

Beyond the Tales of the Sphinxes: Historical Notes on the So-called Sphinxes from 'Torda' (Turda) and 'Marosvásárhely' (Târgu Mureș)

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Abstract: In our study, we present two fake artworks in which the sphinx appears as a dominant symbol. Although their forms and motifs do not exactly follow ancient models, they have nevertheless fooled some scholars. The fakes appeared in Transylvania in the first half of the 19th century, one of them certainly linked to the notorious forger, antique dealer Sámuel Literáti Nemes.

Keywords: Dacia, Potaissa, Sphinx, Count József Kemény, Sámuel Literáti Nemes

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Hungarian art collecting, which experienced a surge in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, reached its true flourishing in the first half of the nineteenth century. The leading role was played by members of the aristocracy, who devoted increasing attention and financial resources to the appreciation of ancient monuments.¹ As a result of the lively interest in collecting, Transylvania also witnessed a proliferation of forgeries imitating ancient artifacts. These objects sought to evoke the glorious past of Transylvania and, not least, the alluring image and atmosphere of antiquity. The colorful mixture of depictions and inscriptions observable on individual pieces can be explained by contemporary market demand and the need to meet it. A forged object became truly marketable when it fitted into a well-recognizable category of finds, confirmed the popular historical narratives of its own time, and was surrounded by an aura of mystery.² Among these objects, particular attention should be given to those forgeries inspired by the Orient, and especially to the Egyptianizing forgeries that sought to evoke ancient Egyptian culture (pharaonic or later periods).³ In the former territory of the province of Dacia, a considerable number of authentic relics of the ancient cults of the so-called Oriental divinities have been preserved⁴. It was most likely these genuine finds that inspired the production of counterfeit objects for the art market. It may also have served as an incentive that, from the early 19th century onwards, the wave of 'Egyptomania'⁵ radiating from Western Europe reached Hungary as well, marking the beginning of the 'golden age' of sphinx interpretations and representations in the country.⁶ However, due to the compulsive drive to meet the aforementioned market demands, the symbols depicted on the forgeries at times form rather bizarre compositions.

In the present study we introduce two modern objects in which the sphinx appears as a prominent symbol. Their formal language and repertoire of motifs do not closely follow the ancient prototypes, yet they have nevertheless managed to mislead some scholars. The reason for this may lie in the fact that, in most cases, the authentic Roman-period artefacts themselves are not genuinely Egyptian, but merely Egyptizing creations.⁷ Moreover, Roman representations of the sphinx often combined features of both Egyptian and Greek prototypes. Among the

1. Entz, *A magyar műgyűjtés történetének vázlatja 1850-ig*.

2. Grüll, "«Hazugságra munkál az írástudók tolla» Bibliai régiségek hamisítása a 19. századtól napjainkig," 46.

3. See also: Nemeti, "Despre o statueta falsă din colecția Kemény József."

4. See: Carbó García, *Los cultos orientales en la Dacia romana. Formas de difusión, integración y control social e ideológico*; Deac, "Romania: Egyptological Bibliography (1959-2014)."

5. Kóthay and Liptay, "Roots and contexts: remarks on Egyptomania and perceptions of ancient Egypt in Hungary during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."

6. Kóthay, "A szfínx, avagy «az egyiptomi állat» útja Magyarországra."

7. For the notion see: Pearson, *The Triumph and Trade of Egyptian Objects in Rome. Collecting Art in the Ancient Mediterranean*,

9. See also: Deac, "Imitating the Egyptian Hieroglyphic Script in the Roman Era. The Case from Potaissa (Dacia Porolissensis)."

authentic Roman artefacts, we also encounter such 'hybrid sphinxes', for instance those reclining in the Egyptian manner yet depicted with uncovered female breasts in accordance with the Greek model.⁸



The so-called sphinx(es) of 'Marosvásárhely' (Târgu Mureș)

Location: spike: Muzeul Național de Istorie a Transilvaniei, inv. no. v 1699 (4280); sceptre: Museo Castello del Buonconsiglio, inv. no. MUN 2818. Sizes: spike: max. H 17 cm, (sphinx H 3.7 cm), Diam. 3.5 cm; sceptre: H 18 cm, max. Diam. 9 cm. The bronze object consists of a hollow, sceptre-like element and a large spike adorned with a sphinx (Fig.1).⁹ On the cylindrical part of the sceptre-like element, perforations are present at both the upper and lower ends, which may have served to fasten a handle. The spike decorated with a sphinx, when inserted into the hollow of the sceptre-like part, secured the handle from above, which in this way can be envisaged as having been made of wood. This interpretation is further supported by the fact that the square-sectioned shaft of the spike is densely grooved. Among the decorations on the cylindrical part of the sceptre-like component, a sphinx motif likewise appears.

The history of the object's discovery has been reconstructed on the basis of hitherto unpublished archival sources. In a letter dated on 17th June 1828, the antiquities dealer from Marosvásárhely (present-day Târgu Mureș), Sámuel Literáti Nemes, offered several antiquities for sale to one of the leading collectors of the period, Miklós Jankovich. Among the objects offered was the sceptre-like piece under discussion, for which Literáti provided a detailed description in his letter.¹⁰ Jankovich's was interested by the offer however, his reply never reached the antiquities dealer. In a subsequent letter dated 25th September 1828, he reaffirmed his interest and requested that Literáti send him the object for inspection.¹¹ There is currently no data indicating whether Jankovich ultimately examined it. The further fate of the object can be traced through two letters by István Kovács Nagyajtai. One was sent to Miklós Jankovich in August 1841¹², and the other to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in May 1842.¹³ According to the letters, the scepter-like object also passed through the hands of Count Elek Bethlen and Baroness Jánosné Jósika (née Countess Rozália Csáky). The latter had plaster replicas made of it, which were sent to Pest, Vienna, and Paris. Around 1832–1833, Count Domokos Bethlen purchased the object from the antiquities dealer Literáti, along with an evidently forged sword, the scabbard of which bore the inscriptions "Godofredus Bouillonius" and "Jerusalem". According to the antiquities dealer, the scepter-like object was discovered in the vicinity of Marosvásárhely, while the sword was found near Beszterce (present-day Bistrița) in a tomb. At the request of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, István Nagyajtai Kovács attempted to find out the precise circumstances of the discovery of the scepter-like object in Marosvásárhely, but no one there was aware of its existence. The object, or its plaster replica, was examined in the 1830s by prominent experts of the time, including Hans Ferdinand Massmann, Félix Lajard, and Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, yet they deemed it unworthy of mention¹⁴.

