historic Churches evoke emotion in people that are "ethno-spiritual" and aim at tying communities to place.

4. Dimension of Aesthetics in religious practice plays a part as people are moved by their senses; further it evokes the senses and moves people into contemplation (Ammerman 2020). For example, the Reformed priest (#16) in the above-cited quote talks about the landscape and the church as sources of strength, which motivate (move) him in his day-to-day activities. He further expressed that the "*world of motives*" of the coffered ceilings in churches is important to him, as a sophisticated knowledge of the world is masterfully communicated (narrated dimension) through the symbols that are also artistic and beautiful. Dimensions of aesthetics, emotion, and materiality are interlinked and tied together with the dimension of narrative.

5. Dimension of Moral Judgment and Morality in religious practice is explained as passing along "moral precepts" (Ammerman 2020, 26) that "religious communities

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110. Council of Harghita County. n.d. "Szent Imre Templom, Gelence." In *Templomok, Haranglábak, Panorámák, Székelyföld 360*. Accessed March 21, 2021. https://www.virtualisszekelyfold.ro/hu/pano/15.

and traditions have" (Ibid., 26). It can be expressed through "moral lessons" (Ammerman 2020, 27) as I will illustrate below through the discussion of the speech of Oláh at the Csíksomlyó Pentecostal Pilgrimage in 2014.

6. Dimension of Narrative in religious practice includes "telling stories that constitute, motivate, and interpret both every day and extraordinary social action." (Ammerman 2020, 30) Further, "religious practice includes ways of talking and habits of storytelling" (Ammerman 2020, 28). The Church frequently references the historic past and engages in ceremonies of remembrance. For example, this may include participation, or organizing events, such as on March 15 to remember the Hungarian Revolution in 1848 against the Habsburg, or the Treaty of Trianon discussed in earlier chapters. This dimension rewards persistence and recognizes the work done both by the Church and ethnic minority.

7. Dimension of Spirituality: Ammerman (2020) explains spirituality as "not confined to any given religious organization" (31), nor is it "independent of religion" (31). This dimension "invokes direct or indirect (institutionalized) connection to something that is 'other than' everyday reality" (Ibid., 9).

The work of the Hungarian Historic Churches to build bonds with local regional communities in the historically bounded ancestral land is a form of community development, carried out in bits and pieces, over and over again, through time, and in many forms, bringing the spiritual-religious, and cultural-ethnic dimension to the heart of certain activities. These activities are carried out in a territorial, and spatial context to fight the continuous social, cultural, and institutional decay of the communities.

The seven dimensions discussed above can be embedded in religious practice. From prayer, to attending church, many acts can be understood as the practice of religion. The "lived-religion" scholarship opened perspectives to understand religion from daily activity. Ammerman (2020) succinctly developed the argument for religious practice as social practice, in which the "seven dimensions of human social experience that can individually and together allow a deeper understanding of the shared practical knowledge that shapes a practice" (9).

The RIDD theory captures a form of community development (*ethnospiritual figuration*) that is practiced (may get carried out over and over again) through cultural (ethnic) and religious (spiritual) means. These practices, in the context of the RIDD theory, were captured as *defragmenting activities*. In essence, ethnospiritual figuration is a form of community development that is performed through cultural-religious practice(s).

The GT analysis found that the Church gives shape and builds a figure for the community through ethnic and spiritual means, or ethno-spiritual figuration. Figuration means a process, or approach to achieve a goal—in this case, to bring members together, and defragment (culturally, socially, etc.) the historically divided ethnic minority. The HHChs do it through ethnic and spiritual means that aimed to shape the mind and spirit of its members to prevent further fragmentation of the Church community and the Hungarian minority that are spatially bounded by the historically divided ancestral land. The layered meaning of division is captured by the Biblical term, the House Divided.

Ethno-spiritual figuration is both an institutional and an individual approach, or process, to achieve a goal, in the form of the undivided "House."

To fight fragmentation, the Church engages in activities; as the Unitarian priest (#19) expressed, in her village community, activities/involvement are not conducted just to spread evangelism, but they are a necessity. Traditions, the landscape/nature, cultural heritage, and the faith of being a minority is not a burden, but rather serves as a "road" to return, as opposed to the rapidly changing world that is hard to predict, or rootlessness present in society. She stated:

> *But what is even closer to us, what can help that nature is still here. So, these stories are at your fingertips from a generation ago, [they] are still there…. There is a lot of tradition.... The minority fate, this dual, the religious and the ethnic/national. So, despite of [everything], I think that our situation is much easier, so it is better, not easier, it is better. Better because we have somewhere [something/a place/space/roots] to return to, something that can turn us around.*

The Unitarian village priest's (#19) recount of her decade and a half of service showcased a very active and lived day-to-day engagement with her community. She gave credit to her village community, as a "strong" community. During the interview, a very active village life unfolded, and the community, on many occasions, came together and organized events. There were key elements that the priest mentioned, such as: remembering the memory of the ancestors, bringing extended family members together through *falutalálkozó* (village meetings), traditional dancing, and theater plays, among many others designed for different age-groups. She was a sort of "main organizer" in the village, starting at a very young age, and won the respect of the people, as she deeply

cares for them. She mentioned that she reinforced her village community by explaining that their ancestors also had to endure, bringing spirit in the sense that "*they can*" in despite of the challenges of the past. The commune's mayor (#7) described it as a strong village where the community "*works together, and celebrated together*."

The priest's work, next to being her priestly work, can also be understood as cultural-religious practice, and a lived and embodied act on behalf of herself, her church, and her village community. She has expressed her devotion to God, the village, the *táj* (landscape, nature), and the ethnic minority (including history and heritage).

To place it into perspective, the yearly event of the *Pünkösdi Búcsú*, or *Csíksomlyói Búcsú* (Pentecostal Pilgrimage, Csíksomlyó Pilgrimage) was revived after the collapse of communism in 1990. The event is organized by the Roman Catholic Church and Franciscan Order (Csíksomlyó Church and Monastery 2016). It has attracted Hungarian nationals of all religions from within and across borders (Ibid.). The number of pilgrims was estimated as 250-300,000 in recent years (Ibid.).

Székely people have the tradition of the pilgrimage since the 1440s (Ibid.). People frequently dress in traditional clothing, and settlements (e.g., villages, cities) can carry their names and flags along with the Hungary and Székely flags (rarely, if ever, the Romanian flag[111]). Special trains, the Székely Gyors (Székely Rapid) and Csíksomlyó Expressz (Csíksomlyó Express), are scheduled from Hungary to Csíkszereda, the city adjacent to the pilgrimage site.[112]

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111. Author's comment and experience.

This event and the site are examples of spiritual and ethnic significance but are also expressions for ethnic-cultural unity, the will to remain as a community, and perseverance. At this event, both the religious community and the Hungarian minority are being spoken to through ethnic and spiritual-religious means, aiming at "activating" the inner realm of mind and spirit of the listener. It also aimed at giving a shape, a figure, for how desired change should be achieved. I share an example in the quote below, which was part of a speech by Dénes Oláh, a Roman Catholic priest in the city of Marosvásárhely, currently serving the *Keresztelő Szent János Plébánia* (Parish of St. John the Baptist).[113] He spoke to the pilgrims in 2014.

In his speech he wove together many of the ESF attributes that were described earlier in this chapter (section 4.2.1). Through his speech he "paints a figure" with reference to Székely roots, the broader Hungarian heritage, and ties to the ancestral land. The seven dimensions of "embodiment, materiality, emotion, aesthetics, moral judgement, narrative, and spirituality" (Ammerman 2020, 19) can be captured.

Oláh (2014) shares a figure of a community, and its members, in which people have a "*we consciousness"*(para. 41). This "*we consciousness*" is present if components like "*Mother-Church* (*anyaszentegyház),*[114] *parish, Roman Catholic, Székelyland, to*

112. Kárpáteurópa Utazási Iroda. n.d. "Össznemzeti zarándokvonat a Csíksomlyói Búcsúra." Csíksomlyó Expressz. Accessed January 11, 2021. http://csiksomlyoexpressz.hu/.

113. Keresztelő Szent János Plébánia. n.d. "Kapcsolat." Accessed January 11, 2021. http://mvh-belvaros.plebania.ro/kapcsolat/.

114. Literally it means "mother-saint-Church," or "the mother of the Church that is saint." It can refer to all the Christians who follow/believe in Jesus.

belong together, the will to remain, future, faith, hope, love, neighbor, brethren, and sibling" have a place (Ibid., para. 41).

Oláh (2014) expresses the meaning of "*we*" as Hungarians and Christians who need to:

- remain in both Christianity, and in national-ethnic belonging, where the land is not for sale,
- realize "*the spiritual, and natural treasures we possess"* (Ibid.), and the high price it took to acquire them as "*Mass graves line the meadows, the grasslands*" (Ibid.),
- and as an inheritance from the grandfathers to their grandchildren.

