

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/se-2021-0018> © Ústav etnológie a sociálnej antropológie SAV
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MANNOVÁ, Elena:
Minulosť ako supermarket?
Spôsoby reprezentácie a aktualizácie
dejín Slovenska
[The Past as a Supermarket? Forms
of Representation and Updating
the History of Slovakia]

Bratislava: VEDA Vydavateľstvo SAV, 2019,
463 p.

Elena Mannová, historian of the Slovak Academy of Sciences based in Bratislava, presented results of her longitudinal research on history and memory in Slovakia in a novel and visually attractive monograph *The Past as a Supermarket: Forms of Representation and Updating the History of Slovakia*. The author is a well-recognised Slovak scholar who shortly after the Velvet revolution collaborated with many Western European colleagues, most notably with the Austrian cultural scientist Mórítz Csáky (Mannová, Csáky, 1999). Among Slovak historians, it was Elena Mannová who swiftly adopted and innovatively operationalised concepts of the Western scholarship on history and memory, collective remembrance and cultural representations in the fairly conservative and predominantly positivist post-socialist Slovak historiography. By doing so, Elena Mannová has contributed much to the “memory boom” in the social sciences and humanities in Slovakia in the last three decades (e. g. Mannová, 2003, 2004, 2008).

The central argument of her new book is a contemporary critique of the misuse of history, i.e. instrumentalisation of the past by differently positioned social actors, be it politicians, public figures or even entrepreneurs, each

of whom endeavour to boost their social and economic capital at the expense of scientific accuracy. To describe this phenomenon, Elena Mannová uses a metaphor of “the past as a supermarket” in which selective and biased interpretations of history are arbitrarily layered to serve to various antagonistic agendas and power struggles.

From this perspective, Elena Mannová significantly challenges the national narrative as a means of symbolic violence employed by the dominant national ethnic group upon marginalised and minority groups, often border-region-inhabiting groups with alternative modes and traditions of remembering. Indeed, Slovakia provides a plausible environment for studying antagonisms of competitive re-interpretations of “common history”, as the territory belonged alternately to several rivalling state formations with competing ideological political regimes (conservatism, fascism, communism, neoliberalism), and, at the same time, is until today, characterised by a high level of ethnic and religious heterogeneity. Mannová criticises continuous adherence to uncontested national mythology and hegemon national narrative and calls for an approach within the politics of history which would provide consensual provision for collective remembrance of all social groups of a certain territorial society (e. g. on the territory of Slovakia, etc.). Deploying ideas of influential scholars of memory studies (most notable A. Assmann, 1999, 2006), Elena Mannová moves far from a largely descriptive interrogation towards a normative approach when emphasising the social function of established historiography to abandon a national victimisation discourse, and instead to critically reflect on all wrongdoings perpetrated by in-group

predecessors, including criminal records, war crimes, atrocities, genocides etc.

Conceptually very well informed, the book may appear to have an ambition to represent a synthesis of memory studies in Slovakia, often comparing the domestic intellectual milieu and its local approaches to memory with neighbouring national societies. However, the book falls short of embedding the *Erinnerungskultur* in Slovakia into the transnational context, leaving in recent scholarship fairly relevant memories of the Holocaust and *Porajmos* on the side-lines of interrogation. Furthermore, mediating memory in museums and in the education process is entirely omitted.

As the problem of re-representation and updating of the past at national and local level is far too complex and ambiguous, the book thematically provides only a sampling insight on some of the issues in memory studies in Slovakia. The author deals in detail with analysis of changing imagery of two marginalised historical personalities within the public discourse in Slovakia (St Elisabeth of Hungary and Empress Maria Theresa), followed by two significant historical events within the frame of Slovak history (the Revolution 1848–1849 and the Slovak National Uprising 1944). In the post-socialist era, interpretative nuances of the latter one have constituted a hot potato in the Slovak public discourse, as well as in the scientific debate, with Slovak historians failing to classify the Slovak State 1939–1944 as a fascist political formation. Elena Mannová is right to label the proponents of the Slovak State 1939–1944 as moral relativists. However, thematising the issue as a problem of cognitive dissonance, defected codes of memory and ethnicisation of war crimes (Nowak-Far, Zamęcki, 2015) would be more beneficial for portraying what ideological purposes and campaigns “the supermarket shopping” serves for.

