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ZRC SAZU



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Predgovor novih urednikov

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Traditiones – mednarodna znanstvena revija, ki objavlja raznovrstne teme iz slovenske in evropske etnologije, antropologije, folkloristike, etnomuzikologije in sorodnih ved – v 52. letniku in s pričujočim zvezkom obrača novo stran. Ker je pred vami povsem prenovljena podoba revije, smo novo stran obrnili dobesedno. Hvaležni smo, da je bil ta korak zaupan podpisanim novim urednikom.

Zgodovina *Traditiones* je dolga in bogata. Revijo je leta 1972 ustanovil Inštitut za slovensko narodopisje, leta 1999 se mu je pri izbiranju in urejanju vsebin pridružil Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut ZRC SAZU. Poleg navdušenosti in naporov ustanoviteljev tematsko široko odprtega zbornika ter njegovih prvih in poznejših urednikov – Nika Kureta, Milka Matičetovega, Valensa Voduška, Vilka Novaka, Angelosa Baša, Toneta Cevca, Mirka Ramovša, Julijana Strajnarja, Mojce Ravnik, Jurija Fikfaka, Marije Stanonik, Helene Ložar-Podlogar in Maje Godina Golija – sta v zadnjih dveh desetletjih reviji pustila močan pečat neutrudna urednika Jurij Fikfak in Ingrid Slavec Gradišnik. Z izborom sodobnih, domiselnih in mnogovrstnih tem sta *Traditiones* od 33. letnika (2004) utirala in krepila mednarodno uveljavljenost in ugled, ki se je kazal npr. v sodelujočih avtoricah in avtorjih, v višanju uredniških standardov, z vpisi revije v mednarodne podatkovne zbirke revij. Za veliko preteklo delo in zaupanje skrbi nad ustvarjenim ugledom smo jima novi uredniki neizmerno hvaležni.

Traditiones izide trikrat letno, od tega praviloma za vsebino dveh številk skrbi Inštitut za slovensko narodopisje, ene pa Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut. Zato smo se z menjavo urednikov odločili, da bomo odslej za revijo skrbeli trije uredniki: dva iz prvega in en iz drugega inštituta. Sprememb je še nekaj, a nobena za bralko ali bralca ni tako opazna, kakor je njena nova zunanja podoba. Pri vizualni prenovi smo si zamislili nadaljevanje določenih elementov prejšnje, hkrati pa dodali nekaj igrivega ali *funky*, kot smo v šali temu rekli na delovnih sestankih. Rdeča nit vizualne opreme je ikona zvoka. Ta po eni strani ponazarja poslušanje sogovornikov (ali drugih izvajalcev) kot značilne etnografske terenske izkušnje, po drugi pa odmev informacije, ki ni nikoli

popoln, s čimer tudi tradicije, ki jih odmevi ustvarjajo, nikoli niso zveste izvirnikom. Na naslovni strani to ponazarja pretvorba ikone v besedo TRADITIONES / DITIO / ITI. Za igrivost bodo poskrbele tudi barve, ki se bodo spreminjale iz zvezka v zvezek in iz letnika v letnik. Prenovljena je tudi notranjost, kjer nas je vodila preglednost. Tudi papir je drugačen. Celostna prenova je delo oblikovalca Jerneja Kroepeja, pri prenovi pa je neprecenljiv tudi prispevek našega tehničnega urednika Roka Mrviča.

Še nekaj besed o tem zvezku. *Traditiones* objavlja prispevke v slovenščini – za znanstveno revijo, ki je pomembna za nacionalni prostor, je namreč del poslanstva razvijati znanstveno-strokovno besedišče v slovenskem jeziku – in angleščini; in res je tokrat (nekoliko po naključju) polovica prispevkov v enem, polovica v drugem jeziku. Počaščeni smo, da so se za objavo v *Traditiones* odločili ugledni etnologi oz. antropologi – Tatiana Bužeková, László Kürti in Eliseu Carbonell, ki delujejo v različnih okoljih (Slovaška, Madžarska in Španija) in z različnimi tradicijami discipline. Njihovi članki so prispeli brez povabila za skupno temo in neodvisno drug od drugega ter prav zaradi tega morda kažejo, s čim javnost najpogosteje povezuje *Traditiones*. Vsi trije namreč tematizirajo tradicije, ki jih poudarja ime revije, čeprav se ta seveda ne posveča le njim, vendar – kakor pokažejo prav ti trije članki – ostajajo zanimiva tema etnoloških, antropoloških, folklorističnih in sorodnih raziskav. Druge tri prispevke smo pridobili z vabilom: ob premisleku, katero polje etnografskih raziskav je danes v Sloveniji posebej živahno (predvsem med mlajšimi), so v ospredje stopile ekološke teme. Zato smo se odločili, da kolegice in kolege povabimo k pisanju o krajinah in načinih, kako ljudje skrbijo zanje. Ana Svetel je raziskovala na Islandiji, Blaž Bajič na hribovitem območju na Solčavskem, Sandi Abram pa med urbanimi skvoterji v Ljubljani. Vsi trije z odlično etnografijo poglobljeno teoretizirajo skrb za krajino.

Tako je ta zvezek deloma tematski, deloma sestavljen iz samostojno prispelih član- kov. S kombiniranjem tematskih in netematskih zvezkov in razdelkov nameravamo nadaljevati. Bralke in bralce zato vabimo, da spremljajo spletno stran revije (<https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/traditiones>), kjer objavljamo napovedi, aktualna sporočila in nove vsebine, predvsem pa, da se odločijo v *Traditiones* objaviti kakovostna spoznanja svojih raziskav.

Foreword by the New Editors

Traditiones – the international scientific journal covering a wide range of topics in Slovenian and European ethnology, anthropology, folklore studies, ethnomusicology, and related fields – is in its 52nd year, and with this issue turning a new page. Since you are looking at a thoroughly redesigned journal, we have turned over a new page quite literally. We are grateful that this step has been entrusted to the undersigned new editors.

Traditiones has had a long and rich history. The journal was founded in 1972 by the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology; in 1999 it was joined by the Institute of Ethnomusicology of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In addition to the enthusiasm and efforts of the founders of the thematically wide-open journal and its first and subsequent editors – Niko Kuret, Milko Matičetov, Valens Vodušek, Vilko Novak, Angelos Baš, Tone Cevc, Mirko Ramovš, Julijan Strajnar, Mojca Ravnik, Jurij Fikfak, Marija Stanonik, Helena Ložar-Podlogar, and Maja Godina Golija – in the last two decades the tireless editing by Jurij Fikfak and Ingrid Slavec Gradišnik has left a profound mark. With a selection of contemporary, imaginative, and diverse topics, they have since its 33rd year (2004) established and galvanized the international reputation and standing of *Traditiones*, reflected, for example, in the diversity of contributing authors, in the raising of editorial standards, and in the journal's entries in international journal indexes. As the new editors, we are immensely grateful for their extraordinary work, and for trusting us with the custody of the salient reputation they have built up.

Traditiones is published three times a year, with the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology usually responsible for the content of two issues and the Institute of Ethnomusicology for one. Therefore, with the change of editors, we have decided that from now on the journal will be edited by three editors: two from the first and one from the second institute. There are a few more changes, but none as noticeable to the reader as the new look. For the visual overhaul, we envisioned continuing certain elements of the previous one while adding something playful or *funky*, as we jovially referred to it at the working meetings. The icon for sound is the red thread of the new visual design. It represents, on the one hand, listening to interlocutors (or other performers) as a typical ethnographic field experience, and, on the other hand, the echo of information that is never complete, and thus the traditions created by the echoes ever reverberating in discourse with the originals. On the front page, this is illustrated by the transformation of the icon into the words TRADITIONES / DITIO / ITI. The colours, planned to change from volume to volume and from year to year, will also provide a playful touch. The inside has been redesigned as well, with clarity as our guiding principle, and the paper is different, too. The overall redesign is the work of designer Jernej Kropelj. Besides, the contribution of our technical editor Rok Mrvič has been invaluable.

A few words about this volume. *Traditiones* publishes contributions in Slovene – for a scientific journal of national importance, it is part of its mission to develop a

scientific vocabulary in Slovene – and English; and indeed in this issue (somewhat coincidentally) half of the contributions are in one language and half in the other. We are honoured that prominent ethnologists and anthropologists – Tatiana Bužeková, László Kürti, and Eliseu Carbonell, working in different parts of Europe (Slovakia, Hungary, and Spain) and with different disciplinary traditions – have chosen to publish in *Traditiones*. Their articles were submitted without an invitation for a common theme, independently of one another, and perhaps for this reason they are indicative of what the public most often associates *Traditiones* with. All three of them deal with ‘traditions’, a notion highlighted in the journal’s name. The journal, of course, does not focus only on traditions, but – as these three articles show – they remain an interesting topic for ethnological, anthropological, folkloristic and related research. The other three articles were obtained by an open call. When considering which field of ethnographic research is particularly lively in Slovenia today (especially among younger scholars), ecological themes came to the fore. And so we decided to invite colleagues to write about landscapes and the ways in which people care for them. Ana Svetel did research in Iceland, Blaž Bajič in the hilly area of Solčavsko, and Sandi Abram among urban squatters in Ljubljana. All three of them theorise in depth the care for landscapes with excellent ethnography.

Thus, this volume is partly thematic, partly composed of articles submitted independently. We intend to continue combining thematic and non-thematic volumes and sections. Readers are therefore invited to keep an eye on the journal’s website (<https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/traditiones>), where we publish announcements and new content, and above all to choose to publish high quality research findings in *Traditiones*.

RAZPRAVE



ARTICLES

Communication of Tradition(s): Narrative Templates of Magical Healing in Urban Shamanism

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The paper examines how Slovak traditional concepts related to magical healing are used in a group around an urban shaman living in Bratislava (Slovakia). It is argued that practitioners' stories about spiritual healing are based on narrative templates which could be identified in Slovak traditional folk stories. It is concluded that folk tradition plays an important role in adapting alternative spirituality to local conditions because it contributes to better remembrance of spiritual concepts.

▪ **Keywords:** Slovak traditional narratives, magic, spiritual healing, neo-shamanism, narrative templates, specific narratives

V članku je obravnavano, kako skupina, zbrana okoli urbanega šamana iz Bratislave (Slovaška), uporablja koncepte iz slovaške tradicije, povezane z magičnim zdravljenjem. Avtorica dokazuje, da zgodbe udeležencev o duhovnem zdravljenju temeljijo na pripovednih obrazcih, ki jih je mogoče prepoznati v slovaških ljudskih pripovedih. Ugotavlja, da ima pripovedno izročilo pomembno vlogo pri prilagajanju alternativne duhovnosti lokalnim razmeram, saj prispeva k boljšemu pomnjenju duhovnih konceptov.

▪ **Ključne besede:** slovaške tradicionalne pripovedi, magija, duhovno zdravljenje, neošamanizem, pripovedni obrazci, posebne pripovedi

Introduction

Traditional healing has long received intense attention in many academic fields, including socio-cultural anthropology, ethnology, and folkloristics. The early studies explored culturally situated practices from the comparative perspective; in this, they considered their magical components within local contexts, with the explicit or implicit assumption of their inferiority to Western medicine (e.g., Evans-Pritchard, 1976 [1937]; Rivers, 1924). However, contemporary research has demonstrated that in a globalised world, healing practices coming from different cultural traditions can be combined and transformed into highly syncretic forms; in this, magic becomes part of holistic worldviews linked to spiritual development; and scientific terms are often employed to legitimise magical healing (e.g., Čavojević et al., 2021; Keshet, 2009, 2011; Koch, 2015; Stevens, 2001). The process of blending traditions is complex and depends on concrete cultural milieus, in which local beliefs and practices can inform new healing systems (e.g., Jerotijević, Hagovská, 2020; Lindquist, 2001, 2005). My paper pays attention to a concrete case of employing a local Slovak tradition in the context of a global spiritual movement, that of neo-shamanism.

The emergence of neo-shamanism or urban shamanism has been ascribed to the post-war transformation caused by the decline of the great colonial empires and the rise of national movements in the Third World countries. “Peoples without history” (Wolf, 1982), which had long remained in the shadow of Western civilisation, came onto the political scene. At the same time, in the eyes of many educated people in the West, the values of progress, science and rationality came to be associated with colonialism and oppression. As a result, in public discourse as well as in academic works, non-Western traditions involving magic, formerly seen as backward and irrational, were re-interpreted in terms of the universal spirituality of humankind that in the West was lost or weakened due to the rationalization of the modern world (Herman, 1997: 364–365; Znamenski, 2007: 166–169). This change of meaning was particularly apparent in scholarly re-interpretations of traditional shamanism, which in a global discourse led to the change of its original connotation. Today the word ‘shamanism’ has multiple meanings: apart from its original reference to a religious complex in Siberia centring on practitioners utilizing drums and chanting to create an altered state of consciousness believed to enable communication with the spirit world, it can refer to a religious practice opposed to historical Western religions, featuring altered states of consciousness; or a primeval religion supposed to have persisted since the Palaeolithic among hunter-gatherer/nomadic peoples; or techniques of altering consciousness, in contemporary Western societies no longer necessarily yoked to religious beliefs (Kehoe, 1997: 377). The constant element of these varied meanings is the magical or spiritual healing linked to altered states of consciousness. In recent decades, the popularity of such practice in Europe – either labelled as shamanic or not – has increased despite the dominant position of Western medicine (Fjær et al., 2020).

The rise of interest in magic, religion and spirituality during the second half of the twentieth century has been repeatedly confronted with Max Weber’s notion of “the disenchantment”¹ referring to the expulsion of magic from the modern world in the process of rationalization. This idea has been contested on many fronts due to rising indicators of religiosity within established churches, as well as popularity of new religious movements and alternative beliefs. This change of religious and spiritual scene has been variously described as “the re-enchantment of the world”, “return to religion”, “new spirituality” or “new religiosity” (e. g., Bauman, 1993; Heelas, 1996; Heelas et al., 2005; Landy, Saler, 2009; Sutcliffe, Bowman, 2000; Tižik, 2006). In post-socialist countries “the re-enchantment” has had specific features, among other due to the official negative

¹ Weber’s expression *Entzauberung*, literally “the elimination of magic” (Weber, 1948 [1919]) referred to a path of continued progress towards greater understanding of the world and controlling everything by means of calculation which leads to the expulsion of magic from the modern world, supported by modern science’s development. However, as Kocku von Stuckrad (2002: 772) notices, Weber “was fully aware of the fact that the world’s disenchantment has always been challenged by mystic, intellectualized, or private religious reasoning.”

attitude to religions during the previous socialist era. The fall of communist regimes in the 1990s not only changed the situation of established churches, but opened doors for new spirituality (Ališauskienė, 2017; Smoczyński, 2016; Tižik, 2006). In Slovakia, the political change contributed to a “religious awakening” that was manifested in two ways: the return to traditional Christian forms of religiosity (especially Catholicism) and the spread of new religious and spiritual beliefs and practices. The latter included both institutionalized religious movements and diverse forms of spirituality, which often opposed traditional religious worldviews (Tižik, 2006: 8–11).

The diversity of spiritual phenomena and ambiguity of their names resulted in scholarly debates, in which various terms, and in particular the notion of New Age, have been criticized. According to Steven Sutcliffe and Marion Bowman (2000: 2), contemporary spiritual currents “invariably understand themselves to be ‘alternative’, either strongly (they are explicitly dissenting) or weakly (they are merely variant or optional)” to dominant ideas and structures of “official” religion as well as secular science, and for this reason, the loose category of “alternative spirituality” is appropriate. In my account, I will use this term. An important characteristic of these alternative sets of “values, explanations, lifestyles choices and communication systems” (Bloch, 1998: 59) is their enactment in micro, everyday settings. As Marion Bowman (2000: 395) has noted, “folk”, “popular” or “unofficial” beliefs are an integral part of people’s conceptual world which influences every aspect of their behaviour. This feature of alternative spirituality and its dynamic nature parallels folk tradition. At the same time, traditional beliefs merge with new ideas: the empirical research of alternative spirituality has shown that it can draw upon multiple traditions and philosophies simultaneously, combining them into individual packages of meaning (Aupers, Houtman, 2010: 135).