The dimension of materiality is articulated not just through the expression of "*mass graves*" (para. 42), but in the articulation that the "*forest, meadows, and wells are not for sale*" (para. 43) and they belong, or are part of, the ethnic community's heritage—expressed as they are "*ours*" (para. 43). Oláh (2014) in his speech also addressed that one needs to realize, raise up, and level up to the heights of an intellectual, spiritual, moral, and soul level of understanding[115] of a "*we consciousness*" (para. 41) and the community that shares such consciousness (Ibid.). He expresses that action is needed, rather than "*empty talks*." Briefly, the unfolding articulation and its content can be

115. *Szellemi-lelki* used [Original: "Igen, erre a szellemi, lelki, erkölcsi magaslatra kell mindannyiunknak felnőni, ráébredni"].

captured with the concept of ethno-spiritual figuration, and at the same time provide understanding for how the seven dimensions are interwoven:

> *Worldwide, the building of fertile, viable, life-supporting, road-retaining communities are at risk. There are hardly any communities that are thriving, growing, receiving, inviting, retaining, healing, passing on values.*
>
> *Many, many thinking people see that the facets of our Hungarian people, my* Székely *people, my Catholic faith have already been targeted by the faceless, demonic powers and forces that want only one thing: to crush, disintegrate our communities that pass on values, and enslave them into slavery on earth everyone, including us.*
>
> *I don't want to wrap what I have to say in the Hungarian flag, but….*[116]

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116. Oláh (2014) continued:

> *…I have been confessing and living with Mihály Babits since I was a teenager: I am Hungarian: my soul and feeling have been inherited, which I do not throw away. God created me to be Hungarian by His inexhaustible wise will. By my will, my blood plays in Hungarian, and in my ears pentatonic sounds like an acquaintance, because I brought this with me, from the fog-throwing past, as the sacred heritage of three thousand years.*
>
> *Well, I confess that blessed with this dual heritage, we must live our days and aim for the future with the weight and cross of this dual heritage.*
>
> *We can and must remain Hungarians as Christians, and we must live the Christian faith as Hungarians, because otherwise we have betrayed the community that has shaped us into human beings, which has given us a homeland, a faith, and not just any culture and civilization….*
>
> *It may be that I am carrying out my vocation, but I know that it is, my vocation exists, I am just a weak person. Then, we-consciousness must awaken in us. We speak of we-consciousness when concepts such as Mother-Church, parish, Roman Catholic, Székelyland, belonging together, the will to survive, future, faith, hope, love, neighbor, brother gain meaning. I [in general] identify with all of this.*
>
> *We need to realize what szellemi [intellectual-spiritual], lelki [soul, from the soul] and natural treasures we possess. These are our treasures. We cannot give up on these because they came at a price. Mass graves line the meadows, the grasslands. This is the grandchildren's inheritance, the rising generations inheritance from their grandfathers.*

Activities that come with messages from the Church to vote on figures representing political parties of the minority, or on Hungarian parties[117] can cause disapproval from local Székely-Hungarians. For example, Respondent #14 expressed that he stopped attending the local church in his larger village, and expressed his disapproval of political messages in the church that aimed at influencing which political party people should vote for. While he seems an anti-religious person, my interview highlighted his relationship to his community, and God, as a lived and devoted day-to-day activity. He was also a professional who actively worked in community development programs, but retired from non-profit, and official organizations, as he "*got sick of it, and jumped off the carriage that was running into its ruins*." He actively "*comes together*" and works, doing what he preaches through sustainable living and farming (value-based large community).

Respondent #32a expressed that his relationship with religion was ecumenical, and him, and his family were not following "*what is on paper*," referring to Church-level customs. Respondent #16, a Reformed priest, expressed his disapproval of the Reformed Church's role of the priest as being too distant. He expressed that he has an "*official*" and "*non-official*" approach to being a priest. Respondent #1, a Unitarian priest, noted

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> *Forests, fields, our wells are not for sale. The Székely gray stock is not for sale either. This is all ours. The fruits and harvest of these are our given right. Yes, we must all grow up and realize this szellemi [intellectual-spiritual], lelki [soul], moral height.* (paragraphs 22-29, 41-43)

117. Hungarian minority members can get Hungarian citizenship and vote during certain elections held in Hungary.

that "*there are no wise elders*" who could lead the younger generation of priests, and there are "groups" within, suggesting division.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY IN LIGHT OF THE CASE STUDY

The three Historic Hungarian Churches [HHCHs] and their representative institutions have an important community-shaping role in the Hungarian ethnic community's life. The role of the HHCHs is bounded by history, culture, religion, territory, and ethnicity, and emerges organically from "Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging" relationships. This translates into space and region bound defragmenting activities. Through ethnic and spiritual means, communities are figured to achieve unity and prosperity, and remain in a culturally-religiously conceived space (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 355) with tangible results in the "perceived [physical] space" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 38), and in "lived space" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 362).

While this study is qualitative in nature, and measurements for involvement of the Church or the religiosity of the studied population cannot be established, Romania is still one of the "most religious countries of both Eastern and Western Europe" (Gog 2006, 51). The study's results reaffirm Gog's (2006) findings. Further, they indicate that the local community, despite communist era secularization attempts, is still religious-spiritual. Further, the need of Church intervention is emphasized and wanted.

Territorial approaches with sensitivity to "fractured region[s]" (Yiftachel 2006, 298) are essential to community development. This case study shows that it is very

important to consider territory, identity, history, religion, and culture in faith-based community development as each of these factors point to processes that may be neglected by state-led community development plans.

The study's findings can contribute to the understanding of faith-based communities and/or organizations where communities (1) have "Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging" relationships, (2) have experienced collective trauma (i.e., historic losses, wars, ethnic cleansing), and (3) are bounded by a historically fragmented ancestral land.

5.2 TRANSFERABILITY OF THE RIDD THEORY

The RIDD theory captures a form of community development (ethnospiritual figuration) that is practiced through cultural (ethnic) and religious (spiritual) means. These practices, in the context of the RIDD theory, were captured as defragmenting activities in terms of ethnic community and space, among others. In essence, ethnospiritual figuration is a form of community development that is performed through cultural-religious practices.

The RIDD theory's contribution to planning can be captured through Porter's (2010) argument that planning is not universal, but rather is "an active cultural agent in space: 'cultural' in the sense that it inhabits particular (rather than universal) explanatory schemas, structures of meaning" (151). Thus, in communities "planning as an active

cultural" (151) and religious "agent in space" (151) can be captured through ethnospiritual figuration [as people enact it, codify it in traditions etc.].

Worldwide there are many nation states with oppressed ethnic minorities. In these settings, the theory could be transferred with sensitivity to cultural, religious, and historical contexts. The discussion of the study's transferability in this chapter entails dominantly Christian societies, and within that category, the United States and Europe. Europe is discussed with an emphasis on Western Europe, and post-communist countries of Eastern Europe (same context as the study area).

In general, indifferent to geographic locations, some key attributes that guide the RIDD theory's transferability are:

1. Spatially bounded struggles of ethnic self-determination and governance,
2. The threat of decay and disappearance as an institutional body and/or congregation and ethnic group,
3. The need to account for whether a Christian community is the ethnic majority or the minority and which specific historical struggles surface in ethnic disputes. This is important to account for because "minority-majority" characteristics can point to activities similar to those described through the three defragmentation activities.

If conditions are different than the core concepts' attributes and defragmenting activities need to be investigated. Both the U.S. and Europe are diverse in ethnicities, and there are diverse cultural ethnic regions under the umbrella of nation states, government systems, and institutions. They are not homogeneous in cultural, ethnic or in

religious terms. For example, in Chapter II, I discussed the case of England's growing non-Anglican population (Peach and Gale 2003), and the diversification of urban space (see Greed 2020). The ten post-communist countries of the European Union are more similar to Romania, where the state-recognized religions mostly resemble conservative changes and are more in line with historic patterns (Stan and Turcescu 2011). In contrast, Western Europe contains a greater diversity of religious groups, resembling the U.S. as discussed in Chapter II. In post-socialist Balkan countries such as Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia Herzegovina and Romania[118], religion is a "means to express identity and a sense of belonging to a certain community. Religious places often function as reference points of local identity, as 'memory places', through which the communities express their sense of ownership of a given territory" (Troeva and Hristov 2017, 11). Religion in these countries returned to the public sphere (Ibid.).

The *core theoretical concept of the House Divided* has a "universal" meaning in Christian societies, however, its properties in the RIDD theory are attributed to a "fractured region" (Yiftachel 2006, 298), fragmentation of nation, language, minority, heritage, and culture. The concept's properties and attributes need to be analyzed in a different setting if different fragmentation/dividedness exists, or when it is applied for a different fragmentation. For example, American society's dividedness may differ, and it may be more defined by the fragmentation of the North and South, East Coast, and West Coast relating to historic events such as the Civil War, or in contemporary times by

118. A good discussion of Romania was done by Flora et al. (2005).

elections, political parties, and climate change denial.[119] In these contexts, defragmenting activities thus would differ. The concept of the House Divided originates from the Bible. Other religions may have similar teachings and "counterparts" to the House Divided. In those instances, the concept could be named differently, but serve the same function in the theory.