The plaster replica sent to Pest was thoroughly examined in 1842 by János Jerney, an academic and linguist, who also published his findings. He identified a mixture of Székely runic and Etruscan script on the head of the object, while the cylindrical neck bore Etruscan letters. Interpreting the retrograde inscriptions as Hungarian text, he evaluated the object as a "foolish fabrication created as a supposed Hungarian relic".¹⁵

In 1847, the scepter-like component—excluding the sphinx-decorated spike—was purchased by Taddeo Tonelli

8. Warmenbol, *Sphinx. Les gardiens de l'Égypte*, cat. 180.

9. Detailed description see: Jerney, "Észrevételek az Erdélyben találtatott fakönyvekre," 315–319; Seidl, "Chronik der archäologischen Funde in der österreichischen Monarchie. IX. Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen. A) Land der Ungarn," 1102–1103.

10. OSZK K Fond 16 III/1/491, fol. 100v.

11. OSZK K Fond 16 III/1/777.

12. OSZK K Fond 16 III/1/430, fol. 157r–159v.

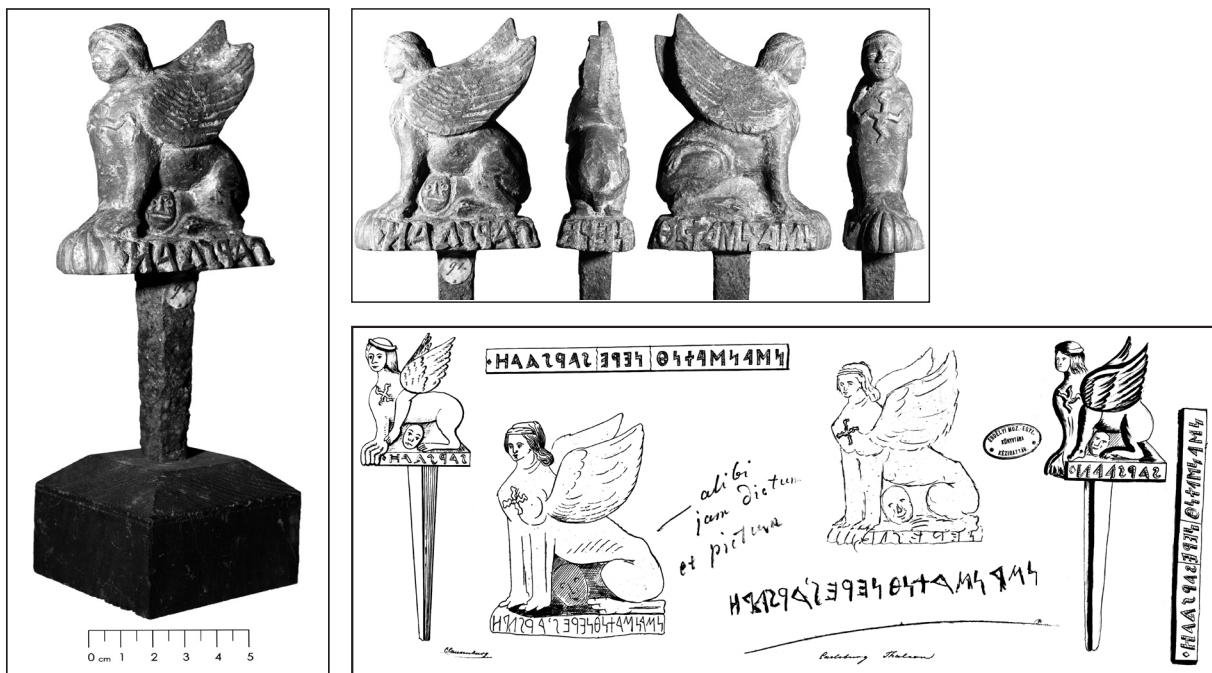
13. Jerney, "Észrevételek az Erdélyben találtatott fakönyvekre," 315–317 n. 1.

14. Jerney, *ibidem*; Jerney, "Az erdélyi ércz sphinxekről," 79; Buday, "Magyar grófnő és francia tudós százéves levelezése," 406.

15. Jerney, "Észrevételek az Erdélyben találtatott fakönyvekre," 318–319; Later also: Jerney, "Az erdélyi ércz sphinxekről".

in Vienna. There, Johann Gabriel Seidl, an archaeologist and curator of the *Münz- und Antikenkabinet*, prepared a detailed description based on the original scepter-like component and a plaster replica (Fig. 2). The latter had been sent to Vienna in 1830 by Baroness Jánosné Jósika and was kept in the *Münz- und Antikenkabinet*. The replica bore the inscription: “*Streitkolbe von Erz, gefunden in den Goldbergwerken Siebenbürgens. 1830. Gräfin Josika* [Bronze mace, found in the gold mines of Transylvania. 1830. Countess Josika]”. Seidl noted formal similarities between the sphinx-decorated spike of the ‘Marosvásárhely object’ and the so-called ‘Torda sphinx’, as well as resemblances in the inscriptions on both objects. Based on these similarities and their shared Transylvanian origin, he concluded that the two objects originated from the same period and source. According to his assessment, the ‘Marosvásárhely object’, which he examined through autopsy, combined motifs, forms, and scripts from various historical periods, indicating that it could only be a recently crafted artificial creation. He argued that the same applied to the ‘Torda sphinx’.¹⁶ Seidl was unaware of Jerney’s Hungarian-language publication from five years earlier, and thus could not have known that the Hungarian academic had reached similar conclusions regarding the ‘Marosvásárhely object’.

In 2024, Eugenia Beu-Dachin and Sorin Nemeti published a study on an object of unknown provenance, cataloged among the ‘Egyptian forgeries’ in the Egyptian collection of the National Museum of Transylvanian History. According to the authors, the atypical positioning of the sphinx’s body on the bronze object, its functional nature, and its stylistic details confirm that it is a modern decorative item.¹⁷ This piece, however, is known from earlier literature and unquestionably matches the sphinx-decorated spike of the ‘Marosvásárhely object’. Thus, this component remained in Transylvania. The other component purchased by Taddeo Tonelli in Vienna was later found in Italy. Tonelli’s artifact collection was transferred to Trento in 1858 and is now part of the collection of the *Castello del Buonconsiglio*.¹⁸ With the assistance of Dr. Roberta Zuech, who manages the collection, we successfully identified the sought-after piece in February 2025.



The so-called sphinx of ‘Torda’ (Turda)

Location: Landesmuseum Kärnten, inv. no. 91. Sizes: max. H 20,5 cm, (sphinx H 9 cm), Basement of sphinx: 6,9 × 3 cm. The head of the object, depicting a sphinx, is crafted from bronze, while its rectangular-sectioned shaft is made of iron (Fig. 3–4).¹⁹ The sphinx-adorned spike likely came into the possession of Count József Kemény in the early autumn

16. Seidl, “Chronik der archäologischen Funde in der österreichischen Monarchie. IX. Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen. A) Land der Ungarn,” 1102–1103, 1111–1112.

