

LEADERS AND HEROES OF THE NATION

JURIJ FIKFAK

*This thematic issue of *Traditiones* is dedicated to heroes and national leaders, and is mainly compiled from papers presented at a conference in Ljubljana in December 2013. The publication of these papers in 2014 presents an opportunity to remember the hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the First World War and at the same time offers a framework for reflections on how individual leaders in Europe or on its margins influenced and guided the masses in times of peace and war, and in times of crisis and catastrophe.*

Keywords: *heroes, leaders, nation, metaphor, sign*

*Tematska izdaja *Traditiones* je posvečena vprašanju herojev oz. vodij naroda in je nastala predvsem na osnovi prispevkov, predstavljenih na konferenci oktobra 2013 v Ljubljani. Objava razprav v letu 2014 je priložnost za obujanje spominov na stoletnico začetka 1. svetovne vojne in je hkrati okvir za premislek o tem, kako so posamični voditelji v Evropi ali na njenem robu vplivali in vodili množice v mirnih in vojnih časih, v času kriz in katastrof.*

Ključne besede: *junaki, vodje, narod, metafora, znak*

This thematic issue of *Traditiones* is dedicated to heroes and national leaders,¹ and is mainly compiled from papers presented at a conference in Ljubljana in December 2013. The publication of these papers in 2014 presents an opportunity to remember the hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the First World War and at the same time offers a framework for reflections on how individual leaders in Europe or on its margins influenced and guided the masses in times of peace and war, and in times of crisis and catastrophe.

The authors proceed from several points of departure. On the one hand, attention is dedicated to the period when heroes and national leaders were active, and to their impulses; on the other hand, the volume predominantly focuses on the reception of their life and work by the general public. The studies focus on individuals and various audiences, discourses, and practices that praised these individuals or consigned them to oblivion.

¹ This thematic volume is the second volume based on studies from the project J6-5558: Heroes and Famous Figures in Slovenia and Central Europe, financed by the Slovenian Research Agency and headed by Božidar Jezernik. The first such volume, *Heroji in slavne osebnosti na Slovenskem* (Heroes and Famous Figures in Slovenia), was published in 2013 (Jezernik 2013).

Despite the increasingly broader research focuses on the culture of the Other, it is appropriate to ask why the topic of heroes, famous figures, saints, and mythological and fictitious heroes should be studied at all, and to what extent such studies are relevant for ethnology, cultural anthropology, and folklore studies. Explorations of the culture of the Other are characterized by a research reorientation from life in general to the dimension where this generality lives and can be referred to as a “common-sense perspective” (Herzfeld 2001; Fikfak 2009)—accordingly, heroes, saints, famous leaders, warriors, and famous individuals are the ideals and motivators that the majority of people look up to and can model themselves after. It can be said that they are a metonymical metaphor for fulfilling the wishes, ambitions, and goals that “common” people (the “man on the street”) strive for. These heroes serve as an orientation; they can give sense to life and the individual, such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk embodied in a tattoo on one’s arm (cf. Turkoz 2014). Heroes and famous individuals become a spiritual horizon, a metonymy of wishes, and a metaphor for goals.

A good example of this is the configuration of characters on the monument dedicated to Edvard Kardelj in former Revolution Square in Ljubljana.² The monument illustrates the dynamics of a time and ideology in which not only its creator Drago Tršar and the sculpture committee knew that one of the leading figures of the revolution was depicted in Revolution Square, one with the ability and power to lead faceless workers, wearing a business suit, colored shirt, and tie; the public also knew that this was one that strove to give meaning to their lives and at the same time relieve them of the weight of self-reflection, whereby he took upon himself the heavy burden of responsibility for others.