The *core concept of ethnospiritual figuration* has attributes that allow it to be applied in both Christian and non-Christian settings. These attributes are the act of giving a shape through ethnic and spiritual means in order to defragment a space-bound and historically fragmented ethnic community. The concept can be applied in many settings and performed as an organic form of community development in terms of this study's definition of CD as coming together and taking action to solve a common problem in a community. This needs to be done with sensitivity to the key transferability attributes listed above.

The United States' faith-based communities are frequently embedded in their institutions, which are less cohesively bounded by space than was the case in the study area. The diversity of denominations, religious groups and "loose aggregations of

119. I am reflecting on the past four years of news events on topics like race and divisions in the U.S. society like the one caused through affiliating with Democratic and Republican parties (Foran, Clare. 2017. "America's Political Divide Intensified During Trump's First Year as President." *The Atlantic*. October 5, 2017. Accessed March 28th, 2021. https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/10/trump-partisan-divide-republicans-democrats/541917/.); President Trump's decision to leave the Paris Agreement (Friedman, Lisa. 2020. "U.S. Quits Paris Climate Agreement: Questions and Answers." *The New York Times*. November 4th, 2020. Accessed March 28, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/climate/paris-climate-agreement-trump.html.).

congregations"[120] has a more diverse typology of denominations than in the study area.[121] Faith-based communities of institutions seem to be less cohesively bounded in some local space than was the case in the study area.

The cities of Bryan-College Station, had 207 churches and places of worship listed in 2021, with 205 of them being of the Christian faith.[122] In Kolozsvár, Romania, a city with a population of more than 300,000, there are only about a quarter of the number of churches found in Bryan-College Station-Bryan area, which have a combined population size of about 200,000.[123]

State-led community development programs need to account for the wide variety and spatial diversity of regions, including ethnographic regions. Stan and Turcescu (2011) reviewed Church and state relations in ten European Union member states where constitutional rights are provided for the free practice of religion. Romania is described as having a "soft separation of church and state" (Ibid., 139). In these countries,

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120. Hartford Institute for Religion Research. n.d. "Official Denominational Websites." Accessed March 24, 2021. http://hirr.hartsem.edu/denom/homepages.html.

121. I establish this conclusion based on my experiences in the U.S. and Romania. I also searched online directories of U.S. Churches such as the Hartford Institute for Religion Research. n.d. "Official Denominational Websites." Accessed March 24, 2021. http://hirr.hartsem.edu/denom/homepages.html.

122. I did a keyword search on YellowPages in the category of "Church and Place of Worship" for the Bryan-College Station area. There was one Islamic Place of Worship listed, and one "Psychic Palm and Card Reading" location (YellowPages. n.d. s.v. "Church and Place of Worship." Accessed March 24, 2021.https://www.yellowpages.com/search?search_terms=Church&geo_location_terms=College%20Station%2C%20TX.).

123. According to DataUsa.io the population in College Station in 2018 was 110,782 (DataUSA.io. n.d. "College Station, TX." Accessed March 24, 2021. https://datausa.io/profile/geo/college-station-tx/).; Bryan population in 2018 was 83,199 (DataUSA.io. n.d. "Bryan, TX." Accessed March 24, 2021. https://datausa.io/profile/geo/bryan-tx.); The population of Kolozsvár was 324,756 as of 2011 (Erdélystat Statisztikák. n.d. "Kolozsvár" [Cluj Napoca]. Accessed March 24, 2021. http://statisztikak.erdelystat.ro/adatlapok/kolozsvar/859.).

elections and politics can be tightly interwoven with religion. For example, in Romania, the Eastern Orthodox Church's role is very influential (see Flora et al. 2005) and religious figures may take on roles as political figures (Stan and Turcescu 2011). The Churches are "public-utility entities" (140) and not private entities, so the state pays a percentage of salaries to state recognized members of the Church (Ibid.). The rest of the salaries are paid by the Churches and their members. Housing is provided by the Churches most of the time, and in many instances, it is each individual priest's responsibility to acquire some or all of the funds for renovation, remodeling, and upkeep, though they can also have special agreements with members (#1, #17, #19). According to one of the priests interviewed (#16) and to local experts, the salary is minimal and many times additional work is needed to keep up a family (i.e. gaining some literate skills, farming, husbandry etc.).

President Biden, not long after of his inauguration in 2021, reestablished "The Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership," a program that was started twenty years ago by President Bush.[124] The pandemic caused a major economic recession[125] in 2021, including loss of jobs[126] and closures of small businesses. These

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124. The White House. 2021. "Fact Sheet: President Biden Reestablishes the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships." Briefing Room. February 14, 2021. Accessed March 17, 2021. https://www.whizoomtehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/02/14/fact-sheet-president-biden-reestablishes-the-white-house-office-of-faith-based-and-neighborhood-partnerships/.

125. Cunningham, Josh. 2021. "The Pandemic's Effect on Economy and Workers." National Conference of State Legislators. January 19, 2021. Accessed March 24, 2021. https://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/the-pandemic-s-effect-on-the-economy-and-workers637463008.aspx.

126. U.S. Department of Labor. 2021. "The Employment Situation – March 2021." News Release of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, USDL-21-0582. April 2, 2021. Accessed April 4, 2021. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf.

will likely influence inner city neighborhoods that are already vulnerable to gentrification, contributing more to the disappearance of historic neighborhoods and their social, religious, and cultural fabrics. Following this argument, the study could be applicable in communities that have been historically oppressed and disadvantaged, or in urban communities where gentrification processes cause the displacement of people, such as the one discussed by Born et al. (2021). Born et al. (2021) studied historic Black Churches that face shrinking due to loss of members and increased expenses due to gentrification in Seattle's Central District (Ibid.). This urban area's dynamics regarding the shared history, surrounding communities, and the pressure to remain have similarities with the study area of this dissertation. However, there are important differences as in the study area, the three denominations and their representative institutions are self-initiating and known to be founders of many educational institutions. The case from Seattle discussed by Born et al. (2021) is a university-community partnership program, while the study area is a more organic, cultural self-initiation, and aligns more with Clarke and Ware's (2015) reasoning as organic (discussed in Chapter II).

In a post-communist context, Bulgaria, which neighbors Romania, has a predominantly Eastern Orthodox population (Sivov 2008), and prior to communism, had an active, well-functioning Eastern Orthodox institution that reached localities (Ibid.) similar to that of the HHCHs. After the collapse of communism, an "awakening" (Ibid., 217) of the Church and consequential community involvement were expected, but it did not happen (Ibid.) Although good examples of local Church community involvement are

not absent and such activities show potential, the Eastern Orthodox Church in Bulgaria has "no national platform for social action" (Ibid., 217).

The Eastern Orthodox Church's reported lack of involvement in Bulgarian communities may highlight ethnic majority and ethnic minority level applicability and transferability of the RIDD theory. The RIDD theory emphasizes the importance of the ethnic minority status where the Churches build communities through *ethnospiritual figuration*. The minority status might add a self-starting, initiative-taking attitude that is not as evident in an ethnic majority case such as in Bulgaria, but which could be still transferable with sensitivity to historic-cultural ethnic context. This is especially important like the case of Roma[127] in light of monoethnic historic Churches and neo-Protestant Churches (Fosztó 2006) that shows "a minority within a minority" context; or "minority and majority" relationships within the same dominant ethnic groups as it was illustrated by Dorondel (2002) of Greek Catholic Church (as religious minority) and the Eastern Orthodox Church (the religious majority). Both are dominantly Romanian monoethnic Churches.[128] Both Fosztó (2006) and Dorondel (2002) demonstrate cultural-religious adaptations in context with historic events (context), and ethnic-religious majority-and minority attributes.

In the United States, community development "increasingly falls within the domain of the public administrator and public policy" (Frederick 2003, 30). FBOs can

127. The Roma population is an ethnic minority within the larger minority group of the Hungarians e.g., in the region of Székelyland; and they are also a minority in regions populated by Romanians.

128. See more about similar dynamics in Yiftachel (2006).

have unique cultures, like the Black Churches in the USA (Barnes 2005) that are known for their activism with charismatic leaders who are expected to raise their voices for civil rights (Frederick 2003). Barnes (2005) found that "prayer, songs, scripture and activist-oriented sermons" (981) can influence community action.

