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Josip Jurčič's Tradition in Muljava: The Boundaries of Localism and Nationalism

ABSTRACT

With the example of an amateur theatre in a Slovenian village the author demonstrates that the adherence to the local community has a significant role in the establishment of everyday nationhood, especially in the communities not bordering on »others«. The writer and patriot Josip Jurčič (1844–1881) was born in the village of Muljava. In 1911 patriotic students organised the theatre staging of Jurčič's novel for the first time. The performances, featuring »ordinary people« speaking the local dialect, became a traditional village activity. The villagers are active and creative in cultivating a memory. The identification with the significance of »our« man in the national mythology increases the importance of the village. The organisation of rituals is an important volunteer activity, which brings the village community together. The organisation of village rituals simultaneously represents the organisation of national rituals. The adherence to the local community outgrows itself. On one hand it is concrete and the members confirm it with joint activities, while on the other hand it is placed in a wider national context. The changes in the state related and ideological context (Austro Hungary, the First Yugoslavia, the socialist Yugoslavia, Slovenia) contribute to the shaping of the village rituals. Various nation building groups attempt to approximate the local patriotic nationhood to their own versions of the national ideologies. A constant misunderstanding exists between the local patriotic nationhood and the nationhood of the elites. A successful nationalism is a misunderstanding that »works«. The author's thesis is based on the exploration of archive, newspaper and oral sources.

Key words: Slovenia, 17. century, nation, nationalism, Muljava, Josip Jurčič, local patriotism

IZVLEČEK

TRADICIJA JOSIPA JURČIČA NA MULJAVI: MEJE LOKALIZMA IN NACIONALIZMA

Autor na primeru amaterskega gledališča v slovenski vasi prikazuje, da ima privrženost lokalni skupnosti veliko vlogo pri oblikovanju vsakdanjega nacionalizma, še zlasti v skupnostih, ki ne ležijo na meji z »drugimi.« V vasi Muljava se je rodil pisatelj Josip Jurčič (1844–1881). Leta 1911 so nacionalistični študenti v vasi prvič organizirali odrsko uprizoritev Jurčičevega romana.

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Predstave, v katerih igrajo »navadni ljudje« v lokalnem narečju, so postale tradicionalna vaška dejavnost. Da bi ostala zavest o osebnosti živa, mora biti lokalna skupnost aktivna in kreativna pri kultiviranju spomina. Identifikacija s pomenom »našega« človeka v nacionalni mitologiji, poveča pomen vasi v ideološkem nacionalnem prostoru. Organizacija ritualov je pomembna pristo-voljna dejavnost, ki povezuje vaško skupnost. Opravljanje vaških ritualov je istočasno opravljanje nacionalnih ritualov. Privrženost lokalni skupnosti preraste samo sebe. Po eni strani je konkretna in jo člani potrjujejo s skupnimi aktivnostmi, po drugi strani pa je postavljena v širši, nacionalni kontekst. Čeprav lokalpatriotski nacionalizem, ki so ga spodbudile elite, za reprodukcijo več ne potrebuje elit, obstajajo žive vezi z elitnim nacionalizmom. Spremembe državnega in ideološkega konteksta (Avstro-Ogrska, prva Jugoslavija, socialistična Jugoslavija, Slovenija) sooblikujejo vaške rituale. Različne narodotvorne skupine poskušajo lokalpatriotski nacionalizem približati svoji verziji nacionalne ideologije. Med vsakdanjim nacionalizmom in nacionalizmom elit je konstanten nesporazum. Uspešen nacionalizem je nesporazum, ki »deluje«. Avtorjeva teza temelji na raziskavi arhivskih, časopisnih in ustnih virov.

Ključne besede: Slovenija, 17. stoletje, narod, nacionalizem, Muljava, Josip Jurčič, lokalni patriotizem

On misunderstandings

Why is nationhood a misunderstanding that works? Because it means different things to different people. Or different things to various groups of people, in different periods as well as at the same time. However, everyone sees themselves as a member of the same community. If a nation »works«, what does that mean? Here is the classic definition by Benedict Anderson: people see themselves as members of an imagined community, even though they will never know all of their fellowmembers.¹ To put it from the perspective of the misunderstanding we are discussing: we think of ourselves as members of a nation, although to some of us this nation means something completely different than to other people who see themselves as members of the same nation. The misunderstandings that allow nations to work are largely a consequence of dynamic social relations in the processes of modernisation.² As Nicos Mouzelis puts it, modernisation contains three basic structural characteristics: destruction of segment localisms; mass mobilisation and integration of a population into an imagined community and a national state; and differentiation of the institutional spheres (economic, political, social, cultural), taking place from above. New technologies allow the state elites to expand the administration to the periphery in ways not possible in the premodern situation. The penetration of power into the periphery is direct - without patrimonial intermediaries. In the premodern societies

¹ Benedict Anderson: *Zamišljene skupnosti*. Ljubljana 2007, pg. 22.