The role of local traditions in the study of alternative spirituality has long been noticed by historians, archaeologists, scholars of religion and other disciplines: as Juliette Wood (2011) states, they “have increasingly realised that folklore and cultural tradition are necessary ingredients in comprehending ‘the big picture’ in a variety of contexts.” In folklore studies, this research problem is often addressed from the perspective of vernacular religion (Bowman, 2011, 2014; Bowman, Sutcliffe, 2000; Primiano, 1995; Roussou, 2021; Valk, 2008). However, alternative spirituality includes healing practices that people do not perceive as religious. As Anne Koch (2015) argues, alternative healing, including spiritual healing and traditional/folk treatments, might be seen as a form of magical self-care which has to be contextualized not only in relation to religion, but also to secular aspects of health care. I argue that to understand this contextualisation, it is necessary to explore it as a complex process based on the memorisation of magical concepts. Cultural knowledge acquired previously plays an important role in adopting new spiritual notions, and this knowledge includes native folk tradition as well as scientific explanations pursued by people due to their education.

I consider how some traditional Slovak folk concepts are employed in a specific spiritual milieu – in a group around a healer who uses shamanic techniques.² I present the results of ethnographic research which was conducted in Bratislava (Slovakia) from 2010 to 2012. The members of this group often referred to Slovak traditional beliefs concerning health. My previous work on folk beliefs in a rural environment in western Slovakia (Bužeková, 2009) allowed me to compare stories about magical influence on health that came from the same geographical region, but from a different discourse. To explain the mechanisms behind the process of combining Slovak traditional concepts and neo-shamanic notions, I will use the concept of tradition as communication (Boyer, 1990), and the theoretical perspective which sees narratives as types of cultural tools or mediational means (Wertsch, 2002, 2004). The main idea of this paper is that urban shamans' stories about magical harm and magical healing make use of the narrative templates which could be identified in Slovak traditional stories explaining misfortune, and that the concept of energy serves as a linguistic bridge making the connection between different notions possible.

The first part of the paper briefly characterises urban shamanism and my research. In the second part, I present the main theoretical ideas utilized in my interpretation. The third part discusses narrative templates that can be identified in Slovak folk stories explaining misfortune. The last part addresses the process of mediating urban shamans' experience in their specific narratives about magical influence on health.

Urban shamanism and tradition(s)

The term 'shaman', derived from the word *xaman* in the language of Siberian Evenki/Tungus, entered Western languages through its usage in Russia and through German travelogues of the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. It referred to a traditional expert in communicating with the supernatural realm, primarily for the purpose of magical healing, but also for other community needs. Although the naming of such persons varied among different Siberian ethnic groups, the Russian inhabitants of Siberia usually used the term 'shaman', because the nomadic Evenki, hunters and reindeer herders, were scattered throughout Siberia and, thanks to their picturesque dress and tattoos, became the prototype of Siberian natives for Russian inhabitants as well as for Western travellers, who then introduced the word 'shaman' to the Western audience (Znamenski, 2007: 3–38). In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries shamanism became the main topic of many classical ethnographies on Siberian traditions (for example, Ksenofontov, 1992 [1928–1929]; Radlov, 1989 [1884]; Shirokogoroff, 1935). Since the beginning of the

² In the context of neo-shamanism, I will use the terms 'shaman', 'shamanic' and 'shamanism' as emic terms (for the discussion of emic and etic meanings of these terms, see Bužeková, 2010). When I will refer to particular cultural tradition which can be labelled as 'shamanic', I will state it explicitly.

twentieth century, however, this term has also been applied by Western ethnographers to various cultural healing traditions involving magic and altered states of consciousness. The term ‘shaman’ subsequently became a synonym for any traditional spiritual healer.³ Thus, research on various aspects of shamanic healing led to a discussion on the validity of the term ‘shamanism’ and to the ethnographic exploration of many “shamanisms” (Atkinson, 1992; see also DuBois, 2011).

The spiritual trend of neo-shamanism based on the re-interpretation of traditional healing practices coming from various cultures has emerged in the early 1970s and has gained increasing importance due to several political and intellectual trends in Western societies (for a review see e.g. Boekhoven, 2011; Kürti, 2005; Luhrmann, 2012; Znamenski, 2007). In this process, ethnographic and historical works played a central role. In the spiritual milieu the word ‘shamanism’ has been interpreted in accordance with Mircea Eliade’s idea of shamanic knowledge as the original spiritual experience of humankind (Eliade, 2004). Together with a general rise of interest toward non-Western traditions, this interpretation led to a new perspective: a practitioner of shamanism could draw on any tradition of spiritual healing, since all of them were supposed to have common roots in the distant past. This view refers to the ancient roots of humanity, but also to local folk beliefs and practices related to the native spiritual heritage. In Europe, many traditions have been re-interpreted by practitioners as well as academics in “shamanic” terms,⁴ although critical analysis of historical sources and folklore does not support arguments for a supposed shamanistic substratum in European vernacular cultures (Nygaard, 2022).

In Eastern Europe, as László Kürti has noticed, “neo-shamanistic phenomena may be connected to the collapse of the Iron Curtain, and with it, the dismantling of Soviet domination throughout the former East Bloc. This was followed by an instant re-emergence of religiosity along with new forms of spirituality” (Kürti, 2004: 1529). Neo-shamanism, however, varies from country to country. For instance, in Hungary this trend is connected to national identity and religious revivalism (Kürti, 2015) and for this reason can be classified as a neopagan religious movement. In contrast, in the Czech Republic, neo-shamanic rituals can be characterised by “eclecticism and the acceptance of an infinite number of varieties of spirituality” which created an individual religiosity (Dyndová, 2020: 162; see also Exnerová, 2018). The same can be said about neo-shamanism in Slovakia which started there at the beginning of the 1990s.

³ See, for instance, Grant, 2021. The meaning of the term ‘shaman’ referring to any kind of spiritual healer can be combined with the interpretation of shamanism as the universal practice of humankind having roots in our ancestral past (Hayden, 2003; Winkelman, 2020). For the detailed historical account on the transformation of meanings of shamanism see Znamenski, 2007.

⁴ For example, shamanism was connected to seidr, magical tradition of North Europe (Blain, 2005), as well as druidism and other pagan traditions in Britain (Wallis, 2003).

The main role in the formation of neo-shamanic groups in Slovakia was played by the European branch of the Foundation for Shamanic Studies (hereinafter referred to as FSS) located in Vienna (see Bužeková, 2012, 2017). The Foundation's founder, the American anthropologist Michael Harner, laid the institutional and ideological foundations of the global movement. They were reflected in his concept of core shamanism defined as a path to humans' rightful spiritual heritage – the roots of spirituality, the universal principles which are not bound to any specific cultural group or perspective (Harner, 1980). Core shamanism, however, is only one of the “shamanisms” that are currently spread in Europe and North America (Znamenski, 2007: 248–256). In Slovakia, there are groups and persons that claim to follow particular shamanic traditions without attending FSS workshops and courses. Unlike the FSS, with its mission of transmitting the ideas of core shamanism to the broadest audience, these circles have been formed and have functioned on the basis of individual interests, personal contacts and friendships, and their meetings take place in private.

My ethnographic research into FSS groups was carried out in the years 2009 to 2013. In 2010 I got in touch with a group that formed around Peter, a spiritual healer, who was not affiliated with the FSS. Among other healing approaches, such as energy healing, he used Mongolian shamanic techniques.⁵ From the beginning of my research into Peter's group, I observed his interest in folk tradition and historical sites, and the same could be said about many of my informants from FSS groups. In numerous stories, Peter and other members of his circle used Slovak folk concepts related to magical harm. This tendency is common in neo-shamanic practice in Central Europe: for instance, as Kürti notices, in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, historical and folkloric sources inspire urban shamans (Kürti, 2004: 1529).

It should be noted that urban shamanism is not a simple replication of local traditions: as many studies have shown, they can be combined and reinterpreted (e. g., Lindquist, 2004; Wallis, 2003). Investigation of this process requires various theoretical tools due to its complexity. My aim here is to pay attention to concrete aspects of blending different traditions – to memory mechanisms supporting juxtaposition of (1) traditional Slovak terms related to health problems and magical healing, and (2) neo-shamanic concepts referring to spiritual healing. I will examine narratives about magical harm collected during my previous research in several villages in western Slovakia, and urban shamans' narratives. The central notions of my argument are tradition, narratives, and meaning. Thus, in the next part I consider tradition as an analytical term in relation to the workings of human memory; and then a theoretical perspective from which narratives are seen as cultural tools in the process of meaning-making.

⁵ I changed the names of practitioners mentioned here. For more about the practices of Peter and Peter's circle, see Bužeková, 2012.

Traditional narratives as cultural tools

Pascal Boyer (1990) points out that the term ‘tradition’ is often used in scholarly literature as self-evident, without proper theoretical elaboration. However, repetition or reiteration of traditional phenomena implies complex processes of acquisition, memorisation and social interaction which must be described and explained. He proposes to pay attention to the interdependence of memory mechanisms supporting transmission of tradition and social relations in a given community. According to him, traditional phenomena are communicative events, which are characterized by the participation of various actors. The distribution of traditional knowledge is subject to certain principles related to how people remember such events: “What is described as traditional in ethnography consists of actions or utterances which are performed with the guidelines provided by people’s memories of a previous occurrence” (Boyer, 1990: 8). Therefore, to explain traditional phenomena, it is necessary to look at how human memory works. Boyer argues that a notable feature of traditional discourse is the emphasis on specific situations instead of general principles; learning tradition means acquiring knowledge through experience, and expertise is the process of the full acquisition of the fundamental terms (Boyer, 1990: 113).

If we consider tradition as “a type of interaction which results in the repetition of certain communicative events” (Boyer, 1990: 23), neo-shamanic practice in a concrete cultural milieu could be seen as a tradition. However, my informants started learning shamanic knowledge as adults, when they already acquired supernatural concepts coming from their local environment – be it religious notions or folk beliefs.⁶ As many studies of developmental psychology demonstrate, human memory evolves during childhood, and episodic memory starts to develop during the preschool period (Nelson, 2003). It means that concepts learned during formative years influence consequent learning and remembering; they create cognitive schemata in which new concepts become embedded.

The process of creating meaning was described by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1956) as semiotic mediation, as “internalization”, which meant that mental functioning is formed – rather than a place to which external semiotic practices are transferred.

⁶ I understand the term ‘supernatural’ in accordance with Pascal Boyer’s theory of religion which frames religious practices and beliefs in terms of recent cognitive neuroscience research. Boyer argues that religious concepts are counterintuitive, which means that they violate our intuitive expectations about material objects, the animal world, or people. Minimally counterintuitive concepts (MCI), i.e., concepts that violate a few ontological expectations of a given category (such as a notion of invisible spirit which violates expectations about a category of person as a material object, because we intuitively expect that any material object is visible), are more memorable than intuitive and maximally counterintuitive (MXCI) concepts. This means that in the process of cultural transmission MCI are more successful and that is why we find similar kinds of supernatural beliefs all over the world, despite their cultural diversity (Boyer, 2001; see also Barrett, 2008; Norenzayan et al., 2006). In the cognitive theory of ritual competence Thomas E. Lawson and Robert N. McCauley (1990) relate counterintuitive concepts to interpreting ritual efficacy; see Kohonen, 2018 for applying this theory to traditional magical healing.



As James Wertsch and Nutsa Batiashvili (2020: 133) argue, this term corresponds to William James' notion of habit and Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus. In contemporary cognitive science, this idea emerged in discussions about the "new unconscious", involving the so-called "fast thinking", a form of mental processing that is unconscious, biased, and confident in its conclusions. Fast thinking involves "confirmation bias", which means that we tend to rely on selective information that confirms our existing views: "Rather than making the effort to consider alternative evidence and hypotheses, our attention is unconsciously drawn to information consistent with our views, and it downplays, or simply overlooks contradictory evidence" (Wertsch, Batiashvili, 2020: 133–134; see also Mynatt, Doherty, Tweney, 1977).

For ethnographers studying traditional phenomena, this line of reasoning is relevant in interpreting people's narratives transmitted in a given community. Wertsch (2002, 2004) proposes a perspective in which narratives are seen as types of cultural tools or mediational means. He argues that the narrative tools provided by our socio-cultural setting offer a series of stories which we employ on any particular occasion of meaning-making. In exploring them, the narrative analysis must address not only specific texts about concrete events but schematic underlying codes and accompanying mental habits (Wertsch, 2012: 10–11).

Wertsch denotes such codes as narrative templates – the notion that grows from the ideas of Russian folklorist Vladimir Propp on textual "functions" found in folk tales (1928), and British psychologist Frederic Bartlett's notion of the schema (1932). In his analysis of Russian folktales, Propp focussed on generalized "functions" that characterize a set of narratives, as opposed to the particular events and actors that occur in specific narratives. Wertsch argues that a related line of reasoning may be found in the writings of Bartlett who viewed remembering as a constructive process and examined the generalized patterns or schemata brought to this process by the agent doing the constructing. He combines the ideas of Propp and Bartlett in the notion of narrative templates which are schematic in the sense that they concern abstract, generalized functions or schema-like knowledge structures. These abstract structures can underlie an entire set of specific narratives, each of which has a particular setting, cast of characters, dates, and so forth. Narrative templates are not universal archetypes: they are specific to particular narrative traditions that can be expected to differ from one socio-cultural setting to another (Wertsch, 2009: 129).

Wertsch and his colleagues explored narratives about historical events on the level of national memory (Wertsch, 2000, 2002, 2012; Wertsch, Batiashvili, 2020; Wertsch, Karumidze, 2009). I will try to apply this perspective to shamanic stories at the level of individual experience. Urban shamans' aim is to heal themselves, other people, and society. Shamanic healing is spiritual and based on supernatural beliefs: it takes place during a journey into the world of spirits – a "non-ordinary", "separate" or "dream" reality that provides authoritative answers to shamans' questions. In accordance with the perspective

presented above, I assume that people who participate in shamanic sessions use the stock of relevant stories distributed in their cultural environment; and that they employ corresponding narrative templates on occasions of meaning-making. Thus, it is useful to look at traditional folk tales related to magical healing, also based on supernatural concepts. Below I will briefly consider them and identify some corresponding narrative templates.⁷

Explanations of misfortune in Slovak folk stories

Folk beliefs about magical influence on health refer to magical harm and magical healing. The terms denoting magical harm in languages other than English are often translated to English as witchcraft or the evil eye (see, for instance, Dundes, 1992; Pew Research Center, 2018: e23; Stein, 1974; Stewart, Strathern, 2004). In the context of Central Europe, witchcraft and the evil eye are considered related terms (Pócs, 2009). The notion of witchcraft is treated by folklorists and anthropologists as an analytical category, although there have been debates about its theoretical value. Many researchers pointed out that folk beliefs have diverse meanings that are produced in accordance with specific socio-cultural settings; in real life, witchcraft can mean different things to different people and varied notions of ‘witches’ can co-exist within the same community (see, for example, Jerotijević, 2010, 2015, 2017; Mencej, 2008, 2016, 2017a, 2017b). Thus, as Stewart and Strathern have noted, “it is not worthwhile to make and adhere to any rigid definitional distinctions. It is more important to recognize the complex and shifting boundaries of indigenous conceptualizations and how they change over time” (Stewart, Strathern, 2004: 2).

