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THE WORKER FOR THE PEASANT, THE PEASANT FOR THE WORKER: THE TRANSFORMATION OF HARVEST FESTIVAL FROM A TRADITIONAL FOLK FEAST INTO A TOOL OF THE POLITICS OF NORMALIZATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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The topics that Czech regional and national periodicals addressed regularly in late August and early September in the 1970s permanently included news about the preparation and holding of organized harvest festivals. They were held at the district, regional, national, and state-wide levels in different places in the former Czechoslovakia. The importance that state and Communist Party authorities attributed to them remained almost identical despite differences in venue and geographical scope.

The incorporation of the harvest festival into pro-regime festivities was in no way a revolutionary novelty in the 1970s. However, we can see an innovative element in the functions that were newly attached to it, as the harvest festival was transformed into a multi-genre collective celebration of the end of the corn-harvest season with the aim to promote the successes of the economic policy of agricultural mass production (e.g. *Oslava úrody... 1974: 1; Jubilejní... 1974: 3*). District, regional, and national harvest festivals, which were carefully planned over a long period, became mass events that in terms of content exceeded the original nature of harvest merrymaking, which earlier had been formed by tradition.

All state power structures that existing in the twentieth century, despite the nature of the regime involved, exploited public festivals with a high number of participants (Hájková – Horák – Kessler – Michela 2018; Keller 2003: 80). After 1948, the Communist apparatus succeeded in working with this propaganda tool in a very ingenious and effective way, and it enriched the calendar of public festivities with many new dates and occasions in comparison with the past. While celebrating Victorious February, May Day, or the Great October Socialist Revolution remained intrinsically linked to key historical moments on the human community's path to communism (Ratajová 2000; Krakovský 2004), celebrating the harvest fell somewhat outside the boundaries of this idea. Being primarily anchored in a clearly defined professional group (agricultural workers), harvest festival was closer to the organized

celebrations of the Day of Miners (then the Day of Miners and Power Engineers, 9 September), the Day of Czechoslovak Railway Workers (27 September), the Day of the Czechoslovak People's Army (6 October), and the Day of Construction Workers (14 July). There is, however, an obvious difference between these celebrations and harvest festival; this consists in the origin and historical rootedness of harvest festival as a folk festivity, which had its constant place in the customary calendar cycle of the medieval countryside (Večerková 2015: 289-299).

In this context, legitimate research questions arise and are aimed at identifying changes in the form and content of the "socialist" harvest festival as compared to its historical predecessors, and also at determining how its nature and form were interpreted in reaction to meeting social and ideological needs during the era of normalization. Because harvest festival was, as a matter of principal, always associated with the peasantry, that is, with the rural environment, other questions that arise include to what extent its modern form drew from the concept of a profession-specific festival, or whether its form and applied formal tools reflected a wider outlined interpretation of the countryside's image as a peculiar socio-geographical space.

The following text tries to answer the defined research questions primarily by analysing materials resulting from the activities of harvest festival organizational bodies at different levels, which allows us to take at least a partial look into the "heart" of the system and to observe to what extent the ideological role could be implemented in concrete situations, or whether this role had to be regulated, corrected, or reduced. Mass media as an important and very effective propaganda tool played the key role in building the image of harvest festivals. For this reason, it is necessary to observe even this line of official interpretation and how it was presented in the state-wide press (*Rudé právo* [The Red Truth]), agricultural newspapers (Ministry of Agriculture and Nutrition

for *Zemědělské noviny* [Agricultural Newspaper]), and regional publications.

Hitherto studies on public festivities exploited by state authorities in several European states and regions (e.g. Roth 2008; Barna 2017) substantiate to what extent identical strategies permeate the power elites' activities despite diverse local and ideological specifics. These strategies are obvious both in the case of historically rooted and traditional feasts (including deliberate adaptations of them) and in the case of completely new events. In this context, Eric Hobsbawm came up with the term *inventing traditions*, which he documents based on examples from the English and German environments (Hobsbawm 1983). Recent investigations focussed on the second half of the twentieth century speak about the *process of festivalization* as an important aspect of how the phenomenon of feast can be "seized" and actively

treated (Roth, 2008: 22-23). These trends are based on the natural human need to experience festive moments (as opposed to everyday life and work) and to increase their social potential by enriching them with ritualized acts. These are an effective tool of power, and they contribute to the legitimization of regimes (Barna 2017: 165), but at the same time they act towards the mass of ordinary players (especially the integration function and interpretation at the level of strengthening social status).

Harvest Festival as One of the Representative Symbols of the Countryside

In its authentic environment, harvest festival was one of the most noticeable customary occasions in the life of rural communities at the end of the summer. It drew attention with its varied content structure that included spoken word, music, and dance performances supple-



Communal harvest festival in Šumbark in 1946. Photo: courtesy of the author

mented with corresponding rural props, as well as moments of a pure symbolic nature with indisputably magical undertones (Jeřábek 1997: 127). As a celebration of the successful harvest season it moreover referred to the rural community's fundamental connection to the soil, the provider of life. Although reapers' thanksgiving congratulations were directed to the farmer (or his representatives at manorial farmyards and large estates), the acknowledgment of the hard labour associated with harvest was addressed mainly to people on the other side of the imaginary "employer-employee" axis, that is, to the anonymous masses of ordinary workers. In the course of the calendar year, we do not find many similar occasions when this unprivileged component of traditional society became a subject matter of public acknowledgement for their work. That only made harvest festival to be more greatly appreciated in local society and correspondingly awaited in the cyclically arranged flow of the agricultural year.

Already in the eighteenth century, the visual attractiveness of harvest festivals and their social context led to their being used as a representative element of rural culture, which helped demonstrate (e.g. alongside wedding customs) rural life. The state administration at the time perceived expressions of traditional culture as examples of good manners, diligence, and virtue as well as occasions for rural residents to enjoy group entertainment (Laudová 1980: 12-13). For the needs of public festivals, all the above expressions of folk culture were translocated out of their authentic space and time, but their actors remained unchanged. Their performance was included (sometimes in a reduced form) as part of staged blocks at large festivals, according just to the needs of the organizers. We can identify this manner of treating part of the rural community's customary traditions, for example, in the case of the folk feast that accompanied the coronations of Emperor Francis II in the summer of 1792 (Horský 1911) and of Ferdinand V in 1836 (Laudová 1975). Even the organizers of the 1895 *Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition* in Prague did not leave out harvest festival (Národopisná... [1897]: 522; Klvaňa 1896: 334).

Over the following decades, one can notice a gradual reduction in the number of harvest festivals as natural peaks of the harvest season at homesteads, manorial farmyards, and large estates. In the first half of the twen-

tieth century, harvest festivals began to be replaced by institutionally organized feasts with exact schedules in some locations. It was mostly local organizations of the agrarian or people's parties, young Catholics, patriotic-charitable associations of Baráčníks, and other clubs and associations that most often took part in the preparation of these feasts (Večerková 2015: 297; Valenta 2005).¹ Although at their core the basic content frame of these events remained unchanged, their adapted form was purposefully enriched with new elements and updates. Alongside the nascent modernization of agrotechnical work, the festival always included demonstrations of harvesting using old farm tools or reminders of events and moments associated with field work (Šimša 2007). The close relation of harvest festival to a particular agricultural unit and seasonal labour carried out on behalf of such a unit also began to disappear. For the above reasons, harvest festival acquired the form of a communal festivity intended for a wide community of people.

Some harvest festivals that took place in the summer of 1945 had a completely specific character. After years of the protectorate regime, wartime suffering, and restrictions on social life, the harvest festival was in many locations the first collectively experienced feast held in stabilized post-war conditions. After the last residua of the post-war situation faded out, people again had an opportunity to enjoy freedom of speech and social meetings within their local environment.²



*Harvest procession in Žádovice in the 1980s.
Photo: Czech Ethnological Society*

Harvest Festival in the New Socioeconomic Context after 1948

The transformation of harvest festival into a public feast, in which people without immediate work ties to harvest also participate, in no small measure strengthened the social relevance of the event. From a longer temporal perspective, this process helped to create conditions for the safeguarding of this festivity even in defiance of the social and economic reversals that Czech society underwent in the twentieth century and especially after 1948. A questionnaire survey conducted by the Czech Ethnological Society in the 1970s recorded the transformations of harvest-festival customs over the course of previous decades. It presented quite a diversified image of the existence, content, and form of harvest festivals across regions in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. Based on reports from local experts it is possible to state that harvest festivals within the studied territory did not have one unified form. In regions we can identify a diverse mixture of events that combined different formal and content-related elements that partially drew from traditions and which partially replied to the current social and economic situation. At the time of collectivization and fundamental transformations of the Czechoslovak countryside, harvest festivals were not among the events that the Communist regime, while implementing its ideological and economic concepts, paid attention to or which it preferred, discriminated against, or directly forbade. In the rural environment, harvest festival remained rather free to evolve naturally. In some locations, the festival completely disappeared as a consequence of the elimination of big farmers;³ in other places the foundation of agricultural cooperatives encouraged the festival's transformation from a closed feast of one economic unit into a public festivity. It is also documented that a formerly disappeared festival was revitalized, as this was newly interpreted as an element representing the success of new forms of farming.⁴

In this context, harvest festival and its form became a readable reflection of ongoing local circumstances and of the extent to which individuals or large communities of people were active and engaged in public life. In many places, we can understand the organizing of harvest festivals as a means by which the local elites responded to inhabitants' desires to participate in cultural and social activities. In addition to the "full-bodied" harvest

festival, which included a procession, the handing-over of a harvest wreath, and subsequent merriment, harvest festival could also be reduced, based on the degree of local inhabitants' engagement and the willingness of and support by local authorities, to a mere afternoon or evening celebration in the form of a dance party in a local pub, sports hall, or community centre.⁵ The newly founded agricultural units (agricultural cooperatives and state-run farms) allow us, through harvest festivals described in the above form, to recognize the existence of another factor – employee-friendly personnel policy. One of the development lines consisted in reducing the feast to a meeting of a closed group of people who worked in a particular agricultural enterprise; the meeting also included harvest assessment, hospitality, and cultural events or a dance party.⁶ The relation to older forms of the feast was demonstrated by handing over a harvest wreath to officials from the local government and agricultural units⁷ and sometimes by an updated form of thanksgiving congratulation recited by a representative of the workers. Although the congratulatory speech retained its original form, not once did its content reflect (with a certain degree of criticality) the new social circumstances and the ongoing situation in the village or enterprise.⁸

In its reduced form, the celebration of the end of harvest season included only a one-time reward (financial bonus, in-kind reward in the form of light refreshments, often also bottles or a barrel of beer for tractor drivers, combine operators, and other workers).⁹ With its focus on people who were directly tied to harvest work, this form imaginarily returned to one of the levels of the traditional feast – meaning a reward for those who actively participated in harvest.¹⁰ In the spirit of the day, the material aspect completely pushed out the symbolic and magical aspects associated with the erstwhile form of harvest festival.

The Regime's Adaptation of Harvest Festival

Local forms of harvest festivals comprised one line on which these festivals developed. They were held by and for the local community or by a homogenous working group. Besides this "little tradition", which is based on the residua of autochthonous phenomena of folk culture (Jeřábek 1978), another form of celebrations began to appear in parallel in the mid-twentieth century. This form was absolutely subordinated to the regime's direction.

References to tradition were rather proclamatory in this case, as this form displayed a selective choice of a few elements associated with folk customs, which were supposed to demonstrate the tie to the erstwhile folk feast.

The first efforts to organize harvest festivals appeared in the 1950s.¹¹ They were concentrated in bigger cities and villages, and in addition to promoting the positive effect of the process of collectivization, they began to include variety shows, a peace rally, and last but not least an extended offer of goods produced by agricultural and consumer cooperatives.¹² As confirmed by correspondents of the Czechoslovak Ethnological Society, harvest festivals organized in this centralized format were the reason the local harvest festivity went extinct in some locations.

It was only the consolidation of the agricultural sector, which was, among other things, associated with an increase in production intensity and labour efficiency, that created appropriate preconditions for a more active treatment of harvest festivities in the subsequent decade (Slezák 1980: 27, 31). Mainly the 1970s offered many occasions for converting harvest festival into a sophisticated multilevel system of mass festivities that were controlled by the political regime and which covered the state-wide level (the harvest festival in Nitra for the whole of Czechoslovakia), the national level (the harvest festival in a regional city for the Czech Socialist Republic), and regional and district levels. Harvest festival offered considerable potential to the normalization apparatus, which was searching for suitable tools for consolidating society as effectively as possible (Šimečka 1990; Bren 2013; Petráš – Svoboda 2018). In contrast to May Day, Great October Socialist Revolution, and Victorious February celebrations, harvest festival was, at first glance, a feast that lacked a superficial ideological mission. It was enrooted in the traditions of rural working people, whose work it celebrated: *“They will come to render accounts of their year-round hard work for which many agricultural enterprises and individuals will be awarded. They will come to demonstrate the progress and achievements in agricultural production [...]; harvest festival also means two days of joy and merrymaking, folk entertainment, dance, music, and singing.”* (Dožínky jsou... 1975: 1)

The historical substance of harvest festival as a popular form of merriment was maintained in the new social context (its other social functions, however, were left

out). Over time, completely new meanings were attributed to this basis of the festival. The outer shell of popular merriment was to hide a political agenda, which Communist officials considered to be the most important part of the celebration. This was, among other things, reflected in the competences of political commissions and committees, which had a privileged position and whose voice was stronger than other bodies that took part in the preparation of harvest festivals (promotion, financial, cultural and programme, technical, and transportation commissions, etc.).¹³

The extending territorial scope of organized harvest festivals naturally resulted in increased prestige in taking part in them. Regional authorities carefully prepared the ideological concept of their own presentations especially for the national harvest festival. Taking into account fulfilled commitments and priority topics, which were to be presented by each authority, they put together a list of representatives from the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, and of other participants who were sent to the venue outside of an official delegation (Na dožínky... 1977: 1; Přijíždíme... 1973: 1; Hrdá... 1973: 1; Kraj... 1973: 1; S pocitem... 1973: 1). In connection with harvest festivals, the prestige factor was also crucial for organs that prepared the events. Successful district, regional, and national harvest festivals were interpreted as proof of the organizational potential and ideological competences of the Communist Party's structures, self-government, and the agricultural institutions involved.

Concentrated efforts for harvest festival to receive as good a response as possible can be traced in measures that gave preference to harvest festival over other events (busses were earmarked for transporting harvest festival attendees) or in the outright elimination of competition. The state-wide harvest festival with its broad schedule and large number of participants was a clear hegemon in the field of cultural, sport, and social events (just the harvest festival in Prague in 1974 gave a less dominating impression). The situation was more complicated at the district and regional levels, and for this reason the organizers devoted much energy to caring for campaigning and promotion. The collision of the date for the regional harvest festival in Náměšť nad Oslavou with other events in 1972 showed to what extent the organizational bodies, due to their social capital (Bourdieu 1998; Field 2008) and the tools of power resulting from

it, were ready to use mechanisms of power. A dog show in Olomouc, at which high attendance was expected, was denied being able to rent the sports stadium in Olomouc, in which the event was planned. In the case of the traditional and popular Catholic pilgrimage to Dub in Moravia, the district church secretary, being under pressure from the regime, arranged the pilgrimage to be postponed until the following week.

The emphasis that leading authorities put on the compatibility of the event prepared by them with the ideological concept applied at different levels throughout the state is clear from a statement of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in Ostrava. This committee decided in the summer 1972 that the event that had been planned in Náměšť na Hané over the previous months had to be called the Regional Harvest Festival; the title Haná Feast was explicitly forbidden. The party apparatus tried to avoid confusion with the successful Haná Feast that had been held in the same locations one year earlier.¹⁴

The Thematization of the Countryside

In the 1970s, Communist Party ideologues chose an utterance made by Prime Minister Klement Gottwald at the time of the Communist coup in February 1948 to be the central slogan of the harvest festival: “The worker for the peasant – the peasant for the worker.” At that time, when it was necessary to promote the unity of the working class and the Communist Party’s support for it, Gottwald’s utterance was expected to become the spotlight of the publicly promoted unity of the proletariat, whether they worked in industrial plants or agricultural enterprises: “*The goal is to emphasize the inseparable bond of workers and peasants when building socialism in their fight for strengthening and maintaining peace. [...] This is a manifestation of workers and cooperative peasants and an accentuation of their importance for the building of socialism.*” The organizers at district and regional levels were instructed in the above sense already in 1972, and local newspapers offices were given similar recommendations: “*To organize the event as a festive manifestation of working people, workers, cooperative workers, peasants, youth, and citizens.*”¹⁵

This interpretation deviated considerably from the former concept of harvest festival, as it had been understood by political and economic elites since

the eighteenth century. The speeches of officials and other official declarations, ideological and programme instructions, and the press in the 1970s already lacked the former line of the almost self-evident (and sometimes even stereotyped) identification of harvest festival with the countryside as a specific social and professional environment. Only in several cases we can notice the survival of the erstwhile polarizing stereotype of “the countryside and agriculture versus the city and industry”: “*The people from the city will pay homage to those who cultivate the fields.*” (S vědomím... 1979: 1)

In the official line, the thematization of the countryside was pushed out by the emphasis of aiming the festival at agricultural workers, which practically led towards the development of harvest festival into a festival of a specific profession: “[...] *by right it is called an agricultural feast*”, said Alois Indra, one of the leading representatives of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, in 1972 (Oslava úspěšné... 1972: 1; also Dík... 1972: 1). Oldřich Dolák, chairman of the programme commission of the national harvest festival in Hradec Králové in 1972, defined the direction more precisely: “*We continue good old traditions, but we understand the harvest celebration in a slightly different and much wider concept. This is also the reason why the scenario is not limited to demonstrating agriculturists’ great merits in our common bread from different perspectives, but at the national harvest festival we want to celebrate mainly the labour in agriculture as an integral part of the success of the whole of the national economy.*” (Rolníci... 1972: 2)

In addition to professions that were immediately connected with work in the fields, this wider concept also included workers in associated sectors, such as the supply and purchase of agricultural products; machinery; tractor stations; research, cultivation, and breeding institutes; and in some cases even the processing industry (e.g. Uznání... 1979: 1). Regional authorities liked to include representatives of agricultural secondary and vocational schools in their section of the harvest procession at the national harvest festival: “*The regional emblem, which expresses the principal directions of agricultural production, will be followed by one hundred uniformly dressed boys and girls from the secondary agricultural and commercial school in Louny and from agricultural vocational schools in Podbořany and Vrbičany*” (Severočeši... 1975: 1). Their participation was to demonstrate to onlookers that the fu-

ture of agriculture was secured and that it consisted in responsibly shaped youth (S vědomím... 1979: 1).

The 1970s were a period when the regime publicly proclaimed a qualitative step forward in agricultural production (even though the situation on the domestic market was not always satisfactory). Production began to be concentrated and specialized in the field of crop cultivation and animal husbandry, and a progressive increase was also obvious in the growingly intensive integration of mass-production technologies (Projev soudruha... 1975: 2; Novák 2018). Higher labour productivity, the increasing degree of technology in agricultural operations, and the application of industrial forms of production in agriculture had a positive influence not only in macroeconomic terms. Positive impacts were seen in erasing the erstwhile differences in economic potential between the city and the countryside, and in improving the quality of life in the countryside (Radostná... 1975: 2). Among other things, this was attributed to the shared efforts of peasants and workers (Jubilejní... 1974: 3; Bohaté... 1978: 2). Therefore, a member of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and chairman of the District Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in Prostějov could state in 1974: *“Old village cottages are disappearing, being replaced by modern family houses. As the last census in 1970 showed, there is no difference between the equipment in the households of cooperative peasants and other agriculturists and the equipment in town households. Life in the countryside is becoming ever closer to life in towns.”* (Dělník... 1974: 1)

Although the mass media and officials' speeches repeatedly promoted harvest festival as a feast of agriculturists and as public acknowledgement of their labour, festival programmes intentionally exceeded purely professional borders (Oslava úspěšné... 1972: 1). The regime intentionally interpreted the translocation of an originally pure village feast into the urban environment and the mass character of the harvest festival formed in new ideological frameworks as the democratization of the festival; the regime also made accessible to all attendees, despite their place of residence or professional status, the collective joy of a job well done: *“The one-hundred-year old tradition of harvest festival has got from village greens to big cities only over the last decades, so that also the rest of us can share the joy of the harvest with hundreds and thousands of unknown tractor drivers,*

combine operators, warehousemen, and all those who care for our daily bread.” (Z dožínkového... 1975: 1)

However, the countryside was also part of several schemes that permanently appeared, as a deeply rooted stereotype, in the behaviour of those who acted as members of bodies organizing harvest festivals. The priorities and strategies they applied in the schedules of the festivals show us how strong was the stereotype that identified the countryside with folk culture and consequently with folk ensembles (which were called “ethnographic ensembles” at that time) and their visual presentation in the form of folk costumes. Programme commissions automatically counted on the participation of such ensembles. The 1972 harvest festival of the North Moravian Region even hosted a separate block composed as a show of folk ensembles from the region.¹⁶ The participation of people dressed in folk costumes was not restricted only to music and dance performances (cim-pal 1972: 2). They were very often exploited to liven up the political section of the harvest festival, whether as part of the manifestation procession or as folk-costumed staffage when harvest wreaths were handed over (Dožínkové věnce... 1979: 1; Radostná... 1975: 1). This important public role, which was attributed to those symbolic bearers of folk tradition, was correspondingly reflected in the press, and it also suitably fitted into the newly formed ideological concept of the harvest festival as a symbiosis of the old/traditional and the new/modern: *“The multi-coloured Kyjovsko region, and the archetypal Mikulovsko, Břeclavsko, and Znojensko regions will shine. They will boast about their excellent achievements in agricultural production, and they will also demonstrate that they do not forget the heritage of beautiful folk traditions – more than 160 pairs dressed in folk costumes will come from the Hodonínsko region alone.”* (Na dožínky... 1977: 1)

The Schedule of Regime Harvest Festivals

It was a matter of course that the programmes of national, regional, and district harvest festivals had to include a much wider spectrum of activities than the folk harvest festivals of the past. The organizers approached scheduling in such a way that the programme could casually contain several levels which were supposed not to compete with each other but to complement each other in ideal harmony and to change the festival into *“a day with a joyful atmosphere”* (Dožínky jsou... 1975: 1).

Agricultural motifs were reflected mainly in the official section of the festival and in several accompanying events, such as exhibitions and presentations of agricultural technologies.

The rest of the festival was scheduled with the aim of satisfying the expectations and needs of the crowds. This was also reflected by the programme commission of the North Moravian regional harvest festival in 1972, when it pointed out “[...] *the choice according to the participants’ interest: from folklore, brass music, variety shows and variety concerts up to our prominent popular singers, top folklore, chamber opera, etc.*”¹⁷ The schedule’s characteristics, which were anchored in mass forms of popular music, are moreover confirmed by instructions that defined the target visitors as middle-aged rural residents and retired seniors who worked predominantly in agriculture.

For this reason harvest festivals hosted numerous performances of brass music bands. Some of them were sent to the venues of national and regional harvest festivals as part of official delegations that represented agricultural enterprises and districts (Blanensko... 1975: 4). While concerts of brass music bands and the supplementary performances of regional music groups or marginal genres of popular music were evenly spread across the whole day, shows by regional or even Prague-based artists were considered to be one of the cultural highlights of the festival. Especially if popular performers (music bands, singers, and actors) took part in a harvest festival, its attractiveness increased on an unprecedented scale. The organizers were very well aware of the importance that this part of the festival had. If the organizers succeeded in hiring famous and popular celebrities, they contributed to building a good image of this highly representative event; this increased the visitors’ satisfaction with the harvest festival (Rolníci... 1972: 2) and their positive reflection on the spot and after returning home.¹⁸

Organizers’ ambitions to offer as wide a spectrum of programme as possible, no matter whether the festival was at the district, regional, or national level, brought about the inclusion of further activities that completely exceeded the original ideological and content framework of the traditional feast at the end of harvest season, and which indicated no close relationship with agriculture or the rural environment in general. For instance, female attendees could appreciate fashion shows. Sport and leisure activities also found a fixed place in festival

schedules. The visitors to the regional harvest festival in Náměšť na Hané in September 1972 could watch demonstrations by members of the Dukla Olomouc motocross team or dog training shows.¹⁹ The national harvest festival in Brno in 1975 offered unusually diverse sporting events: women’s competitions in athletics, tennis matches, a national round of rural sport clubs in volleyball, a youth yachting regatta, and the presentation of Svazarm activities (Dožínky pod... 1975: 4). Organizers did not leave out attending children who were offered competitions and merry-go-rounds (Dělník... 1974: 3); the House of Pioneers and Youth even prepared a large section called “The Pioneer Pilgrimage” for the national harvest festival in Brno in 1975 (Dožínky jsou... 1975: 1; Pionýrská... 1975: 2).

The Harvest Wreath as a Symbol

Despite considerable modifications and enrichments to the schedules of harvest festivals controlled by the state, it is obvious that festival organizers respected several elements of traditional harvest festivals, which they tried to safeguard, at least formally. After all, it was not only the contemporary press (pa 1975: 3) but also official speeches by party and state officials that repeatedly referred to tradition. This is, for example, obvious in the words of Gustáv Husák, the first secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the president of Czechoslovakia, at the national harvest festival in Nitra in 1976: “[...] *it is a traditional celebration of the peasants’ labour, and in the socialist political system it becomes a celebration of the politically conscious labour of employees in socialist agriculture*” (Z projevu... 1976: 1).²⁰

Besides the name itself, it was the harvest wreath that became a symbol of continuity with tradition; the organizers at all festival levels maintained it. The wreath was a symbol of harvested crops in the archetypal harvest festival. It was associated with magic and welfare-bringing imaginations related to the harvest in the upcoming farming year (Stránská 1932-1933: 168; Večerková 2010: 271). Its handing over to the farmer became the conclusion of the formal section of the custom (Večerková 2010: 266-273). Already in the 1930s, the ethnologist Drahomíra Stránská (1932-1933: 168) pointed out the considerable durability of this ceremonial artefact as compared to other elements of harvest festival. The act of handing over a wreath as a significant

symbol of the feast survived also in the new concept of harvest festival in the second half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, its timing changed, as it was moved to the introductory part of the political section.

As harvest festivals were attended by multiple officials, usually each of them was given a harvest wreath (Dík... 1972: 1; Oslava práce... 1973: 1). However, this was not unusual even at traditional festivals. It was common at manorial farmyards to hand over several harvest wreaths in parallel to the owner and to the people in charge of managing farming activities. Harvest festivals designed in the socialist spirit saw the organizers struggle to symbolically involve official guests and to evoke in them a feeling of participation and belonging to the festival itself and its working-class participants. The handing-over of the wreath simultaneously publicly proclaimed respect for them, for their functions, and for the contribution of their public activities that benefitted the whole of society.

The people who were to hand over the harvest wreath were selected very carefully, but always with the awareness of symbolic meanings. While the traditional feast employed especially eloquent, nice-looking female reapers (Večerková 2010: 273), socialist harvest festivals preferred other levels of importance. Thus, the active participants in harvest works were represented by, for example, the best combine operators and tractor drivers (Uznání... 1979: 1; Vysoké ocenění... 1977: 1). At regional and national harvest festivals this highly prestigious task was entrusted to workers and agricultural officials (Radost... 1972: 1; Oslava úspěšné... 1972: 1). This was the case, for example, at the national harvest festival in 1973, when the harvest wreaths were handed over by the chairman of the Czech Committee of the Association of Cooperative Peasants and the chairmen of Czech committees of trade unions for employees in agriculture and the food industry. Even on this occasion the act of handing-over included staffage in folk costumes, references to the traditional feast (Uznání... 1973: 1; Oslava poctivé... 1975: 1).

The harvest wreath as a slightly and easily identifiable symbol, which was understandable to everybody, permeated harvest festivals held during the studied period even at other levels of meaning. At the very beginning of the national harvest festival in Prague, pairs dressed in folk costumes, while reciting a poem in honour of the

twenty-fifth anniversary of the construction of socialist agriculture, placed three harvest wreaths on the platform with official guests (Svátek... 1974: 1). Harvest wreaths were popular symbols that were carried by several regional delegations in their part of the harvest procession (Sejdeme se... 1975: 1; Z dožínkového... 1975: 1). The harvest wreath also became a part of the visual style used to promote the event. In its static form and in many designs and sizes, it was included among interior and exterior decorations and arrangements in places where harvest festival events were occurring (Svátek... 1974: 1). It was given completely extreme dimensions in Prague in 1974 when it was placed opposite the platform



Harvest wreath as part of the visual style of the national harvest festival in Brno in 1975. Photo: Zemědělské noviny, 1975

with official guests: “[...] on a stepped stage surrounded by a forty-meter-high harvest wreath, groups of young people will erect and cross a huge sickle and hammer as a symbol of cooperation between cooperative peasants and the working class.” (Jubilejí... 1974: 3)

The Transformation of the Harvest Procession into a Working-Class Manifestation

The harvest procession became an element that displayed a formal connection with the traditional form of harvest festival but which was also adapted to meet the festival's new form. However, the new ideology clearly characterized it as a peace rally. In the past, those



Official poster for the district harvest festival in Prostějov in 1974.
Photo: State District Archives in Prostějov

who participated in the procession went to a farmer's homestead, manorial farmyard, or large estate, and then, in the case of an organized communal harvest festival, to the local holiday resort or a playground, for example. This was the reason why a harvest procession was included in the folk coronation feast in 1791 as an important part of the harvest festival (Laudová 1980). Almost two hundred years later, its form was subject to quite a different directorial intent, and the tie between the harvest procession and the handing-over of the wreath became looser. Its mission was no more to bring reapers to the seat of a farmer or large estate owner. The schedule was reversed; official speeches and the handing-over of harvest wreaths came before the festive procession.

This new conception changed the procession into a parade of people, floats, and agricultural and other machinery in front of platforms with official guests (Manifestace... 1974: 1; 2000... 1975: 1). From a formal perspective, it displayed numerous features identical with other manifestation processions organized by the political regime, for example, celebrations of Victorious February and May Day (Ratajová 2000). Due to the number of participants, processions were a massive event, mainly at national harvest festivals. They were to present individual regions of the Czech Socialist Republic to representatives from state administration, the Communist Party, local governments, foreign delegations, and the Czechoslovak and Soviet armies (Naše společná... 1972: 1; Svátek... 1974: 1). These processions included tens of thousands of participants (Oslava práce... 1973: 1; Radost z úspěšné... 1977: 1). The period press was not only full of praise for the massive participation, but also for the enthusiasm and joy of all those who formed the “endless flow of the cheering working people” (Manifestace... 1974: 1). The grandiose manifestation parade took several hours in the official programme: “After eleven o'clock, the harvest procession started walking towards the platform with the representatives of the Communist Party, government, public life, and individual regions and districts. From that time until four o'clock in the afternoon, the procession streamed through Brno, and it was greeted by crowds of onlookers with thunderous applause.” (Mohutná... 1975: 3)

The symbolism of the manifestation procession, which integrated participants from different places in the republic and of different ages, as well as those working

in different branches of agriculture and associated industries, into a compact mass, corresponded with the central slogan: “*The worker for the peasant – the peasant for the worker.*”²¹ And because harvest festival was understood as a form of merrymaking that adored labour as well as the merits of all those who took even the least part in common work, a due part of this public tribute was paid to every single one of the participants, irrespective of whether he or she contributed to the success of the work with his or her work in the field, office, workshop, or factory. The heft of this public society-wide appreciation of work in agriculture was strengthened by emotionally tinged words used by officials in their speeches and by the mass media. In addition to highlighting the diligence, devotion, and high labour inputs, they all spoke about the fight for grain, in which cooperative peasants had to battle with nature and weather, and even about labour heroism. The mass character of the event also resulted in important psychological aspects. Participation in the manifestation procession, which was at first glance a compact mass of humanity, must have evoked an unusually strong feeling of social cohesion in many ordinary citizens who achieved this direct level of participation; this cohesion was then transmitted beyond the festival itself, meaning to the home setting of the participants. It was also through such attendees that the normalization regime could, alongside other key moments of the festival, effectively disseminate official proclamations of an ideological (the unity of workers and peasants) and socioeconomic nature (neutralization of the difference between the town and countryside, modernization of agriculture).

Conclusion

The 1970s were an interesting and, in terms of time, quite a closed period in the history of harvest festivals in the Czech lands, which witnessed unusually intensive political manipulation of this cultural element, the task of which was, among other things, to strengthen the cohesion of the working class and, in general, Czechoslovak citizens with those working in agriculture. The national harvest festival symbolically completed the process of dividing the celebrations at the end of the harvest season into two peculiar levels – the local one associated with particular agricultural divisions of agricultural cooperatives or state-run farms, or with the local community, and the general one that inclined to the celebration of the results of labour as a general factor in the form of organized harvest celebrations in district, regional, and national formats. In this concept, creative human labour was perceived as the opposite to the “unrest” of the reforms of the 1960s (Kolář – Pullman 2017: 77). These massive events, in which public appreciation of the labour done (strongly contaminated by ideological objectives) blended with leisure and consumption (relying on cultural, sport, and social events), peaked at national harvest festivals, which took place in big cities in mostly agricultural regions.

Although organized harvest festivals repeatedly proclaimed their ties to the historical form of this traditional custom, and this form was also fulfilled at a symbolic level and through several formalized acts (the handing-over of harvest wreaths), the normalization harvest festival in its final form became a completely peculiar event fully



The deliberate struggle to declare, at harvest festivals organized by the political regime, the interconnection between the old (traditional) world and the modern, progressive era was apparent even in the visual aspects of promoting the national harvest festival. Photo: Zemědělské noviny, 1974

adapted to suit the needs of the power elites (at the ideological level) and ordinary participants (cultural and other events, consumption). The mutual relationship between both groups functioned on the basis of a social contract and reciprocity at the time of state socialism. Working people became part of a large ideologically focussed performance, and they received cultural and material rewards for playing their role in the spectacle. The participants were not just passive marionettes in this process, but they showed differing degrees of active participation, by means of which they satisfied their own needs (Kolář – Pullman 2017: 42).

The transformation and adaptation of a former folk feast into an official regime festivity did not deny, not even in its new context, the factor of ritualization and manipulation with symbols, whose reference to the historical model contributed to the credibility and strengthening of the legitimacy of power elites and the ideologies proclaimed by them (Hobsbawm 1983: 4; Barna 2017: 164). While referring to tradition, party officials tried to proclaim the continuity of values, although they only manipulated elements of the historical model to legitimize their own ideological and power system (Krčál – Naxera 2011: 2-3). The extent to which this was done intentionally is demonstrated by the fact that the national harvest festival stopped being organized in the 1980s. The motives for this can be found in a purely practical aspect that took into account the economic burden produced by this imposing event, which also required a sufficient number of staff. Short critical comments related to the demanding

preparations (as compared to the demands of smoothly managing the actual harvest) were sometimes published even in the press (At' vám... 1973: 1), but they usually disappeared among the plentiful exalting and enthusiastic texts celebrating the regime harvest festival.