² Ernest Gellner: *Nationalism*. Phoenix 1997, pg. 37.

the topmost stratum of the society is very differentiated, while the majority of the population stays segmented. In modern societies, however, differentiation includes most of the population.³

Already Miroslav Hroch was aware that misunderstandings are important for the nations, and he described the nation as a »macrogroup« defined by a combination of various relations. The structure and combination of these relations varies in different nations as well as within the same nation in various periods of time.⁴ However, the modernisation aspect of the story is not enough. Even though the author of this paper sees nationalism/nationhood as a modern phenomenon, he is also aware of the significance of the ethnosymbolic perspective (the »pre-story« of the nations).⁵ He sees ethnosymbolism and modernism as different approaches, but not as completely separate and mutually exclusive theories.⁶ Rogers Brubaker's (de)constructivist approach should also be taken into account. Brubaker went about comprehending the misunderstandings of nationhood (as well as ethnicity and race) by deconstructing it into practical categories, actions, cultural idioms, cognitive schemes, discourse contexts, institutional forms, political contexts, and so on.⁷ He argues for the precise differentiation between groups and categories. Categories may be a potential foundation for the formation of groups. So the nation can be seen as a category, which may assert itself in practice as a group or not, and it may also only assert itself for a short period of time (nation as an event).⁸ Nevertheless, Brubaker's definition of groups as clearly demarcated and bounded, relatively homogenous collectivities that are distinct from other groups is not universally accepted. Richard Jenkins argues for more minimal definition: »group is a human collectivity the members of which recognise its existence and their membership of it. There are no implications of homogeneity or definite boundaries.«⁹

The fact that the concepts of nationhood and the nation cannot be precisely defined is not an obstacle for the success of the nationhood, but an advantage. The

³ Nicos Mouzelis: *Nationalism, Restructuring Gellner's Theory*. In: Ernest Gellner and *Contemporary Social Thought*. Cambridge 2007, pp. 125-131.

⁴ Miroslav Hroch: *Društveni preduvjeti nacionalnih preporoda u Europi*. Zagreb 2006, pg. 10.

⁵ Anthony D. Smith: *Nacionalizem – Teorija, ideologija, zgodovina*. Ljubljana 2005, pg. 107.

⁶ Even though certain nationalism theorists write about nations before the period of nationalism (Liah Greenfield, Anthony D. Smith, Hugh Setton-Watson), they acknowledge the modernity of the nationalist doctrines and political programmes. Brendan O'Leary: *On the Nature of Nationalism: An Appraisal of Ernest Gellner's Writings on Nationalism*. In: *British Journal of Political Science*, 1997, 2, pg. 208.

⁷ Rogers Brubaker: *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Harvard 2004, pg. 17.

⁸ Rogers Brubaker: *Ethnicity Without Groups*. In: *Archives européennes de sociologie*, XLIII, 2 (November 2002), pp. 163-189. Brubaker's theory uncovers important »spaces« and helps us to overcome the terminological and methodological inconsistencies. He synthesised the approaches, which many researchers of nationalisms have already used (frequently without realising it), into a coherent theory. Nevertheless, as we apply his theory we are in danger of taking the methodological deconstruction of the nation »too literally« and losing sight of the nation as the subject of our research (as a practical category).

⁹ Richard Jenkins: *Social Identity, Third Edition*. Routledge 2008, pg. 9.

indefiniteness of the nation¹⁰ allows different people to identify with it. Precisely because nationhood is a misunderstanding that works, it requires – in order to truly work – an »understanding«. It calls for an intermediary link, groups small enough not to be meant in Anderson's sense of the word (the members of the groups may know each other), which have direct links to the imagined community. Such groups may be invented with this purpose (cultural associations, gymnastic societies with a national character), but they can also be the already affirmed groups from the pre-national period, which gain additional national significance during the process of modernisation (village communities, parishes). Such groups maintain contacts with the imagined community through symbols and ritual practices.

These groups are located at the hard-to-define area between the »high« and »popular« culture, between the elite and non-elite, everyday nationhood. In recent years the exploration of the latter has seen a great expansion.¹¹ In 2008 an interesting public debate took place between Jon E. Fox / Cynthia Miller-Idriss and Anthony Smith about the role and importance of everyday nationhood. Fox and Miller-Idriss argue that the nation is created by making the people »national«. In their opinion the macrostructural analysis has focused too much on the nationalism »from above«, but neglected the »ordinary people«. Thus the reaction of the people to the nationalism with regard to their everyday experience should be explored. To this end the authors propose four supporting points: »Talking the Nation«, »Choosing the Nation«, »Performing the Nation« and »Consuming the Nation«.¹² Anthony Smith admits that their approach uncovers many issues, but at the same time believes it also blurs much of the topic at hand. He reproached Fox and Miller-Idriss with ahistoricism, ethnocentrism, nationstatism and the failure to specify »the people«.¹³ It is interesting that all three authors pay great attention to mass rituals. They agree that »ordinary people« do not only represent the audience or consumers of the national concepts, but simultaneously produce them. However, in accordance with their standpoints, the authors emphasise various ways of participating in the rituals. Fox and Miller-Idriss stress that the national rituals can only reach the people who are in fact or virtually present, while large segments of the potential public are simply missed by this mass rituals.¹⁴ The national

¹⁰ I do not mean the indefiniteness of the nation in the sense that the »usthem« level is not defined. Every nationalism has its own indicators, which serve to set a nation apart from the others (and, of course, there is much »room in between«). Indefiniteness is meant in the sense of what the nation means to individuals and groups, what is its imaginary role, what it means to be its member, what are the duties of its members, and so on. Opinions on the nature of the nations are being constantly reinterpreted in the nationalist discourse.

¹¹ Rogers Brubaker, Margit Feischmidt, John Fox, Liana Grancea: *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*. Princeton and Oxford 2007.

¹² Jon E. Fox, Cynthia Miller-Idriss: *Everyday Nationhood*. In: *Ethnicities* 2008, 8, pg. 537. Downloaded from: <http://etn.sagepub.com/content/8/4/536>, 20. 8. 2010.

¹³ Anthony Smith: *The Limits of Everyday Nationhood*. In: *Ethnicities* 2008, 8, pg. 563. Downloaded from <http://etn.sagepub.com/content/8/4/563>, 20. 10. 2010.