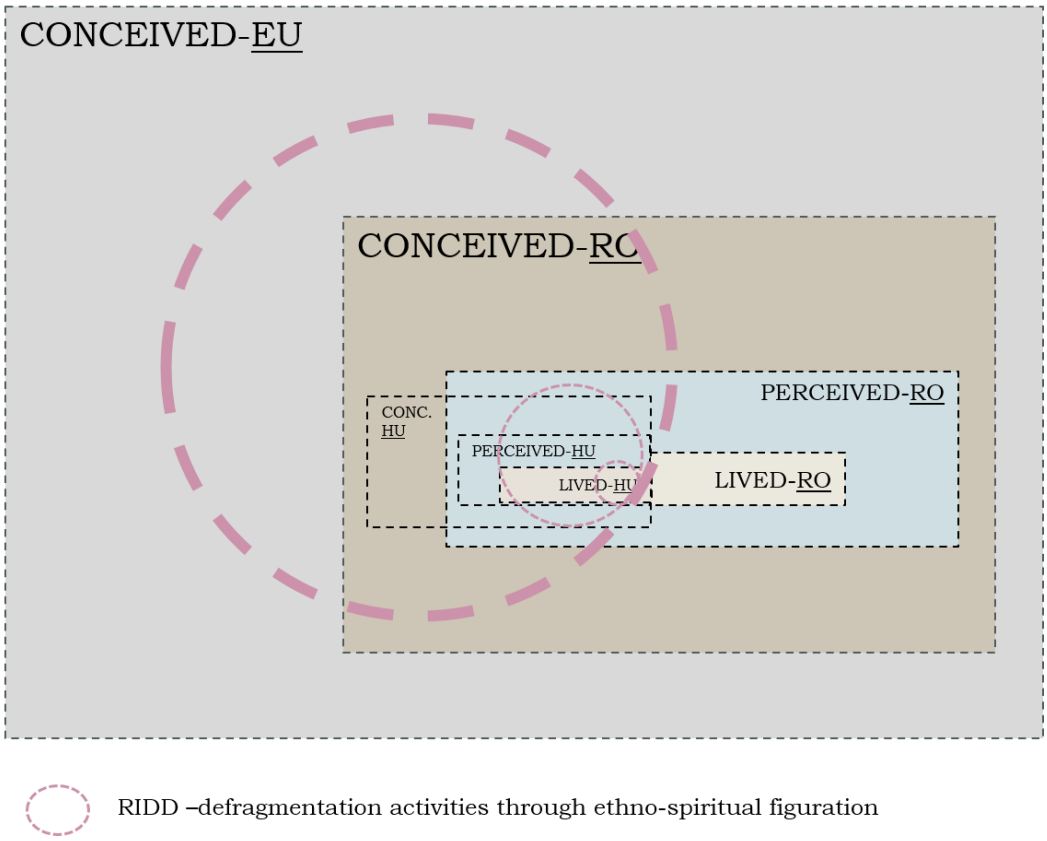
Lastly, FBOs need a different analytic lens from current dominating ones. The RIDD theory provides organic rather than "imposed" concepts for understanding FBOs' role in their own realms of community development. Many faith-based community development research approaches impose measurement systems rather than looking at what Churches actually do. This is an important difference. For example, the widely used Community Capitals Framework (CCF) used in CD research distinguishes seven capitals: "natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built capitals" (Emery and Flora 2006, 20). The CCF has great value in inventory building and the assessing of state led community development program outcomes. Emery and Flora (2006) explain how "identifying community capitals and strategically increasing capitals stocks" (19) through public-private intervention will build on each other and achieve positive change captured by a "spiraling up" (19) process (Ibid.). However, FBOs' public-private community involvement is only a small fraction where they intervene and develop (i.e., communities, assets, capitals). Knowledge generated through these studies may get generalized to FBOs without sensitivity to "conceived," "perceived," and "lived spaces" (concepts by Lefebvre 1991; see pages 38, 40, 355 and 362) where activities are rolled out (Figure 7).

A second example is Tarpeh and Hustedde's (2020) study of "faith-based community development organizations in Kentucky" (1), conducted because of the criticism of FBOs' "limited impact in community development" (8). They looked at how eight faith-based organizations "perceive their roles" (1) in community development and how they integrate "solidarity [aligns] (with community cohesion) and agency [aligns with] (community capacity)" (8) into their work (Ibid.). Tarpeh and Hustedde (2020) use the Community Capitals Framework, where next to the seven established capitals, they discuss spiritual and emancipatory capitals. Out of the eight FBOs, six focused more on individual changes than larger societal changes (Ibid.). I argue that the focus on individuals in the "community of believers," or "potential believers" is an important attribute of faith-based organizations because their focus is at the "soul level." These FBOs focused less on ethnic divisions and other societal issues (Tarpeh and Hustedde 2020).

The same authors recommend a series of actions for FBOs to gain more knowledge and understanding of the seven capitals and the way these can strengthen their work. This approach and attitude of "recommending" technical and expert knowledge to FBOs as a more successful way of doing community development can miss the point. FBOs do not do community development that aligns with technical expert knowledge. Tarpeh and Hustedde's (2020) recommendations may cover the CD that gets overlapped in a state's and an FBO's "conceived," "perceived," and "lived spaces" (concepts by Lefebvre 1991; see pages 38, 40, 355 and 362). They miss the point that FBOs' community development work is cultural-religious practice oriented.

However, they do add two important attributions of emancipations and spirituality that CCF did not capture.

Figure 7 "Perceived – Conceived – Lived" Spaces at the Hungarian Ethnic Minority, Romanian State, and the European Union Level



The HHCHs through RIDD activities transcend the perceived, conceived and lived spaces of the Hungarian minority and the Romanian state. Activities may reach to the level of the European Union (EU-European Union, RO-Romania, HU-Hungarian minority). Made by Gitta Margit Pap, 2021.

Researching the way that FBOs work led to me questioning "Whether researchers see all activities, or they see only through their categories they establish?" Wilson (2015b) argues against "homogenizing" (1) community development projects. I argue, that the professional and [similarly] learned way of community development might not share the goals of FBOs. Professionals of state led officials need to learn the language of FBOs and not impose their categories on them. FBOs likely do not see seven capitals or assets, but rely on ancient scriptures, texts, and moral code.

One value of my study is that it does not impose categories but rather provides an understanding of what the Churches do in their terms of "conceived," "perceived," and "lived spaces" (concepts by Lefebvre 1991; see pages 38, 40, 355 and 362). In Christian faith-based communities, it is widely known that Churches and their members' attitudes toward the state frequently defer to the Biblical Verse where Jesus says, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21, NKJV). The FBOs and their communities may give what needs to be given to the state in order to be left alone, live in peace and obedience (that is a rule too), access funds, and give to God what belongs to God. This is important because there is a mismatch of "conceived," "perceived," and "lived spaces" (concepts by Lefebvre 1991; see pages 38, 40, 355 and 362) of the state and that of the FBOs. Researchers bring knowledge from "conceived spaces" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 355) across thin spectrums while FBOs cross the "conceived space" (Ibid.) of the state, and they capture only limited processes and meaning of community development as FBOs perform it. Additionally, FBOs might not call it community development. The state where FBOs

carry out their activities is not above the Church in the Church's "conceived space" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 355), they rather transcend it (see Figure 7). The state is a different "Kingdom." Faith-based community development can be a term defined by academics, but in essence, Churches and their work are not of such a category. I suggest getting rid of predetermined categories and exploring more of what the Church does in various settings.

Thus, the RIDD theory's applicability in any Christian setting needs to be approached by shifting the research focus on how FBOs, including Churches, can serve the state in their own terms of "conceived space" (concept by Lefebvre 1991, 355), and not in that of the states. By shifting focus, many institutional barriers can be avoided. For example, the funds that are provided by the state to FBOs to do community development should assign deliverables with respect to the "conceived," "perceived," and "lived spaces" (C-P-L) (concepts by Lefebvre 1991; see pages 38, 40, 355 and 362) of FBOs, and not dominate them by state defined ones.

5.3 FUTURE STUDIES

The convergent interviews indicated that communities have different tendencies in regard to attending Church and being influenced by their congregations' interactions. Future studies could evaluate the dimensionality and strengths of these communities, the strengths of bonds, dictums, and the work of priests. The picture painted reflects that communities with a strong, community-conscious priest can influence and propel a

village's development. These, however, also seem to relate to Church property and the "fundamental make-up" of the community. Roman Catholic villages are said to be more closely knit. The inability of any of the respondents to imagine the future in two to three decades is an alarming attribute of local unpredictability and the Church's reliable and confident take on many in the community's future. Lived religious practice can be examined in the lived experiences of individuals and lived day-to day activities, "between Sunday services," and lived religious experiences of "holiday Christians."

Variations among villages are signaling that community level variations exist, perhaps embedded in family, the influence of priests and teachers, and the influencing power of meaningful community involvement rather leisure-based involvement. Ethno-spiritual figuration, while it can be a ubiquitous concept for some, succinctly captures the interwoven nature of an "activity and reasoning complex" that "blooms" into action.