The biggest part of the book is contributed to the local memory with the aim of demonstrating how spatial and textual remnants of local history can challenge the master narrative, and in many ways even replace it in the identity constructing processes. The three case studies of three differently positioned urban milieus were selected to serve the apparent purpose:



Bratislava, Komárno and Levoča. What all three cases have in common is the presence of overlapping histories and plural patterns of remembrance of rivalling ethnic groups which prevalently inhabited the city (Hungarians and Germans in Bratislava and Levoča), or currently still inhabit the city (Hungarians in Komárno/Komárom).

Elena Mannová successfully vindicates how the politics of memory at local level collide with interests of national political elites. The case study of the city of Komárno/Komárom on the Slovak-Hungarian border with Hungarians constituting a 60%-majority of the local populace provides fruitful empirical evidence of a conflicting urban milieu in which a latent ethnic conflict is manifested in the form of a fierce competition in agonising appropriation of prominent sites of public space.

The case study of the capital city Bratislava is by Elena Mannová thematised in the context of the construction of the specifically local urban “Pressburger identity” (*prešpuráctvo*) which socialist policymakers in the period 1948–1990 attempted to overlay by extensive discursive, spatial and demographic Slovakization of the city. In my opinion, the gradual involvement and reinvention of the post-1990 “Pressburger identity”, based on the principles

of tolerance and multiculturalism, as well as advanced “non-Slovak” ethnic coding of many newly emerged sites of the local public space (e.g. Korvín Square, Baross Park) is in Bratislava feasible due to the already achieved, secured and markedly dominant “Slovakness” and constitutional status of the capital which could had been hardly contested by the former, in the bigger picture, rather supplementary initiatives.

Last but not least, the case study of Levoča, a provincial medieval district city of the historical region Spiš/Szepes, functions in Mannová’s discourse as an example for which parallel pluricultural modes of remembrance align in separated, ethnically coded German, Hungarian and Slovak narratives.

Elena Mannová rightly concludes that the Erinnerungskultur in Slovakia has not undergone the decolonisation process (within the framing of the post-colonial studies), and therefore does not provide a sufficient consensual space of remembrance for reconciliation of rivalling narratives and creation of a sense of mutual belonging. In this respect Mannová’s book *The Past as a Supermarket* sends a significant message to the future of scientific scrutiny in the Central European area which indicates that historians – and social scientists alike – still have a long way to go to deconstruct national myths, prejudices and other unsubstantiated beliefs deeply embedded and culturally transmitted in mentalities of the local populace.

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ELŻBIETA DRAŹKIEWICZ:

Institutionalised Dreams:

The Art of Managing Foreign Aid

Berghahn, New York and Oxford 2020, 238 p.

Donors from central Europe are at the margin of academic interest. Most of the research focuses on donors from the West or on donors outside of Europe. This neglect is unfortunate as phenomena, that are at the margin are often the most suitable to explain how things work at their “normal” state. Ela Drażkiewicz’s book *Institutionalised Dreams: The Art of Managing Foreign Aid* offers the type of analysis that goes beyond the subfield of the so called new donors (see, eg, Horký-Hlucháň, Lightfoot, 2013; Szent-Iványi, Lightfoot, 2015; Horký-Hlucháň,

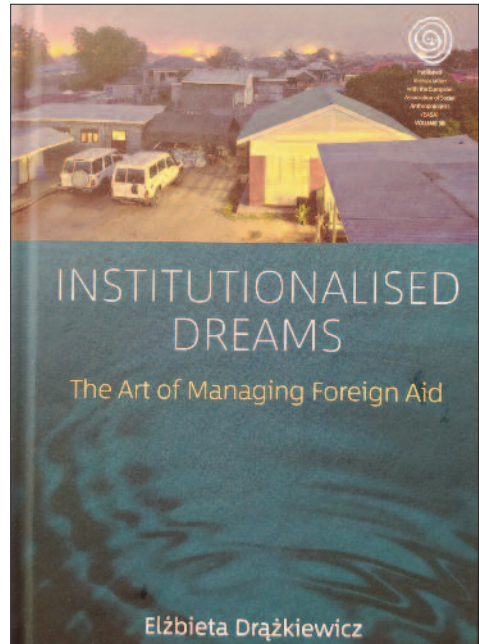
Lightfoot, 2015; Profant, 2019) and should be of interest to the wider audience within the field of development studies.