¹⁴ Jon E. Fox, Cynthia Miller-Idriss: *Everyday Nationhood*. In: *Ethnicities* 2008, 8, pg. 548. Downloaded from: <http://etn.sagepub.com/content/8/4/536>, 20. 8. 2010.

holidays are often just an opportunity for enjoying some free time. On the other hand, Smith underlines the examples of mass national rituals in which ordinary people or nonelite groups can honestly take part in, and even organise many of them.¹⁵

On Slovenians

Let us look at an example of amateur theatre activities in a small Slovenian village in order to demonstrate that the adherence to the local community (together with the organisation of rituals) has an important role in the establishment of everyday nationhood. Two centuries ago the village of Muljava was located in Carniola, a crown land of the large Habsburg Empire. Even though its geographical location stayed the same, in the course of the 20th century the village has seen various states: Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia, the socialist Yugoslavia and Slovenia. The journey of the small village through diverse landscapes of social structures and ideologies was, besides the process of modernisation, also marked by the rise of the Slovenian nationhood. The Slovenian nationbuilders had their work cut out for them. In the Habsburg Monarchy the nations were divided into »historical« and »nonhistorical« ones.¹⁶ The Slovenian movement was based on the language and natural law, not on the tradition of statehood in the Middle Ages. Furthermore, the envisioned national space had been divided into different provinces (Carniola, Styria, Carinthia, Istria, Trieste, the Gorica region and a part of Hungary), even though Carniola with its Slovenian majority population and central location had the potential to become the future centre. Slovenian language was deemed as a »language of peasants«, while in the cities German or Italian were mostly spoken.¹⁷

Hroch's model of development of the »small European nations« is most appropriate for a short presentation of the formation of the Slovenian nationhood. The first wave of modernisation was caused by a state intervention. The extensive reforms of the Habsburg rulers Maria Theresa and Joseph II in the second half of the 18th century encompassed the establishment of modern administration, tax system, church reforms, introduction of general education, etc.¹⁸ In the final decades of the 18th century the stage of the intellectual interest in the life and language of the »people« followed (Hroch's Phase A).¹⁹ In the Carniolan capital of Ljubljana, small groups of intellectuals strived for the »cultivation« of the common language on the basis of the

¹⁵ Anthony Smith: *The Limits of Everyday Nationhood*. In: *Ethnicities* 2008, 8, pg. 569. Downloaded from <http://etn.sagepub.com/content/8/4/563>, 20. 10. 2010.

¹⁶ Robert A. Kann: *The Multinational Empire, Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy 1848 – 1918*, Volume 1. New York 1964, pg. 33.

¹⁷ Peter Vodopivec: *Od Pohlinove slovnice do samostojne države. Slovenska zgodovina od konca 18. do konca 20. stoletja*. Ljubljana 2006, pg. 46.

¹⁸ Helmut Rumppler: *Österreichische Geschichte 1804–1914. Eine Chance für Mitteleuropa, Bürgerliche Emazipation und Staatsverfall in der Habsburgermonarchie*. Wien 1997, pg. 17.

¹⁹ Miroslav Hroch: *Can Nation-Forming Processes Be Used as a Criterion of Uneven Development*. In: *Criteria and Indicators of Backwardness, Essays on Uneven Development in European History*. Prague 1996, pg. 134.

old Slovenian literary language standard, which had been shaped by the Protestants in the 16th century. The first demarcation of the envisioned Slovenian space and the first use of the expression »Slovenian« took place. According to Hroch, in case of Slovenians we can identify the beginning of the national agitation (Phase B) in the 1830s and 1840s, in the period of the so-called Metternich's absolutism, when the dissatisfied Slovenian patriots began mobilising the supporters of »the national cause«. In 1848 the aspirations of these groups manifested themselves politically with the first Slovenian political programme called »United Slovenia«. The programme included the demands for the unification of Slovenians in a single political unit (within the Habsburg state), i.e. the abolishment of the old provincial borders and the establishment of new borders according to the »national« criteria.²⁰ The second half of the 19th century was characterised by the strengthening of the modernisation processes: the complete dissolution of feudalism, railroad, (modest) capitalist production, development of trade, press, education and representative parliamentarism. The Slovenian national movement became a political endeavour, which attempted to penetrate the state institutions.²¹

The transition to Hroch's Phase C (mass national movement) could be placed in the years from 1868 to 1871, when the Slovenian leaders organised mass manifestations in support of the »United Slovenia« and equal rights for the Slovenian language. The following is characteristic of the Slovenian nationhood in the last three decades of the Habsburg Monarchy: the Yugoslav orientation (aspirations for establishing the political or cultural links with the South Slavs), the political split into the liberal and Catholic conservative side, cultural expansion (significant production of literature and other works of art with the Slovenian character) and creation of the economic background.²² Naturally, notable differences existed between the regions. In Carniola the public life in the beginning of the 20th century was Slovenianised. In the Styrian cities an intense struggle between the German and Slovenian bourgeoisie took place. In Carinthia the German language dominated, while Istria and Trieste were dominated by Italian. Slovenian leaders did not have a clear picture of how the Slovenian national integration was to end: would Slovenians remain an independent nation, or would they unite with other South Slavs according to the German example? Other solutions existed, according to which Slovenians would not lose their language and identity but would still unite with their Serbian and Croatian »brothers«, and these entailed the adoption of the Serbo-Croat (Yugoslav) literary language and the preservation of Slovenian linguistic characteristics.²³

²⁰ Vasilij Melik: *Leto 1848 v slovenski zgodovini*. In: *Slovenci 1848-1918*. Maribor 2002, pg. 36.

²¹ Peter Vodopivec: *Od Pohlinove slovnice do samostojne države*. Slovenska zgodovina od konca 18. do konca 20. stoletja. Ljubljana 2006, pg. 81.

²² *Ibidem*, pp. 111-147.

