Final Remarks On Cultural Metaphors

In the previous chapters I aimed to unfold the Hungarian folk cultural conceptualizations of forest, river and wind. It was evidenced that within the context of love, their conceptualizations can be traced back to the basic cultural metaphors a place of intimacy as forest, emotion as river water, and change in life and emotion as movement caused by the wind. Throughout their analyses it was emphasized that their explanations have only partial relation to conceptual emotional metaphors, while they reflect the ideas and beliefs of traditional peasant communities on emotional and moral matters on the one hand and ambiguous experiences about nature on the other. As shown in the study of the horizontal and vertical metaphors within orientational metaphors, the mappings of cultural metaphors are not autonomous. In many cases the same source domain is applied to basically different target domains that mirror contrasting evaluations, e.g., freedom of the bonds of a relationship/parting as the fluttering of an entity by the wind, or the downward movement ‘bending’ has several interpretations depending on the context of the image schema: grief, maturity, sheltered place or blessing.

In many points throughout the analysis of this part I have highlighted that understanding the images of nature in folksongs go beyond capturing the cultural metaphors, metonymies and image schemas in them. In other words, the metaphorical thought is not always primarily related to a natural entity or an event but some cognitive processes that come into prominence in the scene. A more comprehensive view of the images is needed where the mental ideas expressed are viewed through the complexity of various construal factors. Such issues concern the relation of the speaker and the representation (e.g., perspectivisation, grounding and mental spaces), and cognitive processes within the image (attention path or reference point constructions), which provide a more sufficient account of the nature
images in folksongs. The role of perspective is especially interesting in folksongs to
discover how individual feelings are expressed via collective conceptualizations.
Or, for example, the linguistic tools that serve ambiguity and semantic opaqueness
in the interpretation, which is a special characteristic of Hungarian folksongs. It is
assumed that the underlying cultural attitude to express emotions in a modest
(reserved) way can also be recognized in the patterns of construal.