Her book shows the emergence of a donor and thereby contributes to the ongoing debate on the origins of development aid. At the same time it shows one particular element of the global orientalist hierarchy – the effort to become a donor is yet another sign of how international relations are structured and how persistent this structure is.

It is in education that the author demonstrates this persistence in the East-West hierarchy. Global Education (GE) is not only supposed to educate about globalization or poverty in the Global South, but it is supposed to change the whole society to bring, in this case, Poland closer to the West. This role of education can be traced back to the 19th century division of a society into ignorant masses, who need to be enlightened and elites who do the enlightening. Most of the chapter, however discusses the aim to increase the support for the Polish aid to Africa.

My own experience with the Slovak GE would also not support such an almost conspiratorial aim of “creating social change in the country” (p. 91) in GE that Ela Drążkiewicz finds. On the other hand, there clearly cannot be any lesser goal in education than to shape a society. If the Polish society is “ignorant” and “uneducated” then it needs to be educated to become aware of “global connections” (p. 89). And this certainly amounts to a serious social change.

More interestingly, my everyday encounters with GE practitioners push my understanding of the Slovak GE further away from the understanding of GE as a tool to generate support for development cooperation. What I find is a genuine concern with global issues, to which Official Development Agency (ODA) is not the only solution, and which then could be discussed within a framework of International Relations, International Political Economy or any other field dealing with such issues. A more thorough research will probably show persisting institutional self-interest that was so crucial in the beginning of the GE in Poland (and I would argue Slovakia as well), but I would hypothesize that the analysis refers to a partially



bygone era and the central European countries moved from the post-communist period of (re)building their development apparatuses to their “normal” position of semi-peripheral regions with Non-Governmental Development Organisations (NGDOs) doing GE without their institutional self-interests being necessarily the most important reason for doing it and one may understand GE as a separate field of its own partially disconnected from development cooperation.

The most important finding of the study is the distinction between the moral and the professional element in development cooperation. The author persuasively shows the strong connection between the Catholic Church and Polish aid. This is not only visible in overt religious endeavours, but more importantly, Drążkiewicz uncovers how identities are very much shaped by religion, most notably by compassion as its crucial element.

This in itself may to a political scientist seem like yet another interesting anthropological finding without a political analysis that would focus on inequality and conflict in a society. Drążkiewicz's book is very useful in this regard, because she goes beyond simply tracing long

forgotten origins of the current development cooperation and shows how compassion leads to depoliticization, how the involvement of the church results in the very problematic form of development cooperation that dominates the political landscape today.

Moreover, she shows how the unsurprising parental elements in the catholic belief translate into paternalism that the development industry and its predecessors have been fighting since the colonial period. Such findings are very important not only for a more radical critique, but also for a mainstream discussion, which is obsessed with partnership and ownership.

The opposite element of the “irrational” belief in God that the development workers do not present unless asked is the rational bureaucratic nature of development cooperation. This modernistic ideal embodies the postcolonial (East-West) nature of development cooperation as well as the fantasy that becomes the engine of the field. Whereas the developers engaged in Eastern Europe can legitimize their work through a reference to the similar Polish past, those who work in Africa need more than that. On the one hand they use catholic compassion as a legitimating instrument, but at the same time they use the opposite strategy of representing themselves as being that part of the Polish society, which brings Poland to the West. This is done through an unquestioned alliance with Western international institutions. All of their demands can then be presented as legitimate as they come from the knowledgeable donors where development cooperation functions in an orderly fashion. This is a novel finding complementing the more abstract perspective that Poland (or Slovakia) wants to be perceived as part of the West and therefore needs to be a donor. What Drażkiewicz shows is the micro working of this postcolonial notion of belonging. In order to support operations in Africa, those who wish to work there can use the most basic element of the West – modern bureaucracy – as a very particular legitimizing instrument to achieve their goal – legitimize their field of activity.