While district and local harvest festivals still survived in the 1980s (they were occasionally combined with "peace celebrations"), a central feast in the form of a spectacular national harvest festival was no longer organized at that time. In addition to economical, technical, and personnel aspects, the causes can be found at the purely political level. The change of social atmosphere as a consequence of the process of normalization in the previous decade was the reason why its further existence was no longer well founded. The national harvest festival had been held for several years, and it met the expectations of the authorities. No strong enough arguments were found for the further existence of the national harvest festival in the early 1980s. The strategy of political elites corresponded, in certain respects, to the principles of traditional culture, where we notice an identical mechanism: when a cultural phenomenon loses its functions, either it disappears or it transforms, in terms of form and content, into a different form with new functions. The potential offered by public harvest festivals, which the elites adopted, can be confirmed by the survival of district harvest festivals in the 1980s and by the fact that they are regularly organized by regional administrative units even now in the early twenty-first century (for example in the Zlín Region or the South Moravian Region).

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NOTES:

1. Czech Ethnological Society, Small Questionnaires Collection, sign. MD 16, Ev. No. 57; 83; 87. *Harvest Customs*.
2. Ibid., Ev. No. 49. Also Czech Ethnological Society, Correspondents' Contribution Collection, sign. J 57. *Janiček, Vladimír: Jiné obyčeje, které se v Radčicích udržovaly* [Further Customs that Used To Be Safeguarded in Radčice].
3. Czech Ethnological Society, Small Questionnaires Collection, sign. MD 16, Ev. No. 60; 84; 91; 114; 168. *Harvest Customs*.
4. Ibid., Ev. No. 7; 15; 47; 48; 86; 187; 191.
5. Ibid., Ev. No. 29; 65; 70; 84; 88; 90b; 121; 142; 156.
6. Ibid., Ev. No. 4; 17; 22; 32; 92; 96; 103; 108; 133; 136; 150; 152; 157; 161; 167; 174; 192.
7. Ibid., Ev. No. 31; 42; 60; 107; 156; 158; 190.
8. Ibid., Ev. No. 155.
9. Ibid., Ev. No. 63; 89; 82; 183.
10. Ibid., Ev. No. 41; 54; 63; 82, 83. Also (Heroldová 1973: 192).
11. Ibid., Ev. No. 39; 49; 50; 51.
12. Cf. e.g. SOKA Prostějov, National Front – District Committee in Prostějov, Inv. No. 375, k. 96. *International Day of Cooperatives, district harvest festival, district peace celebrations associated with Children's Day, and harvest festival*.
13. Ibid.
14. Cf. e.g. SOKA Olomouc, Park of Culture and Leisure in Olomouc, Inv. No. 48, sign. M5-54, k. 10. *Regional Harvest Festival in Náměšť na Hané 1972*.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., also (Rolníci... 1972: 2)
19. Ibid.
20. Within the studied period, we can regularly find almost identical wording in the speeches given by other party and state officials (cf. e.g. *Projev... 1973: 1-2*).
21. About how to manipulate the masses at public events, see also Roubal 2016.

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Summary

In the past, harvest festival was a distinctive custom in the life of rural communities. Its visual attractiveness and the social context of its organization meant that since the eighteenth century it was exploited as a representative element of rural culture on diverse public occasions. From the late nineteenth century onwards, harvest festival underwent several transformations, and harvest festivals in the Central European village were increasingly organized by the local government or by civic associations and were thus no longer strictly tied to a particular farmstead. While in some places local forms of harvest festival remained safeguarded even after the social changes of 1948, the mid-twentieth century also witnessed the beginning of harvest festivals organized by the political regime. It was mainly national harvest festivals in the 1970s that were large in scale, besides district and regional harvest festivals. Their organizers maintained some elements that linked these festivals to the traditional form of the feast (the harvest wreath, thanksgiving speeches by agricultural workers, the involvement of people dressed in folk costumes). The schedule of events included at such festivals, however, was subject to the ideological needs of state socialism, and harvest festival became an instrument to celebrate the successes of socialist agriculture (and the related processing industries). It was mainly the entertainment events that displayed the loosening of ties to agriculture, whereby harvest festivals became largely based on mass forms of popular culture and consumption. Agricultural workers thus became participants in a grand theatre performance with ideological outlines, and for playing a role in this spectacle they received cultural and material rewards.

Key words: Czechoslovakia; normalization; harvest festival; custom; ideology.

DANCE PARTIES AND THE SYMBOLIC CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNITIES IN THE ERA OF LATE SOCIALISM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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Introduction

Dance parties are one of the pillars that dominate social life in the Czech countryside. As seen by present-day rural residents, they are not only “age-old” and “traditional” gatherings of local community members, but they also provide opportunities to young rural residents to meet with their peers and find possible mates. Present-day dance parties are held on the traditional occasions for dancing, merry-making, and socializing as part of festivities related to the religious year and to significant milestones in the life of a municipality (Stavělová 2007: 1047; Zíbrt 1895: 167). Dance parties evolved into their current form under considerable pressure from processes that established modern society (perception of time, organization of labour, electrification). The usual time and venue of these parties have changed; electrification, Saturdays declared as days off, and the gradual standardization of working hours (which, however, became more evident in the countryside only as a consequence of the collectivization of agriculture) made it possible to organize dance parties in the evenings and on non-holidays (Novák 2007: 43). How dance parties were organized was also affected by the weakening role of the institutions of the estates and by the fact that associations became responsible for the community’s public life (e.g. volunteer firemen’s associations) (Novák 2007: 201). Dance parties moved from outdoor dancefloors to the halls of local pubs, and, later on, to newly built community centres (literally “houses of culture”). Continuous development and the opportunity to follow centuries-old traditions allowed them to express the continuity of rural communities and (for this reason) to create a timeless reference frame for rural identity.

This text aims to demonstrate the possibility of evaluating the principles of the symbolic construction of communities on the example of dance parties (comp. Cohen 1985; Blackshaw 2010: 124-129). It will illustrate how the imaginary continuity of rural communities could be ensured in the course of modernization. The symbolic

significance of dance parties will be interpreted on several levels, levels on which this significance may be reflected – space, generations, and power. The village “tancovačka” [≈knees-up] will be introduced as a realm within which ideas about community, its viability, and normative problems are communicated and different identities expressed.

The presented interpretations focus on the period of “normalization” in Czechoslovakia (1969-1989), which constitutes a pillar for the doctoral research on which the text is based. This period is one of the advanced stages of modernization – the gradual process of traditional society’s transformation, which started already in the late eighteenth century (Matoušek 2010: 14). The organization of labour, production, and leisure was significantly influenced by the collectivization of agriculture after the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia seized power in February 1948. The most vigorous stage of collectivization, accompanied by repressions against wealthy farmers, took place under President Klement Gottwald (1948-1953) in the first half of the 1950s. The cruelty of his rule resembled that of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union. Gottwald’s death in 1953 was followed by a gradual easing, which tried to resolve the inefficiency of collectivized agriculture and which culminated in the enforcement of pro-social policies and economic support for rural development in the early 1960s (Valeš 2014: 479). Economic support for rural development was also part of state policies in the era of normalization, when rural life was influenced by, among other things, the continuing expansion of mobility (commuting to work and study) (Kalinová 2012: 251). The continuing construction of public facilities covered, among other things, community centres (literally “houses of culture”), which became venues where mass cultural events were held (Franc – Knapík 2013: 213). The form of dance parties was, however, influenced by the political context – the struggle to “normalize” the situation in society after the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and the subsequent

replacement of political elites under pressure from the Soviet Union brought about, besides purges in the Communist Party, production enterprises, and societal organizations, various restrictions associated with artistic activities. Opportunities for alternative culture, including “Western” rock, were limited, and as a result urban musical bands were forced to move their performances to the countryside. Under the influence of such concerts, even the countryside saw the development of musical bands playing rock music, known as “bigbít” (big beat) in the Czech lands. This musical genre began to flourish in rural areas, which can be exemplified by hundreds of new local musical groups and the new phenomenon of “rural rock”, which several authors consider to be a Czech particularity (Vaněk 2010: 469; Daniel 2016: 138). Everything mentioned above would not have been possible without technological progress, especially without newly developed amplifiers.

The increasing popularity of “modern music” – “rural rock” – was mirrored in the form of dance parties, which were preferred by young people; this led to a boom in a phenomenon called “three by three” (the band alternated between performing “traditional” folk or brass-band songs and “modern” popular music, either their own songs or adopted pieces; Daniel 2016: 139; Mr U., Petrovice).

Dance parties featuring “modern” music (usually held throughout the year) intended as social events for young people from the broader region (they were accessible due to the development of mobility) gradually diverged from the “traditional” dance parties that were organized for village inhabitants to gather across generations and which were still associated with festive occasions, whether traditional (Shrovetide, kermesse, harvest festival, St. Nicholas Day, St. Stephen’s Day) or modern ones (the ball season at the turn of winter and spring, festivals held by particular clubs and associations, annual meetings; Mr K., Rokytná).

This paper mainly explores dance parties that the participants perceived as “common” ones, and it monitors the stability of their value for rural communities in light of gradual changes in their form (including the style of music produced), which, however, does not mean that it would not be possible to apply this interpretation to “festive” dance parties. Both “festive” and “common” dance parties could be attributed with other significances, which did not deny the primary socializing function of the above-

mentioned occasions to dance and gather; the socializing function is the basis for the argumentation of this text.

Dance parties have been frequently mentioned and spontaneously discussed in oral-history interviews (comp. Vaněk – Mücke 2011).¹ They are a source for expressing local identity and nostalgia for socialism or for the “old” world, which allegedly no longer exists. Moreover, they are often mentioned in the examined archival materials.²

The aforementioned research methods are the basis of the micro-historical interest in two locations in South Moravia – the small rural town of Dolní Kounice (District of Brno-venkov), and Rokytná and Petrovice (District of Znojmo), two small municipalities near Moravský Krumlov. The micro-historical approach (comp. Iggers 2012: 101-117) was chosen due to efforts to analyse and understand as wide a context as possible within a limited space. The dissimilarity between the small town and the two small municipalities allows for many comparisons; Dolní Kounice faced modernization processes more intensively, while the villages around Moravský Krumlov are perceived by several narrators as “more traditional”. Differences between the locations increase the validity of the presented interpretations, although one has to reflect limits in the generalization thereof. The research objective is to better understand the principles of coping with changes, interventions of power, and technological innovations. To achieve it, the research engages in a deeper reflection of the context and connections within a narrow space, and it exploits the widest possible spectrum of sources of (not only) local provenience.

While trying to understand social transformations in the countryside, the author perceives the totalitarian-historical approach of Czech historiography, which dominated after 1989, to be considerably limiting. In its analyses, this approach is influenced by ongoing discussions about the nature of contemporary history (comp. Kolář – Pullmann 2016; Hrubý 2018), and it assumes that it is not possible to properly interpret the values passed down from the past and to reflect the plurality of identities, interests, and motivations of rural residents, while adhering to binary categories of the relationship between power and society (Pullmann 2016: 28), which have been applied thus far in research into the countryside, being influenced by the aforementioned approach (comp. Kaplan 2012).

The Symbolic Construction of Communities

Thinking about phenomena – objects, rituals, and ideas – which are of symbolic importance for individuals, communities, or ethnic groups can help understand the principles of coping with changes. The long lifetime and adaptability of the above phenomena proceed from the definition of a symbol: they are objects or acts that are well known within a certain community or culture, whose basic importance is not questioned among people who identify with them and is considered to be generally valid (Geertz 1966: 5). The interpretations presented in this paper are based on the idea that individuals can understand and re-interpret symbols and their stable significances differently and under the influence of diverse contexts (Soukup 2011: 572).

The symbolic significance of dance parties appears at several levels: they are well known³ and they are given stable characteristics (socialization as a way to ensure a community's continuity). Although dance parties, or their forerunners in the form of different dance occasions related to traditional village life, are bound to many other significances, which were more or less reflected by the community itself, available sources and the expert reflection thereof reveal the distinct socialization function of various forms of folk festivities. Moreover, it is obvious that this property can be so apparent and undoubtable (not only) for the members of rural communities that there is no need to explain it in many cases – not even in texts written by contemporary and older authors dealing with occasions to dance.⁴

Knowledge of dance events' stable function and elementary form makes the adaptation of individuals to a new environment and their integration into communities easier. The formulation of ideas about how the symbolic significance was attributed to dance parties is moreover completed by the form of discussions taking place at different levels – local and regional – of the hierarchy of power in the era of late socialism.

British anthropologist Anthony Cohen has thought about the importance of symbols for the creation of ideas about the existence and vitality of communities. In his texts he emphasizes the reflection of perceived boundaries and limits, which create the basic reference frame to identify “us” and “them” (cit. according to Donnan – Wilson 1999: 21). For this reason, modernization causes symbols to be of increasing importance for a

community because boundaries are increasingly shifted from the physical level to the symbolic level (Cohen 1985: 117). The discussion about dance parties constitutes an optimal field for monitoring this process. A great quantity of people gathered and mingled in a small space, and diverse levels of mutual relations, hierarchies, and differences were reflected there. These were more or less reflected by those participating who created them with their behaviour or were involved in them.

Cohen also explores the idea of the continuity of communities, which use symbolic significances that keep them imaginarily alive. Symbols feature high adaptability to new concepts, which makes it possible to ensure the continuity of a community that identifies with them, providing the external conditions allow that at least a little (Cohen 1985: 91). Later we will see that the authoritarian regime of late socialism provided such conditions and helped create them due to some of its principles – and imperfections.

It must be emphasized that the above-mentioned theories are applied to local communities in this paper – village communities that are bound together by local citizenship, local identity, and relationships with a certain limited space. Similar communities could be further differentiated and accompanied by internal conflicts between two or more opinion streams or power cliques. On the other hand, individual members of village societies became members of other communities during their lives, which were defined by different spaces and symbols – interest and professional groups and informal fellowships.

Diverse levels of mutual relations, as well as affiliations with diverse groups, could be reflected at dance parties, which is obvious from the following examples. Contemplation about their symbolic significance is (however) based on the presumed existence of a local, village community to which all the narrators, while being interviewed, claimed more or less their allegiance in connection with the expression of their local identity and relationship to their native village.

Generational Viewpoints

Contemporary witnesses' reflections confirm that they perceive the transformation of dance parties in the 1970s and 1980s as interference with a form that had existed “from time immemorial”. The arrival of amplifiers for music seems to have been a dominating stimulus

for the transformation in strategies of behaviour and ways of organization – it may even be argued that such intervention might have been identical with electrification in the first half of the twentieth century (which made the safe and easy organization of dance parties in the evenings possible). Older generations of visitors usually accepted the music production with amplifiers in a contradictory way, as “too noisy”. This was reflected in the strategies of party organization – events intended for young people from the broader surrounding area (with produced modern music, mostly rock) began to be organized separately from “knees-ups” intended as a meeting of village residents across generations.

“It’s conditioned, I would say, it’s conditioned by the type of the music. Earlier it was brass music, and therefore the spectrum of visitors ranged from sixteen to maybe eighty. But today, because it is required to have modern music there, so many older people don’t go there, as the noise is excessive, this is, a rumble, and even us, although we don’t consider ourselves to be the oldest, but I mind it now, that you cannot sit at the table and talk normally, as there is such noise, and the brass music also has amps today and this is so needlessly noisy, so I think that this is also a reason why the spectrum of visitors is changing a little bit, and the older people simply don’t go there.” (Mr U., Petrovice)

“This was given by the band; Arcus, Hurikán, or Motýlci and so were invited, so it was given and everybody knew it was modern music, so the posters were placed for that in the environs, yeah, and spread around, so young people came together for that, you know, and when it was a traditional dance party, so I would say the whole village went there, or it could be said like that.” (Mr K., Rokytná)

Although the focus of particular dance parties began to differ according to the target group of visitors (usually “traditional” events on occasions associated with the cycle of festivities in the course of the year – Shrovetide / Easter / kermesse, and “modern” dance parties whenever throughout the year), the stability of their value for the community did not change significantly (which can be reflected using semiotics – the title “dance party”⁵⁵), and their existence was not questioned in contemporary discussions. Despite mentioned displeasure due to the “noise” and subsequent division of “knees-ups” based on the kind of music involved, it is also possible to notice recollections of the continual existence of “soudná

stolice” [judgment seats] at “modern” dance parties. This term was used by local communities in the studied locations (and also elsewhere in Moravia) to name dance party visitors, mostly women, from older generations.

In the past, ethnographic researchers interpreted the attendance of dance parties as an instrument of social control within rural society to supervise the maintenance of good morals and to ensure the imaginary continuity of the community (Frolec 1982: 24). Local communities perceived the phenomenon of judgment seats as natural, and contemporaries from villages, where the judgment seats have survived, mention them rather by the way and with no hesitation or need to explain the importance of the “seats” – they understand them as something that is well known (which brings us back to the definition of a symbol). The “judgment seats” are more often mentioned by narrators from different regions who travelled to dance parties held in “more traditional” agricultural villages: the transformation of dance parties on the background of modernization attracted visitors who may have perceived phenomena like this (moreover without knowing common titles used for them) as an imaginary oddity.

“So, for example here in these kinds of villages, they had Našiměřice, Bohutice, Krumlov, Rakšice, there, simply the Znojmo region, downwards here, Arcus [a rock band] had all that; the youth were crazy about them, yup, already at the end of the seventies. But what was interesting there, so in any case in those villages, a balcony, a gallery, on the balcony gamblers were sitting until early morning, until two, half past two, until the party ended, poker faces, just watching. This no longer exists [from the narrator’s point of view], but earlier they just came to watch, of course, grand-daughters, daughters, and so on, so that they did not cause any mischief, so that they could look after them, and at the same time, they went there to entertain themselves, what the youth lark about today, what they fool around and so on, you know, this is interesting, that phenomenon in those eighties.” (Mr A., Dolní Kounice)

The continual existence of judgment seats can be perceived to be proof of the symbolic significance of dance parties (including modern “rock” ones) for the continuity of rural communities and for passing down values and ideas from generation to generation. Their reflection also points to the interconnection of the temporal (generational) and spatial levels of social transformations: the above recollection could not have

been recorded without a boom in mobility and increased attendance by people who came from a different environment and who did not know the judgment seats. In this sense, dance parties represent a field to follow aspects which could not be perceived without contact with otherness and without reflection of imaginary boundaries. As already noted, modern society reflects the limits of otherness more often at the symbolic level, and the “knees-ups” concisely point out a wide spectrum of levels at which the imaginary divide could be perceived. One of these levels could reflect the idea of boundaries between age groups and their preferences, lifestyles, and entertainment choices:

“They were I think in their thirties at that time, right, and I was a sixteen-year-old kid, so they were somewhat from another generation, but we used to go together, and I experienced here the years, when I was about fifteen, sixteen, that I attended the parties with them, but as I say, they were simply old men for me, who had other trends, though, they were sitting in a pub and I drew them: ‘Boys, come to the dance party, let’s go to the hall.’ But they did not go earlier than after the tenth beer, so I always broke away from them at the party, and I was there with those, how to say it, my own.” (Ms L., Rokytná)

The generational level was reflected not only in ideas about the way of behaviour but also in evaluations of the form of dance, clothing, and the total transformation of normative ideas in rural communities, which is witnessed by records from period ethnographic research, in addition to recollections recorded in the present day. It is possible to mention an example from Loděnice, a village situated in the newly settled regions of South Moravia near the Moravský Krumlov area and Dolní Kounice:

“This is not so long ago when I attended dance parties. You had to have a new dress, new shoes. And now they are wearing trousers, those blue jeans, these are torn, but they don’t mind that. They get dressed like this on workdays, festive days, Fridays, no difference. And when the dance ends, then everybody is outdoors. This was not possible at all. Either we went to the taproom for a fizz, a snifter, or a coffee. And now everybody is outdoors, when they have the hashish,⁶ those young people.” (Pospíšilová 1985: 63)

The perception of symbolic boundaries was reflected in many levels associated with the perception of space.

The Transformation of the Perception of Space and the Reflection of Boundaries at the Symbolic Level

At dance parties, stereotypical ideas about the environs and the character of inhabitants of particular villages and their lifestyles were concisely materialized. The processes of urbanization and the convergence of the countryside and the city had a strong effect on such reflection. The individualization of relations in more urbanized regions in contrast to the behaviour of youth coming from an agricultural environment can be illustrated by a recollection of a narrator from Rokytná, a small village situated near the district border and the imaginary dividing line between the dominant ways of earning a livelihood. From the point of view of a frequent visitor to dance parties, these were places where the ideas of the “industrial north” – the Rosice-Oslavany coalfield – and the “more traditional” villages in the “agricultural south” created a different context. The different environment was subsequently associated with the behaviour of young people, through which the gradual individualization of interpersonal relations was reflected:

“I perceived it was a kind of imaginary border, [...] north of Krumlov, the villages are rather industrial, where the young people behaved like, you know, I saw a little bit they inclined to a different direction, and south of Krumlov, I see the agriculture there, that the tradition is like something more there. Even though the modern band Arcus performed there as well, and I noticed that the atmosphere seemed to be different. I noticed when the people came from that agricultural environment, so the groups which came were larger. From Petrovice eight people went there together and so on, but from the north it was more individual, and maybe they went by car or simply it was like it is today. In the agricultural... There were perhaps groups, that boys, girls attended the parties, which didn’t exist in the north. I think this is not only my opinion, that simply in the industrial... There were either couples or groups independent of the villages and of who was friends with who. And even it happened that in the agricultural environment there were brawls when Petrovice brawled with Lesonice, but in the industrial... This did no longer exist, there brawled Franta with Josef, and it was done.” (Mr K., Rokytná)

Besides the dichotomy between the “traditional” and the “modern”, it is possible to encounter the reflection of stereotypical ideas about particular municipalities,

for example, in perceiving the differences between the “centre” and the “outskirts”. The catchment area in the Moravský Krumlov area, which also covers Petrovice and Rokytná, was, during normalization, defined mainly by the scope of activity of the local agricultural cooperative (Jednotné zemědělské družstvo, JZD) – a Czechoslovak parallel to Soviet *kolkhozy* established during the collectivization of agriculture. The agricultural cooperative called “9 Mai” was founded by the merger of several smaller cooperatives in the 1970s, in keeping with the tendency to create large production units by uniting many municipalities and larger cultivated lands (Valeš 2014: 483).⁷ Jamolice is situated at the edge of the area annexed to the above-mentioned agricultural cooperative, and it is quite a remote village, at the imaginary periphery of this region, where, according to a contemporary witness from Rokytná, people live who have been “specific since time immemorial”. A similar stereotype got a particular frame at the meetings with young people from Jamolice at dance parties.

“[about brawls] And specifically I would say that Jamolice, it was, and it still is today, very peculiar, stranger, and they were most typical in that, simply when somebody touched a Jamolice man, the minute all from Jamolice were there, I would say, nobody anywhere, nobody that they sat together, I don’t know, what, simply, they were so widespread around the party, when somebody touched a Jamolice man, the minute all those from Jamolice woke up and went to him to defend him, to help him.” (Mr K. Rokytná)

Knowledge about and the popularity of dance parties were useful also in the case of the ever more frequent commuting of rural youth for studies to the cities. The sharing of symbols and their stable significances may have helped integrate new students into new communities, which were based on a common “rural” origin and which determined the reflection of the imaginary boundaries between the countryside and the city in contacts with local students, who did not attend village dance parties. The experience of having attended similar events could help as a point of contact for socialization among rural students, even if, for example, dance parties in the Znojmo area looked a little bit different than the “knees-ups” in the Vsetín area. It was not necessary to explain and describe details for their mutual understanding; knowledge about the stable significance of these events was sufficient:

“I always got there, even at the campus, and when we had a group at the university, how shall I say that, it is something like that, that a person gets chummy with his or hers of the same blood type, which means, that I was again with the kids there who were from smaller villages, like me, who knew the dance parties, even if we did not attend any dance parties in Brno, of course.” (Ms L., Rokytná)

In the context of the Czech countryside in the era of late socialism, dance parties constitute an imaginary field around which a discussion and ideas associated with key dichotomies developed; these dichotomies mirror the social atmosphere, identities, and understandings of the modern world – modern / traditional, centre / periphery, industrial / agricultural, and village / city. Due to their symbolic significance, they succeeded in remaining a subject whose existence was not disrupted or questioned by the above discussions.

Rural Communities, the Authoritarian Regime, and Dance Parties as Symbols

Studying period discussions among local officials seems to be very important for interpreting the symbolic significance of dance parties. During normalization a plethora of formal requirements had to be met to organize a dance party. First, the event had to be held under the patronage of a social organization, which was allowed to operate only under the auspices of the National Front;⁸ it was usually the local organization of the Socialist Union of Youth (Socialistický svaz mládeže, SSM), a parallel to the Soviet Komsomol; the Fire Brigade (Sbor požární ochrany); or the Czechoslovak Union of Physical Education (Československý svaz tělesné výchovy, ČSTV), an organization for sports teams. Similarly, each performing music ensemble also had to have a patron in addition to being awarded a “přehrávky”, meaning that they had to undergo an approval process before a commission that assessed the musicians’ practical skills, theoretical knowledge, and political and ideological grounding. The entire process of dance party approval was completed with an application, which included a list of pieces the band would perform, submitted to the local government of the village or city where the dance party was supposed to take place (in the period of Czechoslovak socialism, the municipality was titled the “Local National Committee” [Místní národní výbor, MNV]) – and with an

announcement to the local police (Veřejná bezpečnost – VB) (Houda 2011: 320; Mr K., Rokytná).

Discussions about dance parties constitute a very significant part of the minutes that were kept during sessions of the commissions working at local and district national committees, and which were investigated for the purpose of this study – namely those of MNV Dolní Kounice and the District National Committee (Okresní národní výbor – ONV), a higher stage in the administrative hierarchy, in the adjacent District of Znojmo (under whose competence Rokytná and Petrovice fell).⁹ The complex approval process provided the above-mentioned commissions with a large space to discuss, influence, and interfere in the organization of dance parties. Moreover, the over-bureaucratic centralized system of the authoritarian regime (Rataj – Houda 2010: 373) provided a large field upon which village officials, who often had various reasons for wanting to keep dance parties in their villages, could advocate their own interests and initiatives.¹⁰ The above-mentioned materials feature several levels at which the organizing of cultural events was discussed – the local level; the communication of particular components in the administrative hierarchy; and discussions among representatives from different spheres of the complicated power system, especially from the administrative and security spheres. One can also encounter communication with the bodies of the Communist Party (or better said, the mediation of their will).

The transformation of dance parties – with the arrival of modern rock music and improved accessibility for young people from the broader region – gradually brought about many pathological problems, which in official discussions were associated with increasing criminal activity. This completes the picture of the 1980s, which was formed by a worsening economic situation, supply shortfalls, and frustration about the poor situation in the public space and the natural environment. For this reason, topics associated with dance parties were debated not only at the plenary sessions of cultural and school commissions of local national committees, which dealt with dance party approvals, but also often at plenary sessions of commissions dealing with the protection of public order, which could put restrictions on such events and impose fines on the organizers for possible offences. Under the influence of Soviet *perestroika*, troubles were mentioned in the media in the late 1980s, even at the local level – for

example in *Dolnokounický zpravodaj* [The Newsletter of Dolní Kounice] (Pullmann 2011: 196; Řezáč 1988).

The competent commissions often strongly criticized dance parties, but appeals to forbid them appeared only sporadically – and always in discussions conducted outside the local environment – for example at an off-site session of the District of Znojmo’s Commission for the Protection of Public Order in 1984, where the proposed idea to forbid dance parties led to the counter-argument that such a restriction made no sense, as young people would still meet without any organization or supervision.¹¹ Local commissions also saw suggestions for different regulations – a ban on the sale of spirits or alcohol in general,¹² the determination of the time when a dance party may take place, and even the non-permission of an event for a particular organizer if an inspection reveals any shortcomings at the party (improper labelling of organizers, serving alcohol to minors, vandalism). However, the minutes show that dance parties were usually approved, even though occasionally with defined terms and conditions (e.g., the organizer had to accept some temporary work hours).¹³ Moreover, local administrations and social organizations were strongly criticized for their benevolent approach to permitting dance parties by the representatives of security services:

“The activity of organizers of particular events also gives a negative impression; they are mostly interested in the financial effect and high attendance despite the artistic and ideological-educational content of the event. The situation like this has been recently revealed mainly at the events organized by the Socialist Union of Youth and the Czechoslovak Union of Physical Education, which use the financial profit for their own leisure activities. They consider the social structure of the visitors to be secondary (independent youth, objectionable and criminal subversives). At events of that type verbal performances and contra-social and contra-socialist expressions occur – vandalism, consumption of alcohol and drugs, violent crimes.”¹⁴

How is it possible that dance parties were permitted despite the thorny debates like those above? Could this be explained by just economic interest, social organizations’ desire for earnings, and support from local officials due to the strong interconnections within rural communities? Or was it a matter of local identity and the desire to maintain the community’s continuity, which the dance

parties symbolized? Undoubtedly, there must have been many factors that could have influenced the existence of “knees-ups”, including economic ones. However, if we take into account the above-cited views, which reflected the participants’ perception (including the surviving existence of “judgment seats”), the debates about dance parties and local officials’ varying levels of support for them fit in the mosaic explaining their significance.¹⁵ The expectations of earnings may have been attractive, but former functionaries of local Socialist Union of Youth organizations remember the dance parties as natural opportunities to meet, and they see the situations in which no dance parties took place in their village (for example, before the community centre in Rokytná was built) as pathological.¹⁶ They liked speaking about them, they were spontaneous in their speech, and they connected the existence of dance parties with the expression of local identity and relationship to the native village.

The above-mentioned discussions show that occasionally social organizations and local officials had to “defend” dance parties against pressure “from the outside”. The principles of the authoritarian regime and its limits made their “defence” possible. It was also made possible by the system of power that did not work too effectively at the time of “normalization” due to the parallel existence of several power structures (the Communist Party, administration, and security). This system created the space for local interpretations of different regulations and instructions.¹⁷

Conclusion

Dance parties seem to be a space in which it is possible to observe the reflection of the imaginary boundaries of otherness, which is symptomatic of modern society at the symbolic level. Above all, they create a subject to which a symbolic significance is attributed in rural communities in south-western Moravia (and probably elsewhere in the Czech lands). They were an important subject of monitoring, negotiating, and discussions – in particular at inter-generational, spatial, and power levels, without their existence being questioned on the part of rural communities’ members. The matters “surrounding” dance parties could be interfered with or they could be

changed or modified under the influence of the processes of modernization, but their stable and unchangeable symbolic significance ensured them relative inviolability. Due to the late-socialist authoritarian regime’s limits and poor coordination of power structures, the regime provided a (limited) field for the reproduction of similar symbols, interests, and values.

The application of the above-mentioned principles could differ in terms of regions and locations – everything was dependent on the relations within the community, on the initiative and motivations of local officials and people possessing the proper power. Rock dance parties, as a product of modernization and the specific context of late socialism, are a phenomenon that was highly popular in rural regions in different corners of the Czech lands – for example in South Bohemia, in the Třebíč and Pilsen areas, and in the region of Wallachia. Dance parties, as well as their general acceptance by local bodies of power, may have differed regionally – they attracted mostly urban youth in peri-urban areas, and, for example, in South Bohemia the police did not hesitate to use force against those attending dance parties (which did not happen in south-western Moravia according to recollections) (Kudrna – Stárek 2017: 113). The situation may have also differed in connection with the individual interests of local officials and based on their explanation of regulations coming from their superior bodies. A certain level of symbolic significance for the local community could, in general, represent an element that more or less helped maintain their existence.

The outlined propositions show ways in which it is possible to look at social transformations and to ensure continuity in the rural environment on the background of the processes of modernization. They show how relative is the emphasis laid on the binary categories of the relationship between power and society, winners and losers, and victims and heroes, which have been used in studies on the period of “normalization” to date. Above all they try to work with inspiring theories on the reflection of late socialism and those on the interest in local communities, and they suggest possible ways to use these theories in research on (not only) the late socialist countryside.

NOTES:

1. Interviews with eighteen narrators were conducted in the years 2015-2017. Crucial for the selection of the narrators was their participation in social life and various leisure activities (sports, amateur theatre) during the (researched) period of normalization and their membership in social organizations. For this reason, the recordings include recollections of active and initiative members of rural communities who created, and often still create, the character of public life in municipalities. They represent different generations (the oldest narrator was born in 1930, the youngest, in 1976) with different interests and different attitudes towards the period of socialism.
2. Materials at the State District Archives Brno-venkov and Znojmo were studied, with the emphasis laid on the records of cultural, school, and security commissions of local national committees and the District Committee Znojmo (within the District of Brno-venkov the archives of the district committee have not been processed, and they are not available for study). Furthermore, files from district and regional centres of the National Security Corps in the Security Services Archives were consulted.
3. The reflection of dance parties and dance itself as something that is common can be traced in the difficulties that accompanied the efforts of Čeněk Zíbrt when he tried to get sources for his book *Jak se kdy v Čechách tancovalo* [How People Used to Dance in Bohemia] (Stavělová 2003: 67).
4. For example, Čeněk Zíbrt, without the necessity for deeper commentary, quotes a source from the eighteenth century in his text based on period criticism of folk merry-making: "*Even mothers instigate their daughters to go dancing in order to meet somebody there and to get married after that*" (Zíbrt 1895: 272). More recent authors also mention the socialization property of dance parties without the need for more detailed explanation. For example, Pavel Novák writes: "[...] moreover young people were socially differentiated and their dance parties were often held separately, so the young people had strictly more chances to meet their mates from the same social environment than from a different one." (Novák 2007: 147)
5. It is appropriate to make a comparison with the discos that began to be organized in Dolní Kounice in the 1980s. In contrast to dance parties, discussions about a ban imposed on these events were running at local levels, if those events turned out to be "full of problems". Discos, according to contemporaries' recollections, were not as popular as dance parties were. These were mostly events with reproduced (not live) music, which took place outside community halls (in a café), or in private facilities after 1989. Discos did not have to be perceived as a natural part of social life in a municipality, and the continuity of "traditional" occasions for socialization did not have to be reflected in this case. It is necessary to emphasize that this text monitors the local context of the municipalities in which the research was carried out – elsewhere "discos" may have had a different form and the local community could have positively received them. Arguments concerning dance parties can be supported by the citation of a much wider base of sources, including sources of district, regional, and security provenience, which were purposefully collected for the doctoral research (Mr B., Dolní Kounice; Mr U., Petrovice; SOkA Brno-venkov, MNV Dolní Kounice, Book 89, *Minutes from the session of the Commission for the Protection of Public Order from 18 November 1985*).
6. In several regions in Moravia, for example in the Znojmo area, "hashish" is a term used for modern dance parties.
7. Similar high-capacity agricultural cooperatives helped bring rural and urban lives closer together, and they were comparable with industrial complexes (among other things, they organized cultural and recreational activities for the cooperative members).
8. The National Front was formed as an imaginary coalition of political parties in the specific period after World War II. The focus of this coalition was to collaborate on the renewal of the devastated post-war Czechoslovak Republic. Democratic elections were permitted only among political parties unified in this coalition – the curtailment of the democratic regime was advocated due to the necessity to collaborate and efforts to "purge" politics of all forces discredited during the Nazi occupation. After the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia seized power in 1948, the National Front became the only legal platform, and it included a limited number of political parties and social organizations – focused on culture and sports. It was subject to the directives of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the leading position of which was anchored in the constitution. The National Front was a platform that served to legitimize Communist Party rule (Rataj – Houda 2010: 76).
9. Corresponding materials for the District of Brno-venkov, in which Dolní Kounice is situated, have not been processed to date, and for this reason they are not available for investigation.
10. Inefficiency and lack of communication are clear in many archival materials. Comp. SOkA Brno-venkov, MNV Dolní Kounice, Book 89, *Minutes from the Session of the Commission for the Protection of Public Order, held on 26 March 1979*.
11. SOkA Znojmo, Z/ONV-III, case 597, Commission for the Protection of Public Order, ONV Znojmo, *Minutes from the off-site session of the Commission for the Protection of Public Order ONV Znojmo, held on 18 September 1984*.
12. The sale and consumption of distilled alcohol at dance parties were forbidden by Act No. 120/1962 Coll., on the fight against alcoholism. Knowledge about laws and the degree to which they were adhered to differed across village administrations, social organizations, and even commissions at the district level. Comp. SOkA Brno-venkov, MNV Dolní Kounice, Book 89, *Report from the Plenary Session of the Anti-Alcoholic Brigade of the District National Committee, held on 31 March 1982*.
13. SOkA Brno-venkov, MNV Dolní Kounice, Book 99, *Minutes from the Session of the Commission for Culture and Education, held on 5 September 1988*.
14. Security Services Archives, Regional Headquarters of the National Security Corps [KS SNB] Brno, *Inspection Report about the Situation in the Section of Professional and Folk Music Bands in the South-Moravian Region. Based on the Decision of the Presidium of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia [KV KSC] from June 1983*.
15. While monitoring the "defence" of dance parties by local officials against outside pressure, it is possible to search for parallels to mentions about permitting dance parties in the pre-socialist past in contrast to critics of folk dance on the part of the church or nobility. However, it must be added that, besides the desire to dance, the

desire to earn money was mentioned at that time – the parallel to the principles of dance party permission at the time of late socialism can be searched for even there (Zíbrt 1895: 166).