The ethnographic research in several villages in western Slovakia in the years 1997 to 2003 revealed several concepts of supernatural harm (Bužeková, 2009).⁸ The following terms were most frequent:

- *urieknutie, úrek, uštknutie, úrok*. These words are related to the verb *riečť*, to tell (more or less corresponds to the English term ‘charm’). They are used as synonyms for other terms linked to the noun *oči*, eyes: *z očí/oču prišlo*, meaning ‘from eyes’ or ‘coming from eyes’ (translated to English as “the evil eye”);

⁷ In this paper, I will let aside valuable ethnological and folkloristic works on Slovak folk narratives concerning magical healing (see, for example, Bednárík, 1954; Čizmár, 1946; Holuby, 1958; Horváthová, 1974, 1975, 1986; Jakubíková, 1972; Kosová, 1973) because my aim is to explore the process of meaning-making, and this requires knowledge of a local context. I have such knowledge only in relation to my own ethnographic research.

⁸ During the period 1997–1998 I visited 15 villages in the regions of White Carpathians and Myjava in western Slovakia to collect folk tales comprising supernatural concepts. My research was part of a project of the Department of Religious Studies of the Comenius University in Bratislava, aimed at mapping supernatural folk beliefs in Slovakia. I spent only one or two days in every village, and my enquiry was directed to various topics. In 2000 I spent two weeks in a village in White Carpathians and then in 2000–2003 I conducted the standard ethnographic long-term research in a locality situated in the region of Záhorie. In those two villages I focused on the folk explanations of misfortune, especially witchcraft beliefs.



- *porobiť/porobenie, zarobiť, pobosorovať/bosoráctvo,⁹ čarovať/počarovať/čarodejníctvo* (these are verbs and nouns which more or less correspond to the English notions of witchcraft, sorcery, and casting a spell);
- *prekliat'preklatie/kliatba* (curse);
- *gniaviť* (to push, to mash), *tlačiť* (to push), *mora* (a nightmare). These words refer to possession.

My aim here is not to give an accurate translation of Slovak terms to English, on the contrary: I would like to point to the difficulty in finding precise equivalents of folk terms in different languages. English translation here does not reflect the multiple meanings of these words. Their use could vary from narrative to narrative and their meanings could overlap. For instance, the word *gniaviť* (to push, to mash) can mean ‘witchcraft’ in one story and ‘possession by the dead’ in another; the word *prekliat'* ‘to curse’ can be associated with magic, but not necessarily – it could mean just a strong wish to harm someone because of revenge. Thus, the traditional folk stories that I recorded did not reflect a coherent system of belief where each folk term had an exact meaning. Rather, those terms were used on particular occasions of meaning-making and corresponded to a given social situation. In these stories, most misfortunes were interpreted in social terms by the actions of people who interacted with the victims. It is important to notice that the intent or absence of intent of a person who was supposed to cause harm corresponded to distinct narrative templates.

The narrative template related to *unintentional* magical harm was associated with the terms *urieknutie, úrek, uštknutie, úrok, z očí prišlo*. *Urieknutie* was the most recurrent term, and it will be used here henceforth. All these words refer to the idea that a person can cause sickness by a look, verbal praise, or admiration (not necessarily expressed by words). The sickness appeared in a short time interval after an encounter with a certain person and was interpreted as its consequence. If not cured immediately, it was supposed to cause serious problems and even death, especially if babies and children were affected. However, the people who supposedly caused the sickness did not intend to harm others; their influence was described as spontaneous and was never interpreted by narrators as evil. Often the harmful effect was explained by their inborn abilities, a certain power (for instance, “strong eyes”). The English expression “the evil eye” therefore is not a satisfactory translation; I believe that it is better to translate these words as “the harmful eye”. The corresponding narrative template is the following:

- A victim meets a person who either looks at the victim or praises them.
- A victim feels sick.
- An experienced person identifies the cause of the sickness.
- Magical healing is performed.

⁹ From the Hungarian term for witch of Turkic origin, *boszorkány* (Pócs et al., 2000: e37).

In specific narratives, the generic category ‘victim’ could be represented by a narrator or someone who they knew, often children, but also animals (i.e., cattle) and plants (grain). The symptoms of sickness could be a sudden headache, sleepiness, nausea, problems with the stomach, spasms, or others. “An experienced person” could be a narrator, a person from a victim’s family, or a person with special knowledge of healing charms related to *urieknutie*. Magical healing could consist of various actions involving the use of material objects, certain herbs, or body liquids. Such actions included making “the ember water” – throwing a certain number of embers into the water; washing oneself by it and/or drinking it; spitting on a piece of clothes or urinating on it and then rubbing the forehead with it; or using the herb named *čistec* (literally ‘cleaner’, the plant called woundwort in English) – either burning the herb and breathing smoke, or preparing a potion and drinking it, or washing oneself with the potion, or combining breathing, drinking, and washing.

The diagnosis was often described as the first phase of healing, for instance: when embers in the ember water sink, or if the potion made from *čistec* after washing contains some impurities, the sickness is caused by harmful eye. Identification of the person who caused harm, albeit unintentionally, was important, because sometimes they had to contribute to the healing, as is described in the following narrative:

Mária: It happened when my grandma still lived. I have a sister who is twelve years younger. When my mom worked in the field, grandma was with us, the children. She used to tie up my sister to her back. One day then, my sister started turning her head in a strange way, she was twisting it again and again. I wanted to put her head in a normal position, but she twisted it again. And again. Grandma said that the neighbour who just visited us, aunt Ulina, must have cast a harmful eye on her. She took my sister from her back, I stayed with her, and grandma ran to the neighbour: “You visited us, you cast the harmful eye on her!” And so, they grabbed the woman’s gloves. Women used to wear gloves with a string keeping the pair together. Grandma took a piece of this string from aunt Ulina and burnt it together with herbs, and she put my sister in the smoke. I cried in the courtyard; I was afraid that my sister would die. And when aunt Ulina came to us another time, grandma put my sister into a carpet, swaddled her [laughter], and stood up in front of her. So that aunt Ulina couldn’t cast the harmful eye on her.

Researcher: *Did the neighbour want to harm her?*

Mária: No! No! One cannot help it! It is not malice. What do you think, do I have such eyes? ... Can I cast the harmful eye? ... I will tell you, my daughter lives near the forest, and any time I come visit her, or they come visit me, her children tell me: “Grandma, you cast the harmful



eye on us!” – “But my dear kids, I don’t want to harm you! I like to see you, I like you, I don’t see you often. And I don’t want to harm you, but I can’t come and not look at you!”

I documented the harmful eye belief in every locality I visited; it was a topic that people often mentioned spontaneously. Most of my informants considered it to be a natural bodily illness, often justifying their attitude by the opinion of medical doctors who supposedly believed in the natural causes of such disease.

The Slovak folk beliefs related to *intentional* magical harm are linked to the social world rather than nature. Thus, they are much more complex and diverse. Unlike the harmful eye explaining bodily illness only, the words *porobit’, zarobit’, pobosorovat’, prekliat’* and *gniaviť* are used to explain various types of misfortune: illness and/or death, accidents, loss of property, or broken relationships. These themes produce different narrative templates. For this reason, here I will consider only stories about an illness which may result in death. The corresponding narrative template is the following:

- A victim falls ill and may die.
- A victim or their relatives look for the causes of misfortune.
- They indicate an attacker and/or harmful magical means, often with the help of an experienced person.
- They perform corrective actions.

Similarly to the template of the harmful eye, the generic category ‘victim’ here could be represented by a narrator, someone who they knew, or an animal; but also by people who lived in the village long ago (which is rare in the harmful eye stories). Importantly, many tales were about magical harm done to cattle – one of the basic economic articles of the household in rural areas in Slovakia until the mid-20th century. In such stories, magical harm is typically done by some material objects an attacker has put in the barn, for example:

We had very nice cattle, we had it nice... But every year, a cow or a calf died, something always died. When this continued for three or four years, my mother told us: “You know what, dig under the bottom of the barn, take a look if you have something there”. And we dug up everything, threw it out, but we didn’t find anything really. But then, the cattle stopped dying. Was that true, what do I know? It stopped, I know that. Someone did it. Well, people could wish you harm, you know.

The attacker is frequently a victim’s neighbour, often a relative, but they also could be a person with inborn supernatural power (in western Slovakia such a person is usually called *bosorka/bosorák* – a female witch/a male witch). Their identification was an answer to the question: “*Who did it to me, and why?*” Thus, the story is always about

negative aspects of social relationships – conflicts, envy, revenge, and so on. Magical harm can be done by various means. For instance, a witch can do it by her supernatural power; a neighbour or a relative performs magic, often involving material objects (see also Jerotijević, 2010). Identification of magical objects is a part of corrective actions, which can include magical healing, but not necessarily. Many stories also talk about the victim doing counter-magic to the attacker, often with the help of an experienced person. Such a person can be a member of the family but also a person with inborn supernatural abilities who can heal, and also harm people. In the past, there were several villages in western Slovakia and Moravia where people travelled to meet such experts. In my material, the village Hrozenkov was often mentioned. The female experts on magic who lived there were called *bohyně* (plural, in singular *bohyně*, from *bohovat'* 'to cast a spell with the name of God, *boh*¹⁰), *vedomkyne* (plural, in singular *vedomkyňa*, from *vedieť* 'to know'), or *veštkyne* (plural, in singular *veštkyňa*, from *veštit'* 'to perform divination'). Their "magical services" included divination and healing:

It has also been said that people were doing sorcery [porobili], and some people were arguing that this was true. And someone would say that it was not true. But one old woman, who has already died, had a neighbour. And the woman's husband died. And she got sick... And when she was thinking about it all one night, she concluded that their neighbour cast a spell on them [pobosorovala]. So she went to Hrozenkov. She arrived there and she saw that woman on the water [surface], in a kind of water pool. I don't know, I've never been there in my life, I am just telling you what I heard. There she was, that neighbour who wanted to cast a spell [porobit'], appearing on the water. She put something under a wooden ladder at the riverbank where they often went. The woman didn't overstep it, but her husband did. And then he died. Yes. Yes, yes. They went to the river, and there they found some rags buried. Yes, they found it there and then I guess they removed them; I don't know. Her husband died, and she died soon afterwards.

However, *bohyně* could also perform black magic:

When I worked with other women at the cooperative farm, one woman, who was even younger than me, was threatening us: "I will go to

¹⁰ The word *bohyně* in Slovak means 'goddess'. As a folk term in my data it has a different meaning, although it refers to the divine realm through the root *boh* (God/god). Dobšovičová Pintířová (2016: 17) states that during her research on this phenomenon in Moravia she asked people why *bohyně* (plural of *bohyně*) are called that. The answer was: "*Protože bohujú, vyzývajú Boha*" ("Because they *bohujú*, invoke God"). My informants could not explain the etymology of the word *bohyně*, but they never ascribed any divine characteristics to *bohyně*.



Hrozenkov, I will cast a spell on you all there [zarobím vám všetkým]!” Because they laughed at her and said she had slept with her uncle and another man. They told her: “Tell us, Anča, did you sleep with him too, that musician? They both slept at your house.” And she said: “Just you wait, I’ll go to Hrozenkov!” The two women spreading the rumours didn’t even eat their lunch, they were frightened terribly, and in the afternoon they were weak and infirm. They asked her to forgive them, in fact.

The meanings of the terms corresponding to the intentional magical harm overlap. For example, the word *pobosorovat’* usually means a harmful influence of a person endowed by inborn supernatural power (*bosorka*, a witch); the word *porobit’* usually refers to magic which is performed by a neighbour who is not supposed to have inborn supernatural abilities; and the word *gniavit’* typically denotes a negative experience during sleep which could be caused either by people or by revenants. However, the words *porobit’*, *pobosorovat’* and *gniavit’* could be used as synonyms in the same narrative:

When my brother-in-law was single, he lived in a house which belonged to a strange woman and her husband. He’d always been amazed that when the clock struck midnight, she would start screaming, yelling that something was strangling her. When they came to her: “And what is wrong with you? What is wrong with you?” – “Something is behind me. Something suffocates me, something pushes me” [gniavi]. But when those guys looked behind her, they didn’t see anything! They took something from the house, I don’t even know what, and they went to Žitkov, to a bohyňa. She told them: “When you go to bed you will meet a woman. That woman will go towards you. She will meet you. There is something in each corner of her duvet.” She said that the two neighbours were very angry at each other; one was a monster, and the other was, too. When they left the bohyňa they really met their neighbour. Opening her duvet, they found something in the corners. Just like the bohyňa said. They threw it out and the woman was no longer choking. It was the two neighbours, you see, one did magic on the other – cast a spell on her [porobila, pobosorovala]. This is what they have told me many times.

It appears that the traditional terms as such are only part of remembering stories about magical harm resulting in illness: people employ them when they mediate their experience, and narrative templates as part of memory are behind this process of mediation. The next part of the paper will explore in what way traditional terms are incorporated into narratives told by Peter and members of his group.

Magical healing and energy

Peter's circle was gradually formed on the basis of his personal contacts. It consisted of six regular members, including Peter (two men and four women, at that time aged between 22 and 35, students and college graduates). Three members of Peter's circle were initially learning core shamanism at FSS seminars, and Peter himself participated in two workshops on core shamanism. But then they started practising the Mongolian version of shamanism together with Peter who was initiated into this in 1994, when he had already been practising astral journeys for several years. The members of Peter's group claimed that he had the reputation of being a recognized expert in esotericism and shamanism, as he began his spiritual "career" in the early 1990s. He also was represented as a person with special spiritual capacity, including being able to see the aura and energy (for more about Peter and his circle see Bužeková, 2012, 2019).

The members of Peter's circle, as well as most of my informants in FSS circles, stated that they were not religious, although they used such terms as "God", "deity", "sacred", or "shrine". They saw shamanism as a practical spiritual path that offered a specific way of healing (considered to be compatible with any religion). The shamanic healing takes place during the ritual of a shamanic journey to the "other reality", to the world of spirits, involving altered states of consciousness (henceforth ASC).¹¹ As I argued elsewhere (Bužeková, 2019, 2020), my informants perceived ASC as a channel to the universal spiritual energy. This concept belongs to the most important notions of neo-shamanism and other spiritual trends and serves as a linguistic bridge between science and spirituality, legitimizing alternative practices by using the language of science (Keshet, 2009, 2011; see also Lindquist, 2001). In Peter's circle, the tendency to explain misfortunes and illnesses in scientific terms was strong because in the past he worked in health care and claimed that this practice improved his expertise, as he could combine biomedical knowledge with "seeing" energy (Bužeková, 2009).¹²

Shamanism was not Peter's primary activity: for him, it was only one set of useful spiritual techniques. He was involved rather in energetic healing through astral travelling, which he regarded as a different instrument in comparison to shamanism. He also used his alleged special abilities (for instance, seeing the aura) to make more precise diagnoses and more effective healing:

Peter: I used to work for an internet portal on numerology and everyone there called me a shaman, although I was not a shaman at that time. No one was interested in the techniques I used, but I was able

¹¹ For more about shamanic practices in Bratislava see Bužeková, 2012, 2017.

¹² In this text, I concentrate on shamans' interpretation of misfortune and the corresponding healing techniques and do not interpret shamanic practices in terms of a new religious movement.



to treat a person or an animal, and also to influence the environment, which actually captures all the things that a shaman should do. So, it somehow became my name. I usually intervene three times, three to five times, no more is needed. Because I'm not healing the symptoms, I'm dealing with the source. Because the source is not always directly in the body, it is often connected to the aura.