The fantasy of an orderly development is embodied in the belief into a functioning system of development cooperation. Development

can work; all that is necessary is an act on development cooperation. The messiness of development can be removed by a bureaucratic order. Depoliticization is not a side-effect of a development project, it is desired in accordance with the prevailing idea that politics is something problematic, but experts can solve issues. Here, again Drażkiewicz contributes to the core of critical development studies.

Another important point, which shows the usefulness of looking at an emerging donor to explain the behaviour of the so called mature donors, is the constant expansion as a mode of functioning. The actual content of development cooperation becomes less important and success can be presented through an expansion to yet another location. The more missions the greater the proof that development is occurring. Paradoxically, one could think about it in the opposite way. As some of my informants made clear to me, their ultimate aim is to become unemployed. This is a far away fantasy of a developed world, in the meantime, the greater the growth of the industry, the better. Such an expansion is reminiscent of the colonial expansion, of the dream of connecting Africa from North to South and from East to West. And just like then, the expansion meant the expansion of civilization, today the expansion of NGOs’ offices means an expansion of development.

Overall the book offers more than this short space can cover. Quite often the analysis is historical from today’s perspective as it deals with the emergence of a donor. This part of the analysis is insightful not only from the postcolonial perspective, but also from the perspective of analysing national historical narratives and how they translate into development cooperation. At the same time on several occasions, the book offers pertinent analyses of current trends which enrich the academic field on “traditional” donors and should be read also by those who do not focus on “new” donors. Most importantly, this book pushes the “new donors” subfield in a critical direction and is therefore a crucial political contribution as well.

The work on this review was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency, Grant No.: APVV-19-034.

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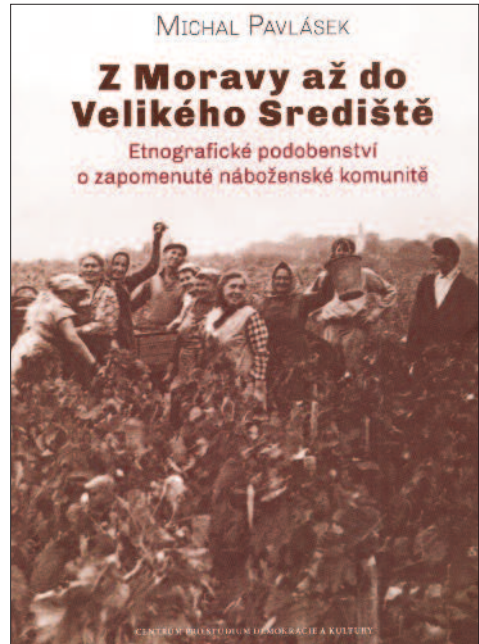
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MICHAL PAVLÁSEK:

**Z Moravy až do Velikého Srediště:
Etnografické podobenství o zapomenuté náboženské komunitě**
[From Moravia to Veliko Središte:
an Ethnographical Parable about
a Forgotten Religious Community].
*Centrum pro Studium demokracie a kultury
and Etnologický ústav AV ČR Brno,*
2020, 239 p.

Emigration from Czechia (Bohemia and Moravia) to other European destinations takes many forms. One of them, which was significant in the 19th century, was internal colonization within the Austrian Empire (after 1867 Austria-Hungary), of which Bohemia and Moravia were part until the end of the First World War. Inhabitants from more developed parts of the monarchy moved to the less populated areas in the south and east of the country to gain land and start farming if they no longer had the conditions to acquire it in their original environment. Thanks to the policy of internal



colonization, in large areas of contemporary Romania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, linguistically and culturally mixed territories appeared, consisting of villages of farmers from today's Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czechia, Ukraine, Slovakia and Poland. At the time of industrialization, similar settlements arose in industrial cities. One such colonization area with a culturally colourful population is the Serbian Banat, today part of the Serbian Autonomous Region of Vojvodina. The village of Veliko Središte, the central point of interest for Pavlášek's book, is located in this area. The descendants of emigrants from Moravian villages live there.