16. In Rokytná the pub was closed in 1954, and then dance parties took place only occasionally in its dilapidated hall. The pub was situated in a private house (which the ageing operators were allowed to keep, in contrast to trade), and the owners, according to recollections, disliked lending the hall and did so with displeasure. The Warsaw Pact invasion on 21 August 1968 allegedly provided the pretext for them to not lend the hall for kermesse in November of the same year, due to the “tense situation”. The impossibility to

organize social life was then one of the factors influencing why local young people were willing to take active part in the activities of the Socialist Union of Youth (established in the village in 1972) and subsequently in the construction of the community centre (finished in 1973) (Mr K., Rokytná).

17. The expression of one’s own interests was, among other things, conditioned by the use of period language, which was full of standardized empty phrases, the use of which was perceived at a performative level at the time of late socialism, which made it possible to apply that language in new, unexpected contexts, which often even defied the original ideas (Yurchak 2006: 121).

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- Interview with Mr K., 14 March 2017. Author’s own archives.
- Interview with Mr A., 12 February 2016. Author’s own archives.

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- Interview with Mr U., 6 June 2016. Author’s own archives.
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Summary

Dance parties constitute a field that concisely reflected the processes of modernization and urbanization of the Czech countryside in the 1970s and 1980s. Dance parties can also be perceived as places that have maintained their stable position in the hierarchy of values and ideas accepted by local inhabitants, which are, among other things, associated with the viability of their own community. This was possible due to the symbolic function of dance parties – phenomena with symbolic significance are endowed with high adaptability to changes. The stable significance of dance parties for a community can be exemplified by discussions conducted in the fields of space, generations, and power. These discussions understand dance parties as a subject based on which ideas about the ability of a community to function are communicated. The symbolic function of dance parties is the reason their existence is not called into question. This paper is based on doctoral field research, which was carried out in two different locations – in a small rural town facing more intensive processes of modernization and in two rural municipalities (everything though is set in a wider regional context).

Key words: Socialism; countryside; social transformation; social life; dance parties; symbols; Czechoslovakia.

“DO NOT ALLOW HISTORY AND MEMORY TO BE FORGOTTEN!” RE-EMIGRANTS FROM YUGOSLAVIA AS A MEMORY COMMUNITY OF AN ALTERNATIVE COLLECTIVE MEMORY

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We live in an era of *memorialism*, to paraphrase the words of Pierre Nora (Nora 2002). The societal *boom* in interest in memory and the lives of *small people* has brought an opportunity (and simultaneously the necessity) to thematize the great national narratives and dominant discourses about the past, and to confront them with the collective memories of marginalized social groups. A space for a plurality of historical memories of individuals, families, institutions, and social groups, which provides a possibility to accentuate another memory besides the *correct memory* that corresponds to the dominant interpretation of the past, is considered to be *one of the major contributions of the post-Communist regimes that adopted liberal democracy* (comp. Slačálek 2013).¹

The group of Czechoslovak citizens who actively took part in the partisan (Communist) antifascist resistance movement in Yugoslavia is among the bearers of such an *alternative* memory.² After the Second World War, the descendants of those who had emigrated from the Czech lands took up the offer of Czechoslovakia, and, within the political project of the post-war restoration of the borderlands, they settled the areas, mainly in South Moravia, from which the old German residents had been expelled.

In this paper, which draws from research based on the interpretation of narrative interviews, biographic interviews, and ethnographic (participant) observation in the Moravian villages of Jiříce near Miroslav and Míšovice (held in 2016-2018), where the group settled, I argue that the *non-ethnic otherness*³ of the group's members alongside their specific historical experience (articulated through communicative and cultural memory as part of family remembering and public commemorative events) has led them to the formation of their own memory community, which produces counternarratives to the narrative produced as a result of the contemporary anti-Communist-oriented politics of memory. The *alternative* memory of this memory community is represented mainly

by the most visible expressions of group remembering, which has been stabilized by the institutionalization of these expressions: they include interpretations, attitudes, and activities associated with the past that were clearly identified in interviews with informants, and which were simultaneously observed and articulated in the form of ritualized behaviour and public speeches at commemorative meetings.⁴

The Construction of the Czechoslovak Borderlands, the Partisan Resistance of Expatriates in Yugoslavia, and Their Re-Emigration

The period immediately after the Second World War brought the extinction of a multi-ethnic environment in Czechoslovakia, which led to the homogenization of Czechoslovak society. The mass displacement of German residents and resettlement by the Czech and Slovak population involved several million people, and it was the most significant migration event in the Czech lands (Wiedemann 2016). The state plan aimed for the structural transformation of the borderlands, which was an “*experimental field for the construction and conversion of the Czechoslovakia into a state socialist system*” in the eyes of the political masterminds of this social and population experiment (Wiedemann 2016: 39-40).

The affected areas were settled not only by people from the inland regions of the state, but also by expatriate communities from eastern and south-eastern Europe (Volhynia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia). This large re-emigration event occurred between 1945 and 1950 (Vaculík 2002; Čapka – Slezák – Vaculík 2005). Appeals to return to the old homeland were directed to expatriates who were supposed to represent the *external part of the nation, the Slavic brothers, or the lost sons* from the perspective of the then political regime (Pavlásek 2012: 106-107; Spurný 2011: 288). The cleansed borderlands were to offer them a future, especially in agriculture. The expatriates in Yugoslavia were among those addressed as well:

“The Czechoslovak government is ready to take measures so that your unit can return to the homeland as a group immediately after the end of the war. We cordially squeeze your hands, all you heroic [antifascist, partisan] male and female fighters, and we look forward to being able to welcome you gloriously in the liberated Czechoslovak Prague.”⁵

These days, there are still dozens of locations in south-eastern Europe where people of Czech origin live, who came there mainly in the nineteenth century. Croatia is one such location, and we can find there what is the probably best organized Czech minority community in the world. Its life was significantly affected by the Second World War. In 1941, Yugoslavia was occupied by Nazi troops, and the pro-fascist Ustashe regime headed by Ante Pavelič founded the Independent State of Croatia (NDH, Nezavisna Država Hrvatska) in the majority of the former Croatian Banovina (Banovina Hrvatska).⁶ The Communist Party of Yugoslavia (KSJ) headed by Josip Broz Tito engaged in partisan resistance activities against the fascists, to which members of the Czech minority significantly contributed; in October 1943 they

established the 1st Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka:⁷ on 3 May 1943, the 1st Czechoslovak Battalion under the leadership of Josef Růžička was established as the first unit, and on 26 October the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* was founded near the Croatian village of Bučja. The brigade consisted mostly of Yugoslav Czechs and Slovaks in 1944 (of its 1000 soldiers, 915 were Czechs and Slovaks; Zona 2018: 13).⁸

The above-mentioned letter written by the Czechoslovak government was a reward for the partisan fighters, the majority of whom had Czechoslovak citizenship; the expatriates understood the letter as an invitation to permanently *return to the old homeland*. The magazine *Jednota* [Unity], issued by the Czechoslovak minority community, later published a resolution of the Svaz Čechů [The Association of Czechs] that emphasized the willingness to “*take over the task*” of settling the borderlands after the “*expulsion of the agelong enemies of Slavic nations, the German fascists*”, to become “*guards of the border*”, despite the necessity to “*leave the current cosy homes, to which we are tied by the tradition of brotherly love and shed blood for freedom*”.⁹

The Association of Czechs, an umbrella organization of the Czech minority, then began to organize the first transport for 250 fighters of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka*, which departed from Yugoslavia on 23 August 1945. This organized visit of partisan fighters became the first unplanned wave of Czech-Yugoslav resettlers to Czechoslovakia. The first actors of re-emigration understood the welcome and security offered by their old homeland as a reward for their participation in the victorious fight against fascism (Herout 2010: 14-15). The former *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* members settled mainly in two south Moravian villages, which had remained almost empty after the forced displacement of their German inhabitants – Jiřice near Miroslav and Míšovice.¹⁰ The largest wave of re-emigrants arrived in 1946, and the re-emigrants were transported on trains. The first stage of re-emigration in 1945-1946 included mostly demobilized soldiers-partisans and their family members (5,000 people); later on, it was mainly middle-sized peasants with Czechoslovak citizenship who participated in the return. Between 1945 and 1949, altogether about 11,000 Yugoslavian Czechs and Slovaks moved to Czechoslovakia (Vaculík 2002).



The arrival of Yugoslav partisans of Czechoslovak origin in Czechoslovakia in autumn 1945. Photo: courtesy of Marie Králová

Re-emigrants in a *Co-Ethnic Trap*

We consider the act of re-emigration to be an example of *co-ethnic migration*. Migration studies uses this term for migration processes in which the ethnicity of migration participants is understood as a legitimate entitlement for *returning* to an *ethnic* homeland on a voluntary or involuntary basis (Čapo Žmegač 2005: 205; Čapo Žmegač 2010: 9). State authorities and migrants perceive ethnicity as being shared with the majority population in the target state of migration, which becomes an *old-and-new* environment for those participating in the migratory movement.

The group of re-emigrants from Yugoslavia (especially from modern-day Croatia) was an ethnic minority until their move, and their re-emigration brought them to an environment in which they shared their ethnicity with the majority in their *ethnic homeland*. Although the successful procession of such encounters is in general based on the precondition of shared ethnicity and ethnic “*affinity*” and “*kinship*” (Brubaker 1998) between those newly coming and the original inhabitants, the process of coexistence was far from being trouble free. Common ethnicity does not automatically guarantee conflict-free adaptation and co-existence (Čapo Žmegač 2010). This was the situation in the case of the re-emigrants in the two studied villages, who after their arrival faced explicitly expressed contempt and condemnation from the “old” inhabitants living in the surrounding villages. But in fact even these inhabitants were new settlers who came from inland regions of Czechoslovakia and whose status of “old residents” was based only on the fact that they had arrived some weeks before the re-emigrants from abroad. This did not change anything about the fact that they soon formed a “*stratum of quasi-old residents that claimed a special position in relation to later arrived settlers, for example, to re-emigrants*” (Fojtík 1986: 21).

Interviews with informants (participants in re-emigration or their descendants) showed that the newcomers gained a reputation of being *brawlers* and *tearaways*; this was the result of, among other things, the fact that some of them intimidated their neighbours with guns that they had held onto after the war as a *relic* of their wartime partisan experience in Yugoslavia. The fact that the Czechoslovak administration attributed to them the distinctly positive political status of antifascist fighters with safeguarded Czech cultural identities did not play such an important

role in the everyday social reality at the lowest local level of life in the newly settled areas and did not prevent them from being perceived as a *strange* element. The re-emigrants found themselves in a “*co-ethnic trap*” (Čapo Žmegač 2010: 20), that is, in a position in which they were exposed to expectations and demands for their quick adaptation and integration, while also being assigned the status of *foreigners* (Čapo Žmegač 2010: 18).

The re-emigrants responded to the attitudes of their neighbours by developing an awareness of their own otherness and togetherness, which was based on their specific collective experience – active participation in the partisan (Communist) resistance movement led by Josip Broz Tito (meaning the Communist Party of Yugoslavia) and the re-emigration event that was understood as a reward for their self-sacrificing antifascist *fight for freedom*. The encounter between re-emigrants and *quasi-old residents* led to the gradual construction of the newcomers’ sub-ethnic exclusivity and to the formation of their *separate* identity, which proceeded from their shared patriotism and collective awareness of *being instrumental to freedom in their homeland and winners of the Second World War*. This narrative was spread and promoted by the Czechoslovak state immediately after the Second World War and their re-emigration, whereby the Czechoslovak state awarded them military medals for their efforts and activities in the Yugoslav antifascist (Communist) resistance movement.

Interviews with the direct participants in re-emigration and their descendants identified three dominating characteristics of the re-emigrants, on which they based their own group *non-ethnic alienness*: diligence, patriotism and cohesiveness, and mutual solidarity. As to the informants, it was their diligence and cohesiveness in the spirit of the slogan “*together in the fight, together in work*” (Mr J., Mišovice) that allowed them rapid social and economic growth soon after their arrival in Czechoslovakia, despite the sudden change in the eyes of the state after 1948, when the *welcomed heroes* became political enemies stigmatized as *unreliable Tito supporters* and *Yugoslavians* (see below).

The Post-War Discourse of National Recovery, Purification, and National Unreliability

The positive image of the resettled expatriates was constructed by narratives about the *necessity* and

deservedness of their *return*. The plan to transform the borderlands was represented by the period discourse of “*strengthening the nation*” (Spurný 2011: 289). However, governmental bodies also introduced a stigmatizing category of (national/state) *unreliability* in the years 1945-1948, which they temporarily anchored in the legislation of the state apparatus of the socialist regime after the Second World War. This designation was assigned to members of several minorities and to newly arriving groups of expatriates from different corners of Europe after the Second World War and reflected fears of experiencing another *betrayal* such as that of the Munich Agreement, and the social demand for social purification as a consequence of the nation state’s insecurity and its not obvious future (Spurný 2011: 120). The category of *unreliable persons* was a supra-ethnic roof under which all *strangers* were hidden, the externally assigned cultural otherness of whom was identified as potentially dangerous to the state regime. With reference to Mary Douglas’s concept of purity and danger, the term *that/those unreliable* can be perceived as reflecting the symbolic designation of possible intruders and *polluters* of a well-established order whereby the stigmatized “*polluting person is always the bad one*” (Douglas 2014: 160).

This post-war discourse made *unreliability* a basic attribute of otherness; it was based on the rhetoric of suspiciousness, which identified unreliability with otherness and the incomprehensibility of the strange (Spurný 2011: 124).

The suspiciousness of re-emigrants from Yugoslavia grew considerably after they began to be seen as a potential danger for the state regime of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in Czechoslovakia due to the political *quarrel* between Tito and Stalin and after the Cominform’s resolution in 1948. This had serious consequences for the re-emigrants from Yugoslavia, a new enemy country; the Czechoslovak Communist regime stigmatized them as suspect supporters of Josip Broz Tito, a political enemy, and their personal contacts with Yugoslavia were completely interrupted. Both countries also terminated all official contacts at the cultural, political, and economic levels.

Recollections of the lost status of heroes and those being instrumental to the homeland still elicited emotional responses during interviews with informants. Their responses related to the re-emigrants’ image and

assessment by the Czechoslovak ruling Communist Party clearly display the victimization motifs of *betrayal, grievance, and injustice* (“*they sorted us out*”, “*we were no longer good enough for them*”, “*we did not deserve that*”). In their narratives, the informants shaped, through experiences from the Second World War, a collective self-image of meritorious patriots and heroes, which, however, was wrongfully taken away from them due to the change of the political regime, and which was replaced by the negative stigma of those unreliable; *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* members were moreover deprived of all military medals, orders, and awards. Relations and contacts between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia improved after the death of Stalin in 1953. After gradual de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union under Nikita Khrushchev, the first secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the re-emigrants were again awarded the status of heroes. Despite their gradual rehabilitation as *heroes* of the Second World War, which symbolically culminated in 1963, when many re-emigrants were re-awarded the *Order of the Red Star* (or rather when the order was returned to them) in Jiřice on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žiřka*’s foundation, and in 1972, when they were given *Certificates for Participants in the National Fight for Liberation* pursuant to § 8 of Act No. 255/1946 Coll., the feeling of bitterness has survived in their recollections to date.

The Year 1989 as Historical Rupture and the Formation of the Czech Anti-Communist Discourse

When the evolving Czech liberal democracy found itself at *ground zero* in 1989, the only things it could lean on at that time of turbulent changes to overcome the necessary doubts and uncertainty concerning the future development of society were the rejection of everything that the former Communist regime brought with it and the vision of a democratic regime following the Western model. The process of decommunization, which was analogous to the process of denazification, became a means of legitimizing the new political establishment and the new state. According to political scientist Jacques Rupnik, it was in Czechoslovakia where decommunization was the most thorough within post-Soviet Eastern and Western Europe (Rupnik 2002: 17-18). At the legal level, the symbolic curtain was drawn over the former regime in

July 1993, when the Czech parliament adopted Act No. 198/1993 Coll. on the Illegality of the Communist Regime. The political regime that ruled from February 1948 until November/December 1989 was explicitly designated to be nefarious, illegitimate, and contemptible. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was declared a *criminal* organization (ibid).

The process of coping with the past, whether at the national or individual level, always involves attempts at overcoming the sometimes unpleasant and painful experiences that connect us with that past. One strategy for coping with the Communist past is to create new evaluative metanarratives that would legitimize the new regime in its new historical destiny, historical mission.¹¹ When thinking over history and its dis/continuities, the Czech environment (as well as that in other post-socialist countries) preferred the *totalitarian paradigm* produced by the very influential theory of totalitarianism (Hoenigová 2009: 651). This theory paid attention mainly to the political functioning of regimes, while the *pre-political* field of ideas, attitudes, and practices of individuals in everyday life remained outside of scholarly interest and analysis (Hrubý 2014: 270). This theory pushed through a vision of the world in which an *oppressive regime that holds power* and the *controlled society* oppose each other (comp. Geyer – Fitzpatrick 2009). The unassailable position of the negative assessment of the Communist era was based on the aforementioned simplifying dualistic theory of totalitarianism, which contributed to the creation of two images, which are accepted by nearly all of society today, about the period delimited by the Communist Party's rise to power in 1946-1948 and the year 1989.¹² According to the first image, the Communist period is an undifferentiated, uniform whole, while the other image is the result of the spread of a collective awareness about the former regime as an imported power structure that was exported by the Soviet Union. Due to these images, the Czechs could view themselves as the victims of *external* power and thus absolve themselves of (co)responsibility for their co-creation of and their participation in that "dark" period of the twentieth century (Pullmann 2011).

The *politics of memory* of the evolving Czech democracy, which was created after 1989 based on anti-Communist sentiment, became an *authoritarian discourse* formed by the anti-Communist assessment of historical

events, processes, and figures whose symbolism was transferred to the level of symbolic *sites of memory* (*Jáchymov, the third resistance, the Mašín brothers, Jan Palach, Milada Horáková, the watershed years of 1946, 1948, 1968 and 1989, secret police file screening, etc.*) (Slačálek 2013: 111). In a similar way, the group of re-emigrants, consisting of partisans and their descendants, draw from historical memory at the level of families and a memory community. Their cultural and communicative memory reflects a different and in many ways – in relation to the hegemonic anti-Communist politics of memory – skewed register of collective historical experience (from the point of view of the bearers of this memory of *reality*).

Annual Meetings of Re-Emigrants and the Creation of the Memory Community: "Do Not Allow History and Memory to Be Forgotten!"

As I have outlined above, the re-emigrants from Yugoslavia built their awareness of their own in-group membership on their specific historical experience, that is, their participation in the antifascist resistance movement and their experience of *non-ethnic otherness*. This *otherness* is articulated and strengthened at annual meetings that alternate between Jiřice and Míšovice-Hostěradice as part of commemorative events and celebrations of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka's* foundation, in cooperation with the *Český svaz bojovníků za svobodu* [Czech Association of Freedom Fighters], a club for participants in the resistance movements of the Second World War and their family members. These ritualized commemorative events have been organized since the 1960s, and they have developed based on the re-emigrants' needs of commemorating their own historical (cultural) memory and the partisan "cult".¹³ In the past, these events were attended mostly by re-emigrants/partisan fighters, who have since passed on the imaginary baton to their children, who take care of their historical legacy:

"In the morning, we laid wreaths to honour the memory of our brigade's members. Many of them made the supreme sacrifice in the fight, their life, but I dare to say that all of them knew why they were fighting and they were fighting for a good thing. You know, when you deduce what the German fascist regime prepared, [...] so today no one of us would sit here; that would have for sure turned out in a different way. So we can really

appreciate our ancestors and be thankful for their fight on our behalf, that they allowed us to live like this. Our ancestors knew that they fought the good fight! [...] We had to build everything here by ourselves in the entire history!”¹⁴

The generation of sons and daughters perceive caring for their ancestors' legacy as a historical necessity and moral obligation. This can be exemplified by a moment which was noticed during participant observation, when one of the main organizers of the annual meeting stated that “*those above* [meaning our deceased parents] *look after us*”.¹⁵

The commemorative events begin with a gathering of the participants at the Second World War memorial on the village greens in Jiřice and Míšovice. The gathering is followed by a festive parade, which is led by a man carrying the Czech flag (supplemented with an inscription reading “Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka”, a red Communist star on a white field, and the motto “Truth Prevails”), which is one of the major symbolic attributes of the memory community. Then, after the Czech anthem and a moment of silence, *Czech Association of Freedom Fighters* functionaries and other guests (e.g., mayors,

vice-mayors, direct participants in the antifascist resistance movement during the Second World War and their descendants), one after another, place wreaths at the monument. After that, the meeting continues in the community centre, where commemorative speeches about the historical importance of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* are given and a discussion with the present participants and guests is held. The programme includes a moment of silence to honour the memory of deceased *Czech Association of Freedom Fighters* and *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* members; the members who are still alive are awarded *Czech Association of Freedom Fighters* medals and orders of the first through third degrees. Mutual respect and a sense of belonging to the group are demonstrated by the use of the words *brothers* and *sisters*, with which the descendants of *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* members address each other:

“Dear brothers and sisters, [...] today we commemorate the 73rd anniversary of the 1st Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka which was founded in the former Yugoslavia. And because I advocate the slogan ‘Do not allow history and memory to be forgotten’, allow me to remember the



A meeting in Hostěradice to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka. Photo: Michal Pavlásek, 2017

heroism of our ancestors, fathers, mothers, and grandfathers. [...] Our ancestors maintained their national feeling, they were very well organized in expatriate clubs, they were progressive, and they were among the first ones to become involved in the fight against invaders..."¹⁶

The speeches that can be heard there relate to the historical task of the partisan brigade: they describe the origins of the brigade and the battles it engaged in, and they emphasize heroic acts and victims. They are followed by a *migration narrative* (a description of the details of the process of re-migration, i.e., of the train journey from Yugoslavia to Czechoslovakia), a *narrative about diligence and industriousness* (the quickly managed adaptation), and a victimizing *narrative of grievance* (the reaction to the change in their status when they found themselves more and more in the position of ignored heroes).

Public speeches and their rhetoric, the bestowing of symbolic artefacts in the form of commemorative medals and orders, and honouring those deceased during a particular year are accompanied by the telling of stories that are practically known by heart to everybody and which personally relate to the past of the families of participants in these events. The reason for recounting these stories is that they are well known to everybody inside the imaginary memory community (comp. Welzer – Mollerová – Tschuggnallová 2010: 18). We can understand them as a ritualized repeating, an institutionalized memory, in which the milestones of group history, which are worth remembering and memorizing, will be made permanently visible. This group, however, found itself in the shadow of the national narrative, which was significantly anti-Communist and which therefore did not prefer a group honouring the legacy of the Communist resistance movement in Yugoslavia. For this reason, the informants were highly critical when reflecting, both in the intimate space of their family and at public annual events of the memory community, the consequences of the Velvet Revolution. The present-day rejection of everything that was tied to Communist ideology sidelined the historical importance of the antifascist Yugoslav resistance movement (because it was organized by Communists) and the role of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* members.¹⁷

"Well, this is also my impression, that these victims are insufficiently somehow [...], simply that even the children at school don't hear about that, nobody speaks

about that, then. [...] Now, with the formation of the Association of Freedom Fighters it looks to be improved a little bit, and before the year 1989 the Association of Fighters against Fascism or something like that existed, and this included all of us, also the Volhynia Czechs and simply said all resistance movements. Well, it had a kind of importance, and it was remembered, and I think that the people who risked the most valuable thing they had and who made the supreme sacrifice, so you know, this should not be forgotten." (Mr J., Mišovice)

Heroes in the Old Times, Victims of the New Era

The informants' recollections demonstrate a quite clear chronology of historical moments that were essential in the life of re-emigrant families. They mainly spoke about the events of the Second World War and the events leading up to it (the occupation of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, the formation of the Independent State of Croatia, the foundation of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* and family members' joining it for patriotic reasons, descriptions of demanding conditions on the battlefield and everyday hardships associated with the war – mainly permanent fear of Ustashe members and German soldiers). They emphasized the reward for the *ancestors-partisans'* acts in the form of the offer to re-emigrate (*"our homeland did not forget us"*), the description of the journey on freight trains, the welcome and military awards they received in Prague, the



A veteran of partisan fighting in Yugoslavia who later reemigrated to Czechoslovakia. Photo: Michal Pavlásek, 2017

settlement of families in houses formerly belonging to Germans, and the gradual process of adapting to a new environment, which was however made more difficult due being stigmatized by their new neighbours, and after 1948 also by the change in political course. After they were given the status of heroes once again in 1963, they considerably favoured the regime of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia,¹⁸ and the regime and its representatives had almost cult-like respect for them as former *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* members



A monument to the partisans of the Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka who fell in Yugoslavia, Jiřice u Miroslavi. Photo: Michal Pavlásek, 2017

– that is, until the regime fell in 1989. For this reason, the group began to find itself in a position in which its *ancestors-heroes* (the winners of the Second World War and freedom fighters), who did not live to experience sufficient acknowledgment, were disregarded. This allows them to create an image of *forgotten heroes*, that is, *victims* of historical developments. Nevertheless, they have not reconciled themselves with this position, and they try to make their ancestors eminent at least through the speeches at their annual meetings, where they make appeals to acknowledge their ancestors' merits in the fight for freedom, when they "*made the supreme sacrifice, [...] simply said that would not be forgotten, then*" (Mr J., Míšovice).

There are no historical heroes without killed victims. Therefore, the status of *ancestors-heroes* is inseparably associated with reminders of their selflessness (and sacrifice) that brought freedom to subsequent generations ("*and our ancestor did fight for the freedom of our nation and against fascism*"). One of the informants delivered a speech at the annual meeting, which finished with the following words:

"So, I ask myself whether this fight of our ancestors made sense...? I would not like to live to see that the present-day development will degrade these sacrifices here and everything. [...] They were killed in the war under terrible conditions for our freedom! We would not be here without them, and Hitler would have won the war."¹⁹



A wreath-laying ceremony during a celebration of the founding of the Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka. Photo: Michal Pavlásek, 2017

References to the *fight for freedom* are an argument through which the group legitimizes its demand for the acknowledgment of its historical role and memory. Nonetheless, the currently prevailing anti-Communist politics of memory is based on the identical legacy. The acknowledgement of the successful *fight for freedom* (by the state, nation, and subsequent generations) is a *topos* used in the hegemonic and marginalized historical narratives. The common requirement of *objectiveness*, or an appeal to historical or moral *truth*, is another such *topos*.²⁰ Several descendants of the re-emigrants-partisans use the above way to require the *settlement* of the discourse through their calls for the mass media to be objective when reporting on historical events, contemporary geopolitical developments, and social affairs:

“The only thing I want is objectiveness and fair explanation! Not the fabrication of those events, but the journalists and presenters should describe the events as they happened. Not to fabricate, make things up, simply trample some facts and distort some others, to make friends from enemies, and enemies from friends, this is not fair, this is not fair! But this relates to the situation after ‘89, that much happens against what was before – that everything was wrong. Not everything was muck. [...] Before they spoke in the other reverse order, this is true and it is necessary to say that. But I say it because the ones who present that to the nation and the young generation, those ones should explain that objectively and fairly.” (Mr J., Míšovice)

The descendants of re-emigrants-members of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* consider themselves to be greatly disappointed and ignored by post-Communist developments to the extent that they have begun inclining towards alternative mass media, such as Aeronet and Sputnik – pro-Russian news websites; they perceive these sites as being the only truthful source of information, which can balance out the blindness of pro-Western public mass media (Czech Television, Czech Radio) and the liberal mainstream.

The values and attitudes of most informants can be described as considerably nationalist and conservative. This is strongly demonstrated by their criticism of Germans, which verges on hatred, which could be heard in public speeches. The Germans play the role of *agelong enemies* in relation to the described group of re-emigrants. The strictly negative relation to them finds

expression at many levels – for example, they criticize the efforts of many post-socialist governments to improve relations with Germany, as well as similar expressions with the same objective at the level of cultural events (Pilgrimage of Reconciliation from Pohorelice to Brno, Meeting Brno Festival). Defending the *inviolability* of the Beneš decrees is a major theme for them; the decrees were a central issue in the 2013 presidential election. During participant observations at the annual meetings, I often encountered criticism of Angela Merkel’s politics, especially in connection with the so called migrant crisis.²¹ The presented attitudes fully copy the recorded opinions and the ideological position that *Czech Association of Freedom Fighters* members present at public events (annual meetings of re-emigrants, as well as in Terezín, Lidice, etc.) and which are also features on the organization’s website²². That is why I assert that the levels of individual and communicative memory of re-emigrants’ descendants and that of institutionalized memory produced by *Czech Association of Freedom Fighters* functionaries (the *elite*), who publicly represent the group and provide it with institutional backing and symbolic protection, are becoming interlocked.

The Dissidents of Memory

Each society tells a story about itself; however, it is also important to have an opportunity to listen to stories with which (or with the narrators of which) we ourselves do not have to identify. This is the only way that allows us to create alternative frameworks of memory in relation to the dominating historical narrative. As oral historian Alessandro Portelli has stated, *“we cannot accept the hegemonic dictate which says that some things have to be forgotten, or – at least – they have to be remembered in a certain way, and not in another one, because that is ‘wrong’. The society in which fair dialogue between alternative narratives is made difficult and some of the narratives are ostracized is not a healthy democracy”*.²³

The politics of memory in post-Communism, which has taken the form of *ideology-memory*, tries to become generally valid through its moral imperative to *learn from the past* (Slačálek 2013: 108). The demand for and emphasis on the *lessons from the past* are also expressed by the descendants of re-emigrants from Yugoslavia (the generation of sons and daughters), who are a kind of encapsulated community of an alternative *counter-*

memory. They use it to accentuate that not everything that is usually associated with the former regime, must be – as one informant stated – *rubbed out*. The common past of their ancestors means for them a prerequisite for the creation of an identity aegis and for the search for their current place in a world that disrespects their images of the past (of their ancestors). For this reason, they ostentatiously show their dissatisfaction with the current exclusion of their ancestors-partisans from the national post-Communist narrative. The reason is that

they experience their unjustified removal from history, and the unappreciation of their family legacy and their imagined *family honour*. They find themselves in the position of contemporary *dissidents of memory*, who – even though only to a very limited extent – undermine the *totalitarian paradigm* and the current anti-Communist narrative, and who, in the end, support Portelli's words: "*The past could be a hell without measure and limits, but the feeling of nostalgia, the fact that it exists, means that we can only hardly call the present a paradise.*"²⁴

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NOTES:

1. In post-Socialist countries anti-Communist-oriented politics of memory distinctly dominate (Kopeček 2007; Slačálek 2013; Hrubeš – Navrátil 2017), but they are also accompanied by nostalgia for the former regime (Todorova – Gille 2010). This nostalgia reflects, if we paraphrase Michael Billig's well-known concept of *banal nationalism* (1995), *banalizing* hindsight, a kind of *banal socialism* (Luthar – Pušnik 2010: 2).
2. In this paper, I try to answer the question *why* we consider them to be bearers of this form of memory.
3. I use the term *non-ethnic otherness* to define such characteristics of the re-emigrants, which helped them form their own collective identity in relation to the Czechoslovak population, with whom they were supposed to share an ethnicity according to Czechoslovak authorities (comp. Spurný 2011: 288). As I will mention below, these characteristics include, in my opinion, diligence, patriotism, and mutual cohesiveness/solidarity.
4. The research is based on statements and participant observation of the commemorative activities of mainly second-generation Yugoslav re-settlers (i.e., the sons and daughters of the direct participants in the fighting of the Second World War and subsequent re-emigration); the re-emigrants' youngest descendants, their grandchildren, mostly declined the opportunity to take part in the research (their reason was lack of time). That is why I am aware of the fact that the memory of the observed group can be presented partially uniformly in the study. On the other hand, the participation of the youngest generation in the memorial events of the group and the several interviews that were conducted despite the youngest group members' prevailing indifference indicate that they understand their family past framed by the partisan experience as an important part of their life.
5. From the letter which the Czechoslovak government sent to the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* on 4 May 1945 from Košice (Herout 2010: 11).
6. The fascist regime violently suppressed any opposition, and it implemented racial laws against Serbians, Jews, and Roma. A system of concentration camps was introduced in order to purify Croatian society.
7. Iva Heroldová dealt with the activity of the brigade during the Second World War from the perspective of the Czechoslovak members of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* (1977).
8. Twenty per cent of the male population with Czech nationality became involved in the fight against the occupation of Yugoslavia. The biggest military action in which the brigade members participated was the Battle of Našice in November 1944 (Zona 2018: 30).
9. The Resolution of the Svaz Čechů [The Association of Czechs]. *Jednota*, 1, Daruvar, 16 March 1946, p. 1.
10. Re-emigrants who were interviewed recalled sharing their new homes for several weeks with the original German inhabitants who were waiting to be displaced.
11. Francis Fukuyama's theses elaborated in summer 1989 emblematically express the mood at that period, the proverbial *zeitgeist*; they speak about the triumphalist *end of history*, which he associated with the final victory of Western liberal democracy: "*What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.*" (Fukuyama 1989: 4)
12. The lexicon of the totalitarian theory dominated the public (political, cultural) discourse in the Czech Republic during the first years of post-Communism (Kopeček 2007: 12).
13. These were mass events in the past. In 1973, when the thirtieth anniversary of the brigade's foundation was celebrated, about three thousand people allegedly met outside the newly built community centre in Hostěradice, with the participation of regional and district government entities and a delegation from Yugoslavia. Today about 100-200 people take part in these events, who are also members of the *Czech Association of Freedom Fighters*. Memorial events related to the brigade's foundation also took place in Yugoslavia (in Daruvar, Croatia) and were attended by representatives of the re-emigrant community. These memorial meetings, too, were aimed at publicly articulating the active involvement of Czechoslovaks in the partisan resistance movement, and memorial ceremonies were meant to honour and remember the victims involved in

- the resistance movement through a group visit to a monument commemorating the foundation of the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka* near the village of Bučja (Croatia).
14. From a speech delivered by a member of the second generation of the resettled families at a meeting to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the brigade's founding, 23 October 2018.
 15. In addition to the memorial annual meetings, the re-emigrants' cultural memory leans on the "Hall of Combat and Labour Fame" in Hostěradice, which was established in 1975. The need to pass down the historical memory of the group was emphasized in the interviews (also) in relation to this place, when the informants critically assessed growing lack of interest among the public.
 16. From a speech delivered by a female member of the second generation of the resettled families in Jiřice near Miroslav on 21 October 2016.
 17. Although the informants explicitly relate the criticism of the post-Communist period (alongside the formation of national and conservative attitudes, see below) to the omitting of the historical role of the partisan resistance in Yugoslavia, their biographic trajectories also offer other reasons for their dissatisfaction in relation with the anti-Communist discourse – the economic situation of many of them got worse after the year 1989 (some of them worked in management positions) in collectivized agricultural cooperatives) or they lost their job position and they had to search a new job in a different branch, not in agriculture. Some of them are still confronted with the fact that they were members of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia before 1989 (the overwhelming majority of them were and still are members of the Communist Party).
 18. This is substantiated by public speeches given at the meetings of the partisans' descendants and by the responses of the informants who all share adoration for the former regime.
 19. From a speech delivered by a member of the second generation of the resettled families at the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the brigade's founding, 23 October 2018.
 20. All hegemonic narratives see the future of the nation state or society, about which they provide an official view, as the future of *the right* memory and values. The official national narrative in the Czech Republic after 1989 identifies, in the spirit of anti-Communism, the *right* and *truthful* memory with the sharing of the *objectively valid* values of the West – that is, a "*democratic state, property rights, and market, which should no longer be called into question*" (Slačálek 2013: 136-137).
 21. The observed debates and situations featured the presence of xenophobic attitudes towards current migrants from the Middle East and Africa, who, from the perspective of the informants, "*should fight for their homeland at home, as our forefathers did*".
 22. Český svaz bojovníků za svobodu [Czech Union of Freedom Fighters] [online]. Available at: <<https://bojzasvobodu.cz/o-nas/>> [accessed June 24, 2019].
 23. "Disidentské příběhy nejsou pravdivější než jiné." [Dissidents' stories are no more true than others'. The interview with the Italian oral historian Alessandro Portelli]. *Česká pozice* [Czech position] [online]. Available at: <http://ceskapozice.lidovky.cz/disidentske-pribehy-nejsou-pravdivejsi-nez-jine-f64-/tema.aspx?c=A150930_174555_pozice-tema_lube> [accessed June 24, 2019].
 24. Ibid.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES:

Český svaz bojovníků za svobodu [Czech Union of Freedom Fighters] [online]. Available at: <<https://bojzasvobodu.cz/o-nas/>> [accessed June 24, 2019].