Researcher: *Do you see the aura?*

Peter: *Yes. As a child, I had friends – purple, pink, blue and red spheres. My favourite leisure activity was talking to them under a bed, I was covered with a blanket. Let's just say I wasn't completely normal, at least not in the common sense of the word. I see it as it is coloured, it is not something like a cloud, you can see it from the front and from everywhere.*

Apart from the members of his circle, Peter helped other people. His clients found him through personal contacts or via the internet; he did not advertise himself. According to him, he could heal from distance and did not need to know a patient personally. Most of the problems he solved were interpreted in terms of energy. The causes of illness were represented in two basic kinds of destructive energetic attacks: (1) contaminating a victim's body by negative energy; and (2) draining energy away from a victim (*cucat* 'to suck the energy out'¹³). Both types of energetic attacks can be intentional, but "sucking the energy out" can be unintentional. Both types refer to a link between the attacker and victim (for instance, talking, touching, contact with material objects, etc.). Remarkably, in his stories about such attacks, Peter used traditional terms *urieknutie* (the harmful eye) and *kliatba/preklatie* (curse):

Peter: *I heal with my own energy when needed, but I tend to heal urieknutie and preklatie through astral travelling. I would put it this way: there are things that are named differently, and yet they are the same techniques that were used in the past. Shamanism is specific in some things, but in a way, it is the same as folklore, folk beliefs, and such things. I know that urieknutie is an energetic attack. I know that it is usually done by someone who had no idea they did it. They call it urieknutie, but in fact, when a person needs energy, they often take it from another person. And, actually, when they've done it once, they've made a channel. And they can do it any time. And that other person, of course, feels weak and, over time, becomes depleted, but [the first person] keeps*

¹³ The words *cucat*, *vyciavať* have several meanings in Slovak and can be understood as 'to deprive someone of strength, to exhaust someone' in addition to sucking itself.

taking, and so [the other person] becomes burned out. Thus, washing by čistec actually helps, because washing interrupts the connection. But on the other hand, it can also be removed in other ways.

Researcher: *Do people come to you with such problems? With urieknutie?*

Peter: *Mostly.*

Researcher: *Is it a physical illness?*

Peter: *It is not. Energy attacks are eliminated, and the person is fine within two weeks. Kliatba, on the other hand, is intentional and special, and it is not always possible to remove it. The person can be treated, but the source cannot be found. It can be kliatba coming from a generation back, or two, or three, that is, ancestral, and therefore it cannot be removed. Shamanism, for example, helps a lot with this. Usually, the cause is losing a piece of soul. It is brought back in, and its return often helps the person.*

As we can see, Peter does not see *urieknutie* as a bodily illness – which differs from the meaning of this word in folk tales; and he employs the notion of energy to explain the phenomenon. But the difference between *urieknutie* and *kliatba* in Peter’s eyes is the same as in folk tales – *urieknutie* is unintentional and *kliatba* is intentional. His accounts of these two notions corresponded to the narrative templates of unintentional and intentional magical harm in folk tales – and, again, incorporated the concept of energy in his explanation. For example, Peter describes the illness of his friend’s child as follows:

Recently I took care of her little son. I’ve been there four times. The little one had digestive problems. It was a newborn, and he could neither poop nor eat. Everything went out, and when he got something in, it didn’t go out. So, either the problem was that everything went out or everything remained inside. I did an energy treatment. His intestines, both liver and stomach, were damaged. The first thing that was needed was to adjust the upper exit, to explicitly lock it. It was caused by kliatba coming from her mother-in-law, his own grandmother, who thought that the woman stole her son. The little one was fine until grandma’s first visit, then it started, and then it wouldn’t end. And now he manages to defend himself, the organism is already strong, he would not let it go in. Well, we had to solve it somehow. It is difficult to find the right amulets for small children. You can have a red ribbon, or you can do it by putting a knife under the cot, but they have cats. When there are cats in a household, I cannot hang knives under the cot. Generally, the knife is directed towards the door, and it works by severing those energy connections. Sharp points



and edges radiate negative energy, so it creates a field in the direction where the knife is turned. That is why the knife should be always directed to the door, to repel the energy.

Thus, this specific narrative follows the narrative template of intentional magical harm: a victim falls ill and may die – a victim or their relatives look for the causes of misfortune – they indicate an attacker and/or harmful magical means, often with the help of an experienced person – they perform corrective actions. The category of ‘experienced person’ in Peter’s narratives was represented by the narrator, by Peter himself. It should also be said that Peter’s grandmother was a local healer, a herbalist who lived in a village in western Slovakia. Thus, Peter’s knowledge of folk terms can be traced back to the older generations of his family.

Other members of Peter’s circle also provided narratives about “sucking the energy out”, which could be unintentional or intentional. In the following specific narrative, Mira talks about a private session when Nora, who had previously participated in FSS events, “sucked the energy out of” others during the shamanic session:

It is unpleasant to be exposed to such things. We dealt with Nora there, right? She sucked the energy out of the whole group, indeed... There was a demonstration of a shamanic technique – you take a rough stone, ask a question, and look for answers there... Well, Rudo asked who wanted to be a volunteer... So, Nora said: “I do!” They practiced for about half an hour, and perhaps after fifteen minutes we all were hurting, and we all fell asleep. That was terrible... Peter stopped her by cutting the connection, but others were not able to so he helped them.

Another member of the group, Leo, described intentional harm done by his own grandmother, who was supposed to have “her own black magic.” She used it not only to cure her diabetes but to harm her descendants by “sucking the energy out” of them or cursing them (*preklínat*). Leo emphasized that he and his mother were able to defend themselves by means of shamanic techniques:

Leo: *Yes, black magic [čierna mágia]. When you visit her, she sucks the energy out of you as much as she can, and she curses you.*

Researcher: *How did you feel it?*

Leo: *Well, you leave and you’re completely exhausted, or you tell her things that you didn’t want to. She starts asking questions and you say things that you shouldn’t tell her, things that we promised not to tell her, and she always manages to extract everything out of everyone. And you go away completely empty, spent, you’re not able to do anything all*

day long. And she curses people [posiela kliatbu]. But we've already discovered how to defend ourselves, so it somehow doesn't work with us. I've got animals,¹⁴ they automatically attack her. When it didn't work with us, she started to curse others in our family. Peter said that there are always enough resources in the family. Now she's cursing my mom's husband. He is ill, he has a urinary tract inflammation, and he has been taking strong antibiotics for three weeks. He is trying to cure it, he is a doctor and yet he is not able to cure himself. He says he got it from the hospital, but he didn't get it from there because it started when she stopped cursing us and started cursing him. She started telling me and my mum that we were bastards. My brother is well because he is stupid and lets her do it. Since we began to defend ourselves and her curses didn't work, I and my mom became bastards. She found out that something was wrong, that it wasn't working, that it was coming back to her. Her magic, I guess, came from the Jews. Because during the war they hid a Jew in Kubín. And somehow, they talked with him about what to do and how to do it, and he probably trained them because even her mother knew such things. But it might not only be the Jews – up there, in Orava, people still do it.

As we can see, Leo interprets folk concepts in terms of energy and also employs shamanic terms (power animals). He traces the origins of his grandmother's abilities to tradition – either Jewish or folk tradition of the Orava region situated in northern Slovakia. In general, in Peter's circle, the knowledge of magic was represented as part of tradition(s) with ancient roots. Slovak, or rather Slavic tradition in this context was an important source. But when it came to specific cases, Peter referred to local context and local concepts, invariably interpreting them in terms of spiritual energy, and sometimes linking them to shamanic terms. For example, in the following specific narrative he presents a story about Nela who wanted to be a witch (*bosorka*):

There is a lot of magic in Myjava.¹⁵ After all, Nela bought that house there because it was a witch's [bosorka] house. Nela is casting spells [robí čarovanie], she is doing the lower magic. She has clients, they come to her when they have a problem. Or when they want to hurt someone. She is concerned with how to create some potions and similar things, usually she uses hair and the like. I don't like it very much; I don't like it. But it

¹⁴ A shaman is supposed to have power animals – allies who help them in their spiritual as well as mundane life. To find an ally, a shaman travels to the Underworld, to the roots of the world tree. The number of allies is not limited.

¹⁵ A region in western Slovakia, bordering the Czech Republic.



is her business. ... Actually, she was my target once, whom I was asked to destroy. She wasn't doing these things then. Her ex-boyfriend came to me and told me that his wife did not want to give him a son and was blocking his property. I told him that I was not a killer or something like that. But he wanted to solve the problem because he thought someone was attacking him. So, I made an energetic field around him and cleared the space around him. And after three years, I met Nela. That was the only time I was in contact with a person who I was originally supposed to work against. But I did not do it, I never do it, the potential attacker means nothing to me. I just build a [energetic] wall, or I send some animals to guard a victim. Thus, I just defend, I do not attack.

Peter says that he is solving problems mostly by using his own energy. The following specific narrative, again, follows the narrative template of intentional harm:

Zuza is a girl who was on a shamanic course with us, when she was seventeen years old. She had problems at home, and she solved them by marrying a boy whom she did not like, just to get away from home. And now she is complaining, and now she wants to deal with it because she is losing energy and she is getting weak. She came to me, and I saw that her husband is doing black magic [porobil]. He attacks her, he compels her into things she doesn't want. When solving problems like that, I spend my own energy. Let's just say it is not a problem for me to do it when someone has a problem, but most people who come to me don't have a real problem. They just have problems in their heads.

Thus, it can be concluded that Peter's narratives about spiritual healing are built upon narrative templates of unintentional and intentional magical harm. Although Peter and members of his circle are supposed to practise traditions with foreign roots – Mongolian shamanism, astral travelling, energetic healing – they use folk concepts that are part of their native folk tradition. The notion of energy serves them as a bridge between different discourses. Hence, on particular occasions of meaning-making, Peter and other shamans draw on the folk tradition to interpret illnesses and spiritual healing.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to point out that memory mechanisms behind the incorporation of folk beliefs into a spiritual worldview need closer attention. In this regard, the investigation of traditional narratives appears as a path worth following. I argue that tradition provides

spiritual seekers with suitable narrative templates related to illness and magical harm. In the process of mediating their experience, urban shamans create a specific amalgam of traditional beliefs and alternative spiritual ideas, glued together by the notion of energy. This concept bridges shamanic and scientific discourses. Thus, in the eyes of educated people, it legitimizes spiritual healing and also justifies their native tradition.

Many neo-shamanic practices are wrapped in the language of science; the neo-shamanic texts emphasise that “in the age of science, belief and faith have become irrelevant” and encourage spiritual seekers to retain “intelligent scepticism and a critical mind” (Cook, Hawk, 1992: frontispiece). Neo-shamanism resonates with scientific thinking also by experimenting with various techniques, and by the absence of a doctrine obligatory for all practitioners: “In contrast to spiritual groups that insult the intelligence of educated people by their adherence to rigid spiritual standards, neo-shamanism does not impose any doctrinal requirements. It attracts people by its loose structure catered to highly individualised practices” (Znamenski, 2004: xiii). However, despite a seemingly unlimited variety of available spiritual paths, practitioners’ choice of healing techniques and their explanation is restricted by their cultural knowledge. Therefore, local traditions, including supernatural folk beliefs, play an important role in adapting neo-shamanism to specific cultural conditions. The interpretation of tradition in spiritual terms (and vice versa) supports the practitioners’ cultural identity, and at the same time places their culture in the context of universal human knowledge.

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Komunikacija med tradicijami: pripovedni obrazci magičnega zdravljenja v urbanem šamanizmu

Sodobne raziskave so pokazale, da se v globaliziranem svetu zdravilne prakse, ki izvirajo v različnih kulturnih tradicijah, združujejo in preoblikujejo v sinkretične oblike. Magija pri tem nastopa kot del celostnih svetovnih nazorov, povezanih z duhovnim razvojem; da bi jo legitimirali, praktiki pogosto uporabljajo znanstvene izraze. Proces mešanja tradicij je zapleten in odvisen od konkretnega kulturnega okolja, v katerem lahko lokalna verovanja in prakse sooblikujejo nove zdravilne sisteme. V članku je obravnavan primer uporabe slovaške tradicije v okviru globalnega duhovnega gibanja neošamanizma.

Neošamanistično gibanje, ki temelji na ponovni interpretaciji tradicionalnih zdravilnih praks iz različnih kultur, se je pojavilo v zgodnjih 70. letih 20. stoletja in je postajalo zaradi številnih političnih in intelektualnih teženj v zahodnih družbah vse pomembnejše. V globalnem kontekstu se praktiki neošamanizma lahko oprejo na katero koli tradicijo duhovnega zdravljenja, saj naj bi vse imele skupne korenine v davni preteklosti. Ta pogled se nanaša na starodavne korenine človeštva, pa tudi na lokalna ljudska verovanja in prakse duhovne dediščine. Avtorica trdi, da je za razumevanje kontekstualizacije neošamanizma v lokalnem okviru potrebno neošamanizem raziskati kot kompleksen proces, ki temelji na pomnjenju magičnih konceptov. Z drugimi besedami, pri sprejemanju novih duhovnih konceptov ima pomembno vlogo prej pridobljeno kulturno znanje, to znanje pa vključuje tako domače ljudsko izročilo kot znanstvene razlage, ki jih ljudje pridobijo z izobrazbo.

Avtorica je med letoma 2010 in 2012 etnografsko raziskovala, kako je tradicionalne slovaške ljudske koncepte uporabljala skupina, zbrana okoli šaman-skega zdravilca iz Bratislave. Za razlago mehanizmov, ki so v ozadju procesa združevanja slovaških tradicionalnih in neošamanskih konceptov, uporablja koncept tradicije kot komunikacije in teorijo o pripovedi kot vrsti kulturnega orodja oziroma posredniškem sredstvu. Dokazuje, da urbani šamani v pripovedih o magičnem škodovanju in magičnem zdravljenju uporabljajo pripovedne obrazce, poznane v slovaških tradicionalnih razlagalnih pripovedih o nesreči. Ob posredovanju svojih izkušenj urbani šamani ustvarjajo specifičen amalgam tradicionalnih verovanj in alternativnih duhovnih idej, ki jih povezuje pojem energije. Ta poveže šamanske in znanstvene diskurze, s čimer v obeh izobraženih ljudi legitimira duhovno zdravljenje in izvorno domačo tradicijo.

Avtorica ugotavlja, da si kljub navidezno neomejeni raznovrstnosti razpoložljivih poti do duhovnosti udeleženci izbirajo in razlagajo tehnike magičnega zdravljenja s svojim kulturnim znanjem. Zato imajo lokalne tradicije, vključno z ljudskimi verovanji v nadnaravno, pomembno vlogo pri prilagajanju neošamanizma

lokalnim kulturnim razmeram. Razlaga tradicije z duhovnostjo (in nasprotno) podpira kulturno identiteto udeležencev in hkrati njihovo kulturo postavlja v kontekst univerzalnega človeškega znanja.

“This Is Not Your Santa”: Roma Children Visualize Christmas

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By discussing visualizations of Christmas by Hungarian children, I integrate children’s drawings and ideas about the holiday as they relate to education, authorship, and ways in which the Roma view the world. While images and figures of the traditional holiday appear as standard tropes, interpretations of the respective drawings provide insights into the children’s perceptions of – and wishes and aspirations for Christmas. Their images highlight anthropologically challenging socio-economic, educational, and familial aspects of Roma culture.

▪ **Keywords:** education, Roma, children, drawing, Christmas holiday

V razpravi o vizualizacijah božiča med otroki na Madžarskem povežujem otroške risbe in ideje o prazniku z izobraževanjem, avtorstvom in načini, kako Romi vidijo svet. Medtem ko se podobe in figure tradicionalnega praznika kažejo kot standardni tropi, dajejo interpretacije posamičnih risb vpogled v otroško dojemanje božiča ter z njim povezane želje in hotenja. Podobe božiča razkrivajo antropološko zahtevne družbeno-ekonomske, izobraževalne in družinske vidike romske kulture.

