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## STUDIES

### **THE INVISIBLE BASES OF TRUST. HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION, WORK AND EXCHANGE IN SLOVAKIAN VILLAGE**

(NEVIDITEĽNÉ ZÁKLADY DÔVERY. DOMÁCA PRODUKCIA, PRÁCA A VÝMENA NA SLOVENSKEJ DEDINE)

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The paper deals with the economic and social use that villagers make of small household plots and gardens. Building on the well-established discussion on household production, which has its roots in economic anthropology in the application of Chayanov's model of a peasant economy, the paper demonstrates two points. First, that family land is used in a way that creates and maintains solid ties between kin members by imposing mutuality, reciprocity, task sharing and trust. Second, it is misleading to consider the household as the basic unit of consumption and production. Analysis of patterns of villages' interaction reveals that household plots are used both for domestic consumption and market purposes.

Key words: household production, Chayanov's model, family

#### **Summary**

The paper has considered patterns of household production and distribution in today's village economy and put them in relation to the consumption sphere, labour and interaction between villagers with regard to family land. The kind of choices that people follow are dictated by considerations that go beyond the mere search for profit or a standard of well-being, as Chayanov put it (Thorner et al. 1966). It is in the ongoing tension between the social and economic dimension of these choices that the meaning of 'household economy' must be sought. Anthropological accounts of peasant economies and their attempts to categorise household practices that otherwise cannot be accounted for by classic economic parameters provide important insights into the family as a basic unit of production, consumption and reproduction. In the case of postsocialist societies these approaches fit very well due to the widespread diffusion of secondary economic activities originating in the late socialist period.

In the village, secondary economic practices based on farming household plots and gardens can be traced back to the 1960s. These allowed people to cope with difficult political restrictions that limited their control of economic assets and resources. During socialism the importance of managing these plots lay not simply in the villagers' desire to complement their household incomes, but it constituted a matter of social status in the village. Farming their own gardens meant for villagers gaining a sense of self-achievement in their work but also maintaining social contact with the village and the outer sphere. However, after socialism this picture has changed slightly. Household farming has remained a crucial economic activity for villagers, but with an increased accent on its economic necessity. Food produced in gardens and through raising animals is consumed within the family and provides important reserves through the whole year. Furthermore, there are families who do sell part of their products grown in small family plots and in gardens. This clearly goes beyond the spirit of a 'subsistence economy' as defined by classic anthropological accounts of household economies almost everywhere in the world.

As in cases where gardening and farming on household plots provide important supplements to the family's economy, the management of land, resources and work are conveyed into social strategies even in households where the need for additional sources of domestic provision is not desperately felt. These strategies are aimed at strengthening social ties and trust within the family group. These ties are dictated by precise considerations of the tasks and roles of family members which operate to construct rules of behaviour, obligations and expectations. At

this point trust becomes the factor underpinning people's relatedness and the reliability of family members. The social use of land and the sharing of work are two of the several adaptation strategies that people have adopted in order to cope with the changing and unstable reality of Central Eastern Europe.

## **COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONIES: HOW INSTITUTIONS INFLUENCE IDENTIFICATION?**

(SPOMIENKOVÉ SLÁVNOSTI: AKO INŠTITÚCIE OVPLYVŇUJÚ IDENTIFIKAČNÉ PROCESY?)

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In this article the preliminary outcomes of a two-month ethnographic fieldwork in a town inhabited by Slovaks and Hungarians, situated in south-western Slovakia, are presented. The article deals with the relation between identification and commemoration and describes how local institutions influence identification processes. A study of two commemorative celebrations organized by local cultural institutions representing Slovaks and Hungarians (the commemoration of Anton Bernolák, a priest who is considered as a first codifier of Slovak language, and the commemoration of the 1956 revolution in Hungary) shows that there is a close connection of identification with ethnic groups to commemoration. Comparing the two examined public events to the third one, organised by the municipality and having no more a character of commemorative celebration, statements about the relation between ethnic and local identification are made.