17. Beu-Dachin and Nemeti, “Modern Shabtis and ‘Egyptianizing’ artifacts in Transylvanian Collections,” 323–325, nr. 3.

18. Gramatica, “Una ‘bagatella’ per il ‘Cavaliere Taddeo Tonelli’. Storia di ‘un piccolo museo’.”

19. Detailed description see: Thalson, “Archäologisches”; Thalson, “Im Interesse der Wissenschaft”; Thalson, “Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundene Sphinx und deren Inschrift II.”



of 1846, as suggested by the lines penned by Dionys Thalson on October 5, 1846: “Die in ihre Hand vor ein Paar Tagen gelegte Sphinx mit einer ans Unauflösbare streifenden Schrift habe ich decifirt. – Herr Graf! [The sphinx, placed in your hands a few days ago, bearing an inscription bordering on the indecipherable, I have deciphered. – Count, Sir!]”²⁰

There is currently no definitive evidence regarding from whom or how the object came into the count’s possession. Concerning the findspot of Torda (present-day Turda), Kemény expressed himself cautiously, noting in a manuscript from 1847 that the sphinx was “angeblich zu Thorda ausgegrabene [allegedly excavated at Torda]” without mentioning a more precise location.²¹ From this, we can presume that the count did not receive precise information regarding the circumstances of the object’s discovery or its findspot. According to Ferdinand Neugebauer, who personally visited the count’s collection in 1846 and 1847²², the object was found in the “Oláh-vár” area of Torda city²³.

Kemény shared the drawing of the object (Fig. 5) with the academic community, partly through his personal network and partly through the contemporary press.²⁴ Based on these drawings, various interpretations emerged regarding the object’s function and age. A lively debate also unfolded concerning the inscription on the object. These matters will be addressed later. From a letter dated 12th November 1847, written by the count, it is revealed that he presented the object itself in Pest, Vienna, Dresden, and Leipzig. However, in each location, experts deemed it a contemporary forgery, describing it as “für ein miserables Machwerk eines Betrügers [a wretched concoction of a swindler].”²⁵ The results of the object’s examination in Pest were presented by János Luczenbacher (later known as Érdy), an academician, archaeologist, and curator of the antiquities collection at the Hungarian National Museum, during an assembly of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on 2nd September 1847. He interpreted the inscription as a retrograde Hungarian text and declared the object a contemporary forgery, particularly noting its easily removable, artificial patina.²⁶

In 1858, the statuette was donated to the *Historischer Verein für Kärnten* in Klagenfurt by an unknown individual, through the mediation of Karl Garzarolli von Thurnlack.²⁷ The anonymous donor may have been Anna Lang, the widow and heir of József Kemény, who was of Carinthian origin and whose family lived in Klagenfurt.²⁸ Karlmann Flor, a member of the *Historischer Verein für Kärnten*, republished the inscription of the statuette in 1858, unaware of its prior documentation.²⁹ According to Flor, the findspot of the sphinx is Várfalva (present-day Moldovenești), a settlement in Cluj County, located a few kilometres from Turda in the valley of the Arieș River. The differing findspot data provided by Flor likely stems from a toponymic issue. The identification of the early medieval Tordavár with Várfalva is credited to József Kemény.³⁰ The count conducted several field surveys and

20. Thalson, “Thalson Comiti Josefo Kemény Salutem Perennem!”

21. BAR-CN KJ 248 Misc.T.II, fol. 16. = Nyulas, “When a Long-Lost Inscription (CIL III, 944) Suddenly Grows. About a Manuscript Regarding Roman Discoveries from Călugăreni / Mikháza,” 188.

22. According to Nemeti, Neugebauer visited Kemény’s collection in Aranyosgerend (present-day Luncani) in 1837. Nemeti, “Despre o statueta falsă din colecția Kemény József,” 113. The Prussian researcher actually visited Aranyosgerend on October 1846 and June 21, 1847. See: Neugebauer, “Alterthümer und Inschriften in Siebenbürgen. I. Aus Briefen des K. Preuss. Geheimenrathes Ritters Neugebauer an Professor Wieseler in Göttingen,” 300; Neugebauer, *Dacien. Aus den Ueberresten des klassischen Alterthums, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Siebenbürgen*, 197, 214.

23. Neugebauer, *Dacien. Aus den Ueberresten des klassischen Alterthums, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Siebenbürgen*, 216.

24. In addition to the widely reproduced drawing of the object (Weber, “Eine in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx”, 92), four distinct pencil sketches are also found, for instance, in the manuscript legacy of András Lugosi Fodor (Fig. 4): BCU-CN Ms. 754. VII. fol. 40 (named as “Torda BJ”), VIII. fol. 43 (named as “Klausenburg”), VIII. fol. 49 (named as “Carlsburg Thalson”), VIII. fol. 56.

25. Letter mentioned in: Trauschenfels, “Ungedruckte Briefe des Grafen Joseph Kemény an Anton Kurz,” 242.

26. Toldy, “Kis gyűlés, sept. 2. 1847,” 282.

27. The old inventory book of the *Historischer Verein für Kärnten*: “No 91 Siebenbürgen altitalische antike geflügelte Sphinx, 2½” hoch, aus Bronze, auf einem 3” langen eisernen Stiel aufgesetzt, mit altitalischer Inschrift. Fund-Ort: Siebenbürgen. Geschenk von: Unbenamt (1858) Hauptmann k.k. Garzarolli [No. 91: Ancient Italic winged sphinx from Transylvania, 2½ inches in height, made of bronze, mounted on a 3-inch-long iron handle, bearing an ancient Italic inscription. Findspot: Transylvania. Donor: anonymous (1858), via Imperial-Royal Captain Garzarolli].” See also: “Der Kärntner Geschichts-Verein”. *Klagenfurter Zeitung* 27. February 4 (1858): 107. According to Wollmann, József Kemény was the donor; however, at the time of the donation, the count had already been deceased for three years. Wollmann, *Johann Michael Ackner (1782–1862). Leben und Werk*, 224 n. 1; Wollmann, “Die Erforschung der Römer- und Völkerwanderungszeit in Siebenbürgen bis zu Beginn des 20. Jh.,” 240 n. 30.

28. Veress, “Gróf Kemény József (1795–1855),” 15.

29. Flor, “Ueber eine heturische Inschrift aus einer Sphinx aus Bronze”; Flor, “Ueber eine kleine bronzene Sphinx aus Siebenbürgen.” Vlassa’s remark, claiming that Flor merely reiterated the data previously published in the *Illustrierte Zeitung* journal, is erroneous. Vlassa, “Sfinxul de bronz de la Potaissa,” 135. Flor was unaware of the earlier literature and did not reference it. Furthermore, Vlassa mentions a two-page manuscript held in the Brukenthal Museum in Nagyszeben (Sibiu), attributed to Johann Michael Ackner, concerning the Torda Sphinx. However, the manuscript in question is actually an excerpt from Flor’s study, “Ueber eine kleine bronzene Sphinx aus Siebenbürgen,” and its author is not Ackner. The manuscript is published in: Wollmann, *Johann Michael Ackner (1782–1862). Leben und Werk*, 224–226 nr. 6.