The dilemma of interpreting heroes and leaders can be most easily explained with the argument that heroes are a *sign* (Peirce, CP 2.228) that every recipient and sender understands, assigns meaning to, and forms in various ways, and each time from a different perspective. The same hero can signify the good or bad, honesty or crime, and can be a stumbling block or a solution. Heroes are thus metonymical metaphors, in which various types of reading, emphases, and reception can be revealed, especially with reference to the leaders of a nation.

This thematic issue discusses famous people and leaders that are (or were) connected with certain aspects of the lives of people past and present during periods of community or national crises and catastrophes. Heroes and leaders of the nation are imprinted in collective memory (Assmann & Czaplicka 1995), which of course only feeds itself on them when various media, official, public, and semi-public discourses enrich it with new content and forms, because otherwise it falls into oblivion, as in the example of John III Sobieski (Demski 2014).

One need only look at the leaders discussed in this volume: Polish King John III Sobieski, who defeated the Ottomans in the Battle of Vienna (Demski 2014), and Austrian Field Marshall Joseph Radetzky (Jezernik 2014); the founder of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (Turkoz 2014), and the leader of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Imre Nagy (Povedak 2014); the “counter-revolutionary” János Kádár (Povedak 2014); and the founder of independent Croatia,

² A detail of the monument showing Edvard Kardelj and completely faceless workmen was also used on the cover of *Heroji in slavne osebnosti na Slovenskem* (Jezernik 2013).

Franjo Tuđman (Belaj & Škrbić Alempijević 2014), Croatian General Ante Gotovina (Pletenac 2014), and the Slovenian politician that played a major part in Slovenia's independence, Jože Pučnik (Komel 2014). They were all connected with crises: the first two with attempts to preserve a system, the second two with attempts to change it, the next with many victims, and the last three with national independence.

It is especially through the ritual practices used, and by including their names in the public repertoire of names and monuments, or by commemorating their lives and work, that former leaders have become a subject of controversy. This occurred with attempts to name a street in Ljubljana after Josip Broz Tito, and in the case of John Paul II Street and Jože Pučnik Airport. In Hungary something similar occurred in relation to Imre Nagy and János Kádár.

These last examples in particular also involve issues of the Slovenian or post-communist discursive dimension in general.

The relationship of the official, public, and media discourse to the past is one thing, but the (in)capacity to think about social systems in an inclusive rather than extractive manner is something completely different (North 1990; 1991); this viewpoint is also most commonly connected with the concept of clientelism (Fukuyama 2014), which excludes everyone outside the interest network.

JUNAKI, VODJE NARODA

Tematska izdaja *Traditiones* je posvečena vprašanju herojev oz. vodij naroda³ in je nastala predvsem na osnovi prispevkov, predstavljenih na konferenci oktobra 2013 v Ljubljani. Objava razprav v letu 2014 je priložnost za obujanje spominov na stoletnico začetka 1. svetovne vojne in je hkrati primeren okvir za premislek o tem, kako so posamični voditelji v Evropi ali na njenem robu vplivali in vodili množice v mirnih in vojnih časih, v času kriz in katastrof. Pisci sledijo več izhodiščem. Na eni strani velja premislek časa, v katerem so junaki oz. vodje naroda delovali ter njihovim vzgibom, na drugi, prevladujoči strani v tem zvezku, pa recepciji njihovega življenja in dela v širši javnosti. V fokusu raziskovalca so tako posamezniki kot javnosti, različni diskurzi in prakse, ki so tega posameznika slavili ali pahnili v pozabo.