²³ Marko Zajc: *Jugoslovanstvo pri Slovencih v kontekstu sosednjih »zdrruževalnih« nacionalnih ideologij*. In: *Evropski vplivi na slovensko družbo*. Ljubljana 2008, pg. 113.

On Jurčič

Josip Jurčič (1844-1881) was a Slovenian patriot, writer, journalist and moderate liberal. We could define him as a typical representative of the Slovenian patriots at the passage from Phase B to Phase C: a talented rural child, sent »to school« by his family to become a priest. Already in the secondary school he became enthusiastic about the Slovenian national movement, and at the same time he also started writing. After his graduation he did not study theology, but went to the Faculty of Arts in Vienna instead. He made a modest living exclusively by writing. He did not finish his studies, but focused on literature and after 1868 also on his work as a journalist with the new liberal newspaper *Slovenski narod* (Slovenian Nation).²⁴ After 1871 he was also its editor. In the period when the Slovenian literary production was still modest, the talented Jurčič became a popular Slovenian writer as a very young man. His historical tale *Jurij Kozjak – slovenski janičar* (Jurij Kozjak – Slovenian Janissary) (1864) became a hit when he was only 20 years old. In 1866 he published *Deseti brat* (The Tenth Brother), deemed as the first Slovenian novel. In the last years of his life Jurčič was highly respected as the editor of the *Slovenski narod* newspaper, and he became the informal leader of the liberal »Young Slovenians«.²⁵ According to Jurčič and his colleagues, Slovenian writers should gather the »folk materials«, remake them according to high cultural standards, emphasise the Slovenian identity, and offer them to the People again. Jurčič found a great inspiration in the works of Walter Scott. He was especially impressed with Scott's narration and historical topics. »History« in Jurčič's works has an important, nationbuilding role: it emphasises the ancient roots of the Slovenian nation.²⁶ German ideologists kept repeating how strong the old German culture was, while they saw Slovenians as some kind of an »imaginary« nation, supposedly created by the »Panslavists«.²⁷ In his works Jurčič kept persuading his readers that Slovenians had their own honourable history and that the Slovenian misery had started already in the Middle Ages, when »every free Slovenian had to give way to foreign noblemen from Germany and Italy.«²⁸ Due to his »tireless work for the nation« Jurčič fell ill and died when he was only 36 year old.

However, after he died in 1881, Jurčič's »true life« has only begun. He passed on in the time when the political situation of the Slovenian movement improved. The Slovenian politicians put the disputes between the liberals and conservatives aside and supported Eduard von Taaffe's government (1879-1893) together. In exchange they received some concessions for the Slovenian language in the administration and

²⁴ Josip Jurčič, *Slovenski biografski leksikon*. Downloaded from: <http://nl.ijs.si:8080/fedora/get/sbl:0982/VIEW/>, 30. 1. 2011.

²⁵ *Enciklopedija Slovenije* 4. Ljubljana 1990, pp. 356-357.

²⁶ Ivan Prijatelj: *Slovenska kulturnopolitična in slovstvena zgodovina 1848-1895*. Ljubljana 1958, pg. 28.

²⁷ Dragan Matić: *Nemci v Ljubljani 1861-1918*. Ljubljana 2002, pg. 29.

²⁸ Josip Jurčič: *Jurij Kozjak – slovenski janičar. Jurčičevih izbranih spisov II*. Ljubljana 1920, pg. 10.

education, and the jobs in the (local) state administration became more accessible to those who declared themselves as Slovenians.²⁹ These developments undoubtedly meant progress, therefore the Slovenian nationalists took advantage of any opportunity to confirm their newfound confidence. It is not unusual that immediately after his death Jurčič's colleagues started systematically constructing his »cult«. Their goals were so much easier to attain because Jurčič's works were in fact popular with an extensive circle of readers. In comparison with their national opposition the Slovenian movement did not have »rich documented memories«. ³⁰ What could they do? Besides inventing a famous history, new legends must be created, especially through prominent personalities (politicians, artists). These personalities may be alive, although it is far better if they are dead. Sometimes a premature death can be quite convenient.

One year after Jurčič's passing (1882), the Slovenian leaders prepared a ceremony in his birth village of Muljava: the solemn unveiling of a memorial plaque on the »house of his birth«. The ceremony was a big organisational and logistic achievement. Several »national« organisations took part in the event: the choir of the Slovenian reading club Ljubljana, Sokoli (a nationalist gymnastic society), the Ljubljana Municipal Brass Band, firefighting societies, etc.³¹ On the morning of the event, which took place on 15 August 1882, the participants left Ljubljana early in the morning. They had more than 35 kilometres to go. The procession was headed by the brass band, followed by 46 members of the Sokoli in their uniforms and several hundred people on adorned carts. On its way through the country the procession was greeted in villages with flags and cheering. After a solemn mass in the church in Muljava the memorial plaque was uncovered. The writer and politician Janko Kersnik gave a solemn speech: »Look around you! All of us who have gathered here, regardless of whether we're of peasant or noble descent, regardless of our class, we are all born brothers, we all speak our language, we're all Slovenian,«³² Kersnik underlined. After the plaque was unveiled, the important guests had a festive lunch with numerous toasts. After the meal the Sokoli gymnastic society demonstrated their sport, the choir sang national songs, and the brass band played dance music. All this in Jurčič's honour.

The small rural community had never seen anything like it before. According to the newspaper reports more than 7000 people gathered in Muljava on that day³³, while in 1880 the Muljava municipality only had 285 inhabitants (54 houses).³⁴

²⁹ Vasilij Melik: Slovenska politika v Taaffejevi dobi. In: Slovenci 1848-1918. Maribor 2002, pg. 521.