▪ **Ključne besede:** izobraževanje, Romi, otroci, risanje, božič

Introduction: Children and their artwork

Recently, anthropologists Smørholm and Simonsen argue that “children are the best informants on their own lives, and their abilities to interpret, express, and communicate their lived experiences should not be underestimated” (2017: 381). Cross-cultural and anthropological analyses also highlight some of the cultural specificities and patterns of children’s drawing (Afonso, Ramos, 2004; Baluch et al., 2017; Gernhardt, Rübelling, Keller, 2013; Kuschnir, 2016; Punch, 2016; Stokrocki, 1994). Since the late 19th century, an understanding of children’s artwork has been a constant source of revelation and consequential difficulty facing educators, artists, and psychologists. In Germany and Hungary, children’s art exhibits were mounted in 1897 and 1903 respectively (Claus, 1901; Nagy, 1905). One of the first scholars to provide a highly original contribution to the field was the Norwegian educator and psychologist Helga Eng, whose 1926 study concerned her niece’s drawings from the age of 10 months to 8 years, translated and published in English in 1931 (Eng, 2002). However, it was not until two decades later that the first trained Hungarian psychologist ventured to discuss drawings of school children: this was Julianna Sárany (1912–1983), whose Ph.D. dissertation elevated the subject to a scholarly standard (Sárany, 1937). Despite this century-long interest in the

drawings of children, the “discovery” of Roma visual art can be traced back to the 1970s, when paintings were shown to the public by journalists, ethnographers, and art historians (Ribó Pongrácz, 2001). At that time, these were labeled “naïve artists” or “folk artists”, since they often lacked formal artistic education and even proper schooling (Bánszky, 1984; Daróczi, Karsai, 1979; Daróczi, Kerékgyártó, 1989). The democratization of the international art world gradually opened the way for East European Roma artists, whose paintings are now regularly exhibited in European museums and galleries (Illés, 2018; Junghouse, Székely, 2006). While working with Roma children, one researcher found individual differences in the artwork, and not surprisingly, but somewhat stereotypically, she interpreted their drawings as polysemic projections of Roma children’s inner conflicts anchored to their tendency to visualize often opposing feelings of fear and hope, aggression, and defensiveness (Hortoványi, 2020: 218).

By viewing the artwork of Roma elementary school children in a rural town in Hungary, my aim is to understand how these youngsters’ visual competency reflects their ideas and self-understanding about the various characters and elements of Christmas.¹ My initial idea was that, since it is the most commercialized and internationally mediatized holiday of the year, children would have no difficulty in depicting Christmas and its main protagonists – Santa, Rudolf, Christ, the Krampus, angel, the Christmas tree – or even the manger scene of the nativity play. As I intend to demonstrate, the results of this extra-curricular ethnography at home exercise proved otherwise, suggesting instead that some children had little knowledge of a Krampus image and were baffled by depicting reindeer, while others stressed their congenial family stories and relied on Roma religiosity in contributing their own memories or aspirations.

Roma children beyond the classroom

As is well known throughout Europe, Romani families have been ghettoized for most of their history and thus live apart from the majority of inhabitants of any towns in separate sections of settlements; the Roma in Hungary are no exception (Kemény, 2005; Stewart, 1997; Szuhay, 1999). National statistics suggest that some 10 percent of Hungary’s population belong to the Roma minority, but only about one-third of them self-identify as Roma (Országgyűlés Hivatala, 2021). Since the collapse of the communist state, opportunities for Roma families to secure paid work have decreased dramatically; since the 2010s, more than 50 percent of Roma men have been unemployed, and this figure rises to nearly 80 percent among Roma women (Papp, 2021: 244–245). Their second-class status is further exacerbated by the meager social benefits provided by the state and the work-program assistance to which they are entitled. In

¹ I describe the town and the local Roma community in detail elsewhere (Kürti, 2019).

terms of educational advancement, data compiled by the EU present a distressing picture: “Only half (53 percent) of Roma children between the ages of 4 and 6 (or the starting age of compulsory primary education) participate in early childhood education [...] on average, 18 percent of Roma aged between 6 and 24 attend an educational level lower than that corresponding to their age, and the share of Roma early school-leavers is disproportionately high compared with the general EU population” (Lecerf, 2022: 2–3; cf. also European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2018: 10–11). Since the fall of communism in 1990, the number of private and religious schools has multiplied, but this by no means offers a viable solution to the majority-minority segregation affecting Roma children (Kovats, 2001: 342; OECD, 2012: 17).

These international statistics are even more obvious when viewed in tandem with national educational policy concerning the classification of school children with learning difficulties. As it turns out, about 30 percent of Roma pupils in Hungary have been classified by the educational system as children having difficulty with comprehension and learning, a figure roughly corresponding to the national average (Farkas, 1994; Forray, Hegedűs, 1991; Havas, Kemény, Liskó, 2001; Szabolcs, 2007). All Roma children selected for the project also belonged to social categories with specific learning disorders (SLD) and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD. These classifications, which Gábor Eröss calls “medicalization” and “psychologization” of “learning disabilities” and “behavioral disorders” (2012: 177), have unfailingly been linked not only to parents’ lack of basic education, unemployed status, and extreme poverty on the fringes of Hungarian society but to the one-sided governmental educational policies (Farkas, 2007; Plainer, 2021; Van den Bogaert, 2019; Zsigó, 2022).

In contrast to such previous studies, I had the opportunity to continue my previous anthropological project “at home” (Kürti, Skalnik, 2009) by devising an ethnographic field project (Sarroub, Nicholas, 2021) when the director of the community health center approached me to teach in an after-school voluntary educational program with Roma children in a medium-sized rural town of 11,000 people with roughly 10 percent of Roma inhabitants.² Since state schools are majority spaces considered by psychologists and critical educators to be limiting and frustrating for minority Roma children (Alexiadou, 2017; Kertesi, Kézdi, 2014; Obrovská, 2018), it became imperative to try to distance children from the institutional school context by providing them with a real sense of autonomy or agency during the visual exercises. In contrast to Kuo, however, who allowed Roma children in a Romanian town to improvise and draw freely (Kuo,

² I have been conducting fieldwork among local Roma since early 2000. As usual in data collecting, I started with the elderly, and continued with their offspring; those children twenty years ago now are all adults with their own families. I was fortunate because many of the families live only a few hundred meters from my house, and thus daily contact was assured. I conducted interviews, photo-elicitation, and video documentaries often returning to the same families for more data and clarification of personal histories, concepts, and more. I have not, however, included those Roma who settled in the town recently, only arriving from Romania since joining the EU.

2015, 2020), I selected a more culturally specific and informal premise by focusing on a single theme, the Christmas holiday.

Since this was a European Union-funded limited-scope project at the end of 2021, young social workers of the community health compound volunteered, for a modest commission, to work with Roma children as part of their regular jobs.³ None of the social workers involved with the project belonged to the Roma minority however; indeed, there were no Roma educators available in the town or even in the nearby city, even though the social workers were determined to include at least one. When I volunteered to join the educators, I immediately realized the daunting task of working with Roma children whose parents did not fully wish to participate in the project. Unequivocally, Roma parents (primarily women) take their children home immediately after the end of classes, resulting in almost 90 percent of Roma children missing special and voluntary educational activities offered by the school. One reason for this has to do with the ubiquitous racism and anti-Roma attitudes widespread not only in segregated schools in Hungary as elsewhere in Europe but on the streets, in the labor market and social services, and in the media (Doytcheva, 2016; Janko Spreizer, 2020; Rorke, 2021). Unfortunately, this action not only hinders children's educational advancement and opportunity to learn special skills but also further aggravates strained majority-minority relations while, at the same time, reinforcing greater ghettoization. Local Roma leaders not only seem disinterested but also eschew direct involvement in school politics, perhaps because of their traditionally divided kinship structure that favors extended family relations rather than the neighborhood or larger ethnonational bonding, in addition to the "double bind" phenomenon – stereotyped popular images and governmental ethnicization of Roma that offer no alternative understandings of Roma identity, described by Peter Vermeersch with regard to dysfunctional national Roma political representation (Vermeersch, 2007: 181). Even the special after-school educational programs initiated by various humanitarian NGOs in Hungary, so prevalent during the 1990s and early years of 2000 and described by Timmer (2010), never took root in the countryside or in the town itself.

With regard to the two months-long after-school art project, only those pupils and their parents were selected to take part who willingly expressed their participation in the project. Initially, thirty children between the ages of eight and fourteen were admitted, but after the first two weeks, all eighth graders left the project. By the beginning of December, attendance dropped to twenty-two children, most of them between the ages of eight and twelve. For the project, we were able to use the local Roma community center, a building that had been reconstructed with European Union financing. My co-workers (three social workers from the municipal health center) and I especially

³ Szegregált területen élők társadalmi együttműködését erősítő helyi szintű komplex programok Lajosmizsén (Local-level complex programmes to strengthen social cooperation among people living in segregated areas in Lajosmizse); TOP-5.2.1, BK1-2015-00001.

welcomed the availability of the building as the spacious room and onsite technical support made our task easy. For my part, I decided against smartphones – about a third of the twelve-to-thirteen-year-old children possessed them – mainly because the children used them in their free time to listen to music, chat with their friends, and view Tik-Tok clips.⁴ After my insistence on this point during the initial classes, this project gained acceptance by the Roma pupils who were willing and eager to become partners in cheerful and entertaining exercises.

Like Roma children elsewhere in Europe, for example in Turkey (Cicekler, Aral, 2020), England (Matras, Leggio, Steel, 2015), Spain (Blasco, 2016), and Romania (Cosmas, Cuso, Momanu, 2010), Hungarian children receive elementary school education; visual learning and drawing, in particular, were not novel to Hungarian Roma pupils in the project; they had already learned to draw in school, many in kindergarten, which considerably strengthened manual dexterity, creativity, and drawing skills. There is an important proviso: in Hungarian elementary schools, specialized sports or art classes are offered mostly after regular classes in the afternoon, a time when most Roma children have already been picked up by their mothers and taken home. No doubt most enjoyed this new artistic opportunity to express themselves freely in any way they wished by using as many kinds of tools, colors, and subjects as they wished. Roma children felt relaxed and enjoyed themselves throughout the afternoon session. The noise level was high at first, but, as the project progressed, the children became more reserved, paying attention to the assignment. I selected the Christmas holiday season as a topic because we started in November and followed in the first half of December but, more importantly, I felt that a more focused approach would challenge and require them to channel their ideas and cultural associations of their lives around a single theme.

Roma children begin to draw...

I devised exercises according to age and gender composition, starting with general discussions about the holiday season, St. Nicholas Day (December 6), and following up with clips and short films, music, and stories about Christmas. In the wake of post-1990 Americanization, globalization, and fully entering the global capitalist market and international commercial culture, in Hungary, the two holidays slowly merged into a single three-week holiday season (Kürti, 2020). I explained that the idea was for them to express themselves freely with images and concepts that come to mind. I decided to exclude selfies and photos, fetish objects children tend to overuse. I suggested that

⁴ By using their mobile phones, participatory photography (Lorenz-Meyer, 2022) would have been another way to conduct a similar visual project. However, since only a few older children possessed mobile phones, I dropped this possibility. For ethnographic examples of using visual anthropology methods with children, see Turk Niskač (2013).

drawing was less labor-intensive than painting; children could sit around four large tables freely and select any type of material – graphite pencils, crayons, and pens. They were also happy with the freedom to use as many A4 papers as they wished, together with erasers. My experience was that most of the children simply discarded the first attempts they did not like or in which they considered images to be inadequate or aesthetically unacceptable.⁵

As it turned out, to depict their own images of the holiday season was an entirely new idea to them. Smaller children were less certain, as one eight-year-old girl asked: *“How can I draw Christmas?”* Before I could answer, a boy slightly older offered help: *“Just draw a Christmas tree or Santa Claus.”* Seeing their first attempts, and the discarded scribbles, I offered some ideas that they might draw. I listed figures of stereotypical images (Santa Claus, Krampus, Angel, Jesus, reindeer), objects (Christmas tree, gifts, candles, stars, candy, accouterments, the nativity), and actions associated with the holiday season (snow, snowman, sled-riding, special food, family gathering). This turned out to be less helpful, as most children drew only a limited range of images, obviously what they perceived to be important. Those less sure of their artistic capabilities looked to their peers for ideas and help; only one ten-year-old boy drew Christian religious objects, such as a cross, shepherd’s staff, and a crown – for him, non-anthropomorphic representation stood for spirituality and God Almighty. This is somewhat similar to the example of anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic representations in the drawings of Christian and Sunni Muslim children in Sweden (Gülec, 2021).

After about an hour, we collected the drawings from each child and continued with open-ended as well as semi-structured interviews focusing on selected drawings. About three-quarters of the drawings were set aside as doodling and unfinished attempts, or because children decided to scrap or destroy them (*“I am not happy with this one”*, or *“That’s really awful, I didn’t know what to do”*, were common decisions on their part). Their answers to our questions were grouped with the main types of drawings: Santa Claus, angels, Christmas tree, reindeer, Krampus, and related religious objects, resulting in about 100 drawings by the end of the project. At the initial stage, younger children were interested only in scribbling just for sensory enjoyment and the independence of playful hand movements. It was for many a free exercise, an emotional release especially since, in the classrooms, they are restricted by their teachers and the subject matter. It also became clear to me that the older ones, those between the ages of thirteen and fourteen, were less enthusiastic about drawing. While some children needed coaching because they were unsure of how to begin, others relied on help. Giving praise and encouraging their ideas to be put on paper, my co-workers and I noticed that the process facilitated increasing social interaction among pupils who were

⁵ For depicting images of beauty and ugliness among Roma and non-Roma Hungarian and American adolescents, see Kárpáti and Kay (2013).

timid at first. Even though they knew each other – they were from the same minority community, some even relatives, and many came from the same school classes – the exercise presented new challenges. The first spontaneous drawings were made with playful lines and chaotic scrawls. Sometimes Santa’s face was represented with unsure contours and indifferent proportions – for example, eyes only indicated by dots, with missing body parts, such as ears. I asked a girl if she saw this as a problem, and her answer was plain: “Ears are not important, Santa knows everything.”



Figure 1: Santa Claus drawings.

I should note, however, that aside from the positive images of Christmas figures, Santa's mischievous associate, the Krampus, morphed early on into his original devil-like personage, the opposite of an angel, an enduring image association based on Christian Apocrypha. In fact, 19th-century German-Austrian Christmas postcards clearly identify the Krampus as the devil (Rest, Seiser, 2016; Ridenour, 2016). Oddly, for Roma children, Krampus possesses even more lurid stylistic characteristics fashioned after horror images taken from films and television cartoons. Quite extraordinarily, the Roma Krampus' mask-like faces parallel those used in recent Austrian wild Krampus revivals, unique Christmas holiday events with which Roma children clearly are not acquainted. When I asked one twelve-year-old about his fierce-looking Krampus, he was not shy about offering his impression: "*The Krampus is not nice, he has big teeth, and he chases and terrifies children.*"

For the smaller children, below age twelve, representing Krampus was an enigma, and when I carefully guided them about the role of the Krampus, one boy (the only thirteen-year-old in the group), said: "*I know, he is the Devil-Santa.*" Because of his self-assured and loud comment, several boys illustrated Krampus as holding a large military-style weapon and not, as was customary, a stick, a broom, or a bunch of small sticks (originally called *virgács*). Rather like the classic trident of Poseidon, boys – most of them like to present a fierce Krampus picture – depicted this dreaded folkloric figure as similar to an image shown to them in which the Krampus holds a three-pronged pitchfork. While four boys pictured Krampus with a three-pronged pitchfork, one boy drew it with a five-pronged fork. I asked him: "*Your Krampus has a dangerous implement, no?*" The boy's answer was stern: "*He is a bad guy, maybe he could kill somebody.*" He seemed to be strongly under the influence of horror films and violent cartoons. Patrick's (eleven at the time of the project) Krampus is perhaps the most frightening of all: his figure is a combination of a devilish animal and an extra-terrestrial creature. Two of the boys of the same age did not bother to display whole Krampuses, only the frightening face; both artworks are mask-like headshots with enormous mouths revealing sharp fangs.