Kljub vedno bolj širokim zastavitvam fokusa raziskav kulture drugega (Drugega) se tu lahko vprašamo, zakaj raziskovati tematiko junakov, slavnih osebnosti, svetnikov, mitičnih in pravljичnih junakov; koliko so te vrste raziskave lahko relevantne za polja etnologije, kulturne antropologije ali folkloristike. Če je za disciplino raziskovanja kulture drugega značilna prav preusmeritev raziskovanja iz življenja na splošno v horizont, znotraj katerega ta splošnost živi in jo lahko poimenujemo kot "zdravorazumski pogled" (Herzfeld 2001; Fikfak 2009), potem

³ Tematski zvezek je druga knjižna produkcija, nastala na podlagi raziskav v projektu J6-5558 – Junaki in slavne osebnosti v Sloveniji in Srednji Evropi, ki ga financira Agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost RS in ki ga vodi dr. Božidar Jezernik. Prva knjiga *Heroji in slavne osebnosti na Slovenskem* je izšla 2013 (Jezernik ur. 2013).

so junaki in heroji, svetniki, slavni vodje in vojskovodje, ter slavne osebnosti tisti zgledi, tisti, motivatorji, h katerim teži in po katerih se lahko zgleduje velika večina ljudi. Mogoče je reči, da so metonimična metafora uresničitve tiste želje, ambicije, cilja, za katerim stremi "vsakdanji" človek – "človek z ulice". Ti junaki so neke vrste orientacija; zdi se, kot da utegnejo podeliti smisel življenju in posamezniku, kot npr. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, ki je utelešen v podobi tatuja na roki (prim. Turkoz 2014). Junaki, slavne osebnosti postanejo duhovni horizont, metonimija želje in metafora cilja.

Zgled temu je konfiguracija likov v spomeniku Edvardu Kardelju na nekdanjem Trgu revolucije.⁴ Spomenik ponazarja dinamiko časa in ideologije, ob čemer sta ne le avtor Drago Tršar in žirija vedela, da je tu, na Trgu revolucije, ena vodilnih osebnosti revolucije, ki je v belem ovratniku, s kravato in v poslovni obleki sposoben in ima moč voditi delavce z brezobličnimi obrazi; tudi publika je vedela, da je tu tisti, ki si je prizadeval, da bi ji osmisлил življenje in jo hkrati razbremenil teže samopremisleka, pri čemer je prevzel nase težko breme odgovornosti za drugega.

Dilemo interpretacije junakov in vodij si najlažje razložimo z izjavo, da so junaki *znak* (Peirce, CP 2.228), ki ga vsak sprejemnik in pošiljatelj razume, opomenja in tvori na različne načine, vsakokrat z druge perspektive. Isti junak pomeni lahko nekaj dobrega ali slabega, poštenost ali kriminal, je lahko kamen spotike ali krog rešitve. Junaki so tako metonimične metafore, v katerih lahko še zlasti pri vodjih naroda odkrijemo različna branja, poudarke in recepcijo.

V tem tematskem zvezku gre za slavne ljudi, vodje, ki so (bili) povezani z nekaterimi vidiki našega življenja ali življenja prednikov v obdobju skupnostnih ali narodnih kriz in katastrof. Junaki in generacije junakov so zapisani v kolektivni spomin (Assmann in Czaplicka 1995), ki se seveda hrani z njimi le takrat, ko ga različni medijski, uradni, javni in poljavni diskurzi bogatijo z novimi vsebinami in oblikami, sicer odide v pozabo, kot npr. Jan Sobieski (Demski 2014).

Pomisliti je treba le na vodje, ki jih pisci obravnavajo v tem zvezku: na zmagovalca nad Turki pri Dunaju, poljskega kralja Jana Sobieskega (Demski 2014), avstrijskega feldmaršala Josefa Radetzkega (Jezernik 2014), ustanovitelja Turčije Mustafa Kemala Atatürka (Turkoz 2014), voditelja madžarske revolucije leta 1956 Imreta Nagya in "protirevolucionarja" Janosa Kadarja (Povedak 2014), ustanovitelja samostojne hrvaške države Franja Tuđmana (Belaj in Škrbić Alempijević 2014), hrvaškega generala Anteja Gotovino (Pletenac 2014) ali slovenskega osamosvojitelja Jožeta Pučnika (Komel 2014). Vsi so povezani s krizo, nekateri s poskusi ohranjanja, drugi s poskusi spremembe sistema, tretji z veliko žrtvami, zadnji z osamosvajanjem.