Emigration from Bohemia and Moravia to the southern regions of the former Austrian Empire (Austro-Hungary) and the subsequent life of immigrants and their descendants is the subject of the long-term interest of Czech ethnographers and historians, and many monographs have been written about it (e.g., Jech, Secká, Scheufler, Skalníková 1992; Matušek, 1994; Uherek, 2011; Pavlášek, 2015). One of the frequently questioned tasks in those publications is how social life is organized in new communities and how new settlers are involved in

the local environment. Particular attention is devoted to petrified social characteristics from the places of origin of their ancestors. This question has become the subject of ethnographic interest, because among other things, these enclaves have for many generations reproduced in the foreign language environment the original language skills and consciousness of their origins.

The above-mentioned question of identity and integration in the new environments is interpreted in many ways in the contemporary literature on Czechs abroad. The approach applied by Iva Heroldová in 1971 (Heroldová, 1971) is important for the contextualization of the reviewed publication. At that time, Heroldová noted on the examples of religious Protestant exiles from Bohemia to Prussia that the factors influencing the preservation of the original language and culture are very diverse. However, religion often plays an important role here. When Czech-speaking Protestant enclaves entered the German-speaking Protestant environment, they quickly assimilated linguistically and culturally. If they came to the Catholic or Orthodox environment in East Prussia, they retained their linguistic and cultural specifics for generations (Heroldová, 1971). Heroldová then in the spirit of modernism (and Marxism), also concluded that these enclaves, which left Bohemia before the middle of the 19th century (in her case in the second half of the 18th century), could not have national consciousness because the constitution of a Czech modern political nation had not yet taken place. Religious consciousness was the strongest social bond in these enclaves (Heroldová, 1971).

In the 1990s and the first decades of the 21st century Iva Heroldová's half-forgotten reflection was rediscovered by some authors dealing with the descendants of colonists from the Czech lands. The reflection on the Protestant, reformist religion as the primary social bond of the enclave in Veliko Središte also became one of the essential motives of Michal Pavlásek's reviewed book. Following this notion, the author's first plan is to capture the cultural constants of the Središťans (emigrants from the Czech lands or their descendants) and explore their cultural

dynamics within the developing social structure, spanning a century-old development from 1850 until the end of World War II.

Pavlásek's book combines elements of a detailed historical monograph with historical ethnography. It is based on archival data and historical material as well as on data obtained by observations and interviews with informants. He acquaints the reader in detail with the archival sources of the book. The reader is familiarized that Pavlásek studied in the regional archive of Bela Crkva, the Central Archive of the Czech Brethren Evangelical Church in Prague, and the personal archives of the locals in Veliko Središte. The data obtained from observations and interviews encompass a period from 2007–2015. Pavlásek says that he obtained data mainly from approximately 60 structured interviews. The interviews did not take place only in the examined municipality itself. The observations and interviews took place in a wide, as Pavlásek states, "multisighted" space. From the range of municipalities where he conducted interviews, it is clear that he focused on the Czech enclaves in Serbia and Romania. Interestingly, he does not mention interviews conducted in other countries. My experience from research in Bosnia and Herzegovina is that many interviews can also be conducted with successors of emigrants in the Czech Republic as relatives visit here or even live there for part of the year.

Since Pavlásek relies mainly on the religious cohesion of the Protestant group, his book is conceived primarily as the history of the reformist church community of Veliko Središte. At the same time, Pavlásek makes no secret that he creates his history as a metaphor. Reminiscence of this consciousness is also in the book's subtitle, which is according to him, an ethnographic parable.