30. More recent literature erroneously attributes the identification of Tordavár’s location to Balázs Orbán: Ferenczi, “Torda váráról,” 167. According to Anton Kurz, the idea originally came from József Kemény: “Er sah aber auch zugleich, daß eben dieses Tordavár das heutige Várfalva sein müsse (...) [However, he also recognized at the time that this Tordavár must be present-day Várfalva].” Kurz, “Vár-Falva,” 305.

'excavations' in Várfalva to clarify the location and geographical context of the medieval Tordavár.³¹

The unknown donor of the sphinx was evidently aware of the count's archaeological investigations in Várfalva, which likely led to the mistaken assumption that the statuette was discovered at Tordavár, i.e., Várfalva, rather than Torda. As previously mentioned, Count Kemény himself was unaware of the precise findspot of the object. According to Vlassa's influential study, the 'Torda Sphinx' disappeared during the Hungarian Revolution of 1848–1849.³² Wollmann already drew attention to the inaccuracy of this claim, noting that the object was transferred to Carinthia and did not disappear³³—although he himself did not locate the object in Carinthia. Despite this, later literature uncritically adopted Vlassa's assertion and made no effort to trace the object.

More recently, it has even been suggested that the 'Torda Sphinx' may never have existed³⁴. In January 2024, with the assistance of Mag. Dr. Renate Jernej, a staff member of the *Landesmuseum Kärnten*, we identified the spike decorated with a sphinx, which is currently preserved in the *Landesmuseum Kärnten*, the institution responsible for the former collection of the *Historischer Verein für Kärnten*. In the meantime, the shaft of the spike has been mounted into a wooden base.

Attempts at Interpreting the 'Marosvásárhely' and 'Torda' Objects

Following the examinations in Pest and Vienna, the object from Marosvásárhely disappeared from the scholarly attention for quite some time, whereas interest in the so-called 'Torda Sphinx' did not abate. Vlassa sought to provide an overview of the latter object's reception history; his summary, however, is incomplete, entirely omitting the abundant Hungarian-language scholarship.³⁵ Since the publication of his study, numerous scholars have discussed the object; therefore – albeit only in passing – we shall also address these contributions. Chronologically, the first 'interpreter' was Thalson, who identified the 'Torda Sphinx' as the finial of a *signum*.³⁶ This function was subsequently questioned only by Wolański, who interpreted it as a cultic sacrificial dagger.³⁷ Those who initially identified the object as a *signum*-finial described it as a military emblem³⁸, whereas, following Vlassa's interpretation, subsequent scholarship has consistently referred to it as a cultic, processional emblem. Most scholars dated the object to Antiquity, although some considered it to belong to the Migration Period³⁹ or even to the Middle Ages⁴⁰. The inscription on the base of the sphinx was interpreted and read as Greek,⁴¹ Greco-Egyptian,⁴² Latin,⁴³ Old-Slavic,⁴⁴ Old-Germanic,⁴⁵ German⁴⁶ and Hungarian⁴⁷. The characters were mostly thought

31. Szabó, "«Csak a néphagyomány pótolja itt a történelmi hiányt» Közöletlen római feliratok Várfalváról, Orbók Ferenc gyűjtéséből," 224–225.

32. Vlassa, "Sfinxul de bronz de la Potaissa," 134.

33. Wollmann, *Johann Michael Ackner (1782–1862). Leben und Werk*, 128–129; Wollmann, "Die Erforschung der Römer- und Völkerwanderungszeit in Siebenbürgen bis zu Beginn des 20. Jh.," 241.

34. Lugosi, "Hamisítvány a magyar feliratos romániai szfinx"; Vinereanu, "Failed Effort to Revise Their Own Historical Narrative: The Case of 'Inscription on a Naxian-Style Sphynx Statue from Potaissa Deciphered as a Poem in Dactylic Meter' by Peter Z. Revesz."

35. Vlassa, "Sfinxul de bronz de la Potaissa," 133–136.

36. Thalson, "Archäologisches."

37. Wolański, *Schrift-Denkmal der Slawen vor Christi Geburt*.

38. See also: Thalson, "Archäologisches"; Bariț, "Un câștig arheologic"; Bock, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift I"; 'K. N. H.', "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift V"; Weber, "Ueber die in Siebenbürgen gefundene Sphinx und ihre Aufschrift mit Beziehung auf deutsche Irmensule"; Bobrik, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx"; Flor, "Ueber eine hetrurische Inschrift aus einer Sphinx aus Bronze"; Flor, "Ueber eine kleine bronzene Sphinx aus Siebenbürgen."

39. Giurescu, "Mormântul germanic dela Chiojdu," 336.

40. 'K. N. H.', "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift V"; Bobrik, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx"; Józsa = Seidl, "Chronik der archäologischen Funde in der österreichischen Monarchie. IX. Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen. A) Land der Ungarn," 1102.

41. Thalson, "Archäologisches"; Thalson, "Im Interesse der Wissenschaft"; Thalson, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift II."

42. Vlassa, "Sfinxul de bronz de la Potaissa," 152.

43. Bock, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift I."

44. 'un Slavophile', "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift IV"; Wolański, *Schrift-Denkmal der Slawen vor Christi Geburt*.

45. 'K. N. H.', "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift V"; Weber, "Ueber die in Siebenbürgen gefundene Sphinx und ihre Aufschrift mit Beziehung auf deutsche Irmensule."

46. Bobrik, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx."

47. Józsa = Seidl, "Chronik der archäologischen Funde in der österreichischen Monarchie. IX. Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen. A) Land der Ungarn," 1102; Jernej, "Az erdélyi ércz sphinxekről"; Luczenbacher = Toldy, "Kis gyűlés, sept. 2. 1847," 282; Révész, "Inscription on a Naxian-Style Sphinx Statue From Potaissa Deciphered as a Poem in Dactylic Meter"; Révész, "A Tale of Two Sphinxes: Proof that the Potaissa Sphinx is Authentic and Other Aegean Influences on Early Hungarian Inscriptions."



to be Greek letters, though some identified them as Etruscan⁴⁸ or Latin script⁴⁹, or even as Germanic runes⁵⁰.