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Summary

The study follows the trajectory of a group of re-emigrants who took an active part in the partisan (antifascist, or Communist) resistance movement during the Second World War in Yugoslavia and who established their own partisan unit, the *Czechoslovak Brigade of Jan Žižka*. After the war, partisans with Czechoslovak citizenship decided to answer the call from Czechoslovakia, and they and their families settled the areas from which the old German residents had been expelled. After their arrival, the state welcomed them as antifascist heroes (freedom fighters), but at the local level, they were accepted as undesired “outlanders”, “other Czechs”, or “Yugoslavians”. After Cominform issued its first resolution, the regime of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia stigmatized them as being “unreliable for the state”. After the fall of the Communist regime in 1989, they found themselves in a position of memory bearers, a position that did not correspond to the contemporary hegemonic anti-Communist narrative. Due to this fact, the second generation of re-emigrants in particular feels that their ancestors have been unjustifiably erased from history, their legacy and imagined family honour unrecognized. At their own commemorative meetings, they clearly demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the contemporary exclusion of their partisan ancestors from the post-Communist national narrative. I argue in the text that the perceived non-ethnic otherness in the past alongside their historical experience and the contemporary post-Communist politics of memory led the re-emigrants to the formation of their own memory community (and thus identity).

Key words: Partisan resistance movement; Yugoslavia; re-emigration; memory community; politics of memory; Czech Republic.

TAILOR'S GUILDS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE FORMATION OF WOMEN'S RURAL DRESS IN CENTRAL EUROPE IN EARLY MODERN TIMES

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The hitherto works that tried to describe and reconstruct rural clothing from the early Modern Times relied mostly on the analysis of literary sources, inventories of estates, and estates to orphans, which they supplemented with iconographic sources. The first group of sources submits the typology of garments and their enumeration in specific households in the city or in the countryside, while the other one predominantly reveals the changes in silhouette and division of clothing components. These works are exemplified by Zikmund Winter's writings that he devoted to the development of historical dress in the Czech lands in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. The core of the research is concerned mainly with the urban environment, but the author does not avoid describing the dress of rural residents, whereby he uses the analogy with the names and forms of folk dress from the late nineteenth century to describe its development. This was the reason why he included many errors in his work, which have tenaciously survived in scholarly literature up to date. Despite this fact, his work may not be denied a large historical extent and the quantity of collected materials, which was probably so binding that the author did not find an equal successor over the twentieth century. Studies written by Věra Trkovská, Irena Štěpánová, and Lydia Petráňová are rather the exception. It was only the large synoptic work by Ludmila Kybalová, called *Dějiny odívání* [The History of Clothing], that brought a necessary summary of the hitherto knowledge and showed its gaps. Recently several researchers have made effort to fill these gaps; most of them, however, deal with the development of noble dress – Milena Hajná, Alena Nachtmannová, and with urban clothing to a lesser extent – Veronika Pilná and Zuzana Safrtálová, and Alena Křížová, whereby rural dress is represented just marginally – Alena Jeřábková and Martin Šimša. The situation in neighbouring countries is very similar; the basic works are mainly based on research into iconographic materials and estates that are supplemented, more for illustration, by cuts of historical dress. Works by Polish historian Maria Gutkowska-Rychlewska and her

compatriot Irena Turnau are designed like this; the works put bigger stress on the development of tailor's and the cloth maker's handicraft and its influence on the form of the clothing. What is failing in the case of most works is the interconnection between the title and the depiction, the mutual relations of which is more illustrative than comparative. The blame mostly lay with little knowledge about cut constructions, their typical features, and tailoring terms, which would make it possible to interconnect a depiction with a particular cut and then with its period name. The solution of the above deficiency is brought up by the study on guild books with tailor's patterns, which contain not only cut constructions but also their period names. The sixteenth-and-seventeenth-century tailor's books have survived not only in the Czech lands but also in Slovakia, Poland, Austria, and Germany. The overview of the research in particular countries is summarized in the introduction to the book *Knihy krejčovských stříhů v českých zemích v 16. až 18. století* [Tailor's Pattern Books in the Czech Lands from the 16th through 18th Centuries] (Šimša 2014). At this point, Adam Glapa's pioneer study should be mentioned; this study deals with rural dress proofs in Polish tailor's books. Attention is also given to this by detailed studies from Austrian researchers, Lucia Hampel and Ingeborg Petraschek-Heim, which deal with particular tailor pattern books. Otto Domonkos summarised Slovak and Hungarian sources on this topic. By the way, the Hungarian research interconnecting historical sources, recent documents of historical garments, and tailor's patterns, as we see in works written by Mária Ember-Varjú, are an example of a suitably structured comparative study. This allows us to conduct needful comparative research into iconographic, construction, and written sources in Central Europe, and to get new information about men's and women's clothing and its basic parts. A significant added value of such structured research results also from the fact that beginning with the mid-sixteenth century, tailor's guilds became a dominating producer of garments not only in their home cities, but also in adjacent seigniorial domains.

Tailors, Stolíři [≈ Amateurs], and Vetešníci [≈ Clothes Menders]

The hitherto research dealt with the production and the producers of rural residents' garments rather marginally, and moreover, both depended on the approach of a particular discipline to the research subject-matter. For ethnographers, the formation of folk dress was one of essential expression of folk culture and its creative forces, whereby it was rural folk, or, as understood by several ethnologists, individual persons that were primarily understood to be its creators. These individuals specialised in this work without being expected to have professional tailor's training. In historical science, the research into dress producers and production was limited to origin, legal status and economic activity of guilds, unfortunately tailors were paid rather marginal attention. Both scholar approaches became closer to each other when research into collection documents proved that the overwhelming majority of all woollen-cloth garments was made by professional tailors and simultaneously that most professional tailors were subject to supervision by urban guilds until the dissolution of the guild system in 1859. Under these circumstances I deem it appropriate to focus on the explanation of the relationship between urban tailor's guilds, rural tailors and garments made for rural residents.

Guild handicraft institutionalised slowly in Central Europe, first in royal towns where some form of craftsmen associating can be anticipated already in the late thirteenth century. The first statutes of handicraft associations come from the subsequent century; it is the statute of Prague tailors from 1318 and the statute of České Budějovice tailors from 1341. Unfortunately, further uninterrupted groups of sources, guild articles, and orders have been preserved only from the late fifteenth century. Their content shows that the guilds first concentrated on the consolidation of inner relations between individual masters, journeymen and apprentices on the one hand, and between tailors and customers on the other hand.

We only have limited reports about how the knowledge of and products of guild tailor's handicraft penetrated the rural environment; by far most reports are captured in particular paragraphs of guild articles as a negative trace. These show that the guild watched over the knowledge of its masters carefully, and in the beginning, it did not allow them to extend their knowledge outside the group of the tailor's family. The articles of

Český Krumlov tailor's guild from 1484 states: *"no master among them is allowed to teach about the pieces written above, albeit his own son born in to lawful wedlock"*. We do not encounter strict order like this in the sixteenth century, but the handicraft techniques were supposed to be protected from unauthorised eyes, the masters were to work mainly at their workshops, and they were not allowed to make garments for pubs or burghers' houses. Without permission from their guild, they were even not allowed to work with noblemen and peasants: *"So that any master subordinated to this order does not leave his workshop to go work for peasants, except for lords of our manor or knighthood, but he has to report to his guild masters first that the peasant came to him, asking him to work at the peasant's place"* (Starkov 1619: 18). An identical order was intended for travelling journeymen who were expected not to resist the temptation to earn a little extra for their journey by occasional work for peasants, in manorial plants, and at vicarages and in nobility houses that were outside the guild's authority: *"Also, any amateur who wants to join the guild and to work at manor houses and strongholds or in villages has to donate one threescore of Czech groschens to the guild first"* (Ledeč nad Sázavou 1557: 13). If a wandering journeymen was caught, he could do much worse: *"The apprentice who properly finished his apprenticeship with his master and who set out wandering and illicitly worked in villages and this was proven by him [...] has to deposit two threescore of Meissen groschens and 1 pound of wax to the church as a penalty [...]. Should he perpetrate it for the second time, he should even be discharged from the order, his work forbidden, and sent to prison for a certain period of time."* (Roudnice nad Labem 1678: 12)

Not all journeymen succeeded in passing the master examination and founding their own workshop, and not all of them wanted to work at their master's workshop for their whole life. For this reason, many journeymen entered the service of lords, yeomen, and knights, or they worked at manorial farmsteads. The greatest majority of them, however, stayed in the countryside, where they became *clothes menders* who earned their livelihood by repairing garments and working for peasants, which still was one of the few tolerated handicrafts in the countryside of the fifteenth century: *"No other craftsmen should be in villages, just blacksmiths, weavers, and clothes menders to repair garments or shoes."* (Drnovský 1868:

93). The change came only in the sixteenth century when the number of handicrafts rapidly increased in the city, and the masters moved to the suburbs or even to the countryside, where they became farm tenants and entered as farm labourers. This allowed them to extricate themselves from the powers of their guilds. Practice like this was not common only in Bohemia, but we encounter it also in Poland.¹ The estate from the village of Roudnice (District of Pardubice) exemplifies the presence of a tailor in the village. In 1597, a plethora of fabric remnants, reels of galloons, laces and tassels, and similar sewing aids were found at a farmstead (Petráňová 1994: 214). However, the guilds considered tailors working like this to be *fušeři* or *stolíři* [≈ amateurs], *Störer* in German, and in the range of their competences (a city or a manor) they tried to suppress this, from their perspective unfair, competition. If these *amateurs* were caught, their work was confiscated, and they were put in prison with a penalty. Even the peasant in whose place they were found could be fined: “*Should a peasant harbour such amateurs in his place in this manor of ours and should he let them make dress either in his house or elsewhere, he is to inform the lords or the village mayor and to pay one threescore of groschens as a fine to each of his lords*” (Kunštát 1638: 16). However, the tailors were simultaneously exhorted not to be strict towards people who use amateurs’ work as to the amount of the fine, so that “*especially ordinary poor people do not have a reason for complaining about them and for using such underhand amateurs*” (Roudnice nad Labem 1678). As to the attitude of the guilds, they were uncompromising towards convicted amateurs. The masters were forbidden to develop closer relationships with them, to admit them to workshops instead of journeymen, and to negotiate work for them.

The tailors also had other competitors in the countryside, namely the *vetešníci* [≈ clothes menders]. In the beginning, these were tailors or shoemakers who repaired old, *vetché* [threadbare] items. Over time, they became capable traders who sold their old and worn-out garments in a special “flea” market, called a *tandelmarkt*. According to Vladislaus II Jagiellonian’s order, everybody who was a trained tailor could sell in this market where master-tailors, amateurs and even clothes menders could meet. It was mainly Prague Jewish clothes menders who excelled in this branch; they traded not only in the city but also in its environs, so they regularly got into disputes

with local and neighbouring tailor’s guilds. However, it was not the sale of garments at the market, of which the tailors were deemed unworthy of their handicraft and some articles even forbid it for the masters “*so that not one of us, the masters, makes anything for sale, neither poctivice [a kind of trousers TN], nor gloves*” (Domažlice 1563: 5), this was the matter causing the disputes; the fact that clothes menders made garments that were of a lower quality but for an affordable price. For this work, they hired journeymen who deserted from their branch and amateurs who made not only tailor’s but also furrier’s items for them. In addition, they also assigned the production to master tailors who accepted this for livelihood reasons, however, knowing such work is incompatible with guild regulations. The disputes between Prague tailors and clothes menders were resolved by the Prague Imperial Office in 1594 when it issued a privilege based on which both tailors and furriers were supposed to single out masters who were allowed to make garments for Jewish traders, and provide them with corresponding inner lining (*futro*). It is interesting that, considering poorer customers, it was permitted to use Polish lining that was of a lower quality, but cheaper (Čelakovský 1886: 481).

Although Prague Jewish tailors failed in being included in any of the Prague guilds (Winter, 1893: 624), they continued their activities on the edge between tailor’s and mender’s handicrafts. They were able to defend their trade throughout the seventeenth century and they merchandised their goods in wide host of surroundings, where their trading methods inspired a lot of their brothers in the faith. Guild articles of tailors in Roudnice nad Labem from 1678 write about Jewish traders and tailors in two large paragraphs that try to regulate the relationship between them and local burghers. The texts show how time-honoured was the organization of the production of “ready-to-wear” items and in which way the producers distributed them from door to door in villages or exhibited them in Jewish houses. “*The Jews merchandising diverse goods have tailor’s products made in Prague towns or elsewhere, illicitly by Jews or slovenly masters, and often from outside marketplaces, or they buy up finished products to make money, and often distribute and sell them in Christian houses, and so they cheat our subjects with their trickery [...]. As to purchasing these garments in Jewish houses, this remains preserved in accordance with the ancient manner. But if*

the Jews wanted, in a fraudulent manner, to aim at making a product elsewhere upon the request of somebody, this is not permitted to them either.” Simultaneously, the masters were admonished to *“try in every possible way to make their products according to every single walk of life and in a way so that the people were forced not to complain about them.”* At that time, many Jewish tailors might have worked in Roudnice, who delivered their goods to everybody and, moreover, distributed them to villages. This activity was, however, banned by the above article, except for *“one Jew who has lived by this handicraft among Christians and Jews for many years, and two other persons (whereby the one is allowed to work just for Jews and the other one also for officials at out manor house, both of them against payment annually deposited in our income, under the penalty of twenty Imperial thalers)”*.

The situation in Roudnice might have been quite exceptional, because in other cities we hear about no more than one or two Jewish tailors who were ordered to make garments only for their brothers in the faith, as it was in Lipník nad Bečvou or Velké Meziříčí.

The Field of Competence of Tailor’s Guilds

Since the beginning, the competence of tailor’s guilds was mainly tied to the space inside city walls, which can be extended by a one-mile wide circle behind the walls, in which royal cities forced their economic interests. Liege cities had to be satisfied with the space inside the city walls and in the suburbs, especially when the articles were granted by the city council (Strakonice 1482; Přebyslav 1504; Jevíčko 1562). These were confirmed or issued by local lords, the competence was mostly extended by the one-mile circle *“in the city or suburb or village closer than one mile from a city or our manors”* (Český Krumlov 1484; Pardubice 1518; Havlíčkův Brod 1556; Bavorov 1592; Velká Bíteš 1678). Within these borders, the guilds tried to force through and also protect their interests, mainly against competitors, meaning clothes menders and amateurs, and also against relative clothing professions, such as coat-makers and furriers.

The stabilised order changed in the sixteenth and mainly in the seventeenth century, when many lords extended the competence of tailor’s guilds to the whole of their manors. The change related to common trends in the development and administration of a manorial

economy that headed towards the centralisation of institutions and active economic policy in using all available resources – fields, pastures, water, forest, and serfs, including inhabitants of liege cities. City guilds gradually ceased to be just associations of craftsmen, which supervised the production and relations among their members, and began to be an active economic agent throughout the manor, which often included several dozens of villages. One of the first and most complex orders of this kind was issued by Jan from Žerotín for the tailor’s guild in Valašské Meziříčí in 1555 (Valašské Meziříčí 1555). The supervising competences of the guild were extended from the one-mile circle around the town to the whole of the manor, where even the producers who had not been included in the guild until that time became subordinate to it: *“As to amateurs and slovenly, unmarried and unsettled tailors who wander around villages and are not members of any guild, and who are obstacles to the guild in the handicraft, so these and such amateurs who would stay anywhere in the vicinity of Meziříčí and Rožnov, so I am granting them, the guild masters and master-tailors my power of attorney and right to capture such amateurs even with their production.”* It was also the subjects in Valašské Meziříčí who had new obligations towards guild tailors, as they had to have their garments made exclusively by these tailors. *“If any of my serfs or his servants needs to have a garment made, everybody has to bring the cloth and other things to the town of Meziříč and to privileged townlets, which belong to the guild in Meziříč, and have the garments made there.”* It was also forbidden in the manor to sell new garments by other than guild tailors, and to export ready-to-wear attire outside the manor. Many other lords followed a similar path in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, whether in larger chambers or smaller liege manors: Lipník nad Bečvou (1533), Přebyslav (1562), Hradec Králové (1571), Velká Bíteš (1609), Strážnice (1616), Police nad Metují (1619), Kunštát (1638), Roudnice nad Labem (1678), Jilemnice (1683), Prčice (1689), Klobouky near Brno (1708), Kardašova Řečice (1711), Světlá nad Sázavou (1725) and others. The field of competence was not as broad as in Valašské Meziříčí, but it almost always covered the penalisation of amateurs and non-guild tailors in the manor. In the sixteenth century, the following manorial facilities were exempted from these prohibitions: farmsteads, breweries, mills, sheep sheds, and vicarages where the

non-guild tailors, mostly journeymen, were allowed to operate their handicraft freely; however, in the seventeenth century the prohibition began to apply there also.

The extension of the guild's competence to the whole of the manors must have not brought up the liquidation of rural tailors, but rather their subordination to guild organisation and supervision. Renewed articles from the Strážnice tailor's guild, which were issued in 1616, regulate a probably much older practice, when the guild approved independent tailors to work in the countryside: "*Which concerns villagers who reside in villages, in farmsteads belonging to the city, and who were allowed by the guild to do their handicraft, so that they could easier search for their trade alongside the others, so they are not allowed to admit any apprentices.*" In Roudnice nad Labem manor this obligation was explicitly ordered with the extension of guild competences to the whole of the manor in 1678: "*Masters from cities, market towns and villages, which belong to our manors, who properly completed their apprenticeship and who live from the tailor's craft, shall join the local order*" (Roudnice nad Labem 1678: 16). In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries we could find a plethora of similar documents about the subordination of rural tailors to a town guild on the one hand, and about the spread of town handicrafts to the countryside on the other hand. It was the mass spread of a new kind of master tailor, who lived in the countryside out of range of the guild, that gradually led to the establishment of the "rural master" institution. In contrast to their colleagues in the city, they enjoyed many benefits; it was sufficient for them to visit the guild meetings just once a year, they did not have to take part in guild funerals and religious festivals, and their membership fees for the guild were lower. On the other hand, they were not considered to be a "full" master and if they moved to the city, they had to apply to the guild for admission amongst the town masters. They were not allowed to train their own apprentices either. This simple order prevented the rural handicraft from being degraded, which would have undoubtedly happened, if the apprentices had been educated in the countryside, out of the reach of the period clothing trends. Because rural handicrafts could not be produced individually there always had to be a tailor educated in the city in the village, this secured a permanent supply of newly educated work forces that were able to hand-over novelty clothing, if customers were interested in them.

A Peasant's Garment for Ploughing. And What about the Peasant's Wife?

In connection with the supervision the city guilds managed over rural tailors, the second half of the sixteenth century saw among master pieces a dress explicitly intended for peasants. In addition to clothing for lower and higher clergy, monks, and lords and knights with their wives, and burghers with their wives and daughters, the peasants are another group of inhabitants whose affiliation to an estate was to be defined by a typical composition of garments and the material used. The hitherto rural clothing style was not clearly defined, rather it is shown in evidence that amateur production occurred using materials of a lower quality and less elaborated silhouette. The period observer Cesare Vecellio describes the attire of an ordinary Bohemian woman (*Boema plebea*), as follows: "*She wears a woollen-cloth coarse dress, embellished with a silk galloon; she wears a simple woollen hat and a white drape under it, which covers the face. They are dressed in cloaks and short fur-lined jackets. Their bottom skirt is made of wool and densely pleated. Dressed like that, they walk quickly, like German women, in wooden shoes or boots without slippers around the town to sell or buy something.*" (Winter 1893: 348)

In contrast to peasants, clothing worn by their wives is almost completely ignored in tailor pattern books. The only exception is the tailor book from the royal city of České Budějovice (1623), in which the pattern for a *skirt worn by ordinary women for field work* is depicted. However, this is not a specific garment – it differs only in the shorter length and material used from a skirt for a townswoman in the same book (Šimša 2014: 202, 204). It is obvious that cut constructions for urban and rural clothing might have not differed from each other in the early Middle Ages, and the differences consisted rather in the quality of materials used and decorative elements, in the workmanship, and in the quantity and choice of particular types of clothing in the women's wardrobe. Tailor pattern books offer a variety of these types, beginning with sleeved skirts through short and long coats and sleeved coats to jackets and bodices. The following study's subject-matter is to decide which of them could also be worn in the countryside.

It is estate dossiers of the deceased that are of paramount importance to the knowledge obtained about particular composition of wardrobes of men and women who lived in the early Middle Ages. The inventories

were mostly made in connection with probate proceedings after the peasant died, as it was necessary to define the inheritance portion for his wife and children. In the presence of witnesses, an inventory was made of all his property, whereby garments were only a small and often the least significant part thereof. Women's garments are mentioned mainly as property of the deceased's widow or previous wife. Garments locked in chests waited to be used by orphans, or converted into money on their behalf. For this reason, the inventories mention not only the types of garments, but also where they are placed, and who keeps the key to the chest.

For example: the list of clothing of the deceased wife of Marek Drobov, a whole-section peasant from the small town of Měřín in western Moravia, which we know from his estate inventory, gives us a picture of women's rural wardrobe in the second half of the sixteenth century, which is exceptional in its volume but quite common as to garments that include: *"20 flax-linen headscarves, 9 cotton headscarves, 7 bonnets made of thread. In the big chest, 20 pieces of fine, medium and coarse linen, 1 golden bonnet, 1 long shirt, 1 fur cap, 10 bed sheets, bed linen and tablecloths. In the third chest, there are 20 short shirts and towels, and a mohair jacket usually worn by women. A skirt made of Flemish cloth, a red skirt made of Lyon cloth, a cherry-red skirt, a fur-coat covered with harras, a woollen-cloth female coat. And this is sealed, and the chest key has been taken to the town hall"* (Měřín 1580) (Hrubý 1927: 58).

In the past, many Czech culture historians worked with the estate dossiers but they mostly used urban estates (Prague, Pilsen, Tábor, Rokycany, Vodňany, and Olomouc) and the countryside was of peripheral importance for them. The first larger work to deal with the inventories of serfs' property was written by the historian František Hrubý (1887-1943), who treated *Sírotčí registra panství Rudolec* [The Orphan's Registers in the Manor of Rudolec] in the Jihlava area (Hrubý 1927). These include 35 estate inventories, twelve of them being published by the author in their full version, but only four of them contain garments. It is obvious in the context of the above-mentioned numbers, how a large volume of written materials must be dealt with to get a plausible sample testifying to the composition of clothing in rural households. This might be a reason why only two works deal with this identical topic: the first one focuses on the Strážnice manor, and the other one on the Pardubice manor. In the

Strážnice manor in south-eastern Moravia, the historian Jiří Pajer (*1948) processed materials from twenty villages, in which the orphan books were kept for several decades at the turn of the seventeenth century (Pajer 2010). Altogether 39 books were processed, in which only several dozen estate inventories are mentioned and these include almost exclusively women's garments.² In contrast to this, the Pardubice manor in eastern Bohemia consists of more than one hundred villages, three small towns, and two towns with books kept from the early sixteenth until the mid-eighteenth century.³ Due to this, František Svatoň (1904-1984), after a twenty-year effort, could find several hundred estate inventories, which contain about 900 clothing items. His edition has the form of an inventory of thematic quotations divided according to the type of garments; they inform about many details of the clothing, but not about the circumstances under which the inventory was made. Due to terminological ambiguity of period records, which use identical names for the *skirt, coat, kolár*, and *cloak* (without taking into account a particular cut or the person, for whom it was intended for), it cannot be recognised in the quotations when they speak about male and when about female garments. This was the reason why the hitherto use of this source was limited, as resulting from the study written by the historian Lydia Petrářová (*1941), in which she used only individual quotations but not a quantitative assessment. To be able to work with the source, one had to reconstruct particular inventories first. After that about 115 inventories from the sixteenth through the mid-seventeenth centuries were identified. In the case of identical names without a specification whether they concern a male or a female garment, the corresponding classification was made based on the overall character of the inventory. I use material treated like this the most in the following analyses whereby I refer to the manuscript stored in the archives of the Institute of Ethnology of the CAS.

As resulting from the Pardubice manor estate inventories, the largest group of clothing items consisted of different types of women's skirts, as women owned more of them. The group included both common everyday skirts and representative pieces. The first ones had to be supplemented with an apron and, from the second half of the sixteenth century, also with a bodice. The second ones were worn with a short jacket, and with a short-sleeved cloak called a *kolárek*, which protected the torso from the cold and which also displayed the wealth and social sta-

tus of its wearer. However, these garments, sumptuous for a rural environment, amounted to 3-4% of the total quantity. In contrast, although coats and fur-coats were considered expensive garments, they were practical and carefully stored and they appear in the inventories as a common part of rural wear. Linen items (shirts, blouses) are garments that are represented to the lowest degree in the inventories; although women owned higher quantities of these garments, they became worn-out very quickly and as ordinary garments they were recorded only rarely.

Sleeved Skirts

Throughout the entire Middle Ages, the *sukně* [herein-after termed skirt for better understanding TN] / *der Rock* were among the basic items of men's and women's outermost clothing, and as a practical and representative overgarment it was worn in all social classes. Originally, it was a more or less undivided attire consisting of a rectangular strip of fabric with a hole for the head (a rectangular poncho); below the waistline, the attire was enlarged by gussets which were inserted into the slit in the centre of front and rear panels and in the side seams. The *skirt* displayed a tight-fitting sleeved body and a flared bottom section, which reached almost to the floor in the case of a women's *skirt*. The men's *skirt* usually reached down to the knees. In dependence on the wearer's social status and the period fashion, it was elongated to reach down to the ankles or shortened to reach to the mid-calves over time. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw a significant differentiation in the silhouette and cut of the men's and women's *skirt*. This, however, brings up a problem in terminology: the single word is used to term different garments, the construction of which can differ due to the owner's gender, his/her social statute, and the occasion for which the garment was intended. Moreover, the term *sukně* / *skirt* almost exclusively meant a garment made of cloth, in contrast to the *kirtle* that, although it displayed an identical cut, was always made of canvas. If an imported fabric of higher quality, possibly also silk or mixed fabrics were used to make a *skirt*, this fact was always emphasised in the estates.

As to men's clothing, it was the *kabát* [≈ coat] that took over the role of the *skirt* as an outermost garment; the *kabát* was connected, in the literal sense, with the new type of men's *nohavice* [≈ trousers]. The hitherto used term began to be used to name a new type of the representative over-garment that had the form of a

sleeved circle cloak with differing lengths. The original tunica-style concept with flaring gussets was maintained only in garments worn by rural residents. Differences between the tunica-style and the cloak-style *skirt* were reflected by the period terminology that used the adjective *enclothe* that we occasionally encounter as a supplement to specify *skirts* and fur-coats. In addition, the terms *sukénka* or *suknička* were used to term a shortened military, hunting, or riding attire called *Waffenrock*, *Röckl*, and *Renreöckl* in German.

Contrary to what is written above, the women's *skirt* continued to develop the basic tunica-style concept. First, the one-piece torso was divided into several vertical cut pieces that absorbed the flaring gussets inserted



Fig. 1 – Festive attire of rural residents from Nuremberg environs. The woman wears a closed sleeved skirt, the sleeves display wide cuffs. Beham, Sebald. 1546. Juli und August

until that time, and they could shape an enlarged flowing silhouette with a tight-fitting bodice part and a bell-shaped flared bottom part; for this reason we begin to speak about the *sleeved skirt* [životová sukně in Czech TN]. Although the proportions of the bottom *skirt-style* part and the upper *bodice-style* part of the *skirt* changed in dependence on the fashionable trends in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it is a single construction type of *sleeved skirt*. Throughout the sixteenth century, the construction of this unity underwent an intensive development at the beginning of which the basis of the later *bodice* began to form in the upper part of the *sleeved skirt*. Over time, the bodice was separated in terms of cut, but it was still sewn together with the *skirt*, and for this reason we can speak about a *skirt with bodice*. In the end, the *bodice* was completely separated, and a new garment emerged (Petraš. 1997: 893). Despite the above-mentioned changes in construction, various types of *skirt* were understood to be a single garment called *sukně / skirt / der Rock* in written materials. We can thus view the changes in construction mainly based on the mention of different materials the *bodice / die Brüst, das Mieder, die Gestalt* was made of. Possibly also based on the order and way in which the particular sections of the *skirt* and the *bodice* are mentioned in estate inventories. The term *der Unterrock* used for a separate *skirt* in the narrower sense has no Czech equivalent unfortunately.

Sleeved skirts are mentioned rather seldomly in tailor pattern books. Peripheral regions in Central Europe (Spiš in Slovakia, Upper Austria) are a certain exception; in their tailor's tradition, the older forms of dress construction could be found, in addition to the new ones, as late as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the tailor pattern book from the Austrian city of Enns (1590), we find three *sleeved skirts* the construction of which is described as a "*Rock mit selb gewaxsner Brüst*", meaning a *skirt with a self-grown bodice* (Barich – McNealy 2015: 240, 244, 248). The garment consists of four symmetrical cut pieces, in which the *bodice* smoothly converts into a flared *skirt*, and only the edges of the cut pieces show the need for the closed-fitting of the upper part and the flaring of the bottom part. The *bodice* is tight-fitting and waisted in all four connecting seams, the front panels are closed and end with a shallow rounded neckline. The *skirt* consists of four elongated trapezoids, which are rounded at their lower edge; after having been sewn together, they have an incomplete quarter of a sec-

tor of a circle in the front and in the back, meaning a not full semi-circle altogether, which, when rolled up, makes a cone, *die Glock*. The lower circumference, the *Glockenweit*, is 432 cm (5 Viennese ells) and its diameter is 138 cm. The *skirt* was broad enough to allow its wearer to tread with dignity, but not broad enough to allow its surface to be gathered into smaller or larger pleats. Younger versions of the *sleeved skirts*, which are recorded in tailor pattern books from the territory of the current Slovakia (Košice 1630; Kežmarok 1641; Spišská Belá 1712), differ in many things from the Austrian ones. The *bodice* completely lost its sleeves, it was given a deeper neckline, and the circle skirt was wider, fully in accordance with fashionable trends of the late sixteenth century.

Tailor pattern books from the Czech lands do not include at all the undivided *sleeved skirt*, which does not mean that these were not worn. *Rudolf II's Order to craftsmen about prices, wages etc.* from the year 1578 mentions four different women's skirts among tailor products (Novák 1887: 279). At least two of them, in which the *bodice* was not mentioned, certainly correspond to one of the types of circle *sleeved skirt* with or without sleeves, which we could find in the tailor pattern books from the territory of the current Austria and Slovakia.

Estate inventories from the villages in the Pardubice manor from the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century include skirts regularly, whereby with 126 records they are among the most common women's garment. Sixty-eight cases mention only the *skirt* and not the *bodice*, from which I infer that they speak about the undivided *sleeved skirt*. Women usually owned two to three skirts, which were made of common home-made cloth, unspecified in more detail. Some of them could be embellished with several sewn-on vertical strips close to the bottom edge: "*women's red skirts with galloon of green satin*" (Choteč 1566). Only a quarter of woollen-cloth skirts were made of a higher-quality imported cloth, mainly of *Leyden* or *Meissen cloth*. Skirts made of high-quality woollen and then even silk fabrics appeared only from the mid-sixteenth century. *Camlet* made of camel hair occurred five times, silk taffeta [*tikyta* in old Czech TN] or double-taffeta [*tupltikyta* in old Czech TN] (a kind of firm *taffeta* with metallic gloss) occurred eight times; finer silk fabrics can also be found, for example *damask* (three times) and *vorstott* (three times). Samite (called *tamin* or *samet*) was used only from the late sixteenth century. Skirt colours are mentioned in about two thirds

of the records, and they did not change essentially over the entire monitored period: red (twenty times), blue (fifteen times), green (twelve times), black (twelve times), and shadows of grey (seven times).

Skirt with Bodice

The first half of the sixteenth century saw the separation of the upper *bodice-style* garment, which gave rise to a separated *bodice* that was mostly made of a fabric of higher quality and in a contrasting colour and was still connected with a firm seam with the skirt. The visible change and also more demanding production might have contributed to the fact that it was included in *Rudolf II's Order to craftsmen about prices, wages etc.* from the year 1578: “for [making] a women's skirt with a bodice and sleeves will cost 6 Bohemian groschens” (Novák 1887: 279). The novelty was worn in cities first: e.g. in Prague the skirts with a separately cut bodice are mentioned in estates from the 1560s. After one generation, from the 1580s, we find them in estates from the Pardubice manor: “women's skirt made of double-taffeta with a damask bodice” (Podůlšany 1586). However, the occurrence is quite sporadic, and only seven other records could be traced by the end of the sixteenth century. *Bodices* were always made of a fabric of higher-quality, than the *skirts* were, mostly of silk taffeta, samite, and damask. The *bodice* could be sleeved or sleeveless; while single girls mostly wore a skirt with a *sleeveless bodice* to allow their white shirt with broad sleeves to pass through, married women preferred a more discreet *sleeved bodice*.