The local Hungarian published historic and ethnographic literature for the area is rich in content and frequently remains localized at case study and monography level. The research activity is high, but mostly remains unpublished peer reviewed international journals, restricted to Hungarian, Romanian, and occasionally German outlets. Despite the great depth of literature, modern changes have been quick and rapid, especially in the past five years. I have acquired training and education that, despite the proliferating research works, remains strong and unique for this region. Village life and villagers still remain unasked about their desires, input, and collaboration, but participative approaches are a must. However, they should be approached with caution

because as interviews indicated, many locals do not see the benefits of more studies, but local actors and transformers are needed.

Participatory action research remains unheard of as I prepare for a study that I am planning to carry out in the near future. The emancipation of the Székely *natio* and their institutions, as well as the will to remain and persist, but by peaceful and democratic means, are definitely taking place. Future studies could examine this unfolding process in real time and space.

The theory was the first step for providing a theoretical ground for future analysis of the Churches' involvement in community development. Identity, territorial history, and ethnographic understanding of communities is very important and should be analyzed further in an interdisciplinary manner while incorporating local multilingual stories. A territorial meaning to community development could be mapped. The possibility for future studies includes comparative studies among the three Historic Churches and their territorial representations. Variability across space in terms of priests' gender, age, length of service, and "good community conscious attitudes" should be analyzed. These variables should be linked to denominational composition of settlements. I believe this topic and the study area provided me with rich content for future studies. In summary, future studies could look into the operationalizing of the theory for quantitative analysis, and the analysis of regional (spatial) variations of variables across space.

5.4 BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

My dissertation research brings urban, rural, and regional planning and planning practitioners closer to communities of faith and to their religious institutions. In secular states, religion and faith are excluded from decision making in many public institutions. However, the separation of Church and state is hard to resolve in planning practice. Both Church and state engage in community building activities. Both Church and state are concerned with the welfare of their members. Separation should, therefore, not mean mutual exclusivity. My case study research's findings can be valuable for various ethnic communities of faith and their institutions, but especially for planners who need practical tools and ways to integrate religious expression and practice. The work that Churches and their members, or religious individuals, do on a daily basis can contribute new language and new meanings for community planners.

Collaborations between public and religious institutions will provide positive benefits to all facets of planning, not merely as a formal and bureaucratic profession, but as a new cultural-religious practice that remains consistent with the needs of the secular state. A better understanding of religion and expression of faith in the public domain allows for a closer relationship with the planning professional. This would result in more engagement, rather than alienation, of an important segment of the stakeholder community. This approach is especially meaningful with ethnic minorities and under-represented groups, where the Church takes and advocacy role. Urban and regional planning projects are frequently insensitive to historic-cultural contexts, and a cookie-

cutter formula is frequently applied to problem solving. The findings of my research will help in closing this gap and facilitates approaching problems from a practitioner standpoint of culture and religion, rather than solely of the planning profession.

5.5 LIMITATIONS

Activities were searched until certain code categories reached saturation, not until all representative activities have been found. This study was not aimed at capturing all the types of activities that the HHCHs did in the past three decades. It captured some of the nature of those activities. The region has a very rich ethnicity based, and multilingual literature base, that can fall off the 'radar' of sole English-speaking researchers. At time, dual language skills, also tend to be not enough to mine in it. Language skills of Hungarian, Romanian, and English is necessary to study this region from a social science, geopolitical perspectives. German would be highly preferable, as valuable research has been published in German. While I have some language skills in German, I was not able to review literature published in German. The multilingual base and its review are time-consuming, and can pose financial burdens on student, and researchers. Another limitation was that not all transcribed interviews, and bulletin articles were translated from Hungarian to English. Translation would have posed time, and financial burdens on me that would not let met carry out the study. Due to COVID-19 I was able to travel to the study area in 2019, and not later. The translation of quotes

at times were challenging and every effort was made to not lose meaning, but at some places they had to be presented in a way to make sense for the reader.

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APPENDIX A

PROBED CONVERGENT INTERVIEW (CI) THEMES

The following tables consist of the 163 themes that emerged during convergent interviews and were probed for agreements and disagreements between interview pairs and the emerging narrative. Themes were grouped into "first order" broad first order categories of L=landscape, VC=village community, I=individual, F=Family, FM=Farming, O=Other. The first order themes were further categorized into "second" order categories based on their specific attributes and/or their "multidimensional" meaning considering the contexts they were discussed. The 2nd order categories are FM=Farming, INC=Income, IA=Individual Assets, VC=Village Community; SWMOB=Seasonal Work Mobility, LM=Land Management, F=Farming O=Other, EKU=Education, Knowledge, Upbringing, EMPL=Employment, ABR=Abroad, O=Other, OTL=Outlook (future, do business), INV=Investment, Lead=Leadership, ETH=Ethnicity, INC=Income, PROF=Profitability, CUL=Culture, COMM ELEM=Elements of community; Variability, F=Family.

A-1 CI Themes - Individual and Family

#	Probed Themes	First order themes	Second order themes
1	People emigrate	I	O
2	Education is important	I	EK
3	Exchange of experiences is important	I	EK
4	Knowledge gap, break in the knowledge	I	EKU
5	Useless/valueless diplomas/certificate	I	EKU
6	No high school graduation exam	I	EKU
7	Earns capital abroad [villagers working abroad]	I	FM, INC
8	Invests the money earned abroad	I	FM, INC
9	Working capital	I	FM, INC
10	People go away to feel better financially, emotionally	I	IA, SWMOB
11	Farmers help each other	I,	VC
12	Who goes abroad escapes	I	O
13	Internet, smart phone's negative influence on children	I	O
14	In villages the land is given for building a house, people stay to build	I	O
15	The world collapses around them [those who are abroad]	I	SWMOB, O
16	For those who goes abroad the world is ahead of them	I	SWMOB, O
17	The importance of mentality/the way one thinks	I	IA
18	Endurance, insistence, perseverance	I	IA
19	Belief, hope (opinion, importance)	I	IA
20	[Székelys] do not relax	I	IA
21	People [Székelys] are materialistic they do not look after themselves and they only stop if there is a problem (or wintertime)	I	IA
22	People do not think through relaxation, difference between village and city	I	IA
23	People are negative, positive thinking would be needed	I	IA
24	There are a lot of people who drink at home alone	I	IA
25	People do not even think of that the soul's problems are important, mental 'things' are important	I	IA
26	Desertification of the soul	I	IA

A- 1 CI Themes - Individual and Family Continued

#	Probed Themes	First order themes	Second order themes
27	Do not look at the negatives [comes intuitively, being positive]	I	IA
28	There is a problem with self-identity [of people]	I	IA
29	Székelys are envious of each other	I	IA, O
30	Whoever goes away will stand on his feet	I	IA, SWMOB
31	Whoever goes abroad should have a "sense of self" [know oneself (*önismeret*)]	I	IA, SWMOB
32	Whoever wants to leave will leave	I	IA, SWMOB
33	Székelys can work a lot but cannot relax	I	IA
34	Only a few people self-educate himself (not just farming, in general)	I	EKU
35	Current liberal upbringing of children results in children who are 'nonviable' [do not cope with difficulties, too laid back, not working, irresponsible, not aligned with the reality and hardship of life, spoiled]	I	EKU
36	Who am I? Self-identity, self-consciousness 's role for young people	I	IA
37	One can get lost if he does not try to step out of his [bad] circumstances and bleakness [appeared as a choice to go abroad]	I	IA, CR, RR
38	There is too much stress, people cannot stop [do not know how]	I	IA
39	Stress level should be recognized	I	IA
40	It is taboo to speak about spiritual/soul problems openly to strangers [including doctors]	I	IA
41	The soul and the body are separated [in medicine, day-to-day living]	I	IA, O
42	People are 'hoarding' [*kaparás*] that is a problem	I	IA, O
43	Teenagers are like zombies	I	IA, O
44	The world dictates the self-image, self-identity	I	IA, O

A- 1 CI Themes - Individual and Family Continued

#	Probed Themes	First order themes	Second order themes
45	Mental hygiene - 'soul health' is an artificial concept, it is good for those who do not know himself, does not know his consciousness, not aware of himself	I	IA, O
46	There is a lot of people who suffer from anxiety, who are alcoholics in villages, family problems [are an issue]	I	IA, O
47	People who go abroad can become lonely, use drugs, develop alcoholism, the family collapses [home and/or abroad]	I	IA, SWMOB
48	People want to avoid compromise (i.e., to be part of corruption) and it makes them to go abroad, bleakness at home [social, political] and beicome sick of it/feds up	I	IA, SWMOB
49	There is a health risk for those who do not go away [abroad] because he can become depressed because there is no work in [villages]	I	IA, SWMOB
50	Whoever stays at home does not take responsibility from a perspective that if he does not get his place at home, but tries it abroad it is not irresponsible because he learns to work abroad, learns responsibility, responsible with himself and tries to step out of his current situation	I	IA, SWMOB
51	It is good if he goes away, it is a good decision, there is no work locally in villages, one can get lost	I	IA, SWMOB
52	Many young people's soul is abroad already	I	IA, SWMOB
53	There is a difference among those who go abroad and those who remain	I	IA, SWMOB
54	The person who goes abroad and is/were unable to stand on his feet at home, won't be able to stand on his feet abroad	I	IA, SWMOB
55	Expectance of instant, immediate income, profit, or results	I	O
56	Mentality change needed of looking at "what are you doing well rather what are you doing wrong"	I	O
57	[Only] a little attention that is needed because it recharges people, and gives strength	I	IA, O
58	Those people get lost who are isolated	I, VC, O	O
59	One should live in a village if [he is already] happy	I, VC	O