The use of dimension, color, and context

I tried to offer a few directions to some of the children, for example, to one girl of ten years of age who was drawing an unusually small Santa Claus compared to the other Santa images. To jump to an easy assessment seemed too obvious, as my co-workers and I hastily assumed that the pupil was introverted, withdrawn, and less communicative than her schoolmates. This closely approximates what one psychologist asserts: "small figures on a comparably large drawing paper suggest emotional closeness and a distant communication with the world" (Feuer, 2002: 12). Dimensionality, symmetry,



Figure 2: Krampus as pictured by the children.

and proportionality have created difficult questions for some of the children. In their drawings, the scale of extremities compared to the size of the body, or adding a small head to large hands or feet did not bother our young artists. As Nagy asserted more than a century ago – reinforced later by Sáray – “children below the age of 12 tend to draw in a smaller scale, smaller objects [...] (and) in general, do not tend to [respect] scale and dimension” (Nagy, 1905: 10; Sáray, 1937: 16). In contrast, girls drew angels with enormous wings, and in two instances Santa was depicted with horrendous legs resembling tree stumps. Only one of the creators readily explained the reason: “*Santa has to have strong feet since he has to go to so many places.*” In the children’s minds, Santa is gender-specific, and he is always a man.

There were some questions about the children’s lack of use of different colors and tools (pencils, markers, paint brushes, chalk, and crayons). A sixth-grade boy relied exclusively on a graphite pencil, but slowly he progressed into a more polychromatic visualization, even venturing into coloring the angel’s dress and hair. While not always obvious in the drawings, angels in their imagination represent positive feelings and trustworthiness, especially when compared to other supernatural beings (Sánta, 2002). As many ethnographers, among them Fosztó (2009), Rostás-Farkas (2000), and Szuhay (1999), have noted, Hungarian-speaking Roma (Romungro) children believe in the general Judeo-Christian opposition concerning the positive-negative duality of angels and the devil. Moreover, many Roma families in the local community we studied belong to or frequently attend services of new charismatic evangelical (Pentecostal) Churches (Kürti, 2019). Naturally, Roma children use elements of their adult world as known by their parents and relatives, and couple those with their mediatized fantasies. A few angels stand out from the rest, as one of them is depicted with a saint’s halo. Encouraged by this specificity I asked the girl to explain the reason for the halo, “*An angel is a holy person*”, was the rational answer. Another girl created an angel, in a manner that resembled a bumble bee. “*She has to fly*”, she commented on the image, “*actually she is flying right now*”, a reason why the angel’s body was tilting to the right with blue clouds around her. For the children, as it turned out, angels are gender-specific, they are always female and all of them, including the boys, justified their belief that angels can fly (have wings) and have long hair.

Children in this project refrained from using multiple colors, a pattern that has not been observed as typical of adult Roma artists especially painters (Medgyesi, Garancsi, 2011). For instance, János Balázs (1905–1977), one of the first nationally recognized Roma painters in Hungary, has often been hailed by art critics as a maverick of “luxurious colors” (Zöldi, 2000). Paintings of the well-known artist Márta Bada (1951-), to use another example, have been associated with rich color schemes (Zsigó, 2009: 15–16). One art critic describes her art as “instinctual” in which there is “an orgy of colors, just like emotions are brimming in the soul of children” (Ritók, 2015). This may be part of the general dichotomy of “us” and “them”, resulting in centuries-long exoticization



Figure 3: Angels.

and racialization of the Roma as many scholars have suggested (Doytcheva, 2016; Kligman, 2001; Kroon et al., 2016). But in the artwork of children, simple colors send powerful messages. This can easily be witnessed, for instance, in the eight selected images of Krampuses, all monochromatic with only two exceptions. One Krampus has five rather subdued colors (grey, green, pink, brown, blue); another is completely green with brown contours. The monochromatic dominance may be due to their age and the lack of art education; but for the child what the image represented was secondary to the narratives attached to it, as Sárany noted almost a century ago (1937: 18–19).

Strange as it may seem at first, one of the most revealing aspects of the drawings is the lack of a larger holiday context, a commercialized and highly internationalized event in Hungary today (see my articles). All the drawings seem to stand isolated without depicting a more contextual approach to the Christmas holiday. It was quite apparent that even though the exercise was clearly about Christmas in a generally wintry landscape, depicting snow or a snowman never occurred to them. The lack of animals in the drawings was also a surprising discovery. Whether this was related to the idea proposed by Carroll and Ryan-Wenger that most children express fear and anxiety about depicting animals (1999) remains to be assessed through more rigorous and specific studies. Of all the possibilities, children mostly drew angels, a Christmas tree, Santa Claus, and Krampus. Only two sisters ventured to draw a single reindeer. The centrality of the angel, Santa, and Krampus is not without justification for these are the most talked about and depicted figures of the Christmas pantheon in Hungary.

To the children, Krampus has been identified as a masculine imp, a negative sidekick of Santa, as per his popularized image in nineteenth-century Central European media, and boys were more likely than girls to depict him. By contrast, girls eagerly drew angels. A lonely Christmas tree, plain without gifts and few decorations, is a sight not readily associated with the holiday. Many children decided to draw Christmas trees. Only rarely did they put a candle or ornaments on the tree. There was one proviso: Christmas trees were always decorated by either the parents or older siblings. When I asked if they ever helped or wanted to help decorate the tree, they were immediately defensive: parents should decorate Christmas trees in secret without children knowing anything about it. One older boy even admitted that they never bought Christmas trees but used the nearby forest to retrieve one for themselves, a constant source of tension between the farmer and the Roma families. One boy of 10 even drew a large box on a single piece of paper. Surprised, I inquired about its meaning, and he answered simply that it is a box full of Christmas gifts he will receive from his parents. However, wrapped boxes illustrating gifts and the process of gift-giving were very few, and when I asked, most Roma children did share their wishes about the gifts they wanted under the Christmas tree. To my surprise, the difference between their expectations and the visual narratives was quite revealing as they knew from previous experiences that their parents would not be able to fulfill their wishes. Most of the Roma children

talked about receiving plenty of gifts only as an ideal situation but not as a reality, as their few drawings of holiday objects revealed.

A rather curious aspect of Roma Christmas drawings was the lack of self-representation as well as that of other people, parents, relatives, or friends. Sequential narrative images were missing as well, except for one important note: in their minds, stories connected to the images were not without people. A twelve-year-old boy commented: *“We will have a tree with many lights on it and it is lit day and night. We do nothing else with it, though. I drew the tree alone. We are not part of the tree.”* When I argued further with him and tried to convince him that the holiday is nothing without the people who make it a holiday, he replied: *“The Christmas tree makes Christmas. By the way, this is my Christmas, not yours.”* After the second or third class, I was able to meet the boy’s mother and showed her some of the drawings her son had made. Her smile revealed she was happy with all of them. I asked her about the lonely Christmas tree and hinted at the family unit during the holiday season. She confessed that she lives in her unmarried brother’s household and that her husband had left her a few years earlier. She is the head of the household, raising her two children alone. Single-parent or non-conforming families among the Roma are the rule, not the exception, a structural constraint that exacerbates Roma pupils’ disadvantages and segregation in learning and school performance (Rostas, Kostka, 2014).

Images, meanings, and explanations

I would also emphasize the discursive qualities and manifold meanings attached to drawings in subsequent discussions with children as I asked them to evaluate each other’s artwork. Apart from criticizing each other’s drawings – *“It’s a bad Santa”*, or *“Angels don’t look like that”* were some of the printable comments – it became quite clear that they easily offered offensive and blunt criticism. Viewing each other’s work gave them a free pass to make judgmental statements such as *“Oh, you don’t know how to draw”*, and *“Why don’t you go to school to learn how to draw”*. Responses were equally dismissive: *“Don’t worry about my skill, look at your Christmas tree, it’s really awful”*, or *“Your devil/Krampus looks like your father.”*

Some children drew figures of different sizes that made me wonder whether this was attributable to their being children, their minority status, or other factors. To illustrate this point, I adduce segments from my conversations with the children, starting with a girl of twelve, which speaks about her feelings about drawing an angel:

Q: *Why did you draw the Angel?*

A: *Because she brings presents.*

Q: *Is she a man or a woman?*

A: *Of course, she is a woman, what else? She has long hair.*

Q: *You drew her with long blond hair, why?*

A: *Angels are beautiful, they have gold.*

Q: *Gold? Could she have nice long dark hair, like yours?*

A: *Impossible, angels are blond.*

Q: *And so small?*

A: *They're tiny, you can't see them, and big angels can't fly.*

Depiction of blond angels is an obvious stereotyped Christian image deeply ingrained in a Euro-American mentality, although it might also suggest hidden or “invisible” racism (Powell, van Baar, 2019: 94), but also internalized racism and self-denigration and the impossibility of living up to a majority aesthetics and body image. Throughout my conversations with the children, their ethnonym – Roma – was never voiced, and none of them ever uttered the phrase “*I'm a Roma*” (*cigány* in Hungarian parlance): that identity seemed obvious to them albeit muted. Another similar Western pattern, that of Santa's reindeer, baffled Roma children as was the case with an eleven-year-old boy, whose grandfather was a well-known and respected musician in the town. The merging of Santa and the reindeer with Christmas was out of the question as our conversation reveals:

Q: *I suggested you could draw a scene showing how Santa brings gifts to children; you know like in the movies?*

A: *They're so stupid.*

Q: *Don't you think that it's a nice scene, with a sled, and reindeer?*

A: *Movies, I said. Because angels are powerful, they do magic, they bring gifts, (they) don't need anything, no sled, no reindeer.*

Another girl of the same age drew a very small animal, a single reindeer, a visual depiction I thought quite impetuous at first that made me ask her:

Q: *Your animal is very small. Why?*

A: *It's not so small, it's just right.*

Q: *But reindeer grow big.*

A: *Yes, but smaller animals are easier to feed, they don't eat so much.*

An older boy even considered the depiction of reindeer a silly idea arguing with an example: as a special treat, two years earlier a horse-drawn buggy brought Santa Claus to his school!

Religious thinking and superstition are detectable in the images children drew. A boy of nine decided to depict only objects, symbols associated with the holiday season,

a shepherd’s crook, a crown, and crosses. A quintessential part of Western Christmas mythology, that of the reindeer, presented a dilemma to Roma children. Clearly, commercialized Western images have not, or not yet, impacted them considerably, and in some cases not at all. Also, angels seem to be still very much within their grasp as supernatural beings who can say and do anything. These and previous extracts illustrate a real divide about how children visualize and rationalize, as opposed to the limited interpretations of an adult instructor. I had never considered that the size of an angel – an imaginary figure readily open to various perceptions – would and could really be a concern. Nativity scenes across Catholic Hungary reproduce angels as the same size as humans – renaissance or baroque little angels (putti) are smaller and childlike and represent a different school of artistic imagination; but clearly, mine was a standard Eurocentric adult rationalization that did not fit with the visualization of this Roma girl. The nativity scene and Christmas carols, two popular aspects of the holiday in Hungary, were simply not present in the minds of Roma children. As I happened to notice during Christmas nativity festivals, none of the families who gathered around the manger scene in the central part of the town were from the Roma community. As Scheffel and Mušinka have shown (2019: 19) with regard to the situation of Slovak majority and minority relations, Roma families are often weary of, and even voluntarily distance themselves from “integrating strategies” devised by *gadjos* (non-Roma), whether school ceremonies, political remembrances, or even popular entertainments. Moreover, racism, poverty, and the existence of a different magic-religious worldview present considerable obstacles that impede their participation in mainstream popular culture. This attitude became evident in our project as Roma children seemed rather lackadaisical about Roman Catholic middle-class cultural elements and ideals. The latter dialogue was even more faithful to children’s imagination. Since, in cartoons or children’s movies, reindeer are depicted as being of normal size, I was expecting that, in the children’s drawings, proportionality would matter somewhat. Yet the girl’s argument presented a curious but rational reasoning as her knowledge of their neighbor’s draught horse and a foal provided a realistic, albeit not straightforward answer: that it is better if reindeer are small because they need less food. What is even more astonishing is the fact that only a few Roma families in the community possessed horses, but in local folklore and imagination, owning a horse has been preserved as a precious symbolic resource.

To picture Santa Claus, David (the only fourteen-year-old who remained in the project until the very end) drew a friendly and loveable head of Santa with the explanation that “*The head is important*”, and continued smilingly, “*he looks very much like my grandfather, he has a beard and always smiles.*” The smiling mouth for him was obviously the most important characteristic that he associated both with his grandfather and with Santa Claus. I met with the boy’s mother who came at the end of the class to take David home and showed his artwork to her. She acknowledged it only

with a small nod, but when I said that she could take the drawing home she rejected my offer without an explanation. I asked her about the boy's grandfather and, to my surprise, she answered that the man had passed away two years earlier. This revelation suggested the contemporaneity of the boy's drawing: the memory of the recently deceased grandfather – actually, his smiling face and beard – in the boy's mind had become associated with the image of Santa Claus.

Another Santa image recalled different associations in the young artist's mind. Here is an excerpt of a conversation with a nine-year-old Eva whose Santa Claus looked, to me, rather frightful:

Q: *Do you know what Santa Claus looks like?*

A: *I forgot.*

Q: *Well, did you see him last week visiting your school?*

A: *Yes, but he did not look like a real Santa Claus. Santa has a long red and gold coat and doesn't smell.*

Q: *Smell?*

A: *School Santa smelled bad.*

Obviously, an unpleasant olfactory sensation created an inimical image in her, resulting in a rather frightening-looking Santa Claus that she had re-considered. When I suggested to her that she could draw a Santa without a smell, she declined, *"It's my Santa, I can draw him any which way I please."* This stress on smell is an important interethnic marker as olfactory discrimination against Roma is pervasive among Hungarians. Most Hungarians hold an ethnocentric view that Roma can be recognized because of their distinct body odor. As the conversation with the other girl reveals, Roma have their own cultural association with odor.

Another curiosity about depicting Santa has to do with his gift-giving. A ten-year-old child drew Santa Claus with two enormous bags on his back. The child answered my question: *"Santa needs two bags because he has to bring so many gifts for us."* An obvious wish fulfillment? Perhaps. For Edina, another ten-year-old, this was not an important issue. She related her Santa picture to me: *"Santa is quite fat and old. He should watch his weight."* Only a 13-year-old girl drew a Santa that more closely approximates the mediatized happy image of Santa, depicting a smiling figure holding a large bag in his left hand and a bell in his right hand, and dressed entirely in red. Her classmate, Vivienne, drew Santa differently with a large conical hat, rather like the wizard Minerva McGonagall in the Harry Potter series or the Wicked Witch of animated children's films. An 11-year-old boy's Santa had enormous feet and outstretched arms with the moon and stars visible above his head. I was rather curious and asked him about this: his answer was quite unexpected: *"Santa is not a real person, he comes from the sky, from heaven."* Another image of Santa, drawn by the eight-year-old Dalma, was

quite unlike any other. Her Santa was pink with a pointed cap, and a long transparent beard, looking surprised. This image prompted me to ask her:

Q: *Your Santa is surprised!*

A: *No, he is just happy. Can't you see? He is smiling. He is happy because Christmas break is here soon.*

Happiness seemed to be a dominant trope the girl wanted to depict, not only in Santa's face but even with some angels exuding this feeling, mostly depicted with open mouths.