Bodice-less skirts are mentioned in urban and rural estate dossiers only rarely: “a red mocheyr skirt with three samite galloons without a bodice” (Praha 1582) (Teige 1910: 732), “a taffeta bodice-less skirt” (Roudnice 1597). However, the question remains whether these cases speak about a skirt with an unstitched bodice, or whether they describe a separate garment.

In Central Europe, the *bodice* became a separated garment at that time. After that, cut pieces for the skirt were enlarged, first in its rear part where they were the size of almost half a circle, and then also in the front where the skirt was considerably narrower. In the Silesian town of Cieszyn (1564), the skirt's upper circumference is 3 ½ and the bottom circumference 14 Wroclaw ells (that is 202 and 806cm); similar sizes can be found in Chomutov (1605), Broumov (1636), and Polish Leszno (1641). In several cases, the skirts were enlarged to

reach a full circle, for example in Most (1576), Hungarian Sopron (1679), and Prague (1685). The separation of the skirt from the bodice brought about the enlargement of the skirt's width and waistline; skirts like this could be gathered in small-sized pleats or wide *folds*, as mentioned in Polish *Wschova* “zu dem Weiber Rock mit falden” (Wschova 1640). In Most (1576), the bottom part of a skirt like this is even termed *der Schurtz*, which corresponds to the records in which one does not speak about a skirt, but about another type called a *šorec*.

The almost full circle skirts were so very different from other women's skirts with a simple width that they began to be termed “double skirts”. In *Rudolf II's Order to craftsmen about prices, wages etc.* from the year 1578, they are even defined as a separate type of tailor's work. The production of such a skirt was the most expensive among all other mentioned types of skirts, not only due to the tailor's labour but also due to the material used. For the women's skirt from Chomutov (1604), it was necessary to use six ells in length (Prague ell = 59,3 cm) and three-ell was of a woollen cloth of the highest quality. The price of a skirt (Pardubičky 1573) made of a high-quality imported Flemish cloth could soar to five threescores, that is 300 Bohemian groschens, which was indeed a staggering amount, as compared to 50 groschens for which a “common women's skirt” was appraised (Stéblová 1562).

Circular Skirt – a Šorc

It is necessary to explain circular skirts called a *šorc* more thoroughly. The reason for this is a hypothesis of the ethnographer Jan Koula (1855-1919) who supposed, based on the anthropological theories about the development of clothing as well as based on his own observation in Moravian and Slovak countryside, that it was not the outermost sleeved *sukně / skirt*, but the linen sleeveless undergarment called a *rubáš* that was the basis of Slavic dress; with the *rubáš* were two aprons – called a *kasanka* and a *šorc* – which were tied; one in the front and the other one in the back. Due to identical terms used for folk and historical garments, he assumed that their appearance and the way in which they were worn had not changed significantly, and they had survived from centuries ago until the nineteenth century (Šimša 2017: 37). The hypothesis became very popular in the Czech lands and it influenced not only Zikmund Winter, who tried to interpret garments in estate inventories from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries based on this, but also many oth-

er ethnographers, who tried to apply this hypothesis on materials acquired in the field (Šimša 2017: 39).

However, as a result from written sources the *šorc* / *Schürtz* was exclusively a man's garment in the beginning, moreover derived from the knight's sheet armour where it protected the lower abdomen and the hips (Winter, 1893: 249). At the turn of the sixteenth century, the *šorc* was given a form of a circular apron which was opened in the front and in the back and which covered the sheet armour worn for tournaments; the used materials,

colours and workmanship predestined it to become a significant aesthetical element of the armour. The *šorc* was used in this form throughout the first half of the sixteenth century, not only as part of tournament armour, but also as a guild ceremonial apron. This was worn by Prague bakers and painters on many official occasions including the coronation ceremony of Rudolf II in 1575 (Winter, 1909: 293). The circular skirts, *šorc*, were not tailor-made, but they were traded by Jewish traders at fairs to which the skirts were delivered by guild tailors based on agreement.

The circular *skirt* / *šorc* seems to have been very popular at its time and it gradually became part of many garments, of which it replaced the older style of their bottom part. I have already mentioned women's skirts but the situation was also identical in the case of men's skirts. The mid-calf-length *šorc* supplemented the older *Wappenrock*, which gave rise to a new garment called a *Turnier röckel* (Sabinov 1642), worn at knight's tournaments, and the short riding skirt, a *Renröckel*, from Most was "modernised" in a similar way (1576). On the contrary, the *French skirt* from Cieszyn (1564) or the *French riding skirt* from Český Krumlov (1704) were considerably longer, reaching down to the knees. The cut of the latter became the basis for the *peasant's old-French skirt* from Chomutov (1604). To avoid mistakes in making a circular skirt, many patterns included a note "*der Schurz*", which notifies the tailor that the pattern is intended for a *šorc* which must be pleated at the waist and gathered on the surface to create wide round folds.

The popularity of the large circular skirt, the *šorc*, concerned even women's clothing, even though it was an absolute marginality in comparison to common skirts. In Prague, the women's *šorc* is mentioned for the first time in a house inventory from 1559 ("*seven women's circular skirts, one of them made of damask with galloons in black samite*"), and the list of the other six pieces is followed by the description of six separate bodices (Teige 1910: 657). Only five further occurrences are recorded by the early seventeenth century, mainly in combination with a *bodice*. The *šorc* could also be fixed to a simple undergarment called a *voplečko* over which a separate *bodice* was worn. Under the wide folded skirt women might have worn petticoats of the same cut to shape the over-garment. Interesting is that we encounter the *šorc* even in the countryside, even though very rarely (Roudnice 1600), which is not surprising due to the mentioned price of four threescores of Bohemian groschens. The



Fig. 2 – A young girl from Strasbourg. The girl wears a fur skirt called a *šorc*pelc with an apron that is supplemented by a laced-up bodice with stomacher, and a short collar. Hollar, Václav. 1643. *Junge Straßburgerin*

šorc could also be made of leather, even lined with fur. In this case, it is called a *šorcpeľc*. This might have been a winter accessory used mostly by women who added it over their skirt to protect themselves from the cold, as can be seen in engravings by Václav Holar (1607-1677) (Kybalová 1997: 56). The *šorcpeľc* became popular only at the end of the sixteenth century when it is sporadically mentioned in urban and rural estates: “one rabbit šorc, covered in mucheyr, another šorc made of goat skin, covered in vorstott” (Bělá 1601).

Band Skirts

Besides circular *skirts* made of four cut pieces, an independent *skirt* is seen in tailor’s pattern books at the end of the sixteenth century. This skirt is made of a softly rounded trapezoid band whereby the ratio of its upper and bottom circumference is 1:2. It is the tailor’s book from Austrian Enns (1590) which shows this type most noticeably as a skirt called “*einer under schauben*”. It supplements a tight-fitting sleeved jacket, “*ein Wamas*”; both garments are made of woollen *camlet* (Barich – McNealy 2015: 235). It is interesting to note that a completely new term was chosen to name this skirt; it refers to its similarity to the women’s short cloak called a *šuba*. The front and rear cut pieces of the *skirt* consisted of two rectangles enlarged using a triangle-shape gusset at the edge, so both the front- and the back-cut piece had the form of wide trapeziums with rounded upper and lower edges. The attached picture of a townswoman wearing a skirt arranged in small sharp folds indicates that it was the need for pleating the skirt’s surface that could cause the change in cut.

Bohemian tailor’s books display a similar form of the skirt only as a *skirt with a bodice* from Frýdlant (1663) and Chomutov (1604) (Šimša 2014: 98, 167). In the first case, the skirt includes two rounded trapezoid bands, whereby the rear band is double the width as compared to the front one. The ratio of the upper and lower edges is 1:2 in the front and 1:3 in the back. This means that the entire surface of the skirt must have been pleated, and the folds in the back must have been more distinctive. In contrast to this, the cut construction of the “*noble skirt with a velvet bodice*” from the tailor’s book from Chomutov (1604) is completely different. The skirt consists of fifteen narrow trapezoid pieces that were created by cutting a strip of fabric in a diagonal direction. After having been sewn together, the bottom circumference of the skirt was eleven ells (Prague ell was 59,3 cm). The ratio

between the upper and the lower edges was 1:2, as was seen in the Austrian Enns (1590), and the shape of the resulting cut pieces displayed a rounded trapezium.

The cut of women’s skirts changed from circular cut pieces to band ones; in the second half of the sixteenth century, this change might have been accompanied by a change in the materials used as well as in the way of how these were fixed to skirt surfaces. In contrast to firm and quite heavy cloth, which nicely flowed down in soft folds and kept its form, the new woollen, silk, and



Fig. 3 – A Bohemian townswoman. The woman wears a densely gathered skirt girdled with a narrow apron, and a sleeved bodice. Weigel, Hans. 1577. *Mulier aetatis propectae in Bohemia*

cotton fabrics were much lighter; for this reason the skirt surface had to be gathered to keep its desired form and not to become swollen and deformed, while the woman was walking. Until that time, it was mainly flax-linen and cotton fabrics that were formed in the above way; among them the light over-cloak called a *kasanka* was considered luxurious women's attire. So it possibly may be that before the common Czech language accepted a permanent name for the new sort of skirt, the word combination "the skirt called a *kasanka*" appeared in many sources (Písek 1546) (Křemen 1917: 112), which refers to the way of arranging the skirt surface in small folds. In the same sense, the *kasankas* are mentioned in connection with aprons (Winter 1893: 504) and they are also similarly understood by the period Latin-Czech dictionary, which mentioned them together with the terms a *firtuch* and a *šorc* as an equivalent to the Latin word *succiuctorium* (Winter 1893: 94).

We no longer encounter the term *kasanka* in written sources in the second half of the sixteenth century, but we perceive it, as a model, in terms used for new types of skirt-style dress. The terms consist of the material name and the suffix *-ka*, i.e. *camlotka* [made of camlet], *muchejrka* [made of *mucheyr*], *kronraška* [made of *kronraš*], *tupltikytkka* [made of double-taffeta], *haraska* [made of *harras*], *barchanka* [made of *fustian*] and even *lindyška* [made of Leyden cloth]. These new terms occur in parallel with the older terms "a skirt" or "a skirt with bodice"; therefore, it is not unusual that in several records both a skirt made of Leyden cloth and a *lindyška*, or a skirt made of *harras* and a *haraska* are mentioned. One could come to the conclusion that this does not mean a shortening of the name, but rather an expression of a different quality of a particular garment; the different quality significantly visible for the contemporaries, that it required a need to have a new term. It was not only the fabrics used but also the skirt surface arranged in small folds and the absence of the *bodice* that gave a different impression; this is the case of "die Unter Schauben" in the Austrian Enns tailor's book.

In the Pardubice area, we encounter this type from the 1560s; there were about forty occurrences by the mid-seventeenth century. The skirts were most often made of a fine imported cloth of high quality (*Leyden cloth* 5x, *harras* 3x, *Saxon cloth* 2x, and *Flemish cloth* 1x). Popular was also *camlet* made of camel hair (4x), and *mucheyr* (12x) made of wool and silk. Completely silk fabrics, rep-

resented by *taffeta* (3x), *vorstott* (4x, *velvet* and *tamin* (1), were a novelty. We also find a common *fustian* (3x) made of cotton and flax. The colours are like those used for *sleeved skirts*, with evenly used red, green, yellow, and black colour. Besides the material and colour, the *skirts* could also be more attractive by their adornment, predominantly with sewn-on galloons in contrasting colours. In noble and urban environments, galloons sewn-on in several layers close to the bottom edge of the skirt were very popular; this was inspiration for the countryside, but the rural women could afford just two rows of galloons instead of five or three rows: "a skirt made of black camlet with two samite galloons" (Křičeň 1618). The bodice could be embellished in a similar manner: "a skirt made of *vorstott* with a bodice made of camlet and adorned with samite galloons" (Černá near Bohdaneč 1577). The bodice as part of the *skirt* is mentioned only four-times amongst the forty occurrences, and *samite*, *damask*, and *tamin* are the mentioned fabrics. Other *skirts* might have not included the bodice that the women wore as a separate garment; this is substantiated by the increase in the occurrence of this garment in the 1590s.

Bodices

Bodices are quite modern/new garments where the origin of which relates to the intensive development in construction of women's *skirts* in the sixteenth century. Particular versions, which were part of *sleeved skirt* or *skirt with a bodice* and were worn as completely detached apparel in the end, show so many identical cut solutions that it is necessary to deal with their analysis in a separate chapter even though we will not avoid mentions about other *skirts*.

Until the mid-sixteenth century, neither urban nor rural estate inventories mention any *bodices*. From this it can be inferred that the *sleeved skirts* were still undivided, and both parts of them were cut from one piece of material, so it was not necessary to specify them. A record dated in 1562 from Prague is one exception; when describing the embellishments on the skirt, it mentions individual garments: "a black *taffeta* skirt and a bodice with sleeves embellished with samite streamers" (Teige 1910: 301). The change came in the 1560s, when estate inventories began to almost always include mentions about *bodices*, both as part of a *skirt with bodice* and, at the same time, as an independent garment. In the first case, the mentions tried to describe the material that

distinguished the stitched bodice from the skirt: “a black *vorstott skirt and satin, also black bodice stitched to it*” (Praha 1562), or “two *taffeta skirts, both of golden colour, one with a samite bodice, the other one with a taffeta bodice, both black*” (Praha 1568) (Teige 1910: 123, 301). Likewise *skirts with a bodice*, also *šorc with a bodice* are mentioned throughout the second half of the sixteenth and in the early seventeenth centuries. At the same time, the records also mention independent *bodices*, the list of which mostly follows the enumeration of women’s skirts “a *bodice made of black šibtuch with puffed sleeves*” (Praha 1568) (Teige 1915: 692) or “a *bodice with sleeves made of black taffeta with samite streamers*” and in the same list “three *samite bodices with a black stomacher*” (Praha 1571) (Teige 1910: 675). The villages in the Pardubice manor saw *bodices* sewn together with diverse types of *skirts* and in one generation later than Prague or Pardubice. In the late 1570, the *bodices* were part of light types of band silk skirts: “a *skirt made of vorstott with a camlet bodice and embellished with samite streamers*” (Černá near Bohdaneč 1577), and after some time also *skirts with a bodice* made of homemade or Flemish cloth. Altogether eleven cases show that the bodice used to be made of a better fabric than the skirt. If the *skirt* was made of cloth, the *bodice* was made of *harras* or *taffeta*; if the *skirt* was made of *taffeta*, the *bodice* of *samite*; and if the skirt was made of *camlet*, the *bodice* was made of *carmasine* etc. A *bodice* of high-quality could improve otherwise common skirts made of white of dyed linen: “a *kirtle with mucheyр bodice*” (Podůšany 1598).

Estate inventories of the Pardubice manor began to include separate *bodices* only at the very end of the sixteenth century; by the 1640s, when they were suddenly replaced by *stays*, there are twenty-nine mentions about *bodices*. They are mentioned either individually, but mostly together with the corresponding number of *skirts*, such as those made of *harras*, *fustian*, *mucheyр*, and *camlet*, and *šorc*, meaning types about which we suppose that they were made mostly without *bodices*. As far as materials, silk fabrics of higher or lower quality were used, which quite possibly must have been very expensive financially for those in the countryside. Yet they are dominated by *damask* (8x), simple and goffered *samite* (7x), *carmasine* (4x), *taffeta* (4c), *tamin* (4x); also *mucheyр*, made of wool and silk (5x), and *camlet* (5x) and *harras* (1x) made of camel hair were also very popular. Colours are mentioned only in one third of the records, and the *bodices* look,

in contrast to *skirts*, quite dark, with a prevailing black colour (9x); several pieces are clove-coloured (2 x), yellow (2x) and green (1 x). Trimming with streamers was a typical way of embellishing and is explicitly mentioned in only three cases, and we can anticipate based on iconographies, that they were placed on the sides of the front panel edges. Unfortunately, the records do not contain any other details about the construction of the *bodices*, and whether they were with or without sleeves. The *stomacher*, mentioned several times, is the only detail telling more about the cut of the *bodice*: “a *tamine bodice with a completely patterned stomacher*” (Podůšany 1598). This means that the *bodice* front panels did not touch each other, and instead of being fastened using hooks and eyelets, they were laced up; a triangle-shaped insert, a *stomacher*, was inserted behind the lace and it covered otherwise unprotected bosom.

However, the estate inventories do not tell about how such a garment looked. Were the *bodices* sewn-together with the *skirt* thus still a sleeved over-garment, or were they a sleeveless garment, as we know from tailor pattern books? The *bodices* themselves give rise to an identical question. In several cases, their sleeves are mentioned, so they might have looked like close-fitting jackets that were worn over the *skirt with a bodice*. Nevertheless, most records do not mention any sleeves, and some of them even write about the *stomacher*, which was supposed to fill the gap between the laced-up front panels, as this is common for sleeveless *bodices*. It is these questions that we will try to answer based on a comparison of documents acquired from tailor pattern books and pictures.

Sleeved bodices as part of the undivided *sleeved skirt* appear very rarely in tailor pattern books, namely in the Upper-Austrian ones (Barich – McNealy 2015: 239, 243, 247, 249). In Enns (1590) and Leonfelden (16th century) the *bodices* are termed *Brüst* or *Prüst*, which is a typical German term used for a *sleeved bodice*.⁴ The period dictionaries have a *prsník* [≈ worn on bosom] as a Czech equivalent, however, we do not encounter this term in common sources. *Bodice* cuts were produced in a quite similar way; the completely closed torso is tight-fitting, with a deep rounded neckline on the chest and on the back, with an indicated decoration, meaning sewn-on streamers, on the front neckline edges. The *bodice* length is not explicitly mentioned, but the drawing shows it reached approximately down to the waist. *Bodices* in-

cluded in the tailor's book from Enns (1590) display conical sleeves with widely opened cuffs. In contrast, the book from Leonfelden shows tight-fitting sleeves, narrowed around the wrists, as this was common in the second half of the sixteenth century. The *bodices* were waisted using diagonally cut central and side seams that were noticeably shifted backwards. The front panels' edges are shaped to accentuate the bosom, which is not a very frequent element in the tailor pattern books. The only exception are the patterns from České Budějovice (1623), a city closely connected with Enns and Linz due to frequent trade contacts. Although *the skirt with a bodice* is younger in terms



Fig. 4 – Festive attire of rural residents from Nuremberg environs. The woman wears a shirt and a skirt with an open sleeveless bodice, girdled with a wide apron. Beham, Sebald. 1537. *Rücken an Rücken tanzendes Bauernpaar*

of cut development and it displays a train and a rectangular neckline on the chest and on the back, its description "*einen schweist Rokh so selbst gewachsenen Büchsen und Brust*" indicates that its old version might have had "independently grown" sleeves and a bodice, as was the case in Austria (Šimša 2014: 196).

In contrast to this, the *skirt with a bodice and sleeves* mentioned in the tailor pattern book from Polish Opole (1702) is significantly shorter, reaching only a little bit under the bosom, and for this reason the rectangular neckline on the chest and on the back gives the impression of a very deep neckline. Puffed sleeves, narrowing towards the forearms, are set in the armholes; this provides the *bodice* with an almost Empire-style silhouette.

The sleeved "*život*" [≈ torso, large bodice] of the "*Swiss skirt for the bride*", recorded in the tailor's pattern book from Prague Old Town (1685), represents a different version; it is the only example illustrating the diagonally cut laced-up front panels closed by a wide *stomacher* (Šimša 2014: 132). The bottom edge ended with a round tail, which we mostly find in men's *wams*, but not as common. This could be a densely gathered *šorčík* to support the skirt, which was tied over it.

The tailor pattern book from Austrian Enns (1590) documents another important garment that we do not encounter elsewhere, namely a separate women's *bodice*, better described as a *jacket / wamas*, an analogue of men's *wams* from the second half of the sixteenth century (Barich – McNealy 2015: 235). The jacket torso is waisted, the bosom is accentuated by vertical chest tucks on the front panels. The tight-fitting torso is in contrast with the balloon-like bulging of the sleeves on the shoulders and narrowing around the arms, in the same sense of the above-mentioned description of a bodice "*with puffed sleeves*". The jacket gives a similar impression, as the Bohemian townswoman's dress in the work *Habitus praecipuorum Populorum* from 1577 (Weigel 1639: 45) does.

Although we are not sure how to identify **sleeveless bodices** (see Fig. 4) in estate inventories, we can find many of them in tailor pattern books from the late sixteenth and seventeenth century as part of the *skirt with a bodice* description. They share many common features with *sleeved bodices*, such as the arrangement of the front panels, form and neckline, and the shaping of the back seams, so it can be said that they logically continued with the development of sleeved bodices in the second

half of the sixteenth century. However, they also feature several specific details that indicate their relationship to underclothing. As pictorial depictions demonstrate, they appeared in the countryside first as part of overclothing; they supplemented long sleeves on white shirts.⁵ In urban environments they were applied gradually; the large set of engravings by Cesare Vecellio (1590) depicted in the Central European territory shows only one girl from Silesia wearing a sleeveless bodice. In Bohemian cities the novelty broke through only at the turn of the seventeenth century, as substantiated by many epitaphs with burgher families from Chrudim; these depictions show the edges of white shirts protruding from long black cloaks worn by burgher daughters and their mothers (Jakubec 2015: 153, 168).

An open bodice with oblique front panels (see Fig. 5) is demonstrated in the tailor's pattern book from Chomutov (1604), namely as part of a *skirt with a bodice* (Šimša 2014: 98, 99). It is called "*sampt den Müder*", which is an old-German term used for a light sleeveless bodice worn rather as an undergarment, in between a chemise and skirt. Only later, the same term was set as a name for *stays*.⁶ The bodice displays diagonally cut front panels that touch each other only in their bottom section, and they open upwards without being necessarily laced up. The chest could remain uncovered, but it could also be covered by a *stomacher* connected with the front panel through lacing. Side shaping seams are shifted softly backwards, and their edges are chamfered. There is a short tip in the middle of the back neckline. The same term, *Mitter*, is used to term the bodice of the skirt from České Budějovice (1623), whose front panels seem to be even more open than those in Chomutov. The uncommon cut revealing the chest was popular in the first half of the sixteenth century, as exemplified in pictures by Lucas Cranach Sr. (1472-1553) and by the funeral dress of Mary of Austria (†1520) and her sister-in-law Anna of Bohemia and Hungary (†1547) (Pilná 2018: 10).

The closed bodice with a rectangular neckline is the most frequent model we find in most Central-European tailor books. The term for it, *die Gestaldt*, occurs in Broumov (1636), Polish Wschowa (1640) and Leszno (17th century). In Frýdlant (1663), its name is even associated with the term for the entire dress: "*einer Rockh undt Gestaldt*" (Frýdlant 1663). In contrast, the mangled Czech *krztalt* is used in Polish Poznań (1628). Although this term may seem surprising, it primarily means a word

for a *form, appearance, look* in contemporary Czech and German, while German spoken in Silesia and northern Bohemia uses it to refer to the term *bodice*:⁷ "*Item einer Jeder 2 Tuchene Röcke [...] zwo macheyern Gestelde mit seiden Schnüren verbremet, einer Jedern ein sammet Bärtlin*" (Meitzen 1863: 231). The cut construction continues with the previous type of the open *bodice*. The wide and loosely attached *stomacher*, which until that time filled the deep neckline between front panels, was divided into two halves, and its sections were fastened to side panels, so they newly covered the entire lower part of the chest. The rectangular neckline was not very deep in the beginning, the bottom edge is straight or slightly chamfered from the centre towards the straps,



Fig. 5 – A rural bridal couple from Nuremberg environs. The woman wears a skirt with a bodice, which displays wide open front panels and narrow sleeves. Beham, Sebald. 1520/50. *Das Brautpaar*

and it features a divided tip and the motif of which is repeated on the back between the straps. The bodice must not always have been closed very strictly, meaning the clamped and laced-up front panels could be used in parallel without the overall form being disturbed.

The laced-up variant is demonstrated on *bodices* of skirts in the tailor pattern books from Frýdlant (1663) in western Bohemia and Spišská Belá (1712) in northern Slovakia; their front panels are very narrow, only slightly



Fig. 6 – A Bohemian countrywoman. The woman wears a skirt with apron, which is supplemented with a closed bodice. She has a mantlil with fur tabs over her shoulders. Hollar, Václav. 1643. *Rustica Bohemica*

shifted forwards before the strap line. In the first case, the front panel is ended with a straight line, while in the other one it turns into a sharp tip of which the motif is repeated on the rear panel. The *bodice* in Broumov (1636) displays a closed rectangular neckline, and the identical form can be found in Silesian Cieszyn (1564), Polish Leszno (1641), and Slovak cities of Kežmarok (1641) and Sabinov (1642). All the above *bodices* are waist-length, which was common. The use of the above-described cut constructions in practice is exemplified by the large finding of textiles in the church crypt in Hungarian Sárospatak, where people were buried from the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries. The found seventeen bodices create an imaginary evolutionary line from which at least six pieces correspond to the type described above (Ember-Varjú 1968: 167-171). Similar examples for wearing these *bodices* in the seventeenth century can be found on period portraits of Hungarian townswomen (Pechová 2013: 82), but also on the epitaph with a family of Brno burghers (Jakubec 2015: 352). The front panel edges and straps are bordered with several rows of silver and golden streamers. This type of *bodice*, bordered in a completely identical way, but using velvet ribbons, was worn in various regions of Europe even at the end of the nineteenth century as part of rural women's dress.

In Bohemia and Moravia, the above-described type of *bodice* has survived in folk costume in many regions, mostly as part of the oldest layer of garments intended for being worn on ceremonial occasions when it is worn together with a woollen-cloth and densely gathered skirt, with which it is often sewn together. The skirt is no longer circular, but rectangular and made of several strips of fabric. Skirts like this were worn as part of bride's attire in an isolated island in the environs of Trstence in Bohemia and in close Moravská Třebová (Ludvíková 2000: 74). Another occurrence of skirts sewn-together with the bodice can be observed in Silesian Cieszyn and its environs, where it is called a *životek* (Haroková 2000: 134), whereby it almost does not differ from the item recorded in the local tailor's pattern book (Těšín 1564). From the Cieszyn area, the occurrence of a similar type of bodice with a rectangular neckline and tips on the front panels and on the back spread to the south, along the Odra valley, where it is documented in the environs of Štramberk and Veřovice. The closed bodice with a rectangular neckline can also be found in the environs of Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, where it is called a *kabátek* (Brandstettróvá

2007: 62), and a similar type can be observed in the village of Strání in the Moravian-Slovak borderland.

In Slovakia, in contrast to what is described above, this type of *bodice* sewn-together with a rectangular cloth or woollen skirt was worn even in the early twentieth century as a standard part of everyday wear and festive costumes. The areas where it was worn are situated along old trade routes used to transport goods, technical novelties, and fashion from the south to the north.⁸ The route goes from Bratislava (Chorvatský Grob) towards Trnava (Čataj, Piešťany) and then along the banks of the Váh River to the region of Liptov (Liptovská Lužná and Liptovská Osada). From there, it continues along the Poprad valley to the region of northern Spiš (Osturňa) and from there to Polish Spiš (Jurgow, Kacwina). Along the Hornád valley, it continues to southern Spiš (Kojšov), to the region of Šaryš (Šaryšské Sokolovce) and to the city of Košice (Poproč and Myslava). Isolated occurrences can be observed in Novohrad (Popltár), and in the region of Hont (Hontianské Tesáre and Dvorníky).

The spread across south-eastern Moravia probably relates to another trade route which connects Bratislava through to the Slovak area of Záhori with the royal city of Skalica. From there, the route continued to Moravia, in the direction of Brno and towards Uherské Hradiště. In 1792 Vinzenz Georg Kininger made an engraving “a woman from the Moravian lowlands in summer attire”, dressed in green woollen skirt and red *bodice* with tipped front panels (Křížová – Šimša 2012: 122). A separate *bodice* with tips on the front panels and on the back is documented by rare collection items from the environs of the city of Skalica, where it belongs to the older layer of ceremonial clothing; a similar situation on the Moravian side of the frontier, in Dubňany nad Vnorovy. In contrast to that, in the environs of Velká nad Veličkou, the *bodice*, called a *kabátek* there, was worn even in the early twentieth century as ceremonial and festive attire (Častová 2008: 13).

The closed bodice with a flat collar (see Fig. 7) is quite a rare variant that we encounter only in the tailor’s pattern book from Frýdlant (1663) (Šimša 2014: 177). The term *Halßkoller* is probably derived from the wide flat collar with a stand-up section on its rear part; the collar borders a triangle-shaped neckline. To create the collar, the front panels must be extended by triangle-shaped gussets that are folded down to make wide rectangular or triangle-shaped lapels, whose upper edges are stitched to the rear standing part of the collar; this

standing part is cut together with the rear panel from one piece of fabric. The use of this *bodice* completed with sleeves is documented in Silesia, which is not so far from Frýdlant, namely on engravings depicting single girls and a townswoman in the work *Habitus praecipuorum Populorum* from 1577 (Weigel 1639: 47, 48, 49).

An open bodice with vertical front panels and sleeves is documented in the tailor’s book from Most (1576), where it is called “*der Leib*”, and we can find a nearly identical pattern in the tailor’s book from Hungarian Sopron (1679), where a scribe might have distinguished between the sleeved and the sleeveless variant



Fig. 7 – Festive attire of rural residents from Nuremberg environs. The woman wears a sleeved skirt and a *kolárek* with flat collar. Beham, Sebald. 1546. November und Dezember

“die Brust oder das Mieder” (Domonkos 1997: 232). The *bodice* front panels are vertical, and in their upper part displaced, in a right angle, due to the depth of the strap. Due to the small width of the attire, the front panels must have been laced-up, and might have been provided with a *stomacher*. The front panels are shifted deeply into the rear panel that is uncommonly narrowed; this resembles the stem of a “Y” letter with two rounded straps and a tip in the centre, which is a feature of this type of *bodice*. The patterns in both tailor’s books include long sleeves, gathered on the shoulders and narrowing towards the wrists, and a circular skirt termed “*der Schürtz*” in Most.



Fig. 8 – A Prague townswoman. The woman wears a skirt with apron, supplemented with a laced-up bodice and short kolár over the shoulders. Hollar, Václav. 1643. Pragerin

Over the seventeenth century, the *bodice* considerably spread across Central Europe, which is exemplified in engravings by Václav Hollar, which capture a woman from Prague (*Mulier Pragensis* – see Fig. 8) and another one from Upper Austria (*Mulier Austriae superioris*) (Petráň 1997: 459). This type of *bodice* from the 1640s has remained even in the textile repository in Austrian Poysdorf (Walcher 1923: 87). The *bodice* displays a typical form of the rear and front panels, which are accentuated with two rows of metal hooks to which the lace is to be fastened. The sleeves are completely lacking and from the skirt only a wide border that is arranged in rounded folds and placed at the bottom edge has remained. This type of border is called *šorčík* in the Czech lands, and it was to support the skirt which was tied over it. Another item from the seventeenth century comes from the crypt of the church in Hungarian Sárospatak (Ember-Varjú 1968: 176). Several discovered garments bear all typical signs of this type, including hooks for fastening. Even decorations that consist of flat streamers and that border edges of front panels, straps, and back seams are obvious. In the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, many portraits of Hungarian female aristocrats and townswomen were painted, which depict them as being dressed in the above-described type of laced-up *bodice* without a *stomacher*, under which a white shirt with long sleeves shows through (Pechová 2013: 95). In contrast, washerwomen in the picture from the manor house in Manětín (1716/17) have their *stomachers* inserted behind front panel lacing (Hajná 2016: 25).

As a result, from the depiction of washerwomen and a helper in the kitchen in the Manětín manor house, the laced-up bodice found its way to the Bohemian countryside over time. Due to the typical way of fastening the front panels, one often talks not about a *bodice*, but about *stays*. We will probably never be sure whether this concerns the same type which was mentioned as “*taffeta stays of an old model*” (Počáply 1649) and which completely replaced *bodices* in estate inventories in the Pardubice area in the 1640s. Many details mentioned regarding embellishment – “*red stays with silver streamers*” (Krchleby 1749), and construction – “*stays with twelve hooks and streamers*” (Popkovice 1753) – indicate that this could be the case. These *laced-up bodices* could be found in Bohemia until the late nineteenth century as part of folk costumes in the regions of Chebsko, Chodsko, Plzeňsko, and Litomyšlsko (Stránská 1949: 27).

In Moravia, the *laced-up bodice* occurs only in the oldest layer of ceremonial dress in the Jihlava and Vyškov areas, and in the city of Jablunkov (Haroková 2000: 136). Iconographic documents from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries turn these separated territory into an area occurrence in western, central, and northern Moravia (Křížová – Šimša 2012: 48, 49, 137) and in Silesia (Ludvíková 2000: 91, 94).

Linen Clothing – a *Letnice*, a *Rubáč*, a *Shirt*, a *Blouse*, and an *Oplíčko*

Outer *sleeved skirts* were not the only skirt-style garments worn by rural women. Their wardrobe also included a large selection of linen garments which served as underclothing, workwear, and summer clothing. The popularity of linen clothing in the countryside is understandable, namely due to its availability based on growing textile plants, such as flax or hemp, and the production of thread from which the weavers made linen or canvas of a different quality. In the countryside worked many tailors who were not members of a guild and who were called *stolíři* or *fušeři* [amateurs], although the guild tailors wanted to hamper this. Rural girls were also apprenticed by urban dressmakers. In the Pardubice manor, two and a half threescores of groschens were paid from an orphan's money for an apprenticeship like this in 1552 (Svatoň [no date]: 96). For this reason, it was possible to make most garments that did not need a complicated cut directly at home; these garments were used as underwear or workwear. Their advantage was that they could be regularly washed, which was not possible in the case of other garments made mostly of cloth (Stránská 1949: 111). Moreover, people could have the linen dyed black or blue by a dyer, and thus have the fabric for a more valuable garment. Estate inventories include linen garments only in fragments, which can be understood due to their intensive use and low residual price. Linen garments are, however, more often mentioned as a spoils of interrogated housebreakers who made do even with undergarments hanging on fences: “*In Dobruška, I took on a courtyard gallery [...] two men's shirts and three women's blouses*” (Solnice 1606) (Lány 1948: 50).

The linen equivalent to men's and women's cloth skirts was called a *kytle* [≈ hereinafter mentioned as *kirtle* for better understanding TN] in the Middle Ages. As the cut construction changed over time, the *kirtle* also changed to a form of a linen underskirt or overskirt with

a bodice. Women's *kirtle* are mentioned only rarely in the Pardubice area's estate inventories; there are not even ten pieces mentioned in total but they reflect the hitherto diversity of their development. In seven cases, a mere *kirtle* is mentioned, which might express that this is a common linen garment with the price of 15-30 groschens. However, a *kirtle* could also be made of a high-quality fine linen with a mohair *bodice*, which it was then worn as a festive dress, a “*kirtle with mucheyr bodice*” (Podůlšany 1598). The homemade linen could be dyed at the dyer's, and the *kirtle* made of it must have been considered a more valuable garment, especially if it was fine linen. A garment like this could be produced with a bodice made of high-quality woollen mohair; and then it was worn on holidays: “*new flax-linen dyed barvínka with a mucheyr bodice*” (1578), meaning at least until the dark colour changed into grey due to washing: “*an ash-grey barvínka with a mucheyr bodice*” (Bejšť 1598), and the *kirtle* then became an everyday garment.