A- 1 CI Themes - Individual and Family Continued

#	Probed Themes	First order themes	Second order themes
60	Buildings are reflecting depression, inner "soul-world" (*lelki világ*)	I, O	O
61	Slave to the land	I, FM	INC, LM, PROF
62	The model of family: women's and men's traditional role	F	F
63	If the family decides what direction wants to go, then they will go that way	F	F
64	Family suffers because of its members who work abroad	F	F, SWMOB
65	Only mothers remain in the village because the youth is abroad, husbands/fathers are abroad	F	F, SWMOB
66	The importance of upbringing in families	F	EKU, F
67	People take their children from villages to the city because there is "romanization" in villages [schools are weaker and education is weak, because there are many gypsy children who had less resources from birth to progress, and due tue cultural differences]	F, VC	O
68	Mental hygiene approach and its distribution in villages to help families, to prevent the problems/sickness of the soul, helps with raising children, cope with alcoholism (spiritual/soul counseling, lectures, the presence of professionals in villages, stress, relaxation teach for positive thinking)	F, I, VC	F, VC, EKU
69	Upbringing is important	F, I	EKU, F, IA
70	Role playing is important for children	F, I	EKU, IA

A-2 CI Themes - Farming

#	Probed Themes	1st Order Categories	2nd Order Categories
71	Permaculture is the solution, family friendly	F, FM, L	F, LM
72	Selling the produce is very hard	FM	INC, PROF
73	APIA subsidies are important for farmers	FM	INC, PROF
74	Marketing's importance	FM	INC, PROF
75	Facebook is important for selling and trading	FM	INC, PROF
76	Not ready for market, cannot brake into the market [*Piacképtelen*]	FM	INC, PROF
77	Subsidies will run out	FM	INC, PROF, LM
78	There is a lot of expectation from small farmers in the EU	FM	LM, O
79	Cattle that are foreign to the landscape do not handle the weather well	FM	LM, O
80	No labor, hard to find people to do day worth of work	FM	LM, PROF, O
81	The farmer is not a businessman but should be educated	FM	EKU
82	Everybody should take part in work, have a role in families even children	FM	F
83	Recipes (for growth, productivity, smarter farming)	FM	INC, LM, PROF
84	EU grants promote illusionary farming/economy	FM	INC, LM, PROF
85	The question is what will happen to the "pumped up" farms after the grants/subsidies [dry up]	FM	INC, LM, PROF
86	Guerrilla gardening [as alternative to conventional farming]	FM	INC, LM, PROF
87	Working in cooperatives (for farming, accessing grants) is hard	FM	INC, LM, PROF
88	Politicians do not want to support Hungarian farmers	FM	INC, LM, PROF, O
89	Cooperatives (for farming, accessing grants) would be good	FM	LM
90	Kitchen garden should be brought back, along with permaculture	FM	LM
91	Farmers are not asked what they want	FM	LM, O

A-2 CI Themes - Farming Continued

#	Probed Themes	1st Order Categories	2nd Order Categories
92	Productivity (attitude towards)	FM	IA, PROF
93	Three types of farmers	FM	IA, LM
94	Under responsibility they take away responsibility from children [EU laws and required policies in school and other areas]	FM	EKU, F
95	Do not apply for grants, not even… (*akkor sem*)	FM	IA, INC, LM, PROF
96	Responsible farming	FM	LM
97	Distrust among farmers	FM	O
98	There is a difference between farmer and farmer	FM	FM, IA
99	Those who work have an 'orderly' life	FM, O	O
100	European Union subsidies do not promote self-sustainable farms	FM, LC	LM, O
101	Leaders do not have conscience, soul-knowing, that is why we have a problem	FM, L, O	IA, O
102	There is uncertainty because of unclear property titles	FM, L	INC, LM, PROF, O
103	There are too many farms, it is not good for the ecological balance	FM, L	INC, LM, PROF, O
104	Two-three farmer works most of the land in a village (Low number of farmers work the land)	FM, L	LM
105	There is no small farmer in the village/villages	FM, L	LM, O
106	The small farmers future is beyond hope, there is no future	FM, L	INC, LM, PROF
107	Animals [for husbandry] have to be placed in the landscape, European Union grants, and subsidies do not do this	FM, L	INC, LM, PROF
108	Giving up land is OK	FM, L	IA, LM, O
109	People in their teens and twenties are not responsible towards community, towards working the land/agriculture	FM, I, L, VC	IA, LM
110	Upbringing/Educating 'local patriots' [who love and not leave their homeland]	FM, I, L	EKU
111	Building [local, traditional] knowledge into the modern contemporary context	FM, I, L	EKU, LM

A-2 CI Themes - Farming Continued

#	Probed Themes	1st Order Categories	2nd Order Categories
112	People are needed who worthy for the landscape	FM, I, L	IA, LM
113	People became too comfortable *(elkényelmesedés)*	FM, I, L	IA, INC, LM, PROF
114	"Shepherds with jeeps and trucks" care for profit, see animals as a money- making machine; profit-oriented mentality [mentioned using too big trucks too frequently causing habitat loss, and land degradation]	FM, I, L	IA, INC, LM, PROF
115	Healthy balance of man and the land: an inner 'program', soul-knowing/[maybe] conscience (*lelkiismeret*), empathy [towards landscape, animals, people]	FM, I, L	IA, INC, LM, PROF
116	Young people do not want to do farming	FM, I, L	INC, LM, PROF
117	We are 'here' because of education and upbringing [problems caused by lack of land attachment, not involved in community, not helping each other]	FM, I	EKU
118	It started in other people's soul that we do not only talk about problems, but we show alternatives for i.e., Farming, growing plants	FM, I	EKU, IA, INC, LM, PROF
119	Envy and the obstruction of each other, and not helping of each other shows a capitalist, businesslike/entrepreneur mentality	FM, I	IA, INC, LM, PROF
120	The working of the land (agricultural jobs) is carried out stressfully, they release tension in alcohol, people are grumpy, moderation/calmness needed [to work the land]	FM, I	IA, LM
121	There's conscious generation in their 30's, who do not want to farm stubbornly and stressfully	FM, I	IA, LM, O
122	Current reality is that it is important who knows who, and where, e.g., farmers cheat each other through network of acquaintances, try to buy land cheaply	FM, I	IA, INC, LM, PROF

A-3 CI Themes - Village Community, Landscape, Other

#	Probed Themes	1st Order Categories	2nd Order Categories
123	Community events are important	VC	COMM ELEM
124	There is a difference between village and village	VC	Variability
125	There is youth in the village	VC	COMM ELEM
126	Cohesion or togetherness is important for a good community	VC	COMM ELEM
127	Priests and teachers are very important for the community	VC	COMM ELEM
128	A leading person is needed for a good community, a main organizer	VC	COMM ELEM
129	Activities performed are contagious [in a village, inspires] shows example	VC	COMM ELEM
130	An individual's success also depends on the community	VC	COMM ELEM
131	The community is envious	VC	COMM ELEM
132	There are no resources on the level of village-communities	VC	COMM ELEM
133	Work together, and celebrate together	VC	COMM ELEM
134	The importance of a handful of people in a community	VC	COMM ELEM
135	There is cohesion in the village community	VC	COMM ELEM
136	Importance of community spirit	VC	COMM ELEM
137	Little things that make a community good and strong	VC	COMM ELEM
138	The realities [social, economic] differ by village	VC	Variability
139	There is no "uniformity" among people, everyone is different	VC	Variability
140	A layered [wealth, status, professional] local village community [*rétegződés*]	VC	Variability
141	Cultural belonging, heritage, and religion is important for community, and feeling belonging, unity	VC	ETH, VC