³⁰ Anthony D. Smith: The Resurgence of Nationalism? Myth and Memory in the Renewal of Nations. In: The British Journal of Sociology, 47, 4 (December 1996), pg. 591.

³¹ Slovenski narod, 14 August 1882, 184.

³² Slovenski narod, 17 August 1882, 187.

³³ Mihael Glavan: Velika Jurčičeva slavnost na Muljavi, 15 August 1882. In: Jurčič naš sopotnik. Grosuplje 1994, pg. 75.

³⁴ Special-Orts-Repertorium von Krain. Herausgegeben von k. k. Statistischen Central-Commission. Wien 1884, pg. 85.

How did the villagers of Muljava see the festivities? Judging by the testimonies of patriots themselves they were, first and foremost, surprised. »They really had to like him very much to honour him so³⁵,« the former Jurčič's neighbours wondered. Some of the village children were afraid of the Sokoli and their uniforms, thinking they were »Turks in red shirts.« The memory of the festivities has been preserved in Muljava for several decades to come.³⁶

On »our« Jurčič

About three decades later, in 1911, another event was prepared in Muljava. This time the villagers did not only observe. Judging by the newspaper reports the main initiator of the event was the liberally oriented village innkeeper and merchant Ciril Hočevar, Jurčič's grandnephew.³⁷ In cooperation with the St. Cyril and Methodius Society (a nationalist organisation, which established »Slovenian« kindergartens and supported Slovenian pupils)³⁸, Hočevar organised the staging of Jurčič's novel *The Tenth Brother*. The theatre performance was carried out by liberal students, and the income was given to the Slovenian students in Prague. Besides the students, several villagers took part in the play.³⁹ Hočevar was not only a patriot, but also an entrepreneur, though. The performance was staged in front of his barn near Jurčič's house. Of course he took care of the supply of food and drink and »diverse entertainment«, including dancing.⁴⁰

After World War I, Muljava, together with two thirds of the »Slovenian territory«, found itself in the new state: Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Even though the ideology of the single »Yugoslav nation« prevailed, the Slovenian leaders saw the establishment of the First Yugoslav State as Slovenian »national liberation«. In the Slovenian part of the state the administration and school system were completely Slovenianised.⁴¹ The works of Josip Jurčič were included into the school curriculums.⁴² The Jurčič tradition received a new encouragement. In 1924 the people of Muljava established their own firefighting society. The villagers, still remembering the *Tenth Brother* performance of 1911, came up with an idea to stage it themselves on this occasion.⁴³ Thus the village theatre activities began, which have – save for a few interruptions – lasted until today. During the first years the amateur theatre operated in the context of the firefighting society and was managed by the aforemen-

³⁵ Slovenski narod, 16 August 1882, 186.

³⁶ Jutro, 11 August 1929, 186.

³⁷ Testimony of his granddaughter Tatjana Lampret.

³⁸ Enciklopedija Slovenije 2. Ljubljana 1988, pg. 363.

³⁹ Danijel Zupančič: Kulturno delovanje amaterskega gledališča na Muljavi v obdobju 1921-1941. In: Zbornik občin Grosuplje, Ivančna gorica, Dobrepolje XXII. Grosuplje 2002, pg. 175.

⁴⁰ Slovenski narod, 4 September 1911, 203.

⁴¹ Ervin Dolenc: Kultura 1918-1941. In: Slovenska novejša zgodovina I. Ljubljana 2005, pg. 423.

⁴² Anton Debeljak: Jurčič v srednješolskih učbenikih in še nekaj. In: Življenje in svet, 15, 9 (4 March 1934), pg. 207.

⁴³ Ciril Jurčič: Zgodovina prostovoljnega gasilskega društva Muljava. Muljava 1994, pg. 3.

tioned Ciril Hočevar. During this period (1918-1941) Jurčič's birth house became a kind of a cultural tourist attraction. Besides the people's theatre the tradition of solemn events dedicated to Jurčič also continued. On such occasions Muljava would be visited by the members of the cultural and political elite. In 1929 Jurčič's house was restored and elaborate festivities with a cultural programme and entertainment were organised.⁴⁴ The makeup of the committee for the restoration of Jurčič's house demonstrates that the tradition was kept alive by the local elite. The committee consisted of the priest, two teachers, two landowners, a notary and a veterinarian.⁴⁵ Since Jurčič became famous in the time when the dispute between the liberals and the conservatives was not yet so prominent, people of various ideologies could take part in the invention of his tradition. Besides the liberal Hočevar, at that time a renowned farmer Anton Lampret, an (unsuccessful) candidate for the conservative Slovenian People's Party several times, also played an important role in this.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, theatre activities have become traditional. The villagers realised »that people's theatre is pleasant entertainment and social gathering«.⁴⁷

The Jurčič tradition persisted even during World War II. After the attack of the Axis against Yugoslavia in April 1941, the Yugoslav Slovenia was divided between Germany, Italy and Hungary. Together with the liberal and Christiansocial groups the Slovenian communists established the Liberation Front, which organised the resistance against the occupiers. While the partisans fought successfully against the Italians and Germans in the rural areas, the conservative political forces, afraid of communism, collaborated with the occupiers and established an anticommunist militia. The guerrilla liberation war also turned into a bloody civil war.⁴⁸ The partisans frequently controlled the village of Muljava and its surroundings. In July 1942 they were victorious against a much larger Italian force in the difficult battle of Muljava. Slovenian partisans held the Slovenian literature in the highest regard. Certain partisan units were even named after Slovenian writers. Therefore it is not surprising that on 4 March 1944, at the hundredth anniversary of Jurčič's birth, the local partisans built a memorial plaque signed by the Liberation Front into the wall of Jurčič's house. On this occasion a ceremony was improvised, complete with solemn speakers and children from the partisan school. Even the village priest took part in it and blessed the plaque.⁴⁹ Jurčič's anniversary was also celebrated by the opponents of the partisans in the National Theatre in Ljubljana, who regretted that they were unable to celebrate it in Muljava.⁵⁰ The culprit was, of course, »godless

⁴⁴ Jutro, 17 August 1929, 191.