Financial circumstances recorded in the Pardubice area's estate inventories, in which costly attire made of cloth, wool, silk, and fur prevailed and included only a few linen garments, stand in sharp contrast to the situation in the Strážnice manor in south-eastern Moravia (Pajer 2010). Garments noted in part of thirty inventories, are all exclusively women's garments. The composition of garments is very modest, and regularly only *blouses*, *summer skirts*, *headscarves*, and *shawls* are repeated. Further garments, such as a *rubáč*, a *cloth skirt*, a *skirt for walking*, a *camlet jacket*, a *carmine jacket*, a *damask kolárek*, a *rabbit fur-coat*, or a *šuba lined with fox fur* occur only in single pieces, and so does the *mentýk* which is regularly mentioned as being worn for the wedding of an orphaned girl (Pajer 2010: 12).

The linen skirt with bodice is mostly described as a *thin letnice* [≈ summer skirt], which means that it was made of a high-quality fine linen which was suitable as an overgarment. The linen was dyed only in one case: “*a letnice made of black linen*” (Hrubá Vrbka 1594). A *bodice* made of the same fabric as the *letnice* was not mentioned; the only exception is an “*obléčko made of red carmine with three samite cords for 3 guldens and 12 groschens and 6 dinars*” (Kněždub 1618). Due to its high value, which can be compared to the price of a common *sleeved skirt*: “*three guldens for a skirt for walking*” (Velká nad Veličkou 1594), this is certainly not a common *opléčko* but a real *bodice* embellished with sewn-on ribbons.

The 1594 estate of Martin Klimeš from Tvarožná Lhota allows the ethnological analogies to set together complete women's underwear. The underwear consisted of a hemp *rubáš* [≈ underskirt] and a *blouse*, over which a *thin letnice* was worn; this was covered by a *thin fěrtoch* [apron] in the front, which was replaced by a *hemp* or *tow fěrtoch* for work. Over the *letnice*, a linen skirt with a bodice, the woman could wear a *camlet jacket*, which could be a sleeved or sleeveless bodice. The head was covered by a *large veil*. In cold weather, women wore a *rabbit fur-coat* and an *ash-grey bonnet*. Footwear is unfortunately not mentioned. The *kirtle* as the major garment worn by rural women was popular not only in Moravia, but also in neigh-

bouring Hungary, where it was described by the Swiss traveller Wilhelm Dilich (1571-1650) around 1600 (see Fig. 9). "*Die Bawrin hat an ein schwartze oder rothe Brust ain schwartzen leinen Rock, mit etwa einem grünen oder rothem Saum, und schwartze Stifel. Auff dem Rücken tragen sie mehrmals ain Tuch, darinnen dasjenige eingebunden, welches sie mitragen wollen.*" (Markov 1955: 45)

It is the 1670s finding from the Austrian small town of Poysdorf that can give us an idea about the look of the *kirtle* and *letnice*. Among other things, the finding included a *long skirt*, a *blouse* and mainly a *linen kirtle with a bodice* (Walcher 1923: 87). The bottom part is made of several bands of flax linen which are arranged in folds at the waist and stitched to the bottom edge of the *bodice*, which displays diagonally opened front panels and a rectangular back panel made of one piece of linen.

Conclusion

The transformation and forming of rural-style clothing were a complicated and immensely stratified process in Central Europe in the early Middle Ages. The developing handicraft guild considerably hindered the settlement of craftsmen in the countryside, except for *vetešníci* [clothes menders] who were supposed to repair old garments, and not to make new ones. For this reason, rural residents were thrown back into their own home production, which cannot be presumed in the case of more complicated cut constructions of clothing attire, or on the purchase of old or less-quality garments from pedlars and urban clothes menders. Therefore it is not surprising, that under such circumstances they gladly invited wayfaring journeymen or *stolíři* [amateurs] to repair their garments or to make new ones. In contrast to this, unsuccessful aspirants to the master examination often went into lodgings on a farm to work as farm hands, and they stayed in the village permanently. This situation changed in the second half of the sixteenth century when many lords decided to subordinate the whole of their manor to the guild's powers, including rural tailors called *vesníci* [village tailors] and *stolíři*, who lived in the manor and who were forced to become guild members. Extended guild competences over serfs' clothing raised the question which type of dress is suitable for rural residents and which garments should represent them among other estates. While it was the *wagoner's smock frock* and *peasant's French skirt*, a garment frequently worn by hunters, riders, and soldiers, that were chosen for men, tailor's pattern books do not pub-



Fig. 9 – A Hungarian countrywoman. The woman wears a shirt with tight-fitting sleeves and a gathered skirt with a sleeveless bodice whose front panels are laced-up. The attire is completed with a narrow apron. Dilich, Wilhelm. 1600. *Ungarische Bewrin*

lish any specific dress for women. However, as a result from the estate inventories in the Pardubice manor, local rural women had a large wardrobe with diverse attire at their disposal throughout the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century. Women's dress was based on an undivided circular sleeved bodice-style skirt that was made of domestic or imported cloth; every woman owned several pieces. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the countryside saw new types of skirts which were made of woollen and silk fabrics and did not display a bodice; this was made and worn independently. Underwear and workwear are represented by a linen *kirtle* supplemented with a long shirt or a short *blouse* and girded with a canvas work apron, which was replaced by a silk one on holidays. The linen *kirtle* that served as underwear and workwear in the Pardubice area was the main

garment in eastern Moravia. The sixteenth century saw mainly linen skirts with a bodice, called a *letnice* [≈ summer skirt], under which women wore a *rubáč* [≈ underskirt] and a short *blouse*, everything girded with a linen apron. In neighbouring Slovakia, this clothing ensemble survived until the early twentieth century, including all the finer details, such as a linen skirt made of chamfered pieces, the cut of which was completely identical with records in the tailor's pattern book dated from 1604. Such penetration and domestication of new trends in clothing would not have been possible, if the professional tailors, organised by the guilds, had not broken through in the production of clothing; these professional tailors were able to do a job of high quality and to distribute, simultaneously and after some time, novelties that changed the face of rural clothing culture.

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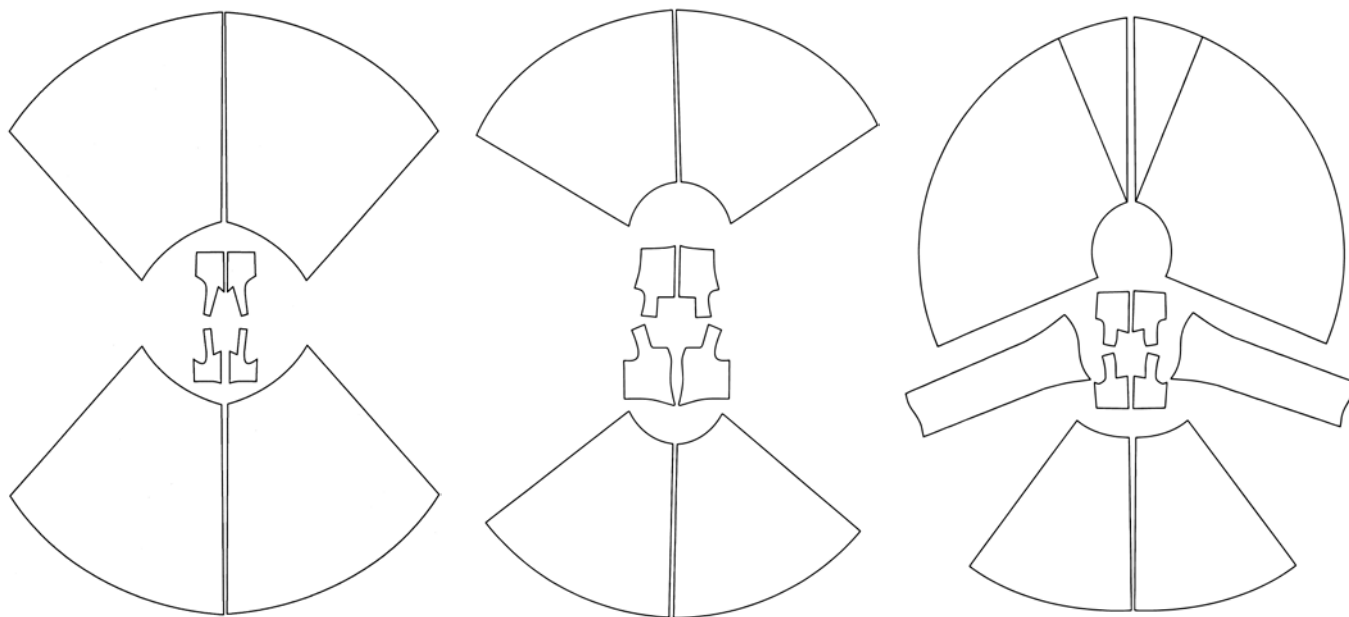


Fig. 11 – A circular skirt with a sleeveless bodice. Tailor's pattern book from Spišská Belá, Slovakia, 1712

Fig. 12 – A circular skirt with a sleeveless bodice of a peasant's wife for field works. Tailor's pattern book from České Budějovice, Czech Republic, 1623

Fig. 13 – A circular skirt with a bodice with long sleeves. Tailor's pattern book from Broumov, Czech Republic, 1642

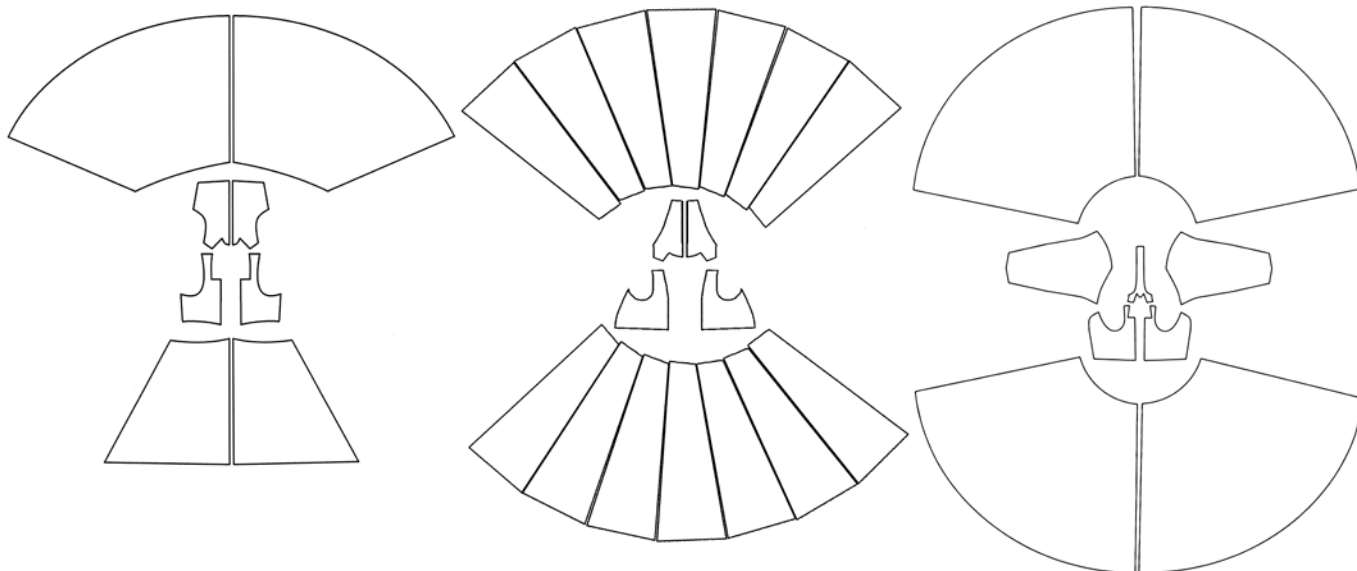


Fig. 14 – A band skirt with a sleeveless bodice. Tailor's pattern book from Frýdlant, Czech Republic, 1667

Fig. 15 – A band skirt with a sleeveless bodice. Tailor's pattern book from Chomutov, Czech Republic, 1604

Fig. 16 – A circular skirt with a sleeved bodice. The back panel is narrowed into the "Y" shape. Tailor's pattern book from Broumov, Czech Republic, 1636

NOTES:

1. This concerns a complaint of the Wschowa tailor's guild from 1593; they complained by the City Council that the peasants living in neighbouring villages invite amateurs to their farms to have their garments made and so they harm the local tailor's guild ("wie daß die Pauer in Oberprietfichen in ihren Höffen Storer fetzen die felbige beherbergen und Zu arbeiten, Ihnen bemelten Meistern Zum Verdinft und mercklichen Ichaden Zu lieffen". Archiwum Państwowe w Zielonej Górze, Cechy miasta Wschowy, syg. 15).
2. The material from the Strážnice manor was treated in an edition and published on the website. *Domovní a sirotčí knihy panství Strážnice z přelomu 16. a 17. století* [House and Orphan's Books in the Strážnice manor from the Turn of the Seventeenth Century] [online]. Available at: <<http://www.panstvistraznice.cz/>> [accessed December 6, 2019].
3. The material from the Pardubice manor was processed by the amateur historian František Svatoň. The gained material is included in several historical books. Comp. Archives of the Institute of Ethnology of the CAS. Svatoň, F. [no date]. *Materiál k dějinám Pardubicka. Díl Domácnost a hospodářství* [The Material about the History of the Pardubice Area. The Volume "Household and Farm"]. Rkp. 351-c.
4. "Brust". In *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm, Erstbearbeitung (1854–1960), digitalisierte Version im Digitalen Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* [online]. Available at: <<https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb/brust>> [accessed December 14, 2019].
5. Beham, Sebald. 1537. "Rücken an Rücken tanzendes Bauernpaar." *Virtuelles Kupferstichkabinett* [online]. Available at: <<http://kk.haumb-s.de/?id=h-s-beham-ab3-0159>> [accessed December 14, 2019].
6. "Mieder." In *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm, Erstbearbeitung (1854–1960), digitalisierte Version im Digitalen Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* [online]. Available at: <<https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb/mieder>> [accessed December 14, 2019].
7. "Gestalt." In *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm, Erstbearbeitung (1854–1960), digitalisierte Version im Digitalen Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* [online]. Available at: <<https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb/gestalt>> [accessed December 14, 2019].
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- Český Krumlov 1489 – State District Archives Český Krumlov, Tailor's Guild Český Krumlov collection, younger duplicate of guild articles from 1489, Inv. No. 8.
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- Havlíčkův Brod 1556 – State District Archives Havlíčkův Brod, Tailor's and Garment Cutter's Guild Havlíčkův Brod collection, guild articles from 1556, Inv. No. 1.
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- Jilemnice 1683 – State District Archives Semily, Tailor's Guild Jilemnice collection, guild articles from 1683, Inv. No. 1.
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- Klobouky 1708 – State District Archives Břeclav, Tailor's Guild Klobouky, untreated collection, extract from guild articles from 1708.
- Kunštát 1638 – State District Archives Blansko, Tailor's Guild Kunštát collection, duplicate of guild articles from 1638, Inv. No. 1.
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Summary

The aim of the study is to capture the process of the formation of women's rural dress in Central Europe in the early Middle Ages. This period brought many new impulses to women's clothing which resulted both in the emergence of national styles of clothing (Italian, German, and Hungarian), and the rapid adoption of pan-European fashion waves of Spanish and later French fashion clothing. This took root in the noble environment first, and then in the cities. The study tries to answer the question in what way these novelties were mediated to rural residents and who did this. The author shows how the field of competences of city tailor guilds spread from cities to adjacent manors, the residents in which were forced to have their garments made exclusively by guild tailors. Thanks to noble decrees, tailor pattern books served, among other things, as models for most garments made for subjected rural residents. The author analyses period depictions, inventories of estates, and estates to orphans. He shows that most hitherto written works fail when connecting the depictions and the terms for garments, the mutual relation of which is rather illustrative than comparative. The problem consists in little knowledge of cut constructions and their period terms. The solution can be brought about by the study of guild books with tailor's patterns, which include cut constructions and period terms. From the 16th and 17th centuries, these books have survived from the various territories of contemporary Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Austria, and Germany. Due to this we can conduct necessary comparative research into iconographic, constructional, and written sources in Central Europe, and to acquire new information about men's and women's clothing and basic garments.

Key words: Development of women's clothing; tailor's guild; tailor pattern books; rural and urban dress; women's skirt; bodice; stays.

CZECH PROSAIC FOLKLORISTICS AFTER 2000: BETWEEN CONTINUITY AND REVITALIZATION

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Czech research on prosaic folklore was in a rather negative situation at the outset of the twenty-first century,¹ although the beginning of the 1990s was quite optimistic. The 1st Folkloristic Seminar, which was held in Prague on 31 May 1990, can be considered to be a symbol of that period. This seminar was attended by twenty leading folklorists, including all key personages in the discipline. The first free scholarly meeting after many years both criticized previous developments in folkloristics during the period of state socialism (Jech 1992; Satke 1999) and outlined optimistic future prospects, which were associated with priority research tasks ahead of the new folkloristics that was relieved from the burden of ideology (Beneš – Tyllner 1992; Sirovátka 1992). However, it was 1992 that proved to be symptomatic for the discipline's future direction. During this year, three important scholars in the field died suddenly, some of whom had returned to active research under new free conditions from more or less politically forced asylum: Jaromír Jech (The Institute for Ethnography and Folkloristics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague), Oldřich Sirovátka (The Institute for Ethnography and Folkloristics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Brno), and Karel Horálek (Charles University in Prague). Karel Dvořák, another doyen of Czech prosaic folkloristics (Charles University in Prague), had died three years earlier, in 1989. These four leading researchers had great potential to modernize the discipline of folkloristics – and the capabilities to move it, under free conditions and through their students, into the new millennium. Their unexpected deaths dramatically decreased the potential of prosaic folkloristics, which was at that time still understood as a less significant subdiscipline of ethnography, that is, a historicizing discipline close to German *Volkskunde* (nevertheless, from the 1950s onwards Czech ethnography was, in accordance with the Soviet model [see Gusev 1978], simultaneously understood as a synthesis of two quite autonomous disciplines, ethnography [primarily conducting research on material culture] and folkloristics [primarily researching on intangible culture]). Several researchers, predominantly middle-aged and older,

remained active in the discipline in the 1990s (mainly Dana Bittnerová, Václav Hrníčko, Dagmar Klímová, Antonín Satke, Ludmila Sochorová, Bohuslav Šalanda, Zdeněk Urban, and Libuše Volbrachtová in Bohemia; Bohuslav Beneš, Martina Pavlicová, Jana Pospíšilová, and Marta Šrámková in Moravia), in addition to many regional and local researchers who focussed more on fieldwork and editorial work. The 1990s also brought another associated phenomenon: temporarily reduced interest in the study of domestic culture. Exotic non-European topics (marginalized in the past) and social- and cultural-anthropological approaches, which had not been applied until that time in the Czech lands and which were fashionable in the 1990s, became attractive. Both things were reflected in offerings of university course and seminars and in the thematic direction of the research activities of a significant part of Czech researchers or even institutions, which in the loose and uncertain situation of the 1990s meant that the discipline often temporarily dealt with themes that were far from “classical” prosaic folkloristics.² This transitional situation can be confirmed by a subtle anthology from the seminar *Hledání cest české slovesné folkloristiky II*. [Searching for Paths of Czech Literary Folkloristics II], held in Brno on 6 June 2002, that was (with some exceptions) dominated by very short papers that addressed the topics of reminiscences to famous folklorists, obituaries and overviews of folklore materials and archives (Krekovičová – Pospíšilová, eds. 2005). The synergic effect of personnel reduction and disinterest in folklore topics, which culminated at the very beginning of the millennium, meant that even in 2010 it was possible to justifiably speak about a “serious crisis” or even about “the disappearance of Czech folkloristics” (Lemeškin 2010). However, in the first decade of the new millennium, three new viable and mutually quite independent research trends emerged. These led to a certain improvement of the situation in subsequent years and included: 1) newly conceptualized scholarly interest in contemporary urban folklore in the form of research into collective memory and contemporary legends, 2) the revitalization and modernization of research on legends,

including a renewal of work on folklore indexes, and finally 3) the restoration of domestic research on folktales. The overwhelming majority of them were approached by the generation of the youngest researchers, who succeeded in following up the broken generational continuity, during which one generation of Czech prosaic folklorists did not in fact exist.

Contemporary Urban Folkloristics: Between Research into Collective Memory and Contemporary Legends

The first of these revitalization trends resulted in an increase in scholarly interest in the study of contemporary urban folklore and current or “modern” folklore genres, which can be divided into two research lines. Both of them independently continued research into personal experience narratives, which was conducted in the Czech lands from the 1950s onwards (Oldřich Sirovátka, Marta Šrámková, Jaromír Jech); they also reflected experience with research on working-class folklore from the 1970s (Dagmar Klímová) and urban folklore from the early 1980s (Bohuslav Beneš, Oldřich Sirovátka, Václav Hrníčko); in the end, however, they grew away from their historical precedents, and followed quite a different course.

The first line continued the aforementioned research on personal experience narratives and the peculiar vision of folkloristics as a discipline that primarily carries out oral history investigations (Beneš 1990, 1996; Beneš – Hrníčko 1993; Volbrachtová 1994), and it was most significantly demonstrated in scholarly publications written by Jana Nosková (born 1975; e.g. Nosková 2013, 2014, 2016) and Sandra Kreisslová (born 1981; e.g. Kreisslová 2014), which thematised collective and family memory. These studies culminated in an edited volume titled „*Takové normální rodinné historky*“: *Obrazy migrace a migrující obrazy v rodinné paměti* [“Such Normal Family Stories”: Images of Migration and Migrating Images in Family Memory]. The monograph interconnected, in an attractive manner, two significant topics of ethnological research: social memory and migration (Kreisslová – Nosková – Pavlásek 2019).

The other line, foreshadowed by scholarly interest in rumours, which began in the 1960s (Pulec 1965) and which was rediscovered at the beginning of the 1990s (see, e.g., Beneš 1991; Šalanda 1991; Klímová 1996; Šrámková 2002, a more recent example), interconnected these trends with the international discourse of research

on contemporary legends and rumours, that is, with the application of the genre approach, which is closer to traditional prosaic folkloristics. This line was most considerably demonstrated in a commented series of Czech contemporary legends and rumours from the cycle *Černá sanitka* [The Black Ambulance] (Janeček 2006, 2007, 2008). The author, Petr Janeček (born 1978), published 668 texts, which were documented in the field and which were related to both the present and the past – from the Second World War to the outset of the twenty-first century. The public’s unexpected response to these popular books resulted in television (Czech Television, 2008), radio (Czech Radio, 2008), and theatre (HaDivadlo, 2007) adaptations. This response then led to a considerable increase in interest in folkloristic topics from the Czech mass media, which led to a certain social rehabilitation of the discipline, which had been quite marginalized for different reasons in the 1990s and at the beginning of the millennium. Janeček continued this series with a rather popular-oriented collection of contemporary ghost stories, which he recorded in the field, called *Krvavá Máry a jiné strašlivé historky* [Bloody Mary and Other Scary Stories] (Janeček 2015) and a large comparative scholarly monograph *Mýtus o pérákovi. Městská legenda mezi folklorem a populární kulturou* [The Myth of the Spring Man: An Urban Legend between Folklore and Popular Culture] (Janeček 2017) that used extensive material from the Czech lands, Slovakia, Germany, and Russia from the years 1917-2017 to interpret the social and cultural context of dozens of versions of an international and originally British migratory legend about a mysterious jumping phantom, who was most often called *Spring-heeled Jack*.³ The research line focussing on contemporary Czech legends can be extended to include works by Jan Pohunek (born 1981), mainly his folklore index *Stíny mezi stromy. Extravilán v současných pověstech* [Shadows between Trees: Non-Built-Up Areas in Contemporary Legends] (Pohunek 2015). This publication deals with contemporary folklore prose in the Czech Republic’s rural areas, which is linked mainly to destinations visited by hikers, tourists, and tramps, or to phenomena such as *legend tripping*, *campfire tales*, and “Forteanas” – that is, peculiar layers of narration on the border between contemporary legends, rumours, memorates, ghost stories, and demonological legends – essentially “urban legends outside the city” (for more on this topic, see, e.g., Pohunek 2010, 2015).

The Revitalization and Modernization of Legend Research

Traditional comparative folklore studies, which were focussed on literary studies and that from the 1880s onwards comprised (in works by Jan Máchal, Jiří Polívka, Václav Tille, Frank Wollman, and later-on Karel Dvořák, Jiří Horák and Karel Horálek) the internationally most important research line of Czech folkloristics (Wollman 1989), were continued in the scholarly activities of Jan Luffer (born 1978) who (without the support of any domestic ethnological academic institutions) revitalized work on indexing “traditional” legends. Such activities were, before being politically forced to stop in the period of normalization in the 1970s and 1980s, conducted by Czech folklorists in the post-war period (mainly Dagmar Klímová, Oldřich Sirovátka, and Marta Šrámková). Luffer first published an index focused on the Berounsko and Hořovicko regions (Luffer 2003), which he followed up with a series of theoretically and methodologically aimed articles about indexing prosaic folklore (Luffer 2006, 2009, 2012). The highlight of his research efforts to this point is the monumental *Katalog českých démonologických pověstí* [The Index of Czech Demonological Legends], in which he uses his own classification methodology; it includes a knowledgeable introduction to the theme of legend as a folklore genre (Luffer 2014). This is the first large Czech folkloristic index to have been produced in decades. Its author is preparing other indexes dealing with historical and local legends. Luffer, in addition to this praiseworthy work, is also a librarian and editor at the Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, where he deals with Asian folklore literature. In 2009 he published a large annotated edition of Japanese demonological narratives *Strašidelný chrám v horách. Japonské lidové pohádky a pověsti* [A Haunted Church in the Mountains: Japanese Folktales and Legends] (Luffer 2009a; for more about the topic, see Luffer 2009b). Other researchers from his generation also engage in intensive folkloristic work in the realm of legends. The historian Adam Votruba (born 1974), whose principal focus is musical folkloristics and children’s folklore, has paid considerable attention to legends about social bandits and highwaymen. Using modern research approaches, he revitalized a theme that resonated in Czech folkloristics mainly in the second half of the twentieth century (Votruba 2009, 2010). Votruba has also paid attention to documenting legends in the

field (Votruba 2003, 2013). This genre is addressed also by Pavel Kracík (born 1976), presently probably the best field collector of folklore, who deals especially with the folklore and history of the Jičínsko region in northern Bohemia (e.g. Kracík 2012, 2016). Other studies based on field research on legends and related genres of prosaic folklore written by other authors from the middle and older generations have also been published (e.g. Pospíšilová 2016).

The revitalization of serious academic research on legends in the new millennium is an important development because this period saw an enormous increase in the Czech public’s interest in demonological, local, and historical legends, which are often commodified and exploited to create popular local, regional, and nationwide collections, museum exhibitions, and educational trails (in the best-case scenario), or to produce various Fortean publications, encyclopaedias, ghost museums, and ghost walks (in the worse-case scenario), in which the commercial viewpoint predominates over the safeguarding of the special nature and language of original folklore texts.

The Restoration of Czech Research on Folktales

The new millennium also saw a renewal of folktale studies, the most famous Czech folkloristic tradition internationally. After quite a long period, when mainly literary scholars dealt with folktales, scholarly folkloristic interest in this genre was revitalized. One of these scholars was Hana Šmahelová (Šmahelová 1989; 2002), who produced a new, annotated translation of the work of Vladimír Yakovlevich Propp (Propp 1999). The aforementioned interest is associated mainly with Jaroslav Otčenášek (born 1974), who, in addition to his cooperation on the *Slovník bulharského slovesného folklóru* [The Dictionary of Bulgarian Literary Folklore] (Baeva – Otčenášek 2013), edited several commented anthologies of south-Slavic folktales (e.g. Otčenášek 2003; Kindlerová – Otčenášek 2006; Otčenášek 2011), and he also dedicated several scholarly monographs to this genre, in addition to many studies (Otčenášek 2012; Otčenášek – Klímová 2012). His most important contribution to the revitalization of Czech folktale studies is that he followed up on the indexing work that was carried out in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences from the 1950s onwards. His efforts resulted

in a monumental nine-volume commented series called *České lidové pohádky* [Czech Folktales], which has been published since 2019 (Otčenášek 2019). This series presents examples of all types of folktale genres, beginning with animal tales and fables through magic and realistic tales to chain and cumulative tales. It is not limited by nationalist aspect, as was common in the past when research was limited only to Czech written and oral folktales; this series also offers narratives of the Czech Germans and Roma. Thus, this series begins to repay one of the greatest historical debts of Czech prosaic folkloristics.

Publication and Conference Activities, and the Treatment of the Discipline's History

The above-mentioned 1st Folkloristic Seminar in 1990 defined many areas that Czech folkloristics had, for diverse reasons, disregarded in the 1970s and 1980s, and it also called for rectification, specifically for the rehabilitation of folkloristics as an independent discipline related to ethnology and/or socio-cultural anthropology, for research on the relationship between folklore and elite and popular culture (including research on folklorism), for systematic fieldwork especially in urban setting (including the documentation of new and formerly unstudied phenomena), for comparative analysis in a broader European space, for the preparation of methodological aids for amateur documentarists, for indexing works, for the publication of a chrestomathy of Czech folklore and anthologies of particular genres, for the treatment of the discipline's history, for the preparation of a folkloristic dictionary, and for the strengthening of the position of folkloristics at universities, in mass media, and in the public space (Sirovátka 1992).

After almost twenty years, it is possible to state that at least some of these tasks have been completed, even though with certain difficulties and many years later than expected, but, at least, the work to implement them has started. Although the disciplinary position of folkloristics remains, as in other Central European countries, quite unclear (that is, folkloristics does not exist as an independent discipline, and it is mostly understood as part of ethnology, socio-cultural anthropology, literary studies, or philological disciplines – see Janeček 2009), most further tasks (meaning research on the relationship between folklore and elite and popular culture, initiation of systematic

fieldwork in the city, collection of non-traditional phenomena, comparative analysis in a broader European space, indexing, and maybe even strengthening of the position of folkloristics at universities, in mass media, and in public space) have been relatively achieved, as can be seen from the above lines.⁴ The prestige and position of Czech folkloristics were also strengthened thanks to the organization of several important conferences, the most important of which were the large international conferences *Perspectives on Contemporary Legend: International Society for Contemporary Legend Research, 32nd International Conference*, which was held at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague in 2014 and which was attended by fifty-five researchers from fifteen countries (only five presenters were from the Czech Republic and only twelve from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe – Janeček 2014b), and *Ballads and Memory: International Ballad Conference of the Kommission für Volksdichtung*, which was organized by the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in cooperation with the National Museum and the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences (Janeček – McKean 2018).

A part of a National Museum project, methodological aids for amateur documentarists of literary folklore were prepared (Pohunek – Janeček – Votruba 2014). The Department of European Ethnology at the Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University published a series of high-quality handbooks, which were primarily intended for university students and which focussed, among other things, on ethnological research, biographical and oral history methods, and research on children's folklore.⁵

A chrestomathy of Czech folklore, genre anthologies, and a folkloristic dictionary have not yet been published in full, but publication activity has developed quite positively. The Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences published, with Jana Pospíšilová as an editor, two hitherto unpublished works by the leading folklorist Oldřich Sirovátka (Sirovátka 2002, 2005). The series *Sanitka* [The Ambulance], published by Plot publishing house, has included six popular publications about contemporary Czech folklore since 2006 (in addition to a commented series of contemporary legends and rumours devoted, e.g., to children's folklore poetry), while the related series *Fabula* included eight important and hitherto unpublished texts of "traditional" Czech folklore (from early folklore collections by Karel Jaromír Erben,

Josef Virgil Grohmann, and Václav Krolmus from the mid-nineteenth century to a monograph about Růbezah, a mountain spirit from the Krkonoše Mountains, written by Jaromír Jech, e.g. Grohmann 2009, 2010; Krolmus 2011, 2013, 2014; Jech 2008). The formation of these series was, to a certain degree, a response to the boom of commercial legend series in the new millennium and whose academic quality was uncertain. However, it was the establishment of a special series called *Folkloristika* [Folkloristics] by the prestigious Argo publishing house that was the most important act in the field of publishing. It is led by Jan Luffer in his position of an expert editor, and it is devoted exclusively to academic folkloristic texts. Besides the already mentioned monographs (Janeček 2017 and Kreisslová – Nosková – Pavlásek 2019), this series also includes a second, significantly re-worked edition of *Soupis staročeských exempel* [An Inventory of Old-Bohemian Exempla], an important index by Karel Dvořák [Dvořák 2016]). A German translation was published in 2019 as part of the prestigious international series *Folklore Fellows' Communications*, which was planned already in the 1980s (Dvořák 2019).

As compared to other disciplines of Czech ethnological and anthropological sciences, the treatment of this discipline's history has moved forward considerably. In 2008, Marta Šrámková published an excellent overview publication *Česká prozaická folkloristika v letech 1945–2000 (Přehled, vývoj, témata, bibliografie)* [Czech Prosaic Folkloristics in 1945-2000 (Overview, Development, Topics, Bibliography)] and an English-written text that summarizes the history of Czech prosaic folkloristics from Romanticism to 2000 (Šrámková 2017). A spectacular jubilee publication devoted to the leading Czech literary folklorist Dagmar Klímová (Klímová 2006) was published even earlier, in 2006. Shorter studies on the discipline's history are published regularly (e.g. Otčenášek 2006; Janeček 2014c; 2016). Let us hope that this quite sharp increase in the publication of series and publication activities in Czech folkloristics, which is associated with the growingly more noticeable presence of Czech folklorists at international academic conferences and in international academic societies (e.g. ISFNR, SIEF, AFS, ISCLR, and others), will contribute to meeting the visions that leading personages in the discipline presented in 1990.

