

Zbornik znanstvenih razprav *Čast: identiteta in dvoumnost neformalnega kodeksa (Sredozemlje, 12. - 20. stol.)* obsega znanstvene razprave mednarodne znanstvene konference z istim naslovom, ki sta jo v Kopru od 11. do 13. novembra 1999 organizirali Zgodovinsko društvo za južno Primorsko in Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Republike Slovenije Koper, kot soorganizatorji pa Oddelek za zgodovino Univerze v Benetkah in Oddelek za pravne študije Univerze v Vidmu. Konferenca je bolj ali manj neposredno načela različne tematike in vprašanja, pri čemer je, kolikor je le bilo mogoče, dala prednost interdisciplinarnemu pristopu in zgodovinskim vidikom, ki so omogočali *prevrednotenje* tradicionalno avtoreferenčnih študijskih področij. Upošteva je hevristično kompleksnost govornice časti, je bila konferenca osredotočena na temeljna vprašanja, medtem ko je bil cilj posameznih študijskih dnevov nizanje najrazličnejših tem, a tudi njihovo neposredno povezovanje.

V skoraj vseh evropskih jezikih vsebuje izraz *čast* temeljno pomensko dvojnost. Po eni strani se *čast* posameznika navezuje na njegovo *krepostno* vedenje, na njegovo sposobnost sprejemanja vrednot in vedenja, ki jih je mogoče zajeti v nenapisani kodeks miselne in splošne kulture določene družbene sredine. Po drugi strani pa je koncept časti posameznika tesno povezan s skupino, ki ji pripada, z družbeno hierarhijo, ki opredeljuje njegovo vlogo in funkcijo. Čast torej, ki se nanaša tako na etične ali moralne vrednote, a tudi na merila, ki skupino, kateri posameznik pripada, opredeljuje. Tako razločevanje (oziroma taka nejasnost) navaja k razmisleku o zgodovinskem razvoju pojma časti, predvsem pa o odnosu med častjo ter naravo in značilnostmi institucionalnega, političnega in verskega sistema, katerih naloga je bila, da na različne načine in različno intenzivno uzakonjujejo legitimnost statusnih in premoženjskih razlik, a tudi rešujejo spore v zvezi s samo definicijo *častnega* obnašanja.

Izvirne razprave, ki jih prinaša pričujoči zbornik, se v skladu z geografskim območjem in časovnim obdobjem, opredeljenem v naslovu, odlično umeščajo v te svojstvene študije civilizacijsko-kulturnih odnosov in zato ne prinašajo novosti le v znanstvenih in metodoloških pogledih, temveč zastavljajo tudi nova vprašanja in odpirajo nove odgovore.

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*The Honour: identity and ambiguity of an informal code (The Mediterranean, 12th - 20th centuries)* is a collection of papers read at the international conference bearing the same name. It was held in Koper from November 11th to 13th 1999, its principal organiser being the Littoral Historians Society and the Science and Research Centre of the Republic of Slovenia Koper, aided by Department of History of the University of Venice and Department of Law sciences of the University of Udine. At the international meeting dedicated to the question of honour, different subjects and questions were dealt with more or less directly. Preference was given, as much as possible, to the interdisciplinary approach and historical aspects, which enabled a *reevaluation* of the traditionally autoreferential spheres of study. By considering heuristic complexity of the language of honour, the symposium focused on more or less basic questions, while the aim of separate academic days was to deal with as many subjects as possible as well as with their direct linking.

In almost every European language the term *honour* contains a basic signficatory duality. An individual's honour is on one hand linked to his/her *virtuous* behaviour, to his/her ability to accept values and behaviours that can be incorporated in an unwritten code of mental and general culture of a certain social circle. On the other hand, the concept of a person's honour is closely linked with the group to which he/she belongs, with social hierarchy which denotes his/her role and function - honour, therefore, which relates to ethical as well as moral values, and to the standards which define the group to which the individual belongs. Such distinction (or such indistinctness) makes us ponder about the historical development of honour, particularly about relationship between honour and nature and the characteristics of the institutional, political and religious systems, the duty of which was to legalise, in different ways and with different intensity, the legitimacy of the differences in people's status and property, as well as to settle disputes in connection with the definition of *honourable* behaviour itself.

The original treatises brought by the present bulletin are perfectly emplaced, in compliance with the stipulated geographical area and the period denoted in the title, in these unique studies of cultural relations and thus bring not only certain novelties in scientific and methodological aspects but also raise new questions and offer new answers.

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