A-3 CI Themes - Village Community, Landscape, Other Continued

#	Probed Themes	1st Order Categories	2nd Order Categories
142	Consolidation of land	L	LM
143	Grants shaped landscape	L	LM
144	One has to live in the landscape does not work it [till it up entirely, etc.]	L	LM
145	The village is declining	L, VC	LM, VC
146	Land, community, and the village cannot be separated	L, VC	LM, VC
147	They still the forest away	L, O	IA, LM
148	Open and liberal thinking and its consequences	O	CULT, EKU
149	Do not know what it will be like in 20 years	O	CULT, EMPL, INC, OTL, PROF
150	There are no alternatives [for doing things]	O	INC, OTL, PROF
151	EU grants for village tourism	O	INC, PROF
152	Little kings "'outgrew" themselves	O	INC, PROF
153	Micro-loans are good solution for buying homes if they do it smart	O	INV
154	Leading figures need to be trustworthy/authentic	O	LEAD
155	Good communities get formed abroad [from those who leave to live/work abroad]	O	ABR, EMPL
156	New copy-paste culture needed	O	CULT
157	Herd mentality	O	CULT, EKU
158	Professional knowledge is outdated	O	EKU
159	There are no wise people	O	EKU
160	There is agreement between Romanian and Hungarian people/farmers.	O	ETH
161	Alcoholism [in villages]	O	O, OTL, INC, EMPL, COMM ELEM
162	Gates should be open [for people, including young people, to go abroad, try out various things in life]	O	ABR, EMPL
163	Abroad the employer respects the employee	O	ABR, EMPL

APPENDIX B

CODEBOOKS FOR RIDD THEORY

B-1 Table of Codebook v. 1

Inductive Codes based on Content	Code Category	Brief Explanation
Unitarian Church and State	Church Administration	Church and state relations, including state laws affecting the Church.
Unitarian Church Rules	Church Administration	Rules that the Church functions by, or set up after the fall of communism.
Nature of the Bulletin	Church Press	The purpose of publishing the bulletins, what it meant to deliver etc.
During Communism as a Church	During and After Communism	Church's existence during communism.
Reported change b/s communism and Church	During and After Communism	The way communism affected and changed the Church and its community. Retrospect.
Starting over after communism	During and After Communism	The Church's work after communism.
Literature - Church - Village	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	The value of literature, and its connection to Church and village: folk life, traditions.
Memory of Historic Figures - Land - Remaining- Ethnicity (Belonging)	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	The emphasis of remaining intact through memorial services of what historic figures did.
Mother Tongue	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	The importance of the Hungarian language emphasized, and the ability to speak it in Romania.
Remaining despite hardship as a Church	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	Remaining in the homeland despite hardships.

B-1 Table of Codebook v. 1 Continued

Inductive Codes based on Content	Code Category	Brief Explanation
Székely Moral-Faith-Land-Village Context	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	Ties to the land (space) through faith, village life, and Székely moral values.
Ties to Homeland (*szülőföld*) and the Church	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	Ties to homeland and the Church.
Unitarian Church and Hungarian Ethnicity Relationship	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	Linkage between the Unitarian Church and ethnicity.
Grants	Other	Reported grant sources for supporting activities.
Important Figure's Writing	Other	An iconic figure wrote an article such as important poets, historians etc.
Important Quote	Other	A quote that could be included in in-text explanations or should be revisited for further analysis.
Unitarian Church History	Other	The history of the Unitarian Church.
Activity --- Church Administration	Reported Activity	Church's administrative activity.
Built Environment-Church	Reported Activity	Church's impact on the built environment noted, such as renovations.
Education	Reported Activity	Education and Church.
International Relations and Church	Reported Activity	Church's activity with international Church is reported.
Report on activity ---Village	Reported Activity	Church's activity in a city reported.
Reported Activity --- City	Reported Activity	Church's activity in a village reported.
Reported Presentations.	Reported Activity	Noted presentations for education. Can be important as it indicates bridging activity with the world.
Work of the Priest	Reported Activity	Reported activity of a priest such as summary of his service, compliment, highlights an achievement.
Role of Unitarian Church general	Role of Church	Indication of some role of the Church.

B-2 Table of Codebook v. 2

Subcategories	Core Category	Properties		Unitarian Bulletin (year)
Unitarian Church and State	Church Administration	Believing/Believer *(hívő)* Historic(al)-Christian faith-spiritual/intellectual *(tőrténelmi-kereszténi hitszellemiségű)* Conscious in landscape, family, mother tongue, faith, location, and remaining community *(tudatos tájban, családban, anyanyelvben, hitben, helytálló és megmaradó közösség*) Role taking (s*zerepvállaló)* Persisting/remaining, remaining at home, remaining together *(megmaradó, otthonmaradó, együtt maradó)* Cares for, protects mother tongue *(anyanyelvet ápoló)* Exemplary (*példázodó)* Educative/Nursing 'nation-Church' *(nevelő népegyház)* Remembering (*megemlékező*)	**ethnospiritual figuration**	**1990, 2000, 2010**
Unitarian Church Rules	Church Administration			
Nature of the Bulletin	Church Press			
During Communism as a Church	During and After Communism			
Reported change b/s communism and Church	During and After Communism			
Starting over after communism	During and After Communism			
Literature - Church - Village	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging			
Memory of Historic Figures - Land - Remaining- Ethnicity (Belonging)	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging			
Mother Tongue	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging			
Remaining despite hardship as a Church	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging			
Székely Moral-Faith-Land-Village Context	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging			

B-2 Table of Codebook v. 2 Continued

Subcategories	Core Category	Properties		Unitarian Bulletin (year)
Ties to Homeland *(szülőföld)* and the Church	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	Believing/Believer *(hívő)* Historic(al)-Christian faith-spiritual/intellectual *(tőrténelmi-keresztényi hitszellemiségű)* Conscious in landscape, family, mother tongue, faith, location, and remaining community *(tudatos tájban, családban, anyanyelvben, hitben, helytálló és megmaradó közösség)* Role taking (s*zerepválalló)* Persisting/remaining, remaining at home, remaining together *(megmaradó, otthonmaradó, együtt maradó)* Cares for, protects mother tongue *(anyanyelvet ápoló)* Exemplary (*példázodó)* Educative/Nursing 'nation-Church' *(nevelő népegyház)* Remembering (*megemlékező*)	**ethnospiritual figuration**	**1990, 2000, 2010**
Unitarian Church and Hungarian Ethnicity Relationship	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging			
Grants	Other			
Important Figure's Writing	Other			
Important Quote	Other			
Unitarian Church History	Other			
Activity --- Church Administration	Reported Activity			
Built Environment-Church	Reported Activity			
Education	Reported Activity			
International Relations and Church	Reported Activity			
Report on activity ---Village	Reported Activity			
Reported Activity --- City	Reported Activity			
Reported Presentations	Reported Activity			
Work of the Priest	Reported Activity			
Role of Unitarian Church general	Role of Church			
Literacy and Reformation *(műveltség és reformáció)*				**1990-1992**
Sense-consciousness of community of the Church and being of the folk-nation *(egyházi közösségtudat és népi nemzetiségi lét)*				
Educative 'nation-Church'*(nevelő népegyház)*				
Church and Education				

B-3 Table of Codebook v. 3

Categories	Code Category Groups	Properties	
Starting over after communism	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging	Believing/Believer *(hívő)* Historic(al)-Christian faith-spiritual/intellectual *(történelmi-keresztényi hitszellemiségű)* Conscious in landscape, family, mother tongue, faith, location, and remaining community *(tudatos tájban, családban, anyanyelvben, hitben, helytálló és megmaradó közösség)* Role taking (*szerepválalló)* Persisting/remaining, remaining at home, remaining together *(megmaradó, otthonmaradó, együtt maradó)* Cares for, protects mother tongue *(anyanyelvet ápoló)* Examplary (*példázodó)* Educative/Nursing 'nation-Church'*(nevelő népegyház)* Remembering (*megemlékező*)	**Ethno-spiritual figuration**
Literature - Church - Village	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging		
Memory of Historic Figures - Land - Remaining- Ethnicity (Belonging)	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging		
Mother Tongue	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging		
Székely Moral-Faith-Land-Village Context	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging		
Ties to Homeland (*szülőföld*) and the Church	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging		
Unitarian Church and Hungarian Ethnicity Relationship	Land-Ethnicity-Faith-Identity-Belonging		
Literacy and Reformation *(műveltség és reformáció)*			
Sense-consciousness of community of the Church and being of the folk-nation *(egyházi közösségtudat és népi nemzetiségi lét)*			
Educative 'nation-Church'*(nevelő népegyház)*			
Church and education			

B-4 Caption of Codebook v. 4 (comprehensive)