Conclusion

Are there unique aspects in the ways in which Roma children visualize Christmas? As an anthropologist, I would argue that the foregoing introduction to Roma children's art yields a resoundingly affirmative response: Roma minority children read such phenomena in light of their own ghettoized/marginalized experience and imagery, interpreting Christmas as their own holiday through a unique prism of Roma cultural identity. The cultural influences on children and their perceptions of what they know and remember cannot be overemphasized in this regard (Feuer, 2002: 7; Jolly, 2010: 247–259). These conclusions corroborate John Berger's argument that “a drawing is an autobiographical record of one's discovery of an event – seen, remembered or imagined” (2005: 3).

In using a visual anthropological methodology in this project, I am well aware that drawing is not a “magic tool”, as Sondergaard and Reventlow put it (2019: 9) in their analysis of disadvantaged Danish school children's artwork. Nor does it readily offer new information about their prejudiced, hidden, and disadvantaged lives, aspects of visual narratives that I have also experienced with regard to messages embedded in vintage postcards (Kürti, 2004). Yet, it would be misleading to dismiss the visual exercise of Roma children as simple, one-sided, or even bland at first sight, especially compared to globally essentialized media-hyped and commercialized holiday images. Nonetheless, it is clear from the above images that such visualization is not without value or individuality. As I have noted, an internationalized Christmas holiday is domesticated or rendered familiar to them, as demonstrated by their unexpected explanations and rationalizations. Roma children attach minimal prestige and importance to receiving gifts, and instead rely on their own world of memory and mysticism generated by the spirit of holiday mythology. Despite the overwhelming influence and pressure of official state education, spiritual aspects of Christmas, a mainstay of Roman Catholic dogma and biblical narratives, seemed only superficially present for many children. They attached less importance to other aspects of popular American and West European

Christmas mythology, such as Santa’s reindeer, and their ample verbal narratives attest to that. For as Tracy Smith has suggested earlier, Roma children’s verbal skills far outweigh their reading-writing competency (1997: 247–248). These ideas together should compel anthropologists of education and visual anthropologists to work more closely together, instead of isolating children’s activities into educational and visual aspects. Namely, there are plenty of benefits from both perspectives, not least of which is the possibility of gaining more useful information, as well as developing more enjoyable meaning-making activities, between adults and children (Spray, 2021).

Perhaps children’s drawings introduced here do not tell us what their subjects may know, what is hidden in their thoughts, or what outside “interventionist” educators or intellectuals would like to hear. It is possible that what children communicate to the observer is something more mundane: that they enjoyed themselves visualizing Christmas, spent a few hours with their peers in an environment outside the rigid school system, and were able to offer their own immediate visions of what the holiday is about. These visual images confirm what others have proposed: that children can and do feel enthusiastic and empowered about their cultural products (Terton et al., 2020). Moreover, by listening to their narratives of their own drawings, we may be better situated to disrupt conventional stereotyping and negative self-representation of Roma communities (Imre, 2003; Kroon et al., 2016; Kürti, 2011). Finally, the images these children created convey the sense that, for a special moment, the holiday and the Santa they represented were indeed theirs, not mine.

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»To ni vaš Božiček«: romski otroci vizualizirajo božič

Etnografsko raziskovanje otrok »po pouku« je potekalo na način »antropologije doma« in je obravnavalo romske otroke v srednje velikem podeželskem mestu z 11.000 prebivalci, od katerih je približno 10 % Romov. Ker so državne šole prostori večinskega prebivalstva, zanje pa psihologi in kritični pedagogi menijo, da so za manjšinske romske otroke omejujoči in frustrirajoči dejavnik, smo v raziskavi oblikovali fakultativni krožek risanja, da bi otroke oddaljili od institucionalnega šolskega konteksta in jim zagotovili pravi občutek avtonomije in lastne tvornosti. V nasprotju s predhodnimi študijami, v katerih je bilo otrokom dovoljeno improvizirati po mili volji, so v tem projektu otroci ustvarjali na izbrano temo – božič. Želeli smo, da se s svinčniki in barvicami svobodno izražajo s podobami in pojmi, ki jim pridejo na misel ob božiču. Otroci so seveda uporabljali elemente iz sveta odraslih, ki jih poznajo njihovi starši in sorodniki, ter jih povezovali s svojimi fantazijami. Toda bila so tudi presenečenja. Večina otrok se je namreč vzdržala uporabe več barv, kar je vzorec, ki bi ga opazili pri odraslih romskih umetnikih, posebej slikarjih. Tudi drugi elementi, povezani z božičnimi prazniki, ki jih širijo množični mediji, so bili večinoma odsotni, se je pa v otroških podobah pojavilo vraževerje. Z opazovanjem likovnega ustvarjanja obravnavanih osnovnošolcev smo želeli razumeti, kako v njihovih likovnih kompetencah odsevajo njihove predstave in razumevanje različnih likov in elementov božiča. Naša prvotna ideja je bila, da otroci ne bodo imeli težav pri upodabljanju božiča in njegovih glavnih junakov – Božička, Rudolfa, Kristusa, parklja, angela, božičnega drevesa in jaslíc, saj gre za najbolj skomercializiran in mednarodno medijsko razširjen praznik v letu. Rezultati te zunajšolske etnografske domače vaje pa so pokazali drugačne rezultate, saj so razkrili, da nekateri otroci slabo poznajo podobo parklja, nekatere je zmedlo upodabljanje severnih jelenov, medtem ko so drugi poudarjali svoje družinske zgodbe in se pri opisovanju svojih spominov ali želja opirali na romsko religioznost. Otroci romske manjšine razumejo božič v luči lastnih getoiziranih/marginaliziranih izkušenj in podob ter si ga razlagajo kot svoj praznik skozi enkratno prizmo romske identitete.

Tradition and Anti-Tradition in Catalan Schools at the Start of the Twentieth Century

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This article analyses what tradition meant for the promoters of the educational transformations taking place a hundred years ago in Catalonia. For some, tradition was a concept that impeded progress and therefore ought to be pushed aside. For others, tradition was a kind of guide on this same course of advancing society through schools. It is concluded that tradition, whether attacked or defended, is a cultural artefact that is used in projects aiming to transform and advance society.

• **Keywords:** tradition, anti-tradition, educational renewal, Modern School, New Education movement

Članek prinaša analizo, kaj je pred stoletjem ideja tradicije pomenila nosilcem sprememb v izobraževanju v Kataloniji. Za nekatere je bila tradicija ovira napredku, zato jo je bilo treba odrivati na stran. Za druge je bila tradicija v šolah nekakšno vodilo na tej isti poti družbenega napredka. Avtor ugotavlja, da je tradicija, ne glede na to, ali jo napadajo ali branijo, kulturni artefakt, ki se uporablja v projektih za preoblikovanje in napredek družbe.

• **Ključne besede:** tradicija, antitradicija, prenova izobraževanja, Sodobna šola, gibanje Novo izobraževanje

Introduction

As in other places in Europe and the world, a strong educational movement emerged in the first decades of the 20th century in Catalonia and Spain. Its aim was to transform the educational landscape, up until then characterised by learning methods defined as rudimentary and mainly based on reading and handwriting (Vial, 1981: 219–240). There was a considerable lack of school infrastructure and teachers, leading to high illiteracy rates. In Spain around 60% of the population was illiterate in 1900 (Vilanova, Moreno, 1992).

Tradition, as a polysemic concept that refers to cultural inheritance through time (Pouillon, 2007; Noyes, 2009; Hrobat Virloget, 2012; Testa, Isnart, 2020), played an important role in this process of modernisation of the school model, but in two diametrically opposite directions. Some educators considered tradition inseparable from the educational project, while others saw tradition as an impediment that hindered the introduction of their programme; something that should be pushed aside or overcome as soon as possible. This latter group belonged to the rationalist movement – in fact, they called themselves the “rationalist educators”. One prime example is the free-thinking anarchist Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia (hereafter Ferrer) (1859–1909), founder of the Escuela Moderna (Modern School) in Barcelona in 1901. His rejection of tradition

fitted in with the ‘disenchantment’ discussed by Max Weber: modernity considered as a process of progressively moving away from the world of traditional beliefs to be able to reach scientific understanding (Jenkins, 2000). In contrast, educators associated with the ruling Catalan class promoted an ambitious programme of creation and renewal of state schools, inspired and advised by pre-eminent educators of the New Education movement (*Education Nouvelle* in French), such as Maria Montessori or John Dewey. For them, tradition was a fundamental tool in their project, a kind of flotation device in a turbulent social context, as will be seen later in this article.

In relation to ethnohistory, Richard Wilk (1987; 1988) indicated that at times of relative stability, little attention is paid to tradition. In contrast, when the social and economic order is threatened, tradition takes on more importance and new meanings. In the case studied in this article, a political and educational project of anarchist inspiration – that questioned the prevailing social and economic order – saw in tradition an obstacle to overcome. At the same time, a bourgeois political and educational project saw in tradition a tool for social transformation in the direction it considered correct, without altering the established social order. The aim of this article is to compare these two coetaneous visions of tradition, their rejection and their use. The end of the article addresses the possibility of now reconsidering tradition beyond a confrontation between revolutionaries and conservatives, or between anti-traditionalists and traditionalists.

Historians of education have defined these educational movements occurring in Spain at the start of the 20th century as “renewal movements” (Esteban, 2016: 263). From different perspectives, these movements had in common the project of transforming society through schools. They were violently interrupted by the dictatorship of General Franco in 1939–1975 (Caivano, Carbonell, 1979; Monés, 2011; Diez, 2018; Soler, Vilanou, 2018; Feu, Besalú, Paludàrias, 2021). The renewal movements were highly varied and included a range of theoretical perspectives and ideological positions. In this article, we focus on two paradigmatic and clearly distinguishable tendencies. The first are the rationalist schools promoted by anarchist intellectuals, as mentioned above. The second are state schools promoted by conservative politicians and intellectuals, based on the principles of the New Education movement established at the founding conference of the Ligue internationale pour l’éducation nouvelle (International League of New Education) held in Calais (France) in 1921. Although these projects are ideologically divergent, they share the aim of proposing a radical change in the educational landscape to transform and modernise society through schools. Notably, what historians call the “renewal movements” of this historical period included other aspects and prominent educators such as Pau Vila or Rosa Sensat, which would lead to other educational models that are not discussed in this article. The aim of this article is not to undertake a historical review of education in Catalonia and Spain in this period. Rather, it is to analyse the reasons for such a divergent interpretation of tradition in these projects, in their time designed to be groundbreaking and renewing.

At the methodological level, to undertake the comparative study presented here, two magazines were analysed that are representative of the two examined projects. The magazines were published successively in Barcelona between 1901 and 1923. First, I analyse the discourse on tradition in the magazine *Boletín de la Escuela Moderna* (Bulletin of the Modern School, hereafter BEM). This magazine, founded by Ferrer, was published between 1901 and 1906. In 1906 it was shut down by the government after a failed attack on the kings of Spain by anarchist Mateu Morral, who had been the librarian of the Modern School. The magazine had a second period of activity between 1908–1909, associated with the Ligue internationale pour l'éducation rationnelle de l'enfance (International League for the Rational Education of Children; Fidler, 1985), which was founded by Ferrer and led by Anatole France. However, this period ended abruptly when Ferrer was arrested and sentenced to death after the events of Tragic Week.¹ Notably, the rationalist education inspired by Ferrer survived after his death in the form of athenaeums, industrial schools, union schools and school colonies, which had a notable presence in the country's educational landscape until the end of the Spanish War in 1939.

The second focus is the discourse on tradition that was expressed in the magazine *Quaderns d'Estudi* (Study Notebooks, hereafter QdE), published by the Education Council of the Barcelona City Council and the Mancomunitat de Catalunya (regional government), between 1915 and 1923. As other contemporary examples in Europe (see e.g. Stevanović, 2010) the aim of this magazine was to transmit an official vision of education. The magazine was aimed at schools that had recently been created by Catalan public entities at the municipal and regional level. It reflected a Catalan nationalist and conservative political project, led by politicians and intellectuals such as Prat de la Riba, Eugeni d'Ors, or Alexandre Galí, and framed in the aesthetic movement of Noucentisme.² As we will see later, within this movement, education was considered a key element in the political and cultural project of national reconstruction and cultural regeneration. From the mid-19th century and based on Romanticism, a nationalist

¹ The Tragic Week of Barcelona was a working-class revolt that occurred in the summer of 1909, during which many religious buildings in the city were torched. This caused great shock among conservative social strata. The reason for the revolt was the Port of Barcelona embarkation of reservists for the colonial wars in Morocco, in a context of great tension between unions and employers. The image of the city in flames earned Barcelona the nickname Rose of Fire. The outcome of the clashes was 82 workers and 5 police dead, 56 religious buildings burnt, including 16 colleges, and 29 life sentences and 5 death sentences given. These included a death sentence for the educationalist Ferrer, which triggered a wave of international protests. In Paris, a defence committee was formed with anarchists such as Pyotr Kropotkin and socialists such as Jean Jaurès. However, this could not stop the shooting of Ferrer at Montjuïc Castle, Barcelona, on 13 October 1909 (see Termes, 2011).

² 'Noucentisme' is a term that plays with the homophony in Catalan of the adjective *nou* (new) and the number nine (also *nou*) of the century that had just begun. It was an aesthetic and philosophical movement present in Catalonia in the first two decades of the 1900s. It combined neoclassicism with avant-garde and had a strong ideological component of social modernisation and regeneration, led by Catalan politicians and intellectuals with the aim of putting Catalan culture on the same level with the rest of European cultures of the time (see Bilbeny, 1988).

movement began to form in Catalonia that would crystallise at the start of the 20th century with the creation of the Mancomunitat de Catalunya in 1914. This institution of regional self-government had limited competences and resources, but took on the task of modernising Catalonia. Its political action was mainly focused on the modernisation of cultural infrastructure and institutions, particularly in education, from primary schools to universities, and including schools of arts and trades, museums, and public libraries. The Mancomunitat de Catalunya was abolished in 1924 as a result of the coup and dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera (1923–1930). The magazine QdE aimed to spread to public schools in the Catalan territory the new ideas on pedagogy that were inspired by the international current of the New Education movement. It was published while the Mancomunitat de Catalunya existed. Unlike the rationalist schools, such as the Modern School and its bulletin inspired by principles of anarchism, this magazine was conservative, nationalist, and inspired by the values of Noucentisme. Below we will analyse separately how tradition was defined and presented in each of these two media for disseminating the new ideas of educational renewal at the start of the 20th century.

Modern School: Rejection of tradition in school

One of the first issues of the BEM called for the hiring of teachers who “are free of concerns, superstitions, and absurd traditional beliefs” (Ferrer, 1990: 56). Teachers who, as Paul Robin maintained in BEM, act differently from “educators of the old school, [who] on the basis of ideas founded a priori on tradition, on the supposed revelations of imaginary beings that are superior to man, believe they know everything.”³ Most of the scientific texts in the BEM are translations of works by well-known foreign authors.⁴ In response to an article published in the press of Barcelona on the Shroud of Turin, the editors of BEM – that is, mainly Ferrer i Guardia and Clémence Jacquinet – considered it vital to introduce the ideas of these foreign thinkers in a country like Spain “that barely participates in the progressive movement”, that is, in scientific development, “due to the traditional obstacles” maintained by those who are defined in the same text as “bourgeoisie with cassocks”.⁵ Which scientists spread their ideas through the BEM? A clear preference can be seen for authors who at the end of the nineteenth century had gained a certain amount of academic prestige with their theories of social evolution, such as Herni Thulié, Ernst Haeckel, Herbert Spencer, and some leaders of anarchist thought such as Élisée Reclus or the aforementioned Paul Robin.

³ Robin, P. 1901, December 31. Educación integral. *BEM* Year 1 (No. 3): 29–32.

⁴ On the influence of French and German philosophy on educational renewal in Catalonia, see Monés, 2010; Vilanou, Collelldemont, 2012.

⁵ Ferrer i Guardia, F. 1902, 31 May. Lo del Sudario de Turín. *BEM* Year 2 (No. 7): 83–85.