⁴⁵ Slovenec, 17 August 1929, 181.

⁴⁶ Vasilij Melik: Volitve 1907-1927 na današnjem Grosupeljskem ozemlju. In: Zbornik občine Grosuplje 1974. Grosuplje 1974, pg. 243.

⁴⁷ Danijel Zupančič: Kulturno delovanje amaterskega gledališča na Muljavi v obdobju 1921-1941. In: Zbornik občin Grosuplje, Ivančna gorica, Dobropolje XXII. Grosuplje 2002, pg. 175.

⁴⁸ Peter Vodopivec: Od Pohlinove slovnice do samostojne države. Slovenska zgodovina od konca 18. do konca 20. stoletja. Ljubljana 2006, pp. 264-300.

⁴⁹ Ciril Jurčič: Pajžbarjev rod. Muljava 2004, pg. 92.

⁵⁰ Slovenec, 5 March 1944, 53.

communism«. However, the Jurčič tradition could not avoid the civil war. When an anticommunist Home Guard batallion occupied Muljava, the partisan plaque was destroyed.

After World War II, the Jurčič tradition was in full swing. Already in 1945 the Tenth Brother play was enacted again. In 1950 the Josip Jurčič cultural society was established, and it is still active. In the following decades the village teachers took over the role of theatre organisers. After 1981 the society modernised its theatre activities. Since then the openair staging of Jurčič's works has taken place every year in the natural amphitheatre next to Jurčič's house. Much effort has been invested into attractive set design, authentic costumes and professional lighting. The performers are, naturally, local people, speaking the local dialect.⁵¹ Jurčič's birth house came into the custody of the cultural institutions of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia as a monument of national importance, and it was opened for the public as an ethnographic museum.⁵² Since then the Jurčič homestead has been a popular venue for various cultural as well as commercial events. In the time of Tito's Yugoslavia the local culturalpolitical organisations liked to associate the Jurčič tradition with the struggle of the partisan heroes for the social and national liberation. Jurčič was presented as a forerunner of the Slovenian partisans, because he »raised our national and social political awareness with his cultural and political mission«. ⁵³ On special occasions during this time Muljava was, just like before, visited by important guests: university professors, renowned poets and writers, painters, etc., who kept confirming to the local population how important Jurčič had been for the Slovenian nation.

The attainment of the Slovenian independence in 1991 did not bring any changes in this sense: the tradition simply kept on going. Today Jurčič is everywhere: the Jurčič awards are given, the local school is named after him, a tourist footpath is named after him, he even has his own Facebook profile. We simply cannot imagine Muljava without Jurčič. Do the people of Muljava perform the plays because of pride or because of the social gatherings that come with it? »It's fun,« an elderly amateur actor admits. »And the company, well, that's one of the best things about it. Good company, since almost everyone from Muljava comes together for this, the older as well as the younger, even children.«⁵⁴ Despite that, the author of this paper has been reassured that the villagers were very proud of »their« Jurčič, because Jurčič had done so much for the Slovenian nation. However, »their« Jurčič is not the Jurčič of the »official« culture. In 1982 a feature film Tenth Brother was shot in the national production. The best Slovenian actors acted in it. Nevertheless, when the film was screened in Muljava, the villagers were not happy with it. »It just wasn't 'their' Tenth Brother.«⁵⁵

⁵¹ Danijel Zupančič: Kulturno delovanje amaterskega gledališča na Muljavi v obdobju 1962-2003. In: Zbornik občin Grosuplje, Ivančna gorica, Dobrepolje XXII. Grosuplje 2003, pg. 124.

⁵² Ciril Jurčič: Pajžbarjev rod. Muljava 2004, pg. 11.

⁵³ Jurčičev svet, Muljava, June 1977, pg. 13.

⁵⁴ Klasje, 10, 3 (March 2004), pg. 17.

⁵⁵ Bogi Pretnar: Klic Jurčičevine. In: Jurčič naš sopotnik. Grosuplje 1994, pg. 109.

On the local nationhood

What is, in our example, the misunderstanding that works? The most obvious misunderstanding takes place between the national elite and the local community, which adapts the new national cultural contents to its own perceptions. This is how the local nationhood is created, which is radically different from the nationhood of the cultural elites. The essence of the local nationhood lies in the reverse perspective. Instead of focusing on the national integrity, the local community focuses on itself. This is what makes this phenomenon impervious to the changes in the ideological and national context and allows it to endure. States and ideologies crumble, but the Jurčič tradition in Muljava lives on and on. If we define the Jurčič tradition as an invented tradition,⁵⁶ then we should ask ourselves who invents. The initial invention was started by the cultural elite, which introduced their invention to the village community in a spectacular manner. As the village community adopted the novelty, it started inventing its own tradition in accordance with its own ideas. The formula for the constant reaffirmation of the invented tradition was brought into the village by the (young) cultural elite with their theatre activities (1911). In order to keep the awareness of a personality alive, the local community has to be active and creative in cultivating a memory. The identification with the significance of »our« man in the national mythology increases the importance of the village in the ideological national space. The organisation of rituals is an important volunteer activity, which brings the village community together. The organisation of village rituals simultaneously represents the organisation of national rituals. The adherence to the local community outgrows itself. On one hand it is concrete and the members confirm it with joint activities, while on the other hand it is placed in the wider national context. Even though the local nationhood, encouraged by the elites, no longer needs the elites for its reproduction, the well-established links with the elite nationhood do exist. These links are kept alive by the intermediaries: teachers, members of educational societies, even important village individuals (innkeepers, merchants, the more important farmers with political ambitions). These people act as organisers, they are in fact the bearers of the local nationhood. Just like the elites exploit the old localisms for the »true« national goals, the villagers exploit the nationhood to strengthen their own community. In our example the localism does not stand up to nationhood (as the resistance of the periphery against the centre). Quite the opposite: people are being national through localism.