NOTES:

1. This crucial period featured social changes in 1989 and the turbulent 1990s, during which many dramatic changes in the Czech social sciences and humanities occurred (on the one hand, they were freed from the dogmatic ideological foundation of Marxism-Leninism; on the other hand, their financing was insufficient, and they were reduced in terms of personnel). This paper deals *exclusively* with the situation in prosaic folkloristics and not with broader literary folkloristics, and not at all with musical folkloristics (ethnomusicology) or ethno-choreology; the situation in these disciplines was quite different, and fortunately their generational and research continuity was not as significantly affected (on Czech ethno-choreology, see, e.g., Pavlicová 2012).
2. On (not only) the Czech situation in this period of crisis for folkloristics, see Lemeškin 2018. On the other hand, it must be stated that the departure from the traditional conceptualization of prosaic folkloristics led to increased focus on other non-traditional topics, e.g., children's culture, children's games, and children's folklore (which, e.g., Dana Bittnerová, Petr Janeček, and Jana Pospíšilová began to deal with); graffiti and written folklore (Bohuslav Beneš, Václav Hrníčko); and electronic and internet folklore (Marta Šrámková, Jaroslav Otčenášek).
3. An English version of this publication is being prepared. For more about the theme of contemporary legends and related genres, see, e.g., Janeček 2014a, 2020; Janeček – Panczová 2015.
4. The institutional position of prosaic folkloristics in the Czech academic environment was strengthened when Petr Janeček began working at the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague (2012); there he was awarded the senior lecturer (Docent) degree based on his habilitation lecture *Motiv 'tragického omylu' v orální, populární a umělecké kultuře* [The Motif of "The Tragic Mistake" in Oral, Popular and Elite Culture] (in 2019, for a printed English version of the lecture, see Janeček 2020). Since 2003, Jaroslav Otčenášek, another leading Czech prosaic folklorist from the younger generation, has worked at the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Another folklorist, Jan Pohunek, has worked since 2015 as head of the Ethnographic Department at the Historical Museum of the National Museum in Prague.
5. Within this project, an exhibition about contemporary folklore was organized at the Ethnographic Museum in Prague, and a freely distributable publication *Folklor atomového věku. Kolektivně sdílené prvky expresivní kultury v současné české společnosti* [Folklore of the Nuclear Age: Collectively Shared Elements of Expressive Culture in Contemporary Czech Society] was published (Janeček ed. 2011). An overview of all above-mentioned handbooks for students issued by the Department of European Ethnology at the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, is available online (<https://etnologie.phil.muni.cz/studium/knihovna/prirucky-pro-studenty>).

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Summary

The study deals with the principal tendencies in the development of Czech prosaic folkloristics after 2000, and it analyses the revitalization of folkloristics, which began after a period of certain instability in the discipline, uncertainty in research activities, and low productivity in the 1990s. The new millennium saw quite a vigorous increase in research on folklore within Czech ethnological and anthropological studies, which became evident mainly in the following research domains: research on collective and family memory; research in the field of contemporary legends, rumours, and contemporary folklore in general; research and indexing of “traditional” legends; and the revitalization of folktale studies. At the same time, new series began to be published, and publication activity itself experienced a significant increase (including the foundation of three folkloristic series, even by non-academic, commercial publishing houses), as did the number of international scholarly contacts. For this reason, prosaic folkloristics can be rightly considered to be one of the most fruitful (sub)disciplines of the Czech ethnological and anthropological sciences.

Key words: Prosaic folkloristics; literary folkloristics; Czech folklore; folklore; history of the discipline.

THE LIST OF INTANGIBLE ELEMENTS OF TRADITIONAL FOLK CULTURE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Over the last decades, Czech cultural institutions and organizations have been heavily involved in the safeguarding of cultural heritage. They focus on building a complex system for care for tangible and intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Tangible culture is accompanied by expressions of intangible culture, which are of the same importance and which feature dynamic development, continuous transformation, and – from the perspective of their bearers – still living content. Traditional folk culture is a significant component of the cultural whole. It is part of the cultural identity of local communities, and it contributes to the safeguarding of cultural diversity in the Czech Republic. Intangible cultural heritage is often understood as an immaterial part of traditional folk culture: “Its particular elements include mainly experience, depiction, ex-

pression, knowledge, skills as well as relevant tools, objects, artefacts, and related cultural spaces that societies, groups and sometimes also individuals consider to be part of ICH. The abbreviated term ‘traditional folk culture’ is commonly used for the intangible component of traditional folk culture” (Krist et al. 2016: 4). The above definition has become the basis for defining certain expressions as intangible elements of traditional folk culture.

The establishment of cooperation with UNESCO was a major milestone in the care for traditional folk culture in the Czech Republic. In 2007-2008, the process of ratifying the crucial Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was under way in the Czech Republic. This document was adopted by consensus at the UNESCO conference in Paris in 2003, and it entered into force three years later. The date of 18 February 2009 marked the Czech Republic’s official accession to the convention (as the 190th country in the world), and through it the Czech Republic received certain legal protections for its

intangible cultural heritage. The convention lays down the obligation to establish two new lists of elements of intangible culture: the List of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (which was then transformed into the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity) and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

The governmental “Strategy of Improved Care for Traditional Folk Culture for 2004-2010” became an important tool for implementing the tasks defined by the convention. This document, which has been updated distributes the competences to professional cultural institutions by their fields of speciality, and it specifies particular projects for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, their guarantors, expected outcomes, and financial means. This strategic document provides recommendations for the authorities in regions as higher-level territorial self-governing units to establish professional departments for the care for traditional folk culture in regional museums in order to meet the demands put on the care of traditional folk culture. Collaboration between the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and regional authorities resulted in a network of fourteen authorized departments, which was established in the years 2005-2008:

- The City of Prague Museum (Prague, capital of the Czech Republic)
- Regional Museum in Kolín (Central Bohemian Region)
- South Bohemian Museum in České Budějovice (South Bohemian Region)
- Dr. Hostaš History and Geography Museum in Klatovy (Plzeň Region)
- Cheb Museum, a public-benefit organization of the Karlovy Vary Region (Karlovy Vary Region)
- Regional Museum in Teplice (Ústí nad Labem Region)
- Museum of the Bohemian Paradise in Turnov (Liberec Region)
- Museum of Eastern Bohemia in Hradec Králové (Hradec Králové Region)



Run for the Barchan. Photo: Archives of the National Institute of Folk Culture, 2012

- National Heritage Institute, Regional Heritage Administration in Sychrov – a detached branch called the Administration of the Vysočina Ensemble of Vernacular Building headquartered in Hlinsko (Pardubice Region – upon agreement with the general directorate of the National Heritage Institute)
- Vysočina Museum in Třebíč (Vysočina Region)
- Masaryk Museum in Hodonín, Kyjov branch (South Moravian Region)
- Slovácko Museum in Uherské Hradiště (Zlín Region)
- Regional Museum in Olomouc (Olomouc Region)
- Těšín Museum and Nový Jičín Museum (Moravian-Silesian Region).

The National Institute of Folk Culture was designated to become the methodological centre for the above institutions, and the Ministry of Culture coordinates the activities of these institutions at regular meetings. The Ministry of Culture's subsidy programme for supporting traditional folk culture allows the above institutions to obtain funding for relevant research and presentation projects. These professional institutions chosen to take care of traditional folk culture play an irreplaceable role in establishing and administrating regional inventories of significant elements of traditional folk culture ("regional inventories"), which are indicative inventories of elements to be inscribed on the List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture in the Czech Republic (the National List). It took several years to establish these regional inventories because many leading representatives of regional authorities did not consider these inventories to be a priority, and the corresponding approval process was very lengthy. The chosen museums, acting as authorized institutions, faced a lack of staff and research fellows. Currently, regional inventories have been produced for all regions.²

Based on the Ministry of Culture's legislative measures, the List of Intangible

Elements of Traditional and Folk Culture of the Czech Republic was established. In 2012, the name was changed to the List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic, which provided a more detailed specification of the types of inscribed elements. The National List was established in order to protect, safeguard, identify, develop, and support ICH in the Czech Republic. The National Institute of Folk Culture was in charge of administering the National List, and the agenda of the National List was managed by the Regional and Minority Culture Department of the Ministry of Culture. The methodological instruction to keep the List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic defines the process of proposing and inscribing the elements, the tasks of particular cultural institutions, the roles of those who assess the proposals for inscription, the requirements of submitted drafts, the binding deadlines for nominations, the procedure for negotiating the proposals, the assessment of the proposals, the approval of

results by the Ministry of Culture, the announcement of results to the submitting entity, the inscription on the National List, the bearers' rights and obligations, the way to keep the List, subsequent periodical re-documentation, and the way to identify the intangible elements of traditional folk culture inscribed on the National List that are endangered or at risk of extinction.³ This document is a necessary tool for submitting entities to complete the nomination form, and it also mentions several links to nominations for the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Only elements that meet the definition of ICH, as described above, may be nominated for the National List. Every nominated intangible cultural element must demonstrate that it has been transmitted from generation to generation. Furthermore, such an element should be continuously reshaped by communities and groups of people in the context of dependence on their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history. It should also be a token of their identity and



Rides of the Kings in south-east of the Czech Republic. Photo: Archives of the National Institute of Folk Culture, 2008

continuity, whereby respect for cultural diversity and folk creativity is supported. As a matter of principle, the production of food and drinks is never inscribed on the National List. Drinks and foods that accompany traditional ceremonies or customs are exceptions. Since 2014, it has been possible to nominate only elements

that are already inscribed on one or several regional inventories. The representatives of regional self-governments often understand the inscription of an element on the National List as a matter of prestige, and for this reason troubles often emerge with political pressure on inscribing certain phenomena that occur within

several regions and which, from a professional point of view, should be jointly nominated for inscription by the relevant regions; regional authorities, however, often put high priority on making nominations related solely to their regions, through which they want to avoid complicated negotiations with representatives from other regions. If these elements fulfil the same social and cultural functions and do not feature principal specific expressions of intangible heritage, it is probable that with time other authorities from other regions will ask institutions in charge of managing traditional folk culture to work out a draft for the nomination of the same element. This would lead to the unnecessary duplication of many administrative and documenting processes.⁴

Nominations for inscription on the National List are submitted by different institutions and organizations: the Ministry of Culture, central bodies of the state administration, the National Institute of Folk Culture, territorial self-governing units (municipalities, cities, and regions), regional professional institutions in charge of the care for traditional folk culture (the above-mentioned fourteen museums), research and scientific institutions, universities, and clubs (in cooperation with authorized regional institutions). The proposing entity is obliged to consult its intent to nominate an element with the National Institute of Folk Culture.

A nomination includes six thematic sections. These concern not only the nominated element and its safeguarding, but also, as mentioned in the first section of the nomination, the nominating institution or organization. The second section focusses on a definition of the proposed element, which includes, among other things, a description of its current form, time classification, periodicity of its occurrence, the geographical localization of its occurrence, and the identification of its bearers. The third section concentrates on measures to safeguard and promote the element, including competent entities that are responsible for the implementa-



Falconry – the art of breeding birds of prey, their protection, training and hunting with them. Photo: Archives of the National Institute of Folk Culture, 2009



Nativity scenes path in Třešť. Photo: Archives of the National Institute of Folk Culture, 2014

tion of safeguarding measures. Attention is paid to the involvement of bearers in the implementation of safeguarding measures. The fourth section provides a space to give reasons for the candidature of an element. It focusses on the element's current social and cultural functions for the bearers. The relationship between the nominated element and the ICH definition is significant as well. The fifth section requires the bearers to give their informed consent for inscribing the element on the National List, and the last section comprises supporting documents (photos, videos, a map identifying the occurrence of the element, a written opinion from the National Institute of Folk Culture on the nomination, and consent from the relevant regional authority to submit the nomination).

The Ministry of Culture makes only a formal check of the submitted nominations before passing them to the National Institute of Folk Culture for a substantial assessment. Subsequently, the nominations are presented to the National Council for Traditional Folk Culture, which was founded in 2004 as an advisory, initiative, and coordinating body of the Ministry of Culture. The number of council members varies. In 2019 nineteen important experts in ethnology, sociology, art history, musicology, film and theatre studies, aesthetics, architecture, technology, and regional studies, as well as employees of educational institutions and mass media outlets, and representatives of self-governments, were on the council. The council is supposed to evaluate inscription nominations, to propose two independent experts to elaborate written expert opinions for each nomination, and to issue a recommendation or a non-recommendation concerning the inscription of the proposed element to the Minister of Culture. The council also discusses and recommends suggestions to elaborate national and supranational nominations for the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. After the expert opinions are finished, the

council debates the proposals and issues its recommendation or non-recommendation for the element to be inscribed on the National List for the Minister of Culture. It is the Minister of Culture who finalizes the process and who is entitled to accept the national council's recommendation or not. Twenty-six elements of traditional folk culture have been inscribed on the National List to date.⁵ Of them, six have been successfully submitted by the Czech Republic for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: the Slovácko *verbuňk* (inscribed in 2005 as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity; after the establishment of the Representative List, it was inscribed in 2008); Village Shrovetide door-

to-door processions in the Hlinecko area (inscribed in 2010); Rides of the Kings in the south-east of the Czech Republic (inscribed in 2011); Falconry – the art of breeding birds of prey, their protection, training and hunting with them (inscribed in 2012 as a supranational nomination); Puppetry in Slovakia and the Czech Republic (inscribed in 2016 as a common nomination submitted by the Czech and the Slovak Republics); and Blueprint – resist block printing and indigo dyeing in Europe (inscribed in 2019 as a supra-regional nomination of five European countries). The nomination for Manual production of Christmas tree decorations from glass blown beads is currently being assessed for inscription.



Folk tradition of the production of Christmas ornaments made from glass beads. Photo: Archives of the National Institute of Folk Culture, 2015

Intangible elements of traditional folk culture inscribed on the List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic:⁶

Year of inscription	Name of the element	Submitting entity
2009	Slovácko verbuňk	National Institute of Folk Culture in Strážnice
2009	Village Shrovetide door-to-door processions in the Hlinecko area	National Heritage Institute – Vysočina Ensemble of Vernacular Buildings, Hlinsko
2009	Rides of the Kings in Slovácko	National Institute of Folk Culture in Strážnice
2009	Falconry – the art of breeding birds of prey, their protection, training and hunting with them	Ministry of Agriculture
2011	Gamekeeping – planned sustainable management of game animals and of the environment as a natural part of life in rural areas	Czech-Moravian Association of Gamekeepers
2012	Wallachian odzemek	Wallachian Open-Air Museum, Rožnov pod Radhoštěm
2012	Leading the Judas	National Heritage Institute, branch in Pardubice
2012	Puppetry in eastern Bohemia	Hradec Králové Region, Pardubice Region
2013	Run for the Barchan	City of Jemnice
2014	Blueprint manufacturing technique	National Institute of Folk Culture in Strážnice
2014	Traditional healing procedures and the legacy of Vincenz Priessnitz	Olomouc Region
2014	Czech puppetry – folk interpretation art	National Information and Advisory Centre for Culture, Prague
2015	Nativity scenes path in Třešť	Vysočina Museum in Třebíč
2015	Folk tradition of the production of Christmas ornaments from glass beads	Museum of Bohemian Paradise in Turnov
2016	Skřipácký-style music in the Jihlava area	Vysočina Museum in Třebíč
2016	Easter door-to-door processions Judas in the Bučovice area	Masaryk Museum in Hodonín
2017	Historical plaque procession in Brtnice	Vysočina Museum in Třebíč
2017	Milevsko masks	Maškarní sdružení, a club for safeguarding traditions in Milevsko
2017	Amateur theatre in the Czech Republic	National Information and Advisory Centre for Culture, Prague
2017	Manual production of Shrovetide masks in Zákupy	Museum of the Bohemian Paradise in Turnov
2017	Easter festival of Matičky and Christ Child's Matičky in the Haná Region	Olomouc Region
2017	Timber-rafting tradition on the Vltava River	Vltavan Bohemia
2018	Brewery cooperage technique	Plzeňský Prazdroj, a.s.
2018	Činovat weaving technique in the ethnographic area of Horňácko	National Institute of Folk Culture in Strážnice
2018	Tradition of bagpipe-playing in the Czech Republic	National Institute of Folk Culture in Strážnice
2018	Hand production of chenille textiles in Hlinsko	Pardubice Region and National Heritage Institute – Vysočina Ensemble of Vernacular Buildings, Hlinsko

After inscription on the National List, the entities that submitted the nominations must continuously document the elements and at least once every three years send reports about the condition of the elements to the National Institute of Folk Culture, which – as the National List's administrator – systematically re-documents the elements, as this is the case of elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The elements inscribed on the National List are financially supported not only by the communities, cities, municipalities, and regions that they are located in and individuals, but also by the state. Every year, the Ministry of Culture issues a call for grant proposals to fund projects associated with the documentation, presentation, and safeguarding of inscribed elements. Projects concerning the safeguarding of endangered elements are prioritized (for example, elements with a low number of bearers).

Inscription on the National List leads to an element receiving regional and local media attention, which also results in the positive promotion of cultural institutions' activities and greater awareness about traditional folk culture among the general public. An increase in the number of tourists and the commercialization tied to particular elements are among the negative impacts of popularization (for example, many multigenre events accompanying local festivals, admission fees for those interested in watching the expressions of the element, approval for stalls selling irrelevant goods, etc.); these impacts can restrict or threaten several functions of the element (especially in the case of elements related to spiritual culture or in the case of customs and ceremonies).

In general, the Czech public does not know much about the existence of the National List. For the future, institutions involved should take advantage of possible occasions to spread awareness of the National List and the elements in-

scribed on it, and to foster positive relationships with traditional folk culture, as in the context of social globalization folk culture represents the legacy of past generations and simultaneously remains

an important component in safeguarding the cultural identity of the population living in a particular territory.

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*Tradition of bagpipe-playing in the Czech Republic.
Photo: Archives of the National Institute of Folk Culture, 2017*



*Skřipácký-style music in the Jihlava area.
Photo: Archives of the National Institute of Folk Culture, 2015*

NOTES:

1. The first update of the document covered the years 2011–2015, and a second update for 2016–2020 followed; currently the second update is being evaluated, and a third update is under preparation.
2. An updated overview of inscriptions on regional inventories can be found on the website of the corresponding regional institution in the section devoted to traditional folk culture or on the website of the National Institute of Folk Culture (Regional Inventories).
3. The document is available on the website of the Ministry of Culture (List).
4. The National List currently includes, for instance, independent inscriptions of Easter door-to-door processions with Judas in the Pardubice Region and the Bučovice area. Puppetry in eastern Bohemia has been inscribed as an individual element, and simultaneously Czech puppetry has been inscribed as a whole.
5. During the 2019 nomination proceedings, two new suggestions were discussed: the tradition of lacemaking in the Vamberk area, and traditional kermesse with “law” in the Uherské Hradiště area.
6. Complete nomination documents, photos, and basic information about the inscribed elements are available on the website of the National Institute of Folk Culture (National List).

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ON CREATING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE LISTS IN SLOVAKIA: THE STATE OF THE ART IN 2019

UNESCO was founded in 1945 in response to two devastating world wars. In 1972, the Convention for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage was established. However, anthropologists, ethnologists, and other experts noted and discussed how many cultures do not have tangible monuments, yet they still are vivid cultures that pass on from generation to generation stories, knowledge, ritual practices, experiences, and know-how related, for example, to craftsmanship. This diversity of heritage is very vulnerable and should therefore be protected. The discussions resulted in the creation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003, which reflected UNESCO’s decision to also protect intangible and living heritage.

This convention established four main instruments for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH). The most famous and extensive is the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. However, concerning the safeguarding of ICH, the Register of Good Practices should deserve much more attention than it actually does, as it can serve as a source of

inspiration for other countries, communities, and ICH bearers. The third tool is the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, which includes elements that are under threat from global changes, climate change, war, and other situations. The fourth instrument is international assistance in the form of UNESCO projects focussed on researching particular elements, creating ICH lists or registers, or designing safeguarding mechanisms or tools.

Overall, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage has been signed by 178 countries so far. The Slovak Republic ratified the convention in 2006. The ratification of the convention by the Slovak Republic stimulated state authorities to become more interested in the systematic safeguarding of ICH. In 2007 the Government of the Slovak Republic approved a document titled *Conception of Care for Traditional Folk Culture*. In addition to the introduction of the subjects of regional education and traditional folk culture into the school curriculum, the creation of a central database of information on folk culture, and the implementation of other systematic steps in the safeguarding process, this document also assumed the creation of lists related to ICH in Slovakia (Kysel' 2008).

Lists of Slovakia's ICH

In Slovakia the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre (Centrum pre tradičnú ľudovú kultúru, CTLK) – a professional institution of the Slovak State Traditional Dance Company (Slovenský ľudový umelecký kolektív, SĽUK), a state-funded organization established by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic – is responsible for implementing the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Government Policy for the Safeguarding of Traditional Folk Culture. It was established in April 2008 at the National Educational Centre (Národné osvetové centrum, NOC)

in Bratislava. Since 2010 it has been a part of SĽUK. Besides its other functions mentioned above, the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre is mainly responsible for compiling two national lists: the Representative List of the ICH of Slovakia and the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices in Slovakia. A call for proposals is announced annually by the Ministry of Culture.

Elements are nominated from the bottom up, that is, it is up to the people – individuals or communities of bearers of an element of folk culture or living heritage – to respond to the call themselves and submit a proposal. CTLK staff can provide guidance throughout the whole process, explaining any ambiguities. However, bearers of ICH, whether individuals or communities, often invite ethnologists, folklorists, or other “en-

thusiasts”, who could be called cultural brokers (Jacobs 2014), to help them with the nominations, as filling in the required forms can be daunting.

Each proposal is reviewed in written form by at least two specialists in the field of the nomination. Subsequently, the Board of Experts, a committee for assessing proposals to be included on the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices, examines the nominations and makes decisions, which are then confirmed by the minister of culture. The implementation of safeguarding measures for all listed elements is evaluated regularly (every six years depending on the inscription date of the element). The evaluation is based on written reports made by the communities concerned and assessed by the Board of Experts. Its members are appointed by the minister of culture and proposed by the Ministry of Culture's Council for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage: these members come from local governments; institutions engaged in ICH research, documentation, and protection on the professional level; non-governmental organizations; the media; and so forth.

The first call for ICH nominations was made in May 2010. Since then, Slovakia has already inscribed twenty-six elements on the national lists. Twenty-three elements are included on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovakia. As the number of elements increased, it became necessary to categorize these elements by domain, partly respecting the UNESCO definition of ICH (Basic Texts 2018: 5). The following categories were created:

1. Oral Traditions and Expressions, comprising the “Slovak Sign Language” (inscribed in 2018);
2. Performing Arts, comprising “Fujara – The Musical Instrument and Its Music” (2010); “Music of Terchová” (2011); “Puppetry in Slovakia” (2013); “Bagpipes and Bagpipe Culture in Slovakia” (2013); “Multipart Singing in the Horehronie Region” (2015); “Fujara Trombita”



A Portrait of a Fujara-Flute Player, Detva. Photo: Tibor Szabó, Archives of the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, 1966

(2017); “Rifová píšťala – The Shepherd’s Pipe” (2018), and “Requests from the Podpoľanie Region” (2018);

3. Social Practices, Rituals, and Festive Events, comprising “Traditional Manual Bell Ringing and the Bell Founders’ Role in Slovakia” (2011); “Aušus Services of Špania Dolina Miners” (2011); “The Radvaň Fair” (2011), and “Salamander in Banská Štiavnica” (2013);

4. Knowledge and Practices Concerning Nature and the Universe, comprising “Husbandry of Lipizzaner Horses at Topoľčianky” (2017); “Mountain Carrying” (2018), and “Falconry” (2018);

5. Traditional Craftsmanship and Artistic Expressions, comprising “Ornaments in Čičmany” (2013); “Blueprint” (2015); “Vajnory Ornament” (2016); “Tulle Bobbin Lace from the Myjava Highlands” (2016), “Carved Wooden Crosses in the Podpoľanie Region” (2017); “Ware from Modra” (2017), and “Wire Craft” (2017).

Three activities are inscribed in the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices

of Slovakia: “The School of Crafts of the Centre for Folk Art Production” (2015), “Documentation and Protection of Wire Craft at the Považie Museum in Žilina” (2017), and “Dancing House Cycle of the Dragúni Association” (2018).¹

Similar to the experience of creating ICH Lists at the UNESCO level, in the Slovak Republic, the main focus of the media and the wider public is on the representative list, although CTLK experts as well as members of the Board of Experts consider the Register of Good Practices to be more important. To share and spread good practices related to the protection of ICH seems to be the most essential measure or tool to help safeguard ICH all around the world.

According to the CTLK’s statutes, the representative list “is a listing of remarkable elements of the intangible cultural heritage of Slovakia. Inclusion on the Representative List is an acknowledgement of exceptional elements and practices accepted by societies and individuals that survive in accordance with the universally observed principles of human

rights, as well as the principles of equality, support, and mutual respect among cultural communities” (CTLK 2019).

However, since the list is created from the bottom up, it may, of course, occur that bearers of elements will nominate very similar phenomena. For example, the inclusion of special ornaments from one municipality on a list of ICH may inspire another municipality or community to nominate a very similar element the following year. On the one hand, it is desirable that this democratic procedure raises awareness among the general public about the value of living heritage and the need for its protection in the modern world.

On the other hand, Slovak experts engage in lively discussions about whether the elements included on the “national list” have to be unique to a particular village, community, or even a single person, or whether elements must be representative for Slovakia in its entirety, or at the very least have symbolic value on the national level. These questions will be answered as the number of nominations and inscriptions grows.

Further discussions are also taking place, for example, on the nature of the elements and the effort to ensure diversity of the listed elements. Many elements included in the lists are related to agrarian culture, specifically to pastoral culture. It seems, based on the symbols used to officially represent Slovakia (see, e.g., the Slovak Olympic team’s uniforms or the official mascot of the Ice Hockey World Championship held in Bratislava and Košice in 2019), that the decision-makers concerned would like to present Slovakia through its relationship to pastoralism and the love of its inhabitants for the land of their peasant forefathers. However, since medieval times there has also been a highly developed urban culture on the territory of today’s Slovakia (related to craft associations, educational institutions, and foreign ethnic groups, for example, thanks to the eastward expansion of Germans in the Middle Ages).



*Aušus Services of Špania Dolina Miners – A Holy Mass, Špania Dolina.
Photo: Archives of the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, 2010*

The tendency to present ICH in Slovakia as rooted only in pastoral culture and farming-related culture does not necessarily correspond with the character of the elements inscribed on Slovakia's ICH Lists. These Lists are sometimes considered to be the “shop windows” of ICH, and they therefore can show just how diverse ICH can be.

Recently, the Slovak media has reported that these lists exclusively contain “folklore” and living heritage elements. But national lists, which contain elements that can then be nominated for UNESCO lists, include more diverse elements, such as “Mountain Carrying”. This fascinating element comprises all nature-related know-how as well as know-how about how to properly make a *krošňa*, a basic tool for carrying goods; how to place loads; and techniques for carrying bundles that can sometimes weigh over 100 kg. The Slovak list also includes a “modern” element: Slovak Sign Language, the means of communication of the Slovak Deaf community.

Discussions about what is and what is not ICH lead to another question: Which elements should be nominated to represent Slovakia at the UNESCO level? Meanwhile, the decisions of the committee for assessing proposals for inclusion on the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices in Slovakia have focussed on the uniqueness of elements originating from Slovakia, which are chosen mostly from those found only on the territory of today's Slovakia and known throughout the country.

So far, six Slovak elements have been included on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: “Fujara and its music” (originally declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2005), “Music of Terchová” (2013), “Bagpipe culture” (2015), “Puppetry in Slovakia and Czechia” (2016; for more about the process of this first multinational nomination, see Voľanská, Hamar 2015), “Multipart singing of Horehronie”

(2017), and “Resist block printing and indigo dyeing in Europe”, a multinational element involving four other Central European countries: Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Germany (2018).

The Slovak Republic has also nominated the element “Drotárstvo – wire craft and art” for inscription on the UNESCO Representative List; the proposal will be evaluated at the fourteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in December 2019.

The nomination process for the element “Fujara and its music” for the UNESCO List was unique. As no national list was provided by Slovakia in 2005, the nomination was made by the Ministry of Culture on the basis of a proposal by scholar Oskar Elschek, who was subsequently commissioned to draw up a nomination file. All subsequent proposals were submitted by the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre.

The method of using wire to mend pots that was invented in the eighteenth century by people living in the northern

regions of today's Slovakia was at the time unique worldwide. In other countries, the tinkering method was usually used to mend pots by patching them with small plates. The use of wire, however, meant that the pots did not disintegrate. Artistic work with wire was also a specialty of masters from these regions. Hence, such workshops successfully spread all over the world, from China to America. Later, this craft was endangered as production methods changed. *Drotárstvo*, or wire craft, is an example of how vulnerable ICH can be. With changes in the economic system and production methods, this craft suddenly lost a major part of its meaning. When new pots are affordable, available even for bargain prices, people will not try to save old ones. It is not surprising that tinkers have begun to create other utility objects and even art. There is no tradition without innovation. However, it is very difficult to ensure this craft production not to become a matter of kitsch and the innovation not to hurt this ICH phenomenon. I believe that it is the job of experts – such as ethnologists,



Wire Craft – Ceramic tableware from western Slovakia and Germany, repaired using wires. Collection of the Žilina Povážské Museum, late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Photo: Anna Kucharčíková, Archives of the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, 2007

museologists, and museum workers – to help with the knowledge of the past.

For example, even in the case of blueprint, when the last well-known master, Stanislav Trnka, died, it seemed for a certain period that there was no expert in Slovakia who could revive the original method of blueprint production. In addition, blueprinting is a demanding craft which takes up all your time. Kypa, the fluid in which the fabric soaks, can be damaged if it is not cared for, and for this reason, the craftsman cannot leave it whenever he wants to. In the end, Matej Rabada, who learned the entire production process himself as a university student and with the help of blueprinting masters from neighbouring countries, mastered this technique. Today the demand for blueprinting is so high that the two existing masters – Rabada and Stanislav Trnka's grandson Peter Trnka – cannot meet it. In some cases, patterns are no longer printed by hand on the fabric. These craftsmen also experiment with screen printing. Importantly, they have retained the essential char-

acteristics of this element. They have struck the right balance between tradition and innovation.

There is a problem I would like to raise here: it is necessary to think about the negative consequences of inscription as well: the inscription of an element can unintentionally lead to its commercialization and the deformation of how it is presented. It is sometimes necessary to explain to the public, to bearers, and to communities that, above all, the best method for safeguarding a tradition, an element of living heritage, is to practice it. Furthermore, there is no financial reward associated with inscription, and inclusion on the list is no guarantee of obtaining financial support via projects within the support mechanisms offered by state institutions, such as the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic.

The preparation of multinational nominations is just as interesting as the creation of lists at the national level. The Slovak Republic has been involved in two successful collaborations so far, and a third one is currently a work in progress.

At present, a Slovenian team is leading work on an international nomination involving countries that were formerly part of the Habsburg Monarchy. This nomination focuses on the knowledge associated with breeding Lipizzan horses, one of the oldest cultural breeds in Europe.

Defining each element and subsequently creating a nomination file is probably the most difficult task. It often takes several months to craft a proposal, which is then commented on. Some passages are completely reworded several times, especially after consulting with ICH bearers themselves. The file-editor team endeavours to design the text so that it is comprehensible to all stakeholders and also conforms with the “UNESCO language” of the 2003 convention. It is here that personal meetings have proved to be an effective, although time-consuming form of communication; they allow for any uncertainties to be resolved together in one place without having to endlessly send minor changes to texts back and forth between all parties. Working on a multinational nomination is always an excellent experience for the interdisciplinary teams in all participating countries. In addition to addressing many of the issues, there are always new issues in the process, which contribute to better functioning of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. An important factor related to multinational nominations is the real historical interconnection of the elements of ICH that have undergone the same or similar developments over a longer period. This true interconnectedness² can serve as an excellent example of how these elements link the living heritage of people, communities, countries or entire regions. If we can unite as communities, for example in order to respect and safeguard the living heritage, it will be certainly possible to look for the ways how to link up people even in other areas of life.

Thus, including an element on a list of ICH can increase the importance of ICH for the broader public by help-



Husbandry of Lipizzaner Horses at Topoľčianky – the introduction at the Pferd Wels International Horse Fair, Wels, Austria. Photo: E. Kovalčík, Archives of the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, 2014

ing to raise awareness about the significance of ICH in general (e.g. when Jamaican Reggae was inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2018). However, the most important component in the whole agenda remains the people themselves, individuals as members of communities that bear ICH. As the lists are formed from the bottom up – that is, the initiative comes from the bearers themselves – including an element of ICH on a list can be a means of recognizing that their culture, knowledge and practices have an important value for all of society.

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Notes:

1. Concise descriptions of the elements and information about the lists in general can be found in printed versions (Hamar – Ryšavá – Voľanská 2016; Hamar – Tichá 2018) as well as online (Representative List).
2. There have also been cases of multinational nominations that, in my opinion, lack a common historical background (Hamar 2013; Hamar – Voľanská 2015).

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Mountain Carrying, Veľká Studená Dolina Valley, High Tatras. Photo: Pascal Tournaire. Archives of the Slovak Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, 2013

BLUEPRINTING'S PATH TO THE UNESCO REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

Blueprinting, also called the indigo hand-print block technique, is the latest Czech element to have been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. It was inscribed in 2018, based on the international nomination "Blueprint – resist block hand printing and indigo dyeing in Europe". The nomination was submitted by Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, and Slovakia, countries where workshops still actively work with the traditional blueprinting technique. There are two remaining family-run workshops in the Czech Republic – the Joch family workshop in Strážnice (District of Hodonín) and the Danzinger family workshop in Olešnice (District of Blansko), both of which have been practicing the blueprinting technique for several generations. The first step was the inscription on the National List of

Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic; the element was inscribed on the national list in 2014 as "The blueprint manufacturing technique".

Blueprinting, also called indigo hand-block printing, is a traditional fabric decoration procedure that includes several techniques. The first one is the preparation of dye-resistant paste (called a *pop*), which is then transferred to cloth by a wooden block with carved or metal patterns. The dye-resist paste is a coating to protect the cloth in places that are not to be dyed. After the dye-resist paste dries, the cloth is dipped into *kypa*, an indigo-mixture bath. After the dye-resist paste is removed, the patterns are not dyed, and they remain white. While flax linen was preferred in the past, current production focusses on cotton linen. The indigo bath also contains plant dye-stuff, and the linen is dipped into it, being fastened to metal frames called *ráfy*.

Czech workshops not only maintain traditional manufacturing procedures, including the use of original patterns, but they also try to innovate, in terms of

patterns and finished products, based on market demand. The workshop in Strážnice employs, in addition to family members, other workers who are mostly graduates from the local secondary school. The Danzingers in Olešnice still run their workshop in the place where it was originally founded. In both cases it is at least the fifth generation that produces blueprinted fabrics.

The international nomination of the blueprinting technique for the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity resulted from the fact that this cultural element covers a wide geographical area exceeding state borders. The international cooperation was based on the need of national cultures to identify with the element, which in all countries was associated with their cultural traditions. The international nomination brought about mutual cultural and administrative cooperation, which did not take place only at the time the inscription of the element was being prepared, but which will also be transferred to the future; moreover, this cooperation blurred national borders as it involved a very large region. The countries involved could say to each other: "we have a common element that brings us together in terms of culture and history, which brought us together in the past, which brings us together at the present, and which will bring us together in the future."

In the case of the blueprinting technique, the international nomination was officially backed by the Austrian Commission for UNESCO. One of the first meetings of representatives from the National Institute of Folk Culture, which administered the nomination on the Czech side, and from the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic took place in 2016. The purpose of the meeting was to prepare for international negotiations, and it defined several basic points. These covered several questions, such as which country would submit the nomination, what the exact



Linen printing using a carved block dipped in the dye-resist paste (*pop*). The Joch workshop in Strážnice. Photo: Martin Sitek, National Institute of Folk Culture, 2017

title of the nomination would be, who the working group would consist of, and whether all the participating countries meet the nomination terms and conditions. The result of the meeting confirmed that all the aspects of the nomination – meaning administrative, formal, content-related, financial, and technical aspects – must be dealt with already by the Czech working group. Then the Czech national nomination, titled “Blueprint Manufacturing Technique from the List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic”, was translated into English; it was the first version of the text for the international nomination.