A milestone in the history of research is represented by the study of the archaeologist Nicolae Vlassa, who, on the basis of the 1847 published drawing⁵¹ of the 'Torda object' long thought to be lost, undertook a detailed analysis. Although he noted that the characters inscribed on the base of the sphinx, due to their lack of distinctiveness, could be associated with numerous alphabets worldwide, he nevertheless advanced pivotal conclusions regarding the object's form, presumed findspot, and supposed function.⁵² In his view, the object was manufactured in Egypt and brought to Dacia by people of eastern origin. In Potaissa, during the 3rd century CE, it was used as a cultic, processional emblem in nocturnal religious ceremonies held in a temple dedicated to Egyptian deities. Its inscription, rendered in Greek letters, consists of a Graeco-Egyptian text: *lao lao Tithoes Re-Harmachis*. His completely hypothetical view was adopted and accepted by later scholarship⁵³, although Perea Yébenes, without going into detail expressed doubts⁵⁴, while Beu-Dachin and Nemeti recently classified the so-called 'Torda sphinx' as a modern decorative object⁵⁵.

Without subjecting Vlassa's rather forced interpretation of the inscription to close scrutiny, we shall here draw attention only to the inaccuracies in his description of the object: contrary to his observation, the swastika depicted on the chest of the sphinx bears little resemblance to the 'ancient and well-known solar symbol' of the Ancient Near East. The four swastikas, composed of boot-shaped legs bent at right angles, have no known parallels in the Ancient Near Eastern, Greek, or Roman world. Likewise, contrary to his opinion, the sphinx is not bald. Its hairstyle cannot be connected either with the 'rebirth of the hair' or with the so-called Horus Lock described by Macrobius. The 'Torda sphinx'—like the sphinxes depicted on the object from Marosvásárhely—wears a diadem. The human head shown beneath the sphinx's belly, according to Vlassa, symbolizes Apophis, the serpent embodying darkness.⁵⁶ It seems more plausible that the depiction was inspired by the Dacian tomb-guarding sphinxes, beneath whose paws the head of the seized human can often be observed. This funerary motif was particularly popular in Dacia⁵⁷, and the surviving stone monuments may well have served as models for the maker of the object. Vlassa also misreconstructed the arrangement of the inscription⁵⁸, although the correct layout had already been published earlier by Flor⁵⁹. Moreover, the – erroneous – distribution of the text across the sides constitutes a key argument in Vlassa's reading.

Most recently, Péter Révész, professor of computer science at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, has dealt with the inscriptions of the Transylvanian sphinxes using only the drawings⁶⁰ published in the mid-19th century. Révész read the inscription of the 'Torda object' in Hungarian. When writing his first study⁶¹, he was not yet aware that Józsa⁶²,

48. Weber, "Eine in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx"; Flor, "Ueber eine hetrurische Inschrift aus einer Sphinx aus Bronze"; Flor, "Ueber eine kleine bronzene Sphinx aus Siebenbürgen."

49. Bock, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift I."

50. Giurescu, "Mormântul germanic dela Chiojdu," 336.

51. Weber, "Eine in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx," 92.

52. Vlassa, "Sfinxul de bronz de la Potaissa," 139–140, 150–152.

53. Selected bibliography: Wollmann, *Johann Michael Ackner (1782–1862). Leben und Werk*, 129; Bărbulescu, *Din istoria militară a Daciei romane. Legiunea V Macedonica și castrul de la Potaissa*, 46; Bărbulescu, *Potaissa. Studiu monografic*, 165; Bărbulescu, "Les bronzes antiques de Roumanie. Collections et recherches," 50; Bărbulescu, "Culte egiptene la Potaissa," 356–357; Bărbulescu, *Civilizația Romană în Dacia*, 553; Pop, "Bronzi figurati della Dacia romana: considerazioni in merito alla datazione di alcuni pezzi dispersi, illustrati nel secolo scorso," 319 nr. 3; Pop, "Bronzuri figurate în Dacia romană. Considerații în legătură cu datarea unor piese dispărute, specificate în istoriografia secolului trecut," 203 nr. 3; Husar, *Din istoria Daciei Romane I. Structuri de civilizație*, 228; Szabó, "Zur pannonischen Sphinx Kult," 240–242; Szabó, "Éléments d'interprétation des autels de Sphinx de Pannonie," 185–189; Nemeti, "Magia în Dacia Romană (I)," 107 nr. V.11; Nemeti, *Sincretismul religios în Dacia romană*, 379 nr. 371; Ruscu, *Corpus inscriptionum Graecarum Dacicarum*, 46 nr. 69; Nemeti, "Isis din colecția Botár," 352, nr. 13; Sălășan, *Artele plastice la Potaissa*, 184–185 nr. 102; Carbó García, *Los cultos orientales en la Dacia romana. Formas de difusión, integración y control social e ideológico*, 387, 398, 558, 1024 nr. 315; Carbó García, "Magia y cultos 'orientales' en la Dacia romana," 168–169 nr. 6; Byros, "Reconstructing Identities in Roman Dacia: Evidence from Religion," 88; Deac, "Un monument egiptizat din Dacia Porolissensis," 194; Deac, "Note on Apis Bull Representations in Roman Dacia," 229; Deac, "Imitating the Egyptian Hieroglyphic Script in the Roman Era. The Case from Potaissa (Dacia Porolissensis)," 36.

54. Perea Yébenes, "Mastrocinque, Attilio; Sanzo, Joseph E. y Scapini, Marianna (eds.), *Ancient Magic. Then and Now*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2020, 451 pp," 411.

55. Beu-Dachin and Nemeti, "Modern Shabtis and 'Egyptianizing' artifacts in Transylvanian Collections," 324–325.

56. Vlassa, "Sfinxul de bronz de la Potaissa," 149.

57. Renard, "Sphinx à masque funéraire."

58. Vlassa, "Sfinxul de bronz de la Potaissa," Fig. 3.

59. Flor, "Ueber eine hetrurische Inschrift aus einer Sphinx aus Bronze", Beilage.

60. Seidl, "Chronik der archäologischen Funde in der österreichischen Monarchie. IX. Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen. A) Land der Ungarn," 1101; Weber, "Eine in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx", 92.

61. Révész, "Inscription on a Naxian-Style Sphinx Statue From Potaissa Deciphered as a Poem in Dactylic Meter."

62. Seidl, "Chronik der archäologischen Funde in der österreichischen Monarchie. IX. Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen. A) Land der Ungarn," 1102.