Nekdanji vodje so prav ob ritualnih praksah ali umestitvah njihovega imena v javni repertoar poimenovanj in spomenikov ali ob spominjanjih na njihovo življenje in delo predmet polemik. To se je zgodilo ob poimenovanju Titove ulice v Ljubljani, ulice Janeza Pavla II. in ob poimenovanju letališča Jožeta Pučnika. Prav pri slednjih primerih pa gre tudi za vprašanja

⁴ Izrez fotografije spomenika, na katerem je vidna podoba Kardelja in popolnoma brezoblični obrazi delavcev, je bil uporabljen tudi za naslovnico dela *Heroji in slavne osebnosti na Slovenskem* (ur. Jezernik 2013).

slovenskega diskurzivnega horizonta. V podobnem položaju sta na Madžarskem oba junaka, Imre Nagy in János Kádár, na Hrvaškem pa npr. Franjo Tuđman. Eno je odnos uradnega, javnega in medijskega diskurza do preteklosti, drugo je (ne)spodobnost misliti družbene sisteme na inkluziven in ne ekstraktiven način (North 1990; 1991); s stališčem pa je največkrat povezan tudi klientelistični koncept (Fukuyama 2014), ki izključuje vse, ki so zunaj interesne mreže.

REFERENCES / LITERATURA

- Assmann, Jan and John Czaplicka. 1995. Collective Memory and Cultural Identity. *New German Critique* 65: 125–133. DOI: 10.2307/488538. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/488538>
- Belaj, Marijana and Nevena Škrbić Alempijević. 2014. Remembering “The Father of the Contemporary State of Croatia”. The Celebration of Tuđman’s Birthday in His Birthplace. *Traditiones* 43 (1). DOI: 10.3986/traditio2014430107
- Demski, Dagnosław. 2014. Jan Sobieski. Anniversaries of the 1683 Battle of Vienna (from 1783 to 1983) and its Historical Imagination. *Traditiones* 43 (1). DOI: 10.3986/traditio2014430103
- Fikfak, Jurij. 2009. Cultural and Social Representations on the Border: From Disagreement to Coexistence. *Human Affairs*. 19 (4): 350–362, DOI: 10.2478/v10023-009-0049-1
- Fukuyama, Francis. 2014. *Political Order and Political Decay. From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy*. MacMillan. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Herzfeld, Michael. 2001. *Anthropology. Theoretical Practice in Culture and Society*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Jezernik, Božidar, ed. 2013. *Heroji in slavne osebnosti na Slovenskem*. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba FF (Zupaničeva knjižnica 38),
- Jezernik, Božidar. 2014. A Group Portrait with an Austrian Marshal, an Honorary Citizen of Ljubljana. *Traditiones* 43 (1). DOI: 10.3986/traditio2014430104
- Komel, Dean. 2014. Jože Pučnik. Personal Freedom, Culture, and Politics. *Traditiones* 43 (1). DOI: 10.3986/traditio2014430109
- North, Douglas. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- North, Douglas. 1991. Institutions. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5 (1): 97–112.
- Peirce, Charles Sanders. 1958–1966. *Collected papers* (cited as/navedeno s CP). Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (eds.) vols. 1–6; A. W. Burks (ed.) vols. 7–8. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Pletenac, Tomislav. 2014. From Conviction to Heroism. The Case of a Croatian War General. *Traditiones* 43 (1). DOI: 10.3986/traditio2014430108
- Povedak, Istvan. 2014. “Survivor Heroes” and Rising Heroes. Discrepancies in the Contemporary Hero Cult. *Traditiones* 43 (1). DOI: 10.3986/traditio2014430106
- Turkoz, Meltem. 2014. Fathering the Nation: From Mustafa Kemal to Atatürk, *Traditiones* 43 (1). DOI: 10.3986/traditio2014430105