⁵⁶ Eric Hobsbawm: Introduction: Inventing Traditions. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge 2008, pg. 5.

Marko Zajc

TRADICIJA JOSIPA JURČIČA NA MULJAVI: MEJE LOKALIZMA IN NACIONALIZMA

Povzetek

Zakaj je nacionalizem nesporazum, ki deluje? Ker pomeni različne stvari za različne ljudi. Oziroma različne stvari za različne skupine ljudi tako v različnih obdobjih kot istočasno. Pa vendar se imajo vsi za člane iste skupnosti. Kaj pomeni, da narod deluje? Če vzamemo klasično definicijo Benedicta Andersona: ljudje se imajo za člane zamišljene skupnosti, čeprav ne morejo poznati vseh članov skupnosti. Povedano skozi perspektivo nesporazuma: nekdo se ima za pripadnika naroda, čeprav njemu narod pomeni nekaj povsem drugega kot nekomu drugemu, ki se ima za pripadnika istega naroda. Dejstvo, da nacionalizma in naroda ni mogoče natančno definirati, za uspeh nacionalizma ni ovira, ampak prednost. Nedoločnost naroda omogoča, da se z narodom identificirajo različni ljudje. Prav zato, ker je nacionalizem nesporazum, ki deluje, pa potrebuje, da bi zares deloval, »sporazum«. Potrebuje vmesni člen, skupine, ki so dovolj majhne, da niso zamišljene v Andersonovem smislu (člani se lahko poznajo), imajo pa direktno vez z zamišljeno skupnostjo. Takšne skupine so lahko izumljene s tem namenom (kulturna, telovadna društva z nacionalnim predznakom), lahko pa so že uveljavljene skupine iz prednacionalnega časa, ki v procesu modernizacije pridobijo dodatni nacionalni pomen (vaške skupnosti, župnije).

Primeru amaterske gledališke dejavnosti v slovenski vasi kaže, da ima privrženost lokalni skupnosti veliko vlogo pri oblikovanju vsakdanjega nacionalizma. Vas Muljava je bila pred dvema stoletjema na Kranjskem, kronovini obsežnega habsburškega cesarstva. Kljub temu da se lokacija vasi geografsko ni spreminjala, je potovala v teku 20. stoletja skozi različne države: Kraljevino SHS/ Jugoslavijo, socialistično Jugoslavijo in Slovenijo. Kdo je bil Josip Jurčič (1844–1881)? Slovenski patriot, pisatelj, novinar in zmerni liberal, nadarjen podeželski otrok, ki so ga doma določili »za šole«, da bi postal duhovnik. Že v srednji šoli se je navdušil nad slovenskim narodnim gibanjem, v istem času je začel tudi s pisanjem. Po maturi pa se ni vpisal na bogoslovje, ampak je pričel s študijem na dunajski filozofski fakulteti. Skromno eksistenco si je zagotavljal izključno s pisanjem. Študija ni dokončal, posvetil se je literaturi in po letu 1868 novinarskemu delu pri novem liberalnem časopisu, prvem slovenskem političnem časopisu, Slovenskem narodu. Po letu 1871 je časopis tudi urejal. V obdobju, ko je bila slovenska literarna produkcija še skromna, je nadarjeni Jurčič še zelo mlad postal popularen slovenski pisatelj. Leta 1866 je izdal roman Deseti brat, ki je priznan kot prvi slovenski roman. V zadnjih letih življenja je imel kot urednik Slovenskega naroda velik ugled in je postal neformalni vodja liberalnih »mladoslovencev«. Zaradi »neutrudnega dela za narod« je Jurčič zbolel in umrl, ko je bil star komaj 36 let. Umrl je v času, ko se je politični položaj slovenskega gibanja izboljšal. Slovenski politiki so postavili nesoglasja med liberalci in konservativci v ozadje in skupaj podprli vladu Eduarda von Taaffeja (1879–1893). V zameno so dobili nekaj koncesij za slovenski jezik v upravi in šolstvu, deklarirani Slovenci pa so lažje prišli do služb v (lokalni) državni administraciji. Pridobitve so nedvomno pomenile napredek, zato so slovenski nacionalisti izkoristili vsako priložnost za potrditev nove samozavesti. Ni nenavadno, da so Jurčičevi kolegi takoj po njegovi smrti začeli s sistematično izgradnjo njegovega »kulta«. Delo je bilo toliko lažje, ker so bila Jurčičeva dela dejansko popularna med širšim krogom bralcev.