Luczenbacher⁶³, and Jerney⁶⁴ had earlier likewise interpreted the inscription as a Hungarian text, arriving at conclusions broadly similar to those of Révész. In his second study⁶⁵, he did cite Luczenbacher and Jerney, yet he did not accept their arguments demonstrating the spurious nature of the objects. Révész acknowledged that the runic variant adorning the headpiece of the sceptre-like object from Marosvásárhely could not have been produced earlier than the mid-eighteenth century. Nevertheless, he argued that the cylindrical neck of the ‘Marosvásárhely object’ in fact belonged to the ‘Torda sphinx’, since the sphinx representation on the cylindrical neck closely resembles that of the ‘Torda sphinx’, and the inscription on the cylindrical part continues that of the ‘Torda sphinx’. According to Révész, components of the supposedly ancient ‘Torda object’ and the modern ‘Marosvásárhely object’ became intermixed. Yet the modern headpiece of the ‘Marosvásárhely object’ and the supposedly ancient cylindrical neck are not separate parts but constitute a single casting. In effect, Révész identified both modern and ancient Hungarian texts on the very same component of the ‘Marosvásárhely object’—thus his own arguments ultimately discredit both artifacts.

In sum, no argument can be advanced in support of the authenticity of either the ‘Marosvásárhely’ or the ‘Torda’ object. At the time of their emergence, both were already weighed and found wanting by contemporary scholarly forums. All scholars who examined the objects—or any of their components—through autopsy (Luczenbacher, Jerney, Seidl, Beudachin, and Nemeti) without exception classified them as modern forgeries. But who could have been their maker?

The ‘candidates’

Sámuel Nemes Literáti (Litterati)

On the basis of the archival sources uncovered, it is beyond doubt that the ‘Marosvásárhely object’ entered the circulation of antiquities in 1828 through Sámuel Nemes Literáti. At that time, Literáti was still active in his hometown of Marosvásárhely as a novice dealer in antiquities.⁶⁶ A few years later, after moving to Cluj, he was already promoting his collection with printed handbills, advertising it, among other things, with „*a genuine Egyptian mummy, never before publicly exhibited in our homeland*”.⁶⁷ He also published an advertisement under the title “*Mummy Gazette*”.⁶⁸ It appears that he perceived a significant business opportunity in exploiting the wave of ‘Egyptomania’ that extended even to Transylvania. Was the ‘Marosvásárhely object’ his own work, or did he acquire it through purchase? We cannot know. Literáti, in any case, was a notorious forger. Scholarly research has primarily examined his fabricated manuscripts and charters, invented linguistic relics, and counterfeit codices.⁶⁹ We also know, however, that he deceived his clients by selling artefacts of dubious authenticity and often abused the trust of the owners of genuine antiquities in his acquisitions. Not only did he sell the so-called ‘sword of Godfrey of Bouillon’, but he also passed off a poor-quality blade as the ceremonial sword of the last pasha of Buda, Abdurrahman Abdi Arnaut.⁷⁰ The provenance of the goldsmith objects he sold was at times ‘authenticated’ with inscriptions of his own making, thereby enhancing their supposed value.⁷¹ He even attempted to foist upon the people of Kecskemét the ‘talking robe’, the ‘miraculous kaftan’, known also from Mikszáth’s novel.⁷² He possessed a stuffed specimen of the mythical creature, the basilisk.⁷³ He most certainly fabricated a Roman inscribed monument himself, which he embedded into the wall of his house in Cluj, ‘so that every traveller might easily read it.’⁷⁴ Alongside a genuine Roman wax tablet from Roşia Montană (TCD I), he also sold a fabricated example to Miklós Jankovich, indicating one of the mine chambers in Torockó (present-day

63. Toldy, “Kis gyűlés, sept. 2. 1847,” 282.

64. Jerney, “Az erdélyi érc sphinxekről.”

65. Révész, “A Tale of Two Sphinxes: Proof that the Potaissa Sphinx is Authentic and Other Aegean Influences on Early Hungarian Inscriptions.”

66. On the life of Literáti see: Szinnyei, *Magyar írók élete és munkái IX. Mircse–Oszvaldt*, 896–898; ‘Z’, “Litteráti Nemes Sámuel (Ismeretlen adatok a neves régiségbúvár életrajzához)”; Kelecsényi, “Egy magyar régiségkereskedő a 19. században. Literáti Nemes Sámuel (1794–1842).”; Kelecsényi, *Múltunk neves könyvgyűjtői*, 248–259.

67. OSZK K Fond 16 II/1/c/32.

68. Szinnyei, *Magyar írók élete és munkái IX. Mircse–Oszvaldt*, 897.

69. On the forgeries of Literáti see: Tóth, *Magyar ritkaságok: curiosa hungarica*, 5–22; Kelecsényi, *Múltunk neves könyvgyűjtői*, 260–275; Láng, “Kitalált középkor a 19. századi Magyarországon: Literati Nemes Sámuel (1794–1842) hamisítványai”; Láng, *A Rohonci kód. Egy történelmi rejtély nyomában*, 18–26; Láng, “Invented Middle Ages in Nineteenth-century Hungary. The Forgeries of Sámuel Literáti Nemes.”

70. Tóth, *Magyar ritkaságok: curiosa hungarica*, 7–8.

71. Mravik, “Jankovich Miklós és a magyarországi műgyűjtés a 19. század első felében,” 345, 379.

72. Hornyik, *Kecskemét város története, oklevél-tárral II*, 38–39.

73. Mátray, “Természeti történet ‘s tudomány,” 70.

74. OSZK K Fond 16 II/1/c/32 fol. 10r; lásd még: CIL III 35*



Rimetea) as its place of discovery.⁷⁵ Literáti was well acquainted with both 'findspots' of the sphinxes: he was born in Marosvásárhely and married in Torda. He regarded both towns as ancient settlements⁷⁶ and could therefore have considered them credible places of provenance.

Although, unlike the 'Marosvásárhely specimen', the 'Torda object' cannot at present be directly linked to Literáti, there is strong suspicion that it too originated from his hand. It should be noted that János Jerney, the first to expose the forgeries, cannot be considered biased against Literáti, since he himself had acted as a patron of the antiquities dealer's collecting journeys.⁷⁷ With one of his manuscript forgeries he even managed to deceive Jerney himself, who enthusiastically praised the fabricated linguistic relic—referred to as the "*Prayers from the time of King Andrew I*"—in a learned treatise.⁷⁸

Count József Kemény

József Kemény, who introduced the 'Torda sphinx' to the scholarly world, was a recognized historian of his time. In recognition of his merits, he was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Learned Society in 1831, and in 1844 became its honorary member, an honour followed in 1847 by membership in the Imperial Academy of Vienna and subsequently in the Paris Academy. He was likewise admitted to the Roman *Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* and the Mainz *Verein zur Erforschung der Rheinischen Geschichte und Alterthümer*.⁷⁹ The distinguished art collector and antiquarian of his age, who conducted field research in addition to his work as a historian⁸⁰, bequeathed his collection of manuscripts and documents, his extensive library, and most of his coin and antiquities collection to the Transylvanian Museum, which was to be established later.⁸¹ Despite his merits, he also had certain flaws. Professional obsession, jealousy, vanity, and patriotic zeal sometimes led him to the falsification of literary works, documents, and other written sources.⁸² We have no information indicating that the count also forged works of art, although his collection certainly included another, clumsily Egyptianized fabrication.⁸³ There were also some fakes in his coin collection⁸⁴, but these are the inevitable dregs of the art trade.