Concept	Subcategories (Why?)	What?	How?							What?		Concept
"The House Undivided"/ "The House Divided"	Defragmantation of Hungarian sense/conscience *(magyarságtudat)*, Hungarian soul, mind	Caring for mothertongue *(Anyanyelv ápolása)*	Literature and church community building	Eloquent speaker *(ékesszóló)*	Comparing countryside's saline soil *(szikessége)* with local intellectual/spiritual *(szellemi)* richness	Hungarian public education	Historic figures			Caring for mothertongue *(Anyanyelv ápolása)*	Ethno Figuration	Ethnospiritual Figuration
		Unification Reformed/ Unitarian Church across border	Morality based and cross-border national cooperation *(erkölcsi alapú és a határokon is átívelő nemzeti együttműködés)*	Loving and respectful	Exemplifies with Hungarian awareness *(magyarságtudattal példázodó)*	Remembering *(megemlékező)*	Love of the Székely village	Reference to birtplace's remoteness and/or isolation	The intertwining of Hungarian folk beliefs and Christian faith	Unification Reformed/ Unitarian Church across border		
	Historical defragmentation	Parttaking in Autonomy efforts		Evokes the memory of historic figures						Parttaking in Autonomy efforts		
		Organizations across space	Raising the minority to a "european level"	Remembers	Memory of historic figures, strong leaders, people who made the community proud in science, art, etc.					Organizations across space		
	Local spatial defragmentation	Village Reunions	Reuniting community	Through parabels						Village Reunions		
		Operating schools at all levels, and colleges	Teaching in mother tongue	Gives recognition						Operating schools at all levels, and colleges		
			Cultural programs, camps etc.	Gives respect								
				Examplifies								
		Biblical character building	Provides continuity *(folytonosságot adó)* Strength giving to join forces (strengthening) *(összekötő erőt átadó)* Dutiful *(kötelességtudó)* Undertaking/embracing *(felvállaló)* Remaining *(megmaradó)* Persistent *(kitartó)* Travels a long and laborious road *(hosszú és fáradságos utat bejáró)* from a small background and place to success, and/or service place where success brought Loving *(szerető)* Believing *(hívő)* Tend to engage in dialogue *(párbeszédre hajtó)* Eloquent speaking *(ékesszoló)*							Biblical character	Spiritual Figuration	
		Biblical community building								Biblical community building		

B-5 Caption of Codebook v. 5 (comprehensive)

Concept	Subcategories (Why?)	What?	How?						What?		Concept
"The House Undivided"/ "The House Divided"	Defragmentation of Hungarian sense/conscience *(magyarságtudat)*, Hungarian soul, mind	Caring for mother tongue *(Anyanyelv ápolása)*	Operating Hungarian schools at all levels, and colleges, literature and church community building, community building singing, pilgrimage, cultural programs, camps etc., pilgrimage, eloquently speaking *(ékesszoló)* , missionary Radio on Hungarian, politics free (Rom Cath)	Having more children and larger families	Comparing countryside's soil salinity *(szikessége)* with local intellectual-spiritual *(szellemi)* richness, and other comparisons	Importance of Reformation on Hungarian literature, and culture, language	Scripture referencing of the "Holy Scripture" and "Word"; sinful to not protect the mother tongue		peace, love and cooperation not division in family, and communities	Caring for mother tongue (Anyanyelv ápolása)	Ethno Figuration	Ethno-spiritual Figuration
		Unification Reformed/ unitarian Church across border	Morality based and cross-border national cooperation *(erkölcsi alapú és a határokon is átívelő nemzeti együttműködés)*	Loving and respectful	Exemplifies with Hungarian awareness *(magyarságtudattal példázodó)*	The intertwining of Hungarian folk beliefs and Christian faith	Cooperative and sibling like *(összefogó, testvéri)*	Calling against-warning against indifference *(közöny elleni felhivás)* , vote and be involved (state election)		Unification Reformed/ unitarian Church across border		
	Historical defragmentation	Partaking in autonomy efforts	Non-politically initiated political activity, to survive as a minority. "This is not about politics. Our life is at stake here." (*"Ez azonban nem politika. Itt az életünkről van szó" Márton Áron, kisebbség)*	Witness/Testimony taking *(tanuságtétel)* Evokes the memory of historic figures	By having more children and larger families.	Tolerance and being open *(tolerancia és nyitottság)*	Self protection should not lead to selfisolation	Tolerant to migrants, refugees "You were a newcomer/incomer on the grounds of Egypt" *(te is jövevény voltál Egyiptom földjén)*		Partaking in Autonomy efforts		
		Institutional organizations across space	Raising the minority to a "European level"	Ecumenical services, asking for dialogue among Orthodox-Roman/Greek Catholic/Protestants	Memory of historic figures, strong leaders, people who made the community proud in science, art, etc.	Call for voting	Tolerant to migrants, refugees "You were a newcomer/incomer on the grounds of Egypt." *(te is jövevény voltál Egyiptom földjén)*	Untrusting towards nation states like "Hungary" and "Poland"		Institutional organizations across space		
	Local and diasporic spatial defragmentation	Community Reunification	Village reunion	Self-knowledge and self evaluation, self-understanding of the community are important in addition to historical knowledge and tradition	Remembers, gives recognition	Church buildings as symbols of remaining *(megmaradás)*	Reference to birthplace's remoteness and/or isolation	Love of the Székely village		Community Reunion		
		Biblical character building	Provides continuity *(folytonosságot adó)* *Strength giving to join forces (strengthening)* (összekötő erőt átadó) Dutiful *(kötelességtudó)* Undertaking/embracing *(felvállaló)* Remaining *(megmaradó)* Persistent *(kitartó)* Travels a long and laborious road *(hosszú és fáradságos utat bejáró)* From a small background and place to success, and/or service place where success brought Loving *(szerető)* Believing *(hívő)* Tend to engage in dialogue (*párbeszédre hajló)* Eloquent speaking *(ékesszoló)*, acting/doing (*cselekvő), N* ot bragging or being pessimistic and sad *(nem hencegő és búslakodó)*, Loving, Peaceful, Patient - Christ Like						Biblical character building	Spiritual Figuration	
		Biblical community building							Biblical community building		
		Scripture based reasoning							Scripture based reasoning		

APPENDIX C

DATA SOURCE

C-1 Caption of the Data Source Table (Unitarian, Reformed)

Denomination	Name of Highest Self-Organizing Church Institution	Name of Bulletin	Archieve	Time Period	Frequency of Publishing	Availability	Format	Downloadable	Searchable	Aqusition
Unitarian	Magyar Unitarius Egyhaz (www.unitarius.org)	Unitárius Közlöny **(Unitarian Bulletin)**	https://unitarius.org/document/unitarius-kozlony/	2017 September-2020	monthly	complete	Online (ISSUU)	not downloadable	yes	not downloaded
			http://epa.oszk.hu/html/vgi/kardexlap.phtml?id=2175	1990-2017	monthly	complete	PDF	downloadable	yes	downloaded (1990-)
Reformed	Kiralyhagomelleki Reformatus Egyhaz http://www.kiralyhagomellek.ro/	Harangszó **(The Sound of the Bell)**	http://www.kiralyhagomellek.ro/harangszo.php	2010-2019 July	biweekly	complete	PDF	downloadable	yes	downloaded
	Erdelyi Reformatus Egyhaz reformatus.ro	Üzenet **(Message)**	http://www.reformatus.ro/uzenet.html	2013-2020	biweekly	complete	PDF	downloadable	yes	

C-1 Caption of the Data Source (Roman Catholic)

Denomination	Name of Highest Self-Organizing Church Institution	Sub Organizing Unit	Name of Bulletin	Archieve	Time Period	Frequency of Publising	Availability	Format	Downloadable	Searchable	Aqusition
Roman Catholic	Gyulafehérvári főegyházmegye	Gyulafehérvári Katolikus Érsekség	Vasárnap **(Sunday)**	https://verbumkiado.ro/hu/olvasosarok	weekly	2017-2020	entire format (current month is available publicly)	Online/no PDF option	not downloadable	no	
	ersekseg.ro			https://vasarnap.verbumkiado.ro/archivumarchive		2016-2008 Nov	online version does not consist the entire format	Online/no PDF option	not downloadable, articles are posted separately	yes	
				https://vasarnap.verbumkiado.ro/archivum/old/index.html		2008-1999	online version does not consist the entire format	Online/no PDF option	not downloadable, articles are posted separately	yes	
			Keresztény Szó **(Christian Word)**	https://keresztenyszo.verbumkiado.ro/archivum/old/index.html		2008 Oct-2018 Dec	online version does not consist the entire format	Online/no PDF option	not downloadable	yes	
				https://keresztenyszo.verbumkiado.ro/archivum/old/old.html	monthly (cultural)	2008 Oct-1999 July	online version does not consist the entire format	Online/no PDF option	not downloadable	yes	
	Bukaresti főegyházmegye	Nagyváradi Római Katolikus Egyházmegye http://www.varad.org/hu/	Forrás **(Spring)** (6)	http://www.varad.org/hu/hirek/forras_szent_laszlo	monthly	2019-2020	complete	PDF	downloadable	yes	
			Egyházamban Egyházamért **(In my Church for my church)**	http://www.varad.org/hu/hirek/e_e/	yearly	2011-2019	complete	Online/no PDF option	not downloadable	no	