Pavlásek's focus on the ecclesial community shifts some common topics in ethnographic literature to a different level than usual. Ethnographical and anthropological literature on migrant groups is often strongly focused on family life and communication between relatives. The family is understood as a central social and organizational unit. In Pavlásek's interpretation, this function is born by a reli-

gious community. It not only provides the family and relatives with a basic ethical framework for action but also fully organizes family life and ensures cultural transmission. Respect for ancestors and their place of origin, the group's code of ethics, customs, holidays and festivities, the mother tongue, in the research of which family and relatives are usually emphasized in ethnographies, are passed on among relatives mainly with the assistance of the religious community. It is especially evident in the question of language and oral communication when the theme of the mother tongue coincides with the theme of the liturgical language. In his ethnography, Pavlásek does not deal with how people speak in families, how and under what conditions and who and to what extent a person passes on language skills, but primarily with liturgical language, which he understands as the basis of the language of everyday communication. Thus, in Pavlásek's concept, the transmitter of the language from the original environment is not a kinship group, but above all, the bible or prayer books, which are also the subject of a whole chapter in the publication. Old prayer books are held in high esteem in the community, and books imported from Bohemia and Moravia are considered a strong link between the country of origin and the new settlement.

Events in the religious community become major events in the life of the village: the absence of a pastor or the presence of mission pastors from interwar Czechoslovakia, or the issue of church bifurcations, which are very common in evangelical communities. Moreover, Pavlásek takes excursions not only into the topics of faith and the composition of the church but also into its economy and management, which went beyond the religious community to the field of agricultural production. The church seems to be omnipotent in the village but still struggles to survive. Very often, it is incomplete and has no priest. Pavlásek shows that proactive interwar contacts with Czech clergy were created not only on the initiative of the Czechoslovak society but also on the initiative of the locals from Veliko Strdište themselves. They were looking for a Czechoslovak priest.

Although Pavlásek announces at the beginning of the publication that his book focuses on the period up to the Second World War, he significantly exceeds his plan. We will find here a brief chapter on the period of socialism and the later search for continuity with the original social organization in the 1990s. By focusing on the Reformed Church, he sees a constant struggle for existence and continued decline. It is a paradox that the protestant community disappeared at the time of his research, although some mechanisms of social organization transferred through community church life to everyday interactions, according to Pavlásek, still function today.

Throughout history, Pavlásek also comments on very topical issues. A very successful part of the publication is the section on migration narratives focused on ancestors' arrival to the village. The migration narrative is likely to be recorded by every ethnographer studying the Czech and Moravian communities in the area. Pavlásek rightly emphasizes that people are part of stories about themselves and their interpretation and adopts the statement that storytelling is an organizational principle of the human psyche and negotiation of the position of the self. Pavlásek shows the generational shifts of the narrative and the preservation of its core in an almost unchanged form. The different experiences of individual generations then follow this core of the narrative on the arrival of ancestors. Pavlásek speaks about the reference points of communicative memory as an important element of the group's social cohesion. This memory is also influenced by contacts with Czechoslovakia and Protestant missionary activities from Bohemia and Moravia, which began to be intense in the interwar period. Pavlásek shows that the concepts of language, faith, ethics and customs in the Protestant community of Veliko Središte are ethnicized, primarily through this activity. He talks about the conceptualization of Protestant national identity or compatriot identity, which moves the group's perception to a new level.

The book is very informative, written in modern language. It is intended for the more demanding reader, who will also be interested in the author's intellectual and knowledge back-

ground, which is reasonably high. Although there are many ethnographic observations from the field, I would welcome a more straightforward positioning of the author himself and a clearer explanation of what the author communicated with his respondents, what he asked them, how his partners perceived him, and how he chose them. His insight into the life of the Protestant religious community shows how strongly religious community life has been intertwined with all other aspects of the group's existence in the new environment. However, the focus on the Protestant community should not confuse the reader that Pavlásek is talking about the entire Czech-language settlement of the village of Veliko Središte. In addition to members of the Reformist community, there are also immigrants from the Czech lands of the Catholic faith, Baptists who have a congregation in Serbian and are cosmopolitan. In addition, other nationalities live here, and the village community as a whole does not follow the codes inherent in Czech Protestants. In the subtitle of his publication, Pavlásek rightly emphasizes that this is a parable, not a classic monograph of a village in the Serbian Banat.