It has recently been suggested that the 'Torda sphinx', too, may have been one of the count's jests.⁸⁵ In this case, however, the strained effort to establish authenticity—always observable in the count's forgeries—is absent. On the contrary, in a letter dated 12 November 1847, Kemény himself seeks to persuade his former secretary, Anton Kurz, of the object's spurious nature.⁸⁶ In his study *Römische Alterthümer zu Mikháza in Siebenbürgen* [Roman antiquities from Mikháza in Transylvania], completed in November 1847 but remaining in manuscript, the count refuted the idea that the Romans abandoned the province of Dacia as a matter of prudent, premeditated policy. According to Dionys Thalson, the first interpreter of the 'Torda sphinx', the object had served as a Dacian military standard during their war of independence against Emperor Aurelian in AD 273–274.⁸⁷ In his study, Kemény notes that if Thalson's interpretation were correct, the sphinx would in fact reinforce his own arguments concerning the chaotic abandonment of Dacia; yet, since the object is a forgery, it cannot be employed as evidence.⁸⁸ Kemény's

75. Jerney, "Észrevételek az Erdélyben találtatott fakönyvekre," 294–313; Jerney, "Közlemények az Erdélyben találtatott fakönyvekről."

76. Literáti Nemes, "Antiquariusi levelek IV," 70.

77. Csontos, "Litteráti Nemes Sámuel 1842-ik évi hagyatékai leltáráról," 268.

78. Jerney, *Magyar nyelvkincsek Árpádék korszakából. Második közlemény*, 3–81.

79. For the life of Kemény see: Veress, "Gróf Kemény József (1795–1855)"; Hamza, "Kemény József (1795–1855), a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia levelező és tiszteleti tagja."

80. Szabó, "«Csak a néphagyomány pótolja itt a történelmi hiányt» Közöletlen római feliratok Várfalváról, Orbók Ferenc gyűjtéséből," 224–225.

81. Kiss, "Az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Levéltárának kialakulása és története," 187, 191; Vincze, "Az Érem- és Régiségtár," 70–72.

82. For the forgeries of Kemény see: Mályusz, "Gr. Kemény József oklevélhamisítványai"; Mályusz, "Kemény József «könyvhamisításai»"; Borsa, "Mohács előtti budai könyvkereskedők és kiadványaik Kemény Józsefnél"; Rady, "The Forgeries of Baron József Kemény"; Hermann, "«Villa nostra olachalis» (Egy hamis oklevél utóéletéről)"; Szentmártoni Szabó, "Antonio Bonfini cenotáfiuma Óbudán"; Nagy, "Kemény József «Román Nyelvmívelő Intézete». A hamisítás és mítoszteremtés divatjához"; Nagy, "Járt-e külföldi akadémiákon Szalárdi János, avagy Kemény József esete a régi magyar irodalommal"; Nagy, "«Societatea pentru cultivarea limbii române» a lui József Kemény"; Nagy, "Az erdélyi irénizmus és a román reformáció, avagy Bethlen Gábor esete Kirill Lukarisszal"; Nagy, *Lehetséges küldetés? Hitek és tévhitek a román reformáció körül*, 91–99.

83. Nemeti, "Despre o statueta falsă din colecția Kemény József."

84. Winkler, "Kemény József érem gyűjteménye és numizmatikai érdeklődése."

85. Lugosi, "Hamisítvány a magyar feliratos romániai szfinx"; Vinereanu, "Failed Effort to Revise Their Own Historical Narrative: The Case of 'Inscription on a Naxian-Style Sphinx Statue from Potaissa Deciphered as a Poem in Dactylic Meter' by Peter Z. Revesz."

86. Letter published: Trauschenfels, "Ungedruckte Briefe des Grafen Joseph Kemény an Anton Kurz," 242.

87. Thalson, "Archäologisches"; Thalson, "Im Interesse der Wissenschaft"; Thalson, "Ueber die bei Thorda in Siebenbürgen aufgefundenene Sphinx und deren Inschrift II."

88. BAR-CN KJ 248 Misc.T.II, fol. 15–16. = Nyulas, "When a Long-Lost Inscription (CIL III, 944) Suddenly Grows. About a Manuscript Regarding Roman Discoveries from Călugăreni / Mikháza," 188.

manuscript also preserves the notes he made in the course of writing the study, including a transcription of the entry on the sphinx from Vollmer's *Mythologisches Wörterbuch* of 1836.⁸⁹ The manuscript likewise contains the critical remarks of Anton Kurz, appended to the count's study. Kurz cautioned Kemény, in his capacity as a member of the Imperial Academy in Vienna, not to pass premature judgment on the spurious nature of the sphinx.⁹⁰ The 'Marosvásárhely sphinx', which appeared in 1828, could not have been known to the count; had he been aware of it, he would undoubtedly have mentioned it in his study.

In the matter of the 'Torda sphinx', József Kemény was almost certainly innocent; yet, as Károly Tagányi, the exposé of his charter forgeries, puts it: "*Nun hat ihn sein Schicksal, wie jeden Lügner, ereilt, indem wir ihm ohne positive Beweise kein Wort mehr glauben* [Such is now his fate, like that of any ordinary liar: without positive evidence, we no longer believe a single word he says]."⁹¹

Cultural biography and metahistories of an object

Since Kopytoff, we know that objects possess biographies⁹²: they are not merely inanimate entities located in museums, private collections, public spaces, underground, or otherwise hidden from the viewer, but may also be understood as entities layered with multiple chronological, social, and semantic dimensions. Objects have not only a 'use-life', which describes the chaîne opératoire of their creation, functional deployment, and potential transformation into museological artefacts, but also a cultural life⁹³: their agency, that is, their direct impact and formative role in human existence, shaping decisions, emotions, and social interactions. Since the paradigmatic work of Appadurai, the cultural life of objects has been explored within the now vast body of literature associated with the material turn⁹⁴. The biography of the objects presented above exhibits distinctive cultural dimensions: in light of the available sources, they were never functional artefacts and were most likely not produced for utilitarian purposes. Their makers are unknown, as are their period of production, intended function, place, and mode of manufacture. Their analogies are distant and anachronistic, constituting historical and cultural anomalies. From the moment of their discovery, these objects became enmeshed in the crossfire of uncertain, skeptical, and analytical viewers. Numerous analyses and scholarly interpretations have been devoted to them, which, in turn, have imposed upon the objects a series of metahistorical—or pseudo-historical—layers that their creators themselves likely never envisaged.