Moreover, UNESCO changed several criteria for nomination documents in 2016, for example, gender criteria, and it was necessary to prepare for these changes before the nomination could be elaborated. It also was necessary to create a promotional documentary video and to inform all the bearers of the nominated element.

The traditional market for blueprinters in Gutau was a significant event which was attended by all producers who were addressed to be included in the nomination document as bearers of the element. This allowed the Austrian company Weitblickfilm from Vienna to create a documentary for the nomination. The video contained interviews with producers, and it included English subtitles.

Because the countries involved speak different languages and they have different histories, the efforts made while preparing the international nomination focussed on balancing key information from each country. The unifying title of the nomination document in English and the titles in national languages were two of the discussed issues. The working group decided to use the terms from each national language as the unifying title for the nomination. The resulting title is *Blaudruck/Modrotisk/Kékfestés/Modrotlač* – resist block printing and indigo dyeing in Europe.

The closing meeting of the representatives from the countries submitting the nomination took place in February 2017 in the Hungarian Open Air Museum – Szabadtéri Néprajzi Múzeum in Szentendre near Budapest. The already-finished nomination was discussed point by point, and several sections of the English translation were corrected, including resolving a dispute about the terms *blueprinting* and *blue-dyeing*, as each of the countries translated the name of the element differently. The representatives of each country delivered pieces of printed fabrics with patterns chosen by the blueprinting workshops and photos of the element. The working group’s members also submitted documents, signed by the bearers, about their free, prior, and informed consent to the submission of the application; these documents formed an integral part of the nomination, and they were collected by each country. After that, suitable documentary photos were chosen. The final choice also included

two photos from the Czech workshop of the Danzinger family in Olešnice; they capture the stages in the process when the printing block is dipped into the dye-resist paste and when the cloth is taken out from the indigo bath to air.

The process confirmed the nomination of the blueprinting technique to be of high-quality. This led to the inscription of the element on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity at the 13th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Port Louis (Mauritius) in November 2018. Both Czech blueprinting workshops were given the document about the inscription of the element at the opening ceremony of the International Folklore Festival Strážnice 2019.

In 2019, the National Institute of Folk Culture, the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, the nominating countries, and the bearers of the element cooperated closely and remained in



Jiří Danzinger, Jr., while taking out the linen from the vat called a *kypa* using frames called *ráfy*. The Danzinger workshop in Olešnice. Photo: David Rájecký, National Institute of Folk Culture, 2017

contact. At the initiative of the Austrian Commission for UNESCO, an exhibition of blueprinting and blue-dyeing was organized in Paris in November 2019 to commemorate the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The exhibition displayed cloths printed with selected patterns from particular blueprinting workshops that are active not only in the nominating countries but also in other ones. The patterns were chosen by the producers at their discretion. The countries supported the exhibition financially with the resources that they had available.

The inscription of the element on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity resulted in significant promotion for the element and the two workshops; nonetheless, increased media and public attention paid to the blueprinting technique in the Czech Republic could already be observed during the nomination process. The promotion of and support for the element at different levels, which are based on the Strategy of More Effective Care for Traditional Folk Culture in the Czech Republic, caused the blueprinting technique to have an influence on the artistic sphere. This has resulted in cooperation between designers and blueprinting workshops, especially the one in Strážnice, which is open to innovative approaches. The use of the blueprinting technique in fashion design is also made evident by Zuzana Osako's independent sports designs of the clothing that the Czech Olympic team will wear at the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020.

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STANISLAV BROUČEK ET AL.: ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA A DIASPORA: CO BYLO A CO BUDE? [THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND DIASPORA: WHAT WAS AND WHAT WILL BE?]. Praha: Etnologický ústav AV ČR, 2019, 309 pp.

The nearly thirty years that have transpired since the 1989 regime change in the Czech Republic provide ample space to produce an overview of certain development. Stanislav Brouček, a leading migration expert, the author of several chapters in this publication and its editor, focusses on certain topics related to diaspora – the Czechs living abroad and their temporary and permanent return to Bohemia. The publication follows up on several earlier successful books that Stanislav Brouček co-authored as the outcomes of conferences, workshops, and meetings between Czechs living abroad and Czech politicians and academic and university experts held in Prague in the 1990s.

The book is well structured. It is divided into chapters whose titles aptly express the topics they cover and which provide insight into the above-mentioned issue. The chapters written by Stanislav Brouček make up a significant part of

the publication: “The Czech Republic and the Diaspora after the Year 1989”, “(1990-1996) The Theme of Exile and Home: Attempts to Become Closer”, “(1997-2006) Searching for a Unitary Community of Expatriates”, “(2007-2018) The Theme of the Diaspora and the Senate”, “Attempts at Incorporating Relations with Czechs Living Abroad into Czech Foreign Policy”, and “Activities on Behalf of Foreign Czechness”. The chapter “From the Response of Czechs Abroad” allows several expatriates to relay their own experiences with returning to their homeland. Tomáš Grulich, one of the other authors, is a senator; he writes about Czechs abroad in the context of the Czech Republic's policies, and he mentions examples of how expatriate issues are dealt with in several countries. Andrej Sulitka focusses on national minorities in the Czech Republic in the context of the expatriate diaspora and Petr Lozoviuk titled his paper “‘Ethnic Immigration’ as an Example of the ‘Return Policy’?”, which concerned the return of ethnic Germans to Germany. Jana Kočí and Ivo Barteček focus on Czech expatriates in Croatia in their expressively titled chapter, “Two Hundred Years Regardless of Assimilation”, and Marek Jakoubek pays attention to Czechs in Bulgaria in his paper “About Re-Emigrants, Tied Deposits, and Waiting for an Apology”. Barteček also provides details about the Centre for Czechoslovak Exile Studies in Olomouc. Research fellows from the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences also deal with the theme of Czechs living abroad. Zdeněk Uherek contributed the article “Czech Ethnology and Czechs Abroad” and Veronika Beranská a study on the return of Czech compatriots from Ukraine after the explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Brouček and Sulitka are also from the Institute of Ethnology of the CAS.

The establishment of relations between the Czech Republic and Czechs living abroad has been quite a complicated process, which Stanislav Brouček



attempts to periodize, as indicated by the titles of three of the book's chapters. He defines three stages: the first period between 1990 and 1996 witnessed the return of some members of the diaspora who offered their services and knowledge within the political sphere, but were received equivocally and rather coldly. This elicited disappointment amongst "foreign" Czechs. In the period between 1997 and 2006, emphasis began to be put on the elements that unified Czech communities abroad despite the time of migration, meaning before 1989 or after it, and on resolving the civil and socio-legal position of expatriates in the Czech Republic. For example, the 2003 conference with the direct participation of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic resulted in concrete conclusions and requirements of Czechs living abroad, which concerned the acquisition of citizenship / dual citizenship, the right to vote, pension entitlement, health insurance, education, upbringing, and so forth. These requirements were formulated as recommendations, and they were sent to the Parliament of the Czech Republic and the Government of the Czech Republic; some of them were implemented during the subsequent period (in the 2013 Act on Dual Citizenship; readers can find the text of the resolution from the 2003 conference in an appendix, where a copy from the Prague Week of Czechs Living Abroad is included). The Standing Senate Commission on Compatriots Living Abroad and its Consultative Council of the Standing Commission, whose members also include Czechs living abroad, began to be active. In the period between 2007 and 2018, after several years of efforts on the part of expatriate representatives, politicians (especially senators), and academic research fellows, the Government of the Czech Republic approved in April 2017 the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Czechs Living Abroad as a coordinating body intended to sim-

plify communication between governmental institutions and expatriates (e.g., by creating a website), meaning both the pre-November diaspora and modern migrants, mainly young people who leave for foreign countries within the European Union and outside it to study or work, or those who are returning home.

Stanislav Brouček as a member of the Consultative Council of the Standing Commission and as a co-organizer of numerous conferences, courses, and talks with representatives of expatriate communities, especially those from the International Commission for Czechs Living Abroad, directly monitored the efforts of the Standing Commission of Czechs Living Abroad to solve problems. According to archival sources, mainly minutes from meetings of the Standing Commission, several submitted proposals were not met with an adequate response by governmental bodies and especially by the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. Its attitude sometimes showed that this would be a rather marginal matter compared to the acute social problems within the Czech Republic. The author also points out the specific features of the problem concerning the act on citizenship for Czechs living in Slovakia after the split of Czechoslovakia in 1993, as well as, for example, the problem of the legal definition of the term *expatriate*. He also mentions the fragmentation of the agenda related to the Czech diaspora amongst different governmental and non-governmental institutions (for example, each ministry has its own bodies), and the low degree of organization, which complicates communication. Even though several problems, especially those within the scope of civil law, have been resolved at the legislative and executive levels with large delays, contacts with expatriate organizations have been established, and clubs and the government have supported many cultural and educational activities, amongst which the expatriate School without Borders pro-

ject is noteworthy. This activity is widespread in dozens of countries worldwide.

In the last section of the publication Stanislav Brouček points out a certain imbalance between the expectations of Czechs living abroad on the one side, and the real possibilities or low helpfulness in meeting those expectations on the side of the state administration; this imbalance has left its marks on the relationship between expatriates and the Czech state. Alongside rapid globalization and increasing migration, greater efficiency in resolving problems between the Czech diaspora and the Czech Republic can be seen in the work of the above-mentioned new Inter-Ministerial Commission for Czechs Living Abroad.

The publication brings valuable knowledge about the development of these mutual relationships, and it makes beneficial contributions to the field of migration studies not only for experts but also for those who are directly or indirectly concerned with the issue of migration.

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NOSKOVÁ, JANA (ED.): „PROČ TO VYPRÁVÍM?“ PRVNÍ POLOVINA 20. STOLETÍ V PÍSEMNÝCH VZPOMÍNKÁCH NĚMECKÝCH OBYVATEL BRNA / „WARUM ERZÄHLE ICH DAS?“ DIE ERSTE HÄLFTE DES 20. JAHRHUNDERTS IN SCHRIFTLICHEN ERINNERUNGEN DEUTSCHER BEWOHNER BRÜNNIS. [“WHY AM I NARRATING THAT?“ THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY IN WRITTEN RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ETHNIC GERMAN INHABITANTS OF BRNO]. Brno: Etnologický ústav AV ČR – Statutární město Brno – Archiv města Brna, 2016, 640 pp.

This volume prepared by the ethnologist and historian Jana Nosková is a follow-up to the book *Měla jsem moc krásné dětství* [I Had a Wonderful Childhood]¹,

which was appreciated by both experts and amateurs and in which the author together with Jana Čermáková presented a set of biographical interviews with ethnic German inhabitants of the city of Brno who were born into the local multi-cultural environment between the world wars and who spent their childhood there in the 1920s through the 1940s. The contribution of the currently submitted book can be, to a certain extent, evaluated with regards to the loose collection created by both publications.

The current volume focusses on the same environment, meaning the city of Brno. Its temporal focus, however, has been expanded, its starting point shifted back in time, as it covers almost the entire first half of the twentieth century. The reason for this lies in the fact that several narrators whose recollections are published in the book were born before World War I. From the point of view of the studied period and environment, the book can be perceived as a follow-up to or a completion of the previous volume. However, the essential contribution of the publication consists in the fact that instead of biographical interviews Jana Nosková now presents written recollections of German inhabitants of Brno that have been kept in the collections of the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. These are a different albeit related type of autobiographical source, whose criticism and interpretation feature significant particularities. From this point of view, the reviewed publication is a companion piece to the first volume, and it offers a unique opportunity to compare work with both types of sources in one thematic framework, and to learn many things. However, it is true that, in comparison with biographical interviews, written recollections are quite a diverse group of sources, which allows the book to cover a broader scope.

The rather extensive introductory study, which also includes the editor's introduction to the presented sources, pays attention to theoretical and meth-

odological issues, the value of sources, and research context. The author also submits an overview of the development of scholarly interest in autobiographical sources that beneficially follows the theme across many disciplines.

This is not a matter of course, at least not from the point of view of research into the ethnic German inhabitants of the Czech lands. Both volumes probably represent the first case in which such thorough attention has been paid to autobiographical sources in methodology and criticism in the aforementioned thematic framework. This fact stands out mainly in contrast to the large collections of recorded testimonies of expelled Germans that were extensively collected and published in the post-war decades mainly in Germany, and which, as a source, have never become a subject matter of comprehensive critical reflection, beginning, for example, with a critical assessment of the circumstances in which they emerged.

From this point of view, the book written by Jana Nosková (together with the previous volume) stands out as a unique work that can serve as a methodological

manual and an anthology and which offers inspiration for any type of research into autobiographical sources.

In accordance with Jana Nosková's research focus as well as with ongoing research trends, the volume and the introductory study concentrate on everyday life and the intellectual worlds of the narrators, where the studied sources have the greatest informative value. In terms of event history and the reflection of political reversals, war, and expulsion, these sources offer experience individualized to a different extent, as well as an insight into the structures of differently formed historical memory.

Considering the ideological deformations and the absolute shortage of hitherto research into the Czech-German past of Brno, the submitted recollections and the interpretation thereof are also an important source of knowledge about the nature and types of coexistence between these two ethnic groups in the Moravian city. A limited sample of individual reflections, which depend on collective memory and great narratives to a varying degree, cannot produce compact answers, but it crucially extends the field of our questioning and points out the diversity and the width of influences present in the coexistence between the Czech and the German inhabitants of Brno and its subsequent reflection. Jana Nosková draws attention to, for example, possible temporal and geographical coexistences of common, parallel, and conflicting modes of living together.

The recollections are divided into ten chapters, each of which represents one eyewitness, except for the last chapter, which presents the diaries of two related people. The first nine chapters contain both passages from autobiographies, meaning coherent individual or family histories, and biographical recollections (*lebensgeschichtliche Aufzeichnungen*).

Each chapter includes a biography of the author of the recollections it contains, which captures not only the narrator's basic biographical data but also other



information about important life events, relationships, and the social and professional context in which the narrators lived and in which their historical memory developed. The narrator's generational affiliation and identity are important aspects. The biographies are followed by short but dense editorial notes that inform readers about the circumstances in which the source text came into being, and about its storage in the collections of the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. We also come to know other relevant information, for example, about important external attributes of the documents. Last, but not least, the editor informs us about the circumstances of and criteria for the selection of published passages, and she also points out the existence of other possible follow-up or otherwise related sources.

The uniqueness of this volume, and this again also applies to the previous book *I Had a Wonderful Childhood*, lies in the fact that – besides the academic importance anchored mainly in contemplation about the nature and value of the presented recollections as sources – this set of narratives provides a very attractive insight into the past and the atmosphere of the city of Brno in the first half of the twentieth century. In principle, this view cannot be considered to be universal, but it is undoubtedly very vital and authentic. With the editor's assistance, we have an opportunity to understand it better. This function of the publication is also emphasized by carefully compiled glossaries, which include explanations of period and local phenomena, identification of people, language concordance, and the localization of toponymical designations.

The text including the introductory study and other auxiliary items is published in two languages, Czech and German.

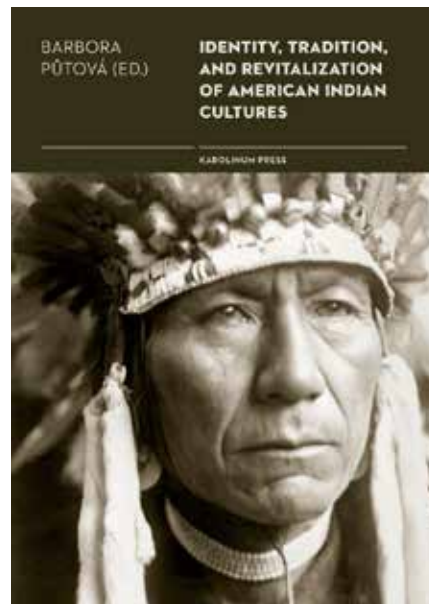
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Notes:

1. Nosková, Jana – Čermáková, Jana (eds.). 2013. „Měla jsem moc krásné dětství“: vzpomínky německých obyvatel Brna na dětství a mládí ve 20. až 40. letech 20. století / „Ich hatte eine sehr schöne Kindheit“: Erinnerungen von Brünner Deutschen an ihre Kindheit und Jugend in den 1920er – 1940er Jahren. [“I Had a Wonderful Childhood”: Recollections of ethnic German inhabitants of Brno of their childhood in the 1920s through the 1940s]. Brno: Etnologický ústav AV ČR, Praha – pracoviště Brno – Statutární město Brno.

BARBORA PŮTOVÁ (ED.): IDENTITY, TRADITION, AND REVITALIZATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN CULTURES.
[Prague]: Karolinum Press, 2017, 232 pp.

American Indian cultures proved their strength and ability to resist and sustain their identity over time and space, contrary to predictions imposed by the dominant Western colonial societies. This publication *Identity, Tradition,*



and Revitalization of American Indian Cultures, edited by Barbara Půtová, addresses current American Indian identity in the light of changes across time and space. Through the analytical concept of revitalization, this collection of diverse essays offers insights into the challenging transitions Native American tribes faced in the colonial and postcolonial eras. Working with multiple elements, such as languages, arts, sports, healing, food, and rituals, the contributing authors collectively capture the complicated processes of change in cultural practices. They show how in different contexts Indian societies negotiate tensions embodied in their efforts to preserve traditional heritage in the context of modernity.

Identity, Tradition, and Revitalization of American Indian Cultures is an important book for several reasons. The contributors' challenging of the narrow adoption of analytical categories of identity allows for a new account of Native American cultural patterns. The many analyses contained in this book shed light on how such patterns are sustained by the dynamic process of revitalization. Addressing heritage while focusing on the revitalization of Native American cultures, these scholars demonstrate how identity has a fluid character rather than being a fixed analytical category. Exploring the relationships between notions of self-identity and the making of the subject in the context of historical processes, this publication offers a new account of reinvention and creativity in the cultural practices of disadvantaged populations, specifically in Native American societies.

In several chapters the authors explore gender-specific patterns, as they shape identities in the process of revitalization. Gender has been proven to be a critically important and helpful analytical category that is applied during anthropological investigations into the complexities of social dynamics and power structures. This publication deliberately works

with the gender-specific production of knowledge that shapes specific cultural patterns.

A significant part of this book is dedicated to detailed descriptions and interpretations of the principles contained in the arts and mythology of northwest Native American Indian cultures (pp. 161-212). Building on the Boasian tradition, several authors address aesthetic patterns among northwest tribes. In the final chapters, this collection includes an experiential approach to analysis offered by a Native American art insider, a Native American scholar. Northwest Native American art is praised by art historians and anthropologists for its profound richness in aesthetic forms. Yet outsiders have no access to the experiential dimensions of Northwest Native American art and therefore cannot illuminate how deeply traditional roots are embodied in various forms of art and how all the performative, symbolic, and formal aspects of this art is valued as heritage by Native Americans. By including an insider, a “real Indian” (p. 185), in this collection, the editor opens a new space for reflexive, experiential analysis.

This publication also brings together historical and modern meanings in Native American art. Considering how traditional mythology shaped various forms of art in the past, as well as in modern and postmodern art (p. 211), in the final chapters contributors provide innovative new parallels capturing provocative examples of the mythological embodiment of the trickster, such as the Raven (p. 198) and Coyote (p. 204) figures.

The strength of this book is its ability to bring together various elements of traditional Native American cultural practices shaped by processual changes over time. Its multiple accounts of Native American forms of heritage in the context of modernity will appeal to a broad audience because of the diverse examples demonstrating the dynamic sustainability of Native American societies.

Considering traditions and heritage in the light of processual change, this publication focuses attention on lived cultural heritage in modernity, postmodernity, and desired futures.

*Jana Kopelent Rehak
(University of Maryland)*

PANCZOVÁ, ZUZANA: KONŠPIRAČNÉ TEÓRIE: TÉMY, HISTORICKÉ KONTEXTY A ARGUMENTAČNÉ STRATÉGIE [CONSPIRACY THEORIES: THEMES, HISTORICAL CONTEXTS, AND ARGUMENTATION STRATEGIES]. Bratislava: VEDA – Etnologický ústav SAV, 2017, 155 pp.

Conspiracy theories, hoaxes, fake news, and their major disseminators, “alternative” mass media outlets, have recently become a topic of society-wide discussion. They are problematized within journalism; they are dealt with by governments (except for those that use

them to their advantage), state security forces, and owners of supranational online communication networks; and they have drawn the attention of sociologists, political scientists, and psychologists. Considering this situation, Zuzana Panczová’s book has appeared at the perfect time, and it makes possible the better understanding of *conspiracy theories*, a phenomenon that has varied over time and in space.

In the introductory chapter, the author briefly presents the theme of rumours as a multi-layered phenomenon that has been part of European cultures for centuries. She pays attention to terminology and research conducted both globally and in the Slovak Republic. She also introduces different approaches to rumours – beginning with their use in popular culture up to the creation of European Union policies to fight against the exploitation of rumours for propagandistic purposes. The following chapters deal with conspiracy theories as such. The author pays thorough attention to the history of research on conspiracy theories in related disciplines, and she establishes this phenomenon as a subject matter of oral folklore research. The presentation of the origin of the most disseminated themes included in conspiratorial thinking is germane to the current discussion within society. It covers images of secret associations that control political events worldwide or that permanently endeavour to gain such influence. The author explains the interconnection of the above ideas with anti-Semitism and far-right political values. Through this interconnection, she gets to the relationship between conspiratorial thinking in politics. Ties to religious apocalyptic visions about the end of the world as we know it followed by the establishment of a new world order are another covered topic. The last large area includes the relationship between conspiratorial thinking on the one hand and



official scientific discourses and knowledge on the other hand, which are permanently questioned within these types of narratives. A part of the text deals with the cognitive aspects of conspiracy theories, which paradoxically gain their credibility through quasi-professional rhetoric and argumentation.

To exemplify the theme, the author uses materials produced by the Slovak far right. She primarily draws from her long-running research on one of the oldest online platforms that publishes conspiracy theory content. She uses this material to demonstrate the close links between events in Slovak history and pan-European and global conspiratorial motifs (the 1919 death of Milan Rastislav Štefánik, a politician who was one of the founders of the Czechoslovak Republic), how these themes are adopted and maintained, how they vary (harmfulness of microwave ovens), and how the Slovak conspiracy community accepts ongoing events and how it responds to them (the “migrant crisis” culminating in 2015). The analysis of the Hedviga Malinová case (a student of Hungarian nationality who was physically attacked in Slovakia in 2006) is also valuable; it was representatives of the government party who introduced conspiratorial motifs into her case and who, in doing so, influenced the investigation into this incident. Because the author worked solely with material from the Internet, she also presents research conducted in an online setting, which is a growingly popular topic of discussion amongst exports on oral folklore.

It is doubtlessly a demanding task to write a compact text about a topic as complex and complicated as conspiracy theories are. Therefore, it is understandable that the author focusses only on certain areas. At the same time, she endeavours to show the diversity, the depth, and the complexity of conspiratorial thinking and particular narratives, which she creates and interconnects. The author demonstrates how this think-

ing affects different areas of everyday life, including pop music, kitchen appliances, health issues, and the explanation of global political events. Readers receive detailed information about conspiracy theories, but the book also presents many narratives that have not been completely told or even things that have been left unsaid (Is conspiratorial thinking related to religious sects?). It gives rise to many new questions that are based on ongoing discussions within the media and society (for example, about the use of conspiracy theories within propaganda and about their influence on political events). The publication opens a discussion amongst her professional colleagues, and while reading it we can ask how the folkloristic approach to conspiracy theories can help understand and solve problems that are currently being dealt with by political scientists, as well as by security, media, and communication experts. The book's poor editing, however, is detrimental to its quality.

In this publication Zuzana Panczová adds neglected aspects of conspiracy theories to the ongoing discussion. Throughout the book, she adopts a position of neutrality to cover a phenomenon that currently evokes strong emotions. On the other hand, she does not avoid introducing scientific attitudes, which perceive rumours and conspiracies in a negative light. Using particular examples from the past and present, she points out their political, populist, and propagandistic potential. Nevertheless, she does not slide into politicization and moralizing, making her publication a space that will not only fill in missing knowledge about conspiracy theories but that will also provide the possibility of understanding these conspiracy theories without the everyday feeling of danger that is presented by the mainstream media.

Eva Šipöczová
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MARTA BOTIKOVÁ – MIROSLAV VÁLKA ET AL.: ETHNOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: BASES AND PROSPECTS. Brno: Department of European Ethnology, 2017, 254 pp.

This book was published as the twenty-second publication in the Ethnological Studies series issued by the Department of European Ethnology at Masaryk University in Brno. The contributions were written not only by Czech and Slovak research fellows from Masaryk University, Comenius University in Bratislava, and Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, but also by research fellows from the Czech Academy of Sciences as well as by postgraduate students at the aforementioned universities. The publication's target is to assess the position and mission of contemporary Czech and Slovak ethnology and to discuss further possible transformations and visions of university study in this discipline. The book is divided into three sections, each with a different theme. Due to the nature of ethnology and its frequent classification as a historical discipline, the papers in the first section deal with historical issues in ethnology, folkloristics, and ethnomusicology. The second section deals with the themes of migration, integration, and multiculturalism, which are currently particularly topical subjects. The third section focusses on the body as the subject matter of ethnological research. Understandably, the choice of themes for the book had to be limited for capacity reasons, and it was not possible to cover the full range of currently researched themes but only a selection from several areas of study. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the themes that have been included in the book are quite broadly approached. The first section, the largest one in the book, covers the widest thematic scope, as it contains themes aimed at the development of ethnology and folkloristics, and

it also captures the development of several institutions aimed at ethnomusicology, and it also deals with urban ethnology, socialism, and applied folkloristics. The papers written by Miroslav Válka and Juraj Janto offer a quite thorough historical view of the discipline's formation. Hana Hlôšková focusses on the teaching of folkloristics at Slovak universities and deals with systematic research preparation, development, and presentation of Slovak folkloristics at Comenius University in Bratislava. In her paper, Jana Pospíšilová presents diachronic research methods applied in the field of folkloristics, pointing out their positives. Klára Císaríková and Martina Hanáková wrote two essays dealing with ethnomusicology, each of them from a different perspective. Klára Císaríková presents the development and possibilities of institutional research. In contrast, Martina Hanáková deals with busking, which Czech ethnologists have not been interested in to date. The text by Oto Polouček presents the current interest in the era of socialism. The author has found in this topic the potential for researching and documenting extant historical sources. Karel Altman summarizes interest in research on the city; he deals with this theme from many points of view, but his paper examines how research in this field has developed. On the contrary, Jan Semrád deals with research on the contemporary urban environment with an emphasis on the housing estate. He examines society's stereotypical view of this form of habitation, and he outlines a path that ethnologists should follow in the future. Jana Ambrózová, Zuzana Beňušková, and Margita Jágerová, authors of another paper, also deal with folkloristics, and they present teaching practice at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. The second section of the book focusses on themes associated with migration, integration, and multiculturalism. The chapters deal with particular case studies, such as

investigations of incentives for migration and contacts between foreigners and the Foreign Police, or, in contrast, with themes related to interdisciplinary teaching and student research, as well as with efforts to encourage students to participate in talks with Czech expatriates. Joanna Mauer deals with socio-economic migration. In the conclusion, she mentions hitherto unresearched aspects of modern migration, such as digital nomadism. Stanislav Brouček writes about migration from a pedagogical point of view. He tries to link study with practice and application in the public sector. In her paper, Helena Tužinská works with terms such as *multiculturalism*, *communication*, *stereotype*, and *memory*. She tries to highlight the ways in which it is possible to work with the above terms in teaching and research. Lenka Koišová, under the leadership of Marta Botíková, presents a case study from the Foreign Police branch in Bratislava. The study tries to point out the pitfalls of similar research and the problems with the system. The third section called "The Body as a Subject Matter of Ethnological Study" explores the interdisciplinary understanding of the term *body*, whether from the perspective of the humanities and social sciences, which point out, among other things, bodily aesthetics, or from the perspective of physical anthropology in combination with psychology. Alena Křížová presents her work based on the interdisciplinary view of body decoration. Tatiana Bužeková's text focusses on the development of the ethnological/anthropological understanding of the lineage theory. The paper written by Michal Uhrin presents an anthropological view of the body from the perspective of evolutionary biology. The study by Danijela Jerotiević presents an anthropological view of the body in the realm of medicine. It reflects current global social problems, and it points out the possibilities of applying this anthropological sub-discipline. Overall, the book is arranged logically, although there are

some exceptions. I think that the chapters about ethnomusicology and busking should follow each other because one of the authors mentions the other. Similarly, the chapters dealing with folkloristics should also follow each other. This fact, however, does not detract from the quality of the book, which tries to cover current research and pedagogical themes at Czech and Slovak institutes, and present them to foreign readers.

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PETR JANEČEK: MÝTUS O PÉRÁKOVÍ. MĚSTSKÁ LEGENDA MEZI FOLKLOREM A POPULÁRNÍ KULTUROU [The Myth of the Spring Man: An Urban Legend between Folklore and Popular Culture]. Praha: Argo, 2017, 359 pp.

A book by Petr Janeček was published by Argo Publishers in 2017 as part of the *Folkloristics* series. This prominent Czech publishing house enabled this supremely academic publication to reach as wide a readership as possible. The book is not only the outcome of precise research, but it is also a stirring read that has the potential to positively impress even readers who are unfamiliar with oral folklore and research into it in different periods and social contexts as well as its position within everyday culture.

It is not by coincidence that Petr Janeček chose the theme of his book. His evolution as a researcher and his bibliography indicate that after he graduated with a degree in ethnology he inclined, in his professional orientation, towards the study of folklore, especially oral folklore. However, he was attracted not only to its traditional forms related mainly to the rural cultures, but also to its contemporary prosaic expressions with an accent on urban milieu. He naturally

focused on legends and rumours which can be observed in their vital oral form much longer than other traditional expressions of oral folklore, many of which began to lose their social function in the early twentieth century or even earlier.

At the very beginning of his work, the author fixes three points in time (1945-1965-2015). As he notes, these are “three basic positions of the most famous mythical character in twentieth-century Czech history – the legendary Spring Man”, a jumping phantom who pervaded Czech tradition from the early twentieth century to artistic depictions in literature and comics at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Besides introducing the main subject of the work, the author’s other starting point is crucial, and it is formulated in the subtitle to the introduction – “Collective Imagination between Comparative Folkloristics and European Ethnology”. This is viewed from the standpoint of the discipline’s interest, a wide path for methodology and contextual analysis, along which the author goes and within which he observes the Spring Man in oral tradition and literature.

Just a glimpse at the book’s structure indicates that explaining the titular figure is really only one of the text’s plans. The above-mentioned voluminous introduction is followed by chapters titled “The Birth of a Legend: The Spring Man in Czech Communicative Memory”, “The Phantom of the Industrial Age: The Cultural Evolution of the Spring Man”, “The Social and Cultural Function of Urban Demonology”, and “A Superhero for Every Political Regime: The Spring Man in Czech Cultural Memory” (the conclusion is followed by appendices and lists, including English, German, and Russian summaries).

The chapters’ titles show how complicated the task the author embarked upon was and what a multilayered work he presents. The large introduction, which includes sub-chapters about historical research on this phenomenon and also

outlines the work’s disciplinary and theoretical background and methodological starting points, can be considered to be the key to the meaning of the entire text. The author clearly documents his erudition, which is based on the scholarly tradition of folkloristics, and he extends it towards the study of popular culture and the world of media. After all he writes: “*The main goal of this book is to introduce and interpret the phenomenon of the Czech Spring Man in its broader historical, geographical, social, and cultural context, whereby special attention is paid to the folkloric and pop-cultural context.*” The passages dealing with communicative memory and cultural memory, outlining the dichotomies of oral and literary culture; folklore and popular culture; collective and individual artistic creation; and folk culture and mass culture, give an interesting impression.

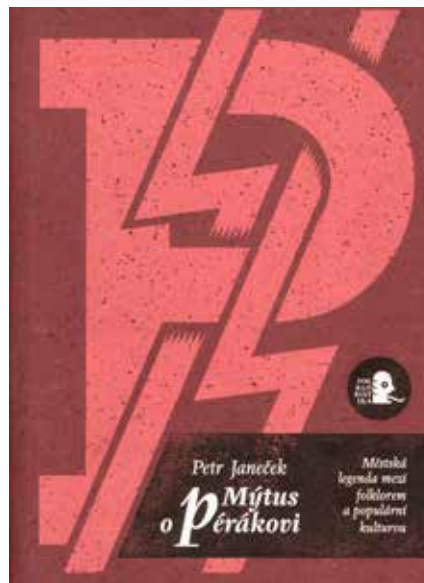
The author demonstrates that theoretical concepts are clear to him and that he can without difficulty define diverse academic discourses within which the given theme can be studied. He does not, however, apply an open-ended, postmodern approach, but a clearly de-

finer concept in which the methods used are chosen in a deliberate fashion to become a tool for clarifying the studied theme. He respects the discipline that he studied and that he enriches with additional possibilities for contemporary research.

In particular sections the author gradually reveals the Spring Man from diverse perspectives, looking for local, regional, and supra-regional bonds, and demonstrating how communicative memory worked in relation to historical events and how the researched motif evolved in the cultural memory. The author applies a comparative approach with each further piece of information that is associated with the jumping phantom, which can be perceived as an unquestionable contribution of the work. Step by step, he puts together an image that surprises with its plasticity, and he reveals new, often unexpected dimensions of the researched theme. The author discovers them in history (see, for example, the sub-chapter “An Apparition from Podskalí, Vysočany, and Libeň as a Vernacular Spectacle”); in foreign contexts (“Spring Man’s Predecessors – Spring-Heeled Jack and the Prowling Ghosts of the 19th Century”, “Spring Man’s Contemporaries”, and “Spring Man’s Descendants in Post-War Germany”); in the search for social, psychological, and cultural factors associated with the existence of demonological legends; and, last, but not least, in the integration of the Spring Man into cultural memory, where he gradually became a hero that has inspired literature, comics, and theatre.

The author not only excellently elaborates the chosen theme, but he also confirms the potential of ethnology and folkloristics as disciplines that can uncover the essence of contemporary cultural and social phenomena thanks to their knowledge of the past.

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EDITORIAL

The current issue of the *Journal of Ethnology* introduces present-day research topics in Czech ethnology. It contains four original studies and one synoptic study. The studies by Daniel Drápala and Oto Polouček both examine the culture of the “normalization village” from 1969-1989. After the decreasing political tensions and the search for a specific socialist path at the end of the 1960s, this period brought the return of a Soviet-type regime to Czechoslovakia. In both studies, the researchers focus on the semantic levels of selected cultural elements (dance parties in the countryside and harvest festivals) and on the continuities that linked them with the preceding period. Michal Pavlásek’s study interconnects two significant themes in present-day Czech ethnology – historical memory and Czech re-emigrants who settled in the Czech borderlands after the expulsion of the old German residents. In a study about clothing, Martin Šimša demonstrates the unrelenting interest of Czech ethnologists in the traditional folk culture of the Czech lands in the past. The synoptic study about Czech and Slovak folkloristics after 2000, written by Petr Janeček, documents not only the close connection to ethnology, but also the interest of scholars in the history of their own discipline.

Reports about the events in ethnology draw attention to another level of present-day Czech ethnology – the interest in intangible cultural heritage and related activities and policies – in this case the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage at the regional and international levels.

Roman Doušek

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