The weakness of the texts of Czech and Moravian authors about the southern border of the former Austrian Empire (Austro-Hungary) is that they usually focus only on the "Czech or Moravian" aspect of the existence of immigration groups. Migration narratives about coming from Czech Lands are not intended for everyone. When telling stories, not only the one who narrates but also the one who listens is an important element. Other stories are told to Czech ethnographers and different stories to other actors who form the context of migration groups. The Bohemian and Moravian origin groups have a large part of their everyday life connected with the country in which they now live. They know the local customs, songs, history, politics, and heroes. They were educated in local schools, and they have friends of various linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It only flashes in the book that the younger generation of descendants of Czech immigrants lives in mixed marriages and that the Baptist Church split away from the original reformists also so that members of non-Czech

language groups could attend the church. The closeness or openness of immigrant groups to the local context is quite diverse in the individual municipalities of the Banat, and the influences of the Czechoslovak state in the interwar period and the current Czech Republic on the identity of the descendants of Czech colonists are just as diverse. In the reviewed book, Pavlásek emphasizes the influence of interwar Czechoslovakia on the constitution of Czech national identity or exclusivity. In the Polish Zelów reformist community, for example, this influence was not so clearly recorded. In recent research, the core of the Protestant community has very often hesitated whether to call themselves Czechs or Poles. They perceived double nationality. They were born in Poland and are Polish citizens, even though they are of Czech origin. The bond was the Protestant religion (Kučerová, 2016). Here too, however, the community was affected by not living in isolation, but by various civil society influences, which weakened identification with the religious community in favour of other civil society institutions, which may be family, generation group, professional group, political party, nation, or the category of compatriots and the like.

The migratory narrative, which Michal Pavlásek describes in his book, how Protestants transmit it in Veliko Središte, has a positive conclusion. The re-settlers found the place they were looking for. In other villages, I have usually heard stories of disillusion and disappointment. The Czech colonists came to an unknown environment and had to overcome many difficulties before arranging a sufficient life. Often this story ends with a will to strengthen contacts with the country of origin or relocate, which again can lead to an emphasis on compatriot identity.

The perfectly and contemporarily written history of the evangelical church in Veliko Središte, documents the vital interconnectedness of the religious community, family and kinship group in the resettlement communities. The mechanisms of language and culture transmission in Protestant communities then reveal possible reasons why in many communities inhabited by Protestants, there are different types of integration into the local environment

than in the case of communities with a predominant Catholic orientation. Like Iva Heroldová, Pavlásek underlines the importance of liturgical language in the development of community language policies. His emphasis on narratives is then very topical and very close to me. Nevertheless, I personally pay more attention to whom and why the narrative is communicated. The emphasis on the hermeneutic method reveals other dimensions of research given by questioning and the interviewer's position.

However, the connection between the church and the family up to the present may not only concern Protestant communities. Jana Ševčíková also created a similar image through the documentary film *Piemule* for the Catholic village of Ravensca (Rovensko) in Romania, which Czech colonists settled at the beginning of the 19th century (Ševčíková, 1983). However, her migration story is negative. The group perceived their departure to the new environment more as a bad decision of the ancestors and God's punishment.

The book provides stimuli for research into reformist communities not only in the Banat but also in Ukraine, Poland and other destinations. At the same time, it opens up many theoretical and methodological questions in ethnography and anthropology as such. Why did Pavlásek need to emphasize religious consciousness and advocate its primacy compared to national or ethnic consciousness? Why did the topic of ethnization apply only to the communication of the descendants of Czech emigrants and the Czech state? Why is he less interested in other influences on community cohesion: the influence of Orthodoxy, the Catholic community, which also exists in Veliko Središte, the ideology of Yugoslavianism and the influence of the Serbian state, education and culture, which have a cardinal impact on life trajectories of local people. It is clear that Pavlásek emphasizes the transformations in the

religious community and derives from them the transformations of the way of life and communication practices in families and wider communities, and not vice versa, as is more common. It seems a good strategy for the ethnographies of families strongly fixed on the religious community in conditions of social isolation, as well as communities where the influence of civil society, which changes values and priorities, is not significantly apparent. The publication evokes many questions, and this only underlines that it is highly inspiring.

The text was created with the support of the long-term conceptual development of the research organization RVO: 68378076.

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