

**LÁSZLÓ FRANCSICS**

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATION BETWEEN THE  
COSMOS AND MAN IN THE HUNGARIAN RURAL  
ENVIRONMENT**

**CASE STUDY OF NYIM MICROVILLAGE**

**THESES**

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# ABSTRACT

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The micro-villages that represent the culture of the Hungarian countryside are on the verge of passing away. It is our acute task to map and to learn our tangible and intellectual heritage that the micro-villages hold. While cultural geography draws a picture of the fading vernacular social structure from social, ethno-cultural and economic aspects, ethnography studies the cultural patterns of the past. In the intersection of these two research orientations, architectural correlations can be revealed regarding spatial and temporal usage, that can be studied through the conceptual triad of man - space - time, that is, the concept of the cosmos. The aim of the dissertation is to understand the deeper relation between man and the cosmos and to study the dynamics, the development and the decomposition of this relation in the Hungarian rural environment, through the case study of a Hungarian micro-village, Nyim. Using a unique spatial typology, the whole set of natural and built elements of the micro-village and the spatio-temporal usage of these are analysed between 2011 and 2020. From its alternative viewpoint the analysis reveals the hidden patterns of usage, the quality of the relations between man and the cosmos, and the multiple interactions between an urban based, alternative community moving into Nyim and their new environment.

# THESES

## **I. thesis**

*In regard of the spatial and temporal usage the village is the antithesis of the city.*

## **II. thesis**

*The small sacral monuments have the potential to structure the cosmos spatially and temporally.*

## **III. thesis**

*The disappearance or the lack of active use of the so-called altering and sectioning places, that are intrinsically linked to the inhabitants' special stages or turns of life in the village and in parallel the appearance of the hibernating places intensify the alienation of the village community from its own environment.*

## **IV. thesis**

*The desired social practices and habits that relate to the cosmos do not develop in those communities that return to live in the village in spite of the usage of cosmic architectural forms and ornamental symbols.*

## **I. thesis**

*In regard of the spatial and temporal usage the village is the antithesis of the city.*

While the relation between the village and its natural space is determined by a harmonizing effort, the city subordinates the natural space, its proximate or farther environment. The temporality of the village, that is, the symbolic pattern that connects the past and the future in the present is circular and it is consistent with the way nature structures time. On the other hand, the temporality of the city is linear, pointing to one direction. The processes taking place in the city of linear temporality are dynamic, that materialize in progressive architecture. In the villages the changes are slower, the traditional architecture of the villages is bound to a static state.

## **II. thesis**

*The small sacral monuments have the potential to structure the cosmos spatially and temporally.*

The bell designates certain points in time, the wayside cross does the same in space, while the calvary acts as a complex combination of the former two, highlighting both spatial and temporal points. Through erecting small sacral monuments, the village does not transform its natural environment into built space, but structures it with symbols. This form of building is a special manifestation of the relation between man and his environment, that is the opposite of the act of taking space into possession through the process of urbanization and the creation of dense built environment.

### **III. thesis**

*The disappearance or the lack of active use of the so-called 'altering' and 'sectioning places', that are intrinsically linked to the inhabitants' special stages or turns of life in the village, and in parallel the appearance of the hibernating places intensify the alienation of the village community from its own environment.*

The disappearance of these special, so-called 'altering' or 'sectioning' objects (eg. church, kindergarten, school) and the appearance of the so called 'hibernating' objects instead of them that no longer have an active relationship with the inhabitants' life, are the indicators of the decay of the village to a suburban residential area. However, this spatial and mental loss only affects the territory inside the village and the local people find these no longer active functions elsewhere in the suburban-urban surroundings. As a consequence, the significant moments of the inhabitants' life shift out from the village spatially, and the villagers become alienated from their own environment and lose their inspiration that charge their actions taken in and with their built and natural environment. This process contributes in the symptom that the majority of the non-urban society does not feel responsible for the matters of its place of residence and finally leave the village.

#### **IV. thesis**

*The desired social practices and habits that relate to the cosmos do not develop in those communities that return to live in the village in spite of the usage of cosmic architectural forms and ornamental symbols.*

Through the analysis of the Nyim Eco Community, a Hungarian community that returned to rural lifestyle, it turns out that their most used architectural form is the circle and the ornamentations are characterised by the spiral, the circle, the Sun and other symbols. The members of the community only adopt patterns of cosmic symbols, and they use complete cultural products such as Buddhist or esoteric symbol sets. They do not decode these systems into their original state while adopting them. They totally lack the attachment in their life to the astronomical phenomena that was once typical to the early primitive cultures or the vernacular culture. The representation of astronomical phenomena is occasionally present, but it has no other role than a symbolism that simply creates identity for the community.