The cultural life of these objects is characterized by their movement within an open field: a multitude of oral and written narratives attach themselves to their biographical dimensions, only a fraction of which originate from scholars adhering to objective, methodological standards of research. This multi-narrative dimension constitutes a form of contemporary myth-making, in which the power of narrative and the ever-expanding cultural biography continually generate new layers in the life of the object.

The most recent metahistorical narrative concerning the analyzed sphinx(es) may be explained in this way, appearing in the writings of Péter Révész.⁹⁵ As an IT scientist who undertakes historical analysis, Révész engages with the stratified cultural biography of the 'Torda sphinx', selecting certain narratives—specifically the one connecting the object to a Roman settlement (Torda–Potaissa). In doing so, he anchors the object within a chronological and historical framework, namely the Roman Empire of the second and third centuries CE (Potaissa being an integral part of the Empire between 106 and 270 CE, with most of its Roman artefacts datable to this period). At the same time, his iconographic analysis of the object links it primarily to Greek art and its case studies, thereby generating yet another metahistorical dimension—one created by Révész himself. His interpretation of the inscription on the sphinx as a Hungarian text reintroduces a narrative dimension that first emerged in a random and later deliberate fashion, already detectable in the nineteenth century, within the cultural life of the object. By uniting these dimensions, Révész arrives at the conclusion that the sphinx is a Hungarian (!) artefact originating within the Roman context of the second–third centuries CE⁹⁶. This conclusion, however, stands in direct contradiction to a century and a half of consensual and axiomatic findings in history and archaeology, as well as to the chronological data supplied by all relevant literary and material sources, which unanimously indicate

89. Nyulas, "When a Long-Lost Inscription (CIL III, 944) Suddenly Grows. About a Manuscript Regarding Roman Discoveries from Călugăreni / Mikháza," 166–167.

90. BAR-CN KJ 248 Misc.T.II, fol. 2. = Nyulas, "When a Long-Lost Inscription (CIL III, 944) Suddenly Grows. About a Manuscript Regarding Roman Discoveries from Călugăreni / Mikháza," 190.

91. Tagányi, "Siebenbürgisch-sächsisches Urkundenbuch," 589.

92. Kopytoff, "The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process."

93. Gosden and Marshall, "The cultural biography of objects."

94. Appadurai, *The social life of things. Commodities in cultural perspective*.

95. Révész, "Inscription on a Naxian-Style Sphinx Statue From Potaissa Deciphered as a Poem in Dactylic Meter"; Révész, "A Tale of Two Sphinxes: Proof that the Potaissa Sphinx is Authentic and Other Aegean Influences on Early Hungarian Inscriptions."

96. Révész, "Inscription on a Naxian-Style Sphinx Statue From Potaissa Deciphered as a Poem in Dactylic Meter"



that the Hungarians entered the Carpathian Basin only several centuries after the collapse of the Roman Empire, most likely in the late ninth century⁹⁷. Révész's metahistorical interpretation must therefore be regarded as nothing more than an additional layer, a further narrative chapter, within the cultural biography of the object.

We conclude our study with the prophecy of János Jerney, who uncovered the history of the two fabrications some six generations ago. According to the linguist, in the future there will also be interpreters of the 'Transylvanian sphinxes' riddle who "will joyfully, with ovations, pour forth the confused outflow of their obsession in praise of their own people. — Let them have, according to their belief, the barren glory of their vain imagination; yet let them, at the same time, rack their brains day and night over the great nothing (...)".⁹⁸

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List of figures: **Fig. 1:** The so-called 'Marosvásárhely sphinx(es)', the spike and the sceptre. Photos: © Muzeul Național de Istorie a Transilvaniei / © Museo Castello del Buonconsiglio. **Fig. 2:** Johann Gabriel Seidl's drawing of the so-called 'Marosvásárhely sphinx(es)'. Source: Seidl, "Chronik der archäologischen Funde in der österreichischen Monarchie. IX. Großfürstenthum Siebenbürgen. A) Land der Ungarn," 1101 Fig. A & A1. **Fig. 3–4:** The so-called 'Torda Sphinx'. Photos: © Landesmuseum für Kärnten. **Fig. 5:** András Lugosi Fodor's drawings of the so-called 'Torda Sphinx' and its inscription (approx. 1846–1854). Source: BCU-CN Ms. 754. VII. fol. 40, VIII. fol. 43, VIII. fol. 49, VIII. fol. 56.

Abbreviations of archives and collections: BAR-CN KJ 248 Misc.T.II.: Biblioteca Academiei Române Filiala Cluj-Napoca [Cluj-Napoca Branch of the Romanian Academy Library], Kemény, KJ 248, Miscellanea T. II. Römische Alterthümer zu Mikháza in Siebenbürgen [Roman antiquities from Mikháza in Transylvania]. // BCU-CN Ms. 754. I–VIII: Biblioteca Universitară "Lucian Blaga" Cluj-Napoca, Colectii speciale ["Lucian Blaga" Central University Library of Cluj-Napoca, Special Collections], Ms 754. Lugosi Fodor András kéziratái és rajzai [Manuscripts and drawings of András Lugosi Fodor]. // OSZK K Fond 16: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Kézirattár [National Széchényi Library, Manuscripts Department], Fond 16. Jankovics Miklós hagyatéka [The legacy of Miklós Jankovics]. // II/1/c.: Jankovich Miklós könyvtára és régiséggyűjteménye gyarapításával kapcsolatos könyvjegyzékek és iratok [Catalogues and Documents Related to the Expansion of Miklós Jankovich's Library and Collection of Antiquities]. // 32 Nemes Sámuel tudományos fogalmazványai, nyugtái és rá vonatkozó egyéb írásk [Sámuel Nemes' scientific papers, receipts, and other writings of him]. // III/1.: Jankovich Miklóshoz intézett levelek [Letters addressed to Miklós Jankovich]. // 430 Nagyajtai Kovács István levele Jankovich Miklóshoz [Letter from István Nagyajtai Kovács to Miklós Jankovich], fol. 157r–159v (Kolozsvár, August 22, 1841). // 491 Literáti Nemes Sámuel levele Jankovich Miklóshoz [Letter from Sámuel Literáti Nemes to Miklós Jankovich], fol. 98r–100v (Marosvásárhely, June 17, 1828). // III/2.: Jankovich Miklós levélfogalmazványai [drafts of Miklós Jankovich's letters]. // 777 Jankovich Miklós levele Literáti Nemes Sámuelhez [Letter from Miklós Jankovich to Sámuel Literáti Nemes] (Pest, September 25, 1828.). // *CIL*: Mommsen, Theodor et al. eds. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Berolinum, 1863–. // TCD: Tabellae ceratae Dacicae. In *CIL* III, 921–960.

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