Leto po Jurčičevi smrti (1882) so slovenski voditelji pripravili v njegovi rojstvi vasi Muljava, slavnostno odkrite spominske plošče na Jurčičevi »rojstni hiši«. Organizacija slovesnosti je bil velik organizacijski in logistični podvig. Na dan slovesnosti 15. avgusta 1882 so se udeleženci zgodaj zjutraj odpravili iz Ljubljane. Pred njimi je bila več kot 35 km dolga pot. Na čelu sprevoda je bila godba, za njo pa je korakalo 46 članov Sokola v uniformah, sledilo je več sto udeležencev na okrašenih vozovih. Po odkritju plošče so imeli visoki gostje slavnostno kosilo s številnimi zdraviciami. Po kosilu so sokoli izvajali gimnastične točke, pevski zbor je imel program narodnih pesmi, godba pa je igrala plesno glasbo. Vse v Jurčičevo slavo. Česa podobnega majhna podeželska občina še ni doživela. Po pričevanju časopisov se je na Muljavi tistega dne zbralo več kot 7000 ljudi. Občina Muljava pa je imela leta 1880 285 prebivalcev (54 hiš). Kako so slavje sprejeli muljavski vaščani? Sodeč po pričevanjih samih patriotov, so bili predvsem presenečeni. »Pa so ga morali vendar zelo radi imeti, da ga tako časte,« so se čudili nekdanji Jurčičevi sosedi. Nekateri vaški otroci so se bali sokolov v uniformah, ki so jih imeli za »Turke v rdečih srcah.« Spomin na to »Jurčičevo« slovesnost so na Muljavi ohranjali še več desetletij.

Slaba tri desetletja kasneje, leta 1911, se je na Muljavi znova pripravljala Jurčičeva slavnost. Tokrat pa prebivalci Muljave niso bili samo opazovalci. Sodeč po časopisnih poročilih je bil glavni pobudnik liberalno usmerjen vaški gostilničar in trgovec, Jurčičev pranečak, Ciril Hočevar. Predstavo so izvedli liberalni študenti, izkupiček od predstave so namenili slovenskim študentom v Pragi. Poleg študentov je v predstavi sodelovalo tudi nekaj domačinov. Hočevar pa ni bil samo rodoljub, ampak tudi poslovnež. Predstava se je odvijala pred njegovim skednjem v bližini Jurčičevega doma. Seveda je poskrbel tudi za ponudbo pijače in hrane ter za »raznovrstno zabavo« s plesom. Po prvi svetovni vojni se je Muljava skupaj z dvema tretjinama »slovenskega ozemlja« znašla v novi državi: Kraljevini Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev. V slovenskem delu države sta bili uprava in šolstvo povsem slovenizirani. Dela Josipa Jurčiča dobila mesto v šolskih kurikulumih. Jurčičeva tradicija je dobila novo spodbudo. Leta 1924 so Muljavci ustanovili gasilsko društvo. Med domačini, ki so se spominjali predstave Deseti brat leta 1911, se je porodila ideja, da bi ob tej priložnosti sami pripravili predstavo Deseti brat. Začela se je vaška gledališka dejavnost, ki s prekinitvami traja do današnjih dni. Pravi razcvet je Jurčičeva tradicija doživela po drugi svetovni vojni. Že leta 1945 so tradicionalno uprizorili igro Deseti brat. Leta 1950 je bilo ustanovljeno Kulturno društvo Josip Jurčič, ki je še vedno aktivno. Vlogo gledaliških organizatorjev so imeli v naslednjih desetletjih vaški učitelji. Po letu 1981 je društvo posodobilo gledališko dejavnost. Začeli so z vsakoletnimi uprizoritvam Jurčičevih del na prostem v naravnem amfiteatru poleg Jurčičeve hiše. Veliko truda je vložnega v privlačno scenografijo, avtentične kostume in profesionalno razsvetljavo. Kot igralci seveda nastopajo domačini, ki igrajo v domačem narečju.

Kje je v našem primeru nesporazum, ki deluje? Očiten je predvsem nesporazum med nacionalno elito in lokalno skupnostjo, ki nove, nacionalne kulturne vsebine prilagodi svojim predstavam. Tako nastane lokalni nacionalizem, ki se bistveno razlikuje od nacionalizma kulturnih elit. Bistvo lokalnega nacionalizma je v obrnjeni perspektivi. Namesto da bi bila v centru pozornosti narodna celota, v center pozornosti postavijo svojo skupnost. To ga naredi neobčutljivega za spremembe ideološkega in državnega konteksta in mu omogoči veliko vzdržljivost. Propadajo države in ideologije, Jurčičeva tradicija na Muljavi ostaja. Če opredelimo Jurčičevo tradicijo kot izumljeno tradicijo, potem je na mestu vprašanje, kdo izumlja. S prvotnim izumom je pričela kulturna elita, ki je svoj izum spektakularno prinesla v vaško skupnost. Ko pa je vaška skupnost sprejela novost, je začela izumljati svojo tradicijo v skladu s svojimi predstavami. Formulo za potrjevanje izumljene tradicije je v vas prinesla (mlada) kulturna elita z gledališko dejavnostjo (1911). Da bi ostala zavest o osebnosti živa, mora biti lokalna skupnost aktivna in kreativna pri kultiviranju spomina. Identifikacija s pomenom »našega« človeka v nacionalni mitologiji poveča pomen vasi v ideološkem nacionalnem prostoru. Organizacija ritualov je pomembna prostovoljna dejavnost, ki povezuje vaško skupnost. Opravljanje vaških ritualov je istočasno opravljanje nacionalnih ritualov. Privrženost lokalni skupnosti preraste samo sebe. Po eni strani je konkretna in jo člani potrjujejo s skupnimi aktivnostmi, po drugi strani pa je postavljena v širši, nacionalni kontekst. Čeprav lokalni nacionalizem, ki so ga spodbudile elite, za reprodukcijo več ne potrebuje elit, obstajajo žive vezi z elitnim nacionalizmom. Te vezi gojijo posredniki: učitelji, pripadniki izobraževalnih društev, pa tudi pomembni vaški posamezniki (vaški gostilničarji, trgovci, večji kmetje s političnimi ambicijami). Ti delujejo kot organizatorji, so pravzaprav nosilci lokalnega nacionalizma. Tako kot elite izkoriščajo stare lokalizme za »prave« nacionalne cilje, tako vaščani izkoriščajo nacionalizem za krepitev lastne skupnosti.