Key words: ethnic identification, local identification, ethnic categories, commemorative celebrations, local institutions, social constructivism

### **Summary**

The article shows how local institutions use public events, esp. commemorative celebrations reproduce categories of identification. An ethnographic material coming from Nové Zámky - an ethnically mixed town situated in south-western Slovakia is presented here. According to the last census (2001) the town is inhabited by Slovak majority and Hungarian minority. Focusing on the activities of two cultural institutions, one representing Slovaks and the other one Hungarians, two commemorative celebrations organised by these institutions are described and examined.

Study of commemorative events points to the importance of the reflection of past events for identification with ethnic groups. As Paul Connerton argues, for the existence of groups and their reproduction the concept of continuity is inevitable. According to him, the idea of continuity may be created and reproduced non-verbally, i.e. through commemorative celebrations. The examined case illustrates how continuity in Slovak and Hungarian history is established. Comparison with a third non-commemorative public event, organised by the municipality, allows to study ethnic identification in relation to local identification. In the case of Nové Zámky the institution of municipality reproduces ethnic categories as elements subordinated to the category of a town resident. Similarly as ethnic identification to ethnic (or national) histories, identification with the town is closely connected to a concept of the history of the town.

Arguments presented in the study follow social constructivist theories of identification and collective memory. Methodologically, the study is based on qualitative methods of data collection including participant observation of commemorative celebrations and interviews which are supplemented with information from local press. The research have not been completed yet, all conclusions presented here are of preliminary character.

## **FAIRY-TALE BETWEEN ORAL ACCOUNTS AND LITERATURE (THE PROBE INTO FAIRY-TALES' STYLE)**

## (ROZPRÁVKA MEDZI ORALITOU A LITERARITOU (Sonda do štýlu rozprávok)

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The comparative analysis of the texts' style on micro-level demonstrated that particular fairy-tales differ first of all by their style of wording. Stylistic rendering of the texts by individual authors (in the cases of Dobšinský or Němcová we can speak about nuances of the style) have important impact on the further levels of the texts' epic structure. They strongly influence the context of environment and characters, implementation of the category of story teller and elaboration of canonized elements and motives (dialogues in the analyzed texts' segments stand for formulas). Therefore, mentioned levels indicate elaboration of the texts on the basis of oral tradition (folklore) or literacy. They are part of characterization of the story as a folklore or literal phenomenon. Thus they can be seen as a sign of literary texts.

Key words: tale, orality, literature, folklore

### **Summary**

The comparative analysis of the texts' style on micro-level demonstrated that particular fairy-tales differ first of all by their style of wording. Stylistic rendering of the texts by individual authors (in the cases of Dobšinský or Němcová we can speak about nuances of the style) have important impact on the further levels of the texts' epic structure. They strongly influence the context of environment and characters, implementation of the category of story teller and elaboration of canonized elements and motives (dialogues in the analyzed texts' segments stand for formulas). However, it does not mean partial or absolute violation of these elements (categories) in the sense of modern fairy-tale or fairy-tale written by some author, but mainly specific stylistic presentation of the elements (categories) which become significant especially during comparing various way of stylization.

Qualitative differences between particular texts can be observed at three mutually depended levels: realization of an expressive categories in the texts on the axis 'experience – significance' influencing a way of depiction of the elements of the epic structure of the text that further influences saturation of the text by new meanings, or revealing of archaic archetypal meanings. The elements (characteristics) of each level could be ranged (qualitatively graduated) on the base of relation between folklore and literary qualities, or, respectively, it is possible to observe gradation of literary qualities of the certain elements. For instance, the direct characteristic of a character by story teller is the simplest way of its depiction, typical for folk tales. Thus it can be evaluated as an element connecting the author's way of rendering the story to folklore. On the contrary, indirect characteristic (depiction of the character by means of actions, language, appearance and environment) implies increasing level of literary qualities of the text. Therefore, mentioned levels indicate elaboration of the texts on the basis of oral tradition (folklore) or literacy. They are part of characterization of the story as a folklore or literal phenomenon. Thus they can be seen as a sign of literary texts.