According to Pere Solà (1980: 86), Clémence Jacquinet was the person who marked the educational and ideological model in the Modern School during the first academic years. She showed great interest in Herbert Spencer. Spencer had published in 1861 ‘Education: Intellectual, Moral, and Physical’, a text that was adopted as a manual in almost all the teacher training schools in England (Acton, 2021). Spencer was the main representative of the sociopolitical movement known as social Darwinism, which was one of the theoretical bases of scientific racism. In this aspect, the BEM and the QdE were similar. In the QdE, one can also find articles praising social Darwinism, eugenics and the promoters of these ideas, such as Francis Galton.⁶ In their insistence on discrediting everything associated with tradition, some BEM contributors addressed with disdain and even contempt peoples who they called “primitives” or “savages” (in contrast to those they called “civilised”). According to them, the most rudimentary cultural forms and those most attached to tradition could be found among these peoples.

For example, the evolutionist doctor and anthropologist Henri Thulié presented in an article on the “origin of mysticism”⁷ a list of the beliefs of various non-Western societies about totemic beings and animist practices. In his opinion, these had survived within religion in Western societies and would have to be overcome through education. Thus, speaking of atmospheric phenomena such as thunder and lightning, he explained that North American Indians offer tobacco to supernatural forces to calm thunder. This would be equivalent to the practice of lighting altar candles or ringing bells among peoples “who are called civilised [...], and this even after having learnt at school that thunder is a natural phenomenon.” Another author, Ernst Haeckel, who along with Spencer was one of the main representatives of social Darwinism, wrote an article about “superstition”⁸ in which he proposed that the “traditional superstitions” that we find among “civilised peoples” are no more than vestiges of those that are observed “among the coarse primitive peoples” and are in turn a legacy of their primate ancestors. Here we have an example of the evolutionary paradigm of anthropology from the second half of the 19th century that was maintained at the start of the 20th century. In various issues of the BEM, we can find other articles by Haeckel that urge people to overcome, through scientific rationalism, beliefs described as absurd that are based on tradition. For example, in an article entitled ‘Conflicto entre la Razón y el Dogma’ (Conflict between Reason and Dogma), Haeckel maintained that tradition is synonymous with dogma and that there are influential sectors or parties in society that want to see us “under the yoke of traditional dogmas.”⁹

⁶ Galton, F. 1915, December. *QdE* Year 1 (No. 3): 23–25.

⁷ Thulié, H. 1902, 30 June. Origen del misticismo. *BEM* Year 1 (No. 8): 95–98.

⁸ Haeckel, E. 1902, 31 October. La superstición. *BEM* Year 2 (No. 1): 7–8.

⁹ Haeckel, E. 1903, 31 October. Conflicto entre la Razón y el Dogma. *BEM* Year 3 (No. 2): 24.

Some articles were published in BEM that described primitive societies with respect. Examples are pieces by Reclus about the indigenous people of the Tierra de Fuego, or the presentation of his masterpiece ‘The Earth and Its Inhabitants’, being the first article in the bulletin of March 1905 and defending the uniqueness of the human species – in contrast to what was maintained by the popularisers of scientific racism. Nevertheless, it can be asserted that the authors and publishers of these two magazines shared an attitude that was widespread at the time, one which undervalued peoples who were considered premodern. In the BEM, this served as a strategy to reinforce a line of argument against everything related to tradition.

The BEM wished to offer all students at the Modern School suitable textbooks that would serve to combat all the “beliefs”, “superstitions”, and “traditions”. As noted, these were considered vestiges of the practices of “primitive peoples” that persisted among “civilised peoples” and were maintained through religion. The back cover of the BEM showed advertisements for the Modern School’s publications aimed “at intellectuals”, with “a vehement call to writers who love science” encouraging them to write textbooks for the Modern School: “It is telling that you cannot find a book for schools that is not full of mystical errors, which propagate and promote religious tradition, and hinder the progress of science.”¹⁰ Therefore, in their opinion, the old education that they wanted to leave behind with the introduction of the Modern School perpetuated some premodern characteristics and beliefs. In a letter, Ferrer i Guardia wrote to Reclus to ask him for a geography manual for his school. Reclus replied that Ferrer should not use one, instead, the teachers should transmit orally their interest in geography to their students.¹¹

However, textbooks were used in the Modern School, such as the *Compendio de Historia Universal* (Compendium of Universal History) by Jacquinet, and the books on grammar, arithmetic, or geometry by Cels Gomis. Gomis (1841–1915) was an engineer, folklorist and author of school manuals whom anarchist educators particularly appreciated, as explained by Pere Solà (1980: 70). Gomis was an uncommon – if not exceptional – case of a folklorist who sympathised with the anarchist movement and was critical of contemporary folklorists, considering them reactionary (Samper, 2013: 109–111). Gomis is the author of a highly extensive folkloric work resulting from his journeys and long stays in various rural areas of Spain, where he worked as a civil engineer, particularly on railways and roads. He took advantage of his free time in contact with rural people to gather a large amount of folkloric material. Gomis does not present an essentialist vision of folklore, as was common among Spanish folklorists of the time (for a historical review of folklorism in Catalonia, see Roma, 1985; Juliano, 1986; Prats, 1988; Martí, 1996). Notably, the origin of folklorism was part of

¹⁰ Correspondencia administrativa. 1902, 30 April. *BEM* Year 1 (No. 6).

¹¹ Reclus, E. 1903, 31 March. Carta a Ferrer Guardia. *BEM* Year 2 (No. 6): 68.

the Romantic and Nationalist movement of the 19th century that was designed to gather and establish the essence and soul of the peoples expressed in customs and traditions. However, for the intellectuals who published in the BEM, these customs and traditions formed part of the cultural corpus that should be banished from education.

Gomis's intention in studying the traditions was not to gather folkloric material to establish the supposed real soul of the people. Instead, throughout his work, "he maintained a reformist attitude to popular culture, based on the conviction of the need to eradicate superstitions in the interest of progress" (Prats, 1991: 80). For example, in his treatise 'La lluna segons lo poble' (The Moon According to the People) published in 1912, he stated that his intention in writing about these cultural phenomena was not to perpetuate their beliefs, but rather to compile and invalidate them so that the future generations could see the backwardness of their ancestors' lives (Samper, 2013: 102). This was one of the objectives of the rationalist schools, as outlined earlier. In a school manual published in 1923, entitled *Lecturas instructivas* (Instructive Readings), Gomis maintained that intelligent young people should come out of schools – particularly rural ones – so that "If they find a stone axe tomorrow, when digging a furrow or vine hole, they recognize it as a tool made by man in the infancy of Humanity as opposed to believing, as they do today, that it is a bolt of lightning that, striking soil, had been buried seven yards underground so that it might resurface again after seven years" (Samper, 2013: 160). Therefore, education should correct and dispel ideas that are perpetuated by tradition and classified as erroneous from a scientific perspective. Gomis considered traditions an expression of the ignorance in which religion keeps the people. The aim, according to Bakunin's hypotheses in his book *God and the State*, is to ensure that the people are more easily subjected to the power of the state. Furthermore, he considers that education, and particularly teachers, are responsible for ending these traditional false conceptions of the world.

Years later, in his well-known text 'Observations on Folklore' in *Quaderni del carcere* (Prison Notebooks), Antonio Gramsci expressed this idea in a very similar way:¹²

For the teacher, then, to know "folklore" means to know what other conceptions of the world and life are actually active in the intellectual and moral formation of young people, in order to uproot them and replace them with conceptions deemed to be superior. In reality, from elementary schools to [...] chairs of agriculture, folklore was already systematically combatted and forced to retreat: the teaching of folklore to teachers should further reinforce this systematic task. (Gramsci, 1966: 275)

¹² Although Lombardi-Satriani explained that, apart from what was stated in his extremely well known 'Observations on Folklore', in other places Gramsci had underlined "the great variety in the conception of the world and life present in folklore, even if it is only found in a mutilated, contaminated way in folkloric documents" (Lombardi-Satriani, 1978: 35).

In relation to the popular beliefs about the moon discussed by Gomis, we will conclude this review of the BEM by referring to an article entitled ‘La influencia de la luna: Preocupaciones populares acerca de la misma en la vegetación’ (The Influence of the Moon: Popular Concerns Regarding Its Impact on Vegetation) by Ph. Cormerois. This article, originally published in the bulletin of the Normal School of Nice, maintained that, due to the progress of science, old superstitions that attributed to the moon an immense influence on vegetation and health had been abandoned. Despite this, many people still let themselves be swept away by an unthinking faith in these beliefs, defined therein as absurd. However, what is of interest to us now is to highlight that, according to this author, “teachers have the honour and the duty to shake the tree of old concerns and discredit these unhealthy products.”¹³

Therefore, teachers were responsible for impeding the continuing transmission of traditional knowledge to the next generations. Clémence Jacquinet, for example, stated clearly that popular proverbs and sayings should not be taught in school (Solà, 1980: 98). This was the opposite stance to that maintained by most folklorists of the period, except Cels Gomis. For example, Rossend Serra i Pagès (1863–1929), who was both a folklorist and a teacher trainer in the Escola d’Institutrius (School of Governesses), defined folklore as “a moralising element, an educational medium for children and entertainment for everyone” (Serra i Pagès, 1926: 9). As will be shown below, in contrast to the rationalist education of anarchists, the educational projects undertaken by the bourgeoisie in Catalonia at the start of the 20th century considered the dissemination of folklore and Catalan traditions as a fundamental element in schools, both at the methodological level to motivate students through sayings, fables, songs and dances, and at the level of instilling values in citizens, as will be analysed below. In contrast to the BEM, the magazine QdE held among its collaborators various notable folklorists of the time.

Education Council: The promotion of tradition in school

In 1915, the first issue of the magazine QdE was published. This was the main medium for disseminating the reformist educational principles that the Mancomunitat de Catalunya wished to promote through its Consell de Pedagogia (Education Council). In addition to this publication, the principles were promoted through teacher training in the Cursos de vespre (Evening courses) and the Escola d’estiu (Summer school). The Education Council was created by the Barcelona City Council in 1913. The following year, it was passed to the Mancomunitat de Catalunya, which was formed in 1914. The

¹³ Cormerois, Ph. 1902, 31 January. La influencia de la luna: Preocupaciones populares acerca de la misma respecto a la vegetación. *BEM* Year 1 (No. 5): 44–46.

Mancomunitat was presided by Prat de la Riba from 1914 to 1917, followed by Puig i Cadafal from 1917 to 1924. Both politicians were members of La Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya (The Regionalist League of Catalonia), a Catalan nationalist, conservative party that was in power in Catalonia in this period.

It is relevant that the Mancomunitat put Eugeni d'Ors at the head of State Education. Eugeni d'Ors was the most influential Catalan intellectual at the time and the ideologist behind the Noucentisme political and cultural project of regeneration of Catalan society (Billbeny, 1988). This already gives us an indication of the importance that this government wanted to give to the Catalan population's education. The magazine QdE was run by Eladi Homs (1886–1973), an educator trained in the United States thanks to a scholarship from Barcelona City Council. Homs was one of the first people to introduce the thinking of John Dewey in Catalonia. However, according to González-Agàpito, Marquès, Mayordomo, and Sureda (2002: 46), the “true organiser of educational renewal” in Catalonia was the educator Alexandre Galí (1886–1969), who “managed to offer Catalan teachers a doctrinal corpus that summarised the educational ideas of Noucentisme, the New Education movement, and nationalism.”

The first time the name Alexandre Galí appeared as an author in the QdE magazine was in the first issue, to present a section entitled ‘Ballets populars de Catalunya’ (Popular Dances in Catalonia). This section was the responsibility of Aureli Capmany (1868–1954), one of the most prominent Catalan folklorists at the time who specialised in popular music and dances, and in children's folklore. He was in contact with Italian educator Maria Montessori.¹⁴ In the 54 issues of the magazine that were published, one can find 8 long articles on popular dance and music by the folklorist Capmany. In his presentation, Galí stressed the importance of incorporating dance into schools. He stated that it formed part of what he called moral education: “Education in those activities of custom and recreation that the spirit also has, and that are the salt of life, that give the reason to live.”¹⁵ These are aspects that, according to him, had not been given sufficient attention by state education up to that point. Along with dance, Galí included elements such as play, outings, ceremony, and liturgy.

Unlike in the BEM, in the QdE magazine religion was not seen as opposing the task undertaken by the New Education movement. Instead, the Catholic religion occupied a predominant place in the configuration of this movement of educational renewal. In fact, the first long article in issue 1 of the magazine, published in November 1915, was entitled ‘Instruction and Preparation of the Faithful in Schools to Take Part in the Liturgy’. These were educational recommendations to instruct children in Catholicism. The article was by Anna Maccheroni, an Italian teacher and collaborator of Maria Montessori whom the Barcelona Provincial Council hired to apply the Montessori

¹⁴ On the relationship between Aureli Capmany and Maria Montessori, see Roma (2018) and Pujol (2018).

¹⁵ Galí, A. 1915, November. La dança a l'escola. *QdE* Year 1 (Vol. 1, No. 1): 31.

method in their schools. Indeed, the educational renewal movement represented by Dewey or Montessori did not see any disassociation between science and religion, in contrast to the postulates of rationalist education. In the QdE issue corresponding to December 1917, we can find ‘My Pedagogical Creed’ by John Dewey, which is an extensive compilation of the main points of his pedagogical thinking. The last point stated: “I believe that in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God.”¹⁶ To give a final example of this, in the issue of February 1918 an article was published on the pedagogy of the *Old Testament* in which it was concluded that God, when He created the World, “moulded himself to the ways of speaking, thinking and feeling of men, and thus proceeded in a fully pedagogical manner.”¹⁷ The Lord is presented here as the first teacher, the model or the guide of the New Education movement.

Over the eight years of existence of this magazine, articles were published on children’s songs, dances, fables, almanacs and other expressions of traditional Catalan culture. Beyond enlightening the readers on certain themes, these articles transmitted a very specific idea of the culture and values they wanted to promote. For example, an article on the Colla castellera els Xiquets de Valls (a folkloric group dedicated to the construction of human towers) explained in detail the formation of human towers, the musical compositions that accompanied them, the specific vocabulary, the clothing, etc. The article was based on a speech by the president of the Mancomunitat de Catalunya, Prat de la Riba, according to which “individuals of different nationalities have different characteristics.” Then, it presented the tradition of building human towers or dancing *sardanas* (a traditional dance that is characteristic of the region) as an expression of the Catalan character: “These are the customs of peoples and also the product of the preferences of their inhabitants [...] and thus Aragón has ended up with the *jota* and Catalonia with the *sardana*.”¹⁸ Here we can see that certain elements were selected and others rejected to construct a “Catalan character”, to use Prat de la Riba’s terminology. Some forms of musical expression that were present in rural areas of Catalonia in the period were excluded. For example, the *jota* dance was systematically ignored by Catalan folklorists of this time, as they considered that it was from another place, alien to Catalan tradition (Flores, 2021). There was a preference for specific elements of folklore such as *sardanas* or human towers that, in accordance with the principles of Noucentisme, situated the distant origin of these traditions in Greek mythology when, according to the cited article, the Titans erected human towers to try to storm the palaces of the gods. Indeed, Classicism was one of the aesthetic pillars of Noucentisme.

¹⁶ Dewey, J. 1917, December. El meu credo pedagògic. *QdE* Year 3 (Vol. 1, No. 3): 252–259.

¹⁷ La pedagogía del Antiguo Testamento. 1918, December. *QdE* Year 3 (Vol. 1, No. 3): 252–259.

¹⁸ Ballester, F. 1920, January. Els xiquets de Valls. *QdE* Year 5 (Vol. 1, No. 2): 145–168.

One can also find in issues of QdE reviews of books on popular architecture or on children's stories, for example. These articles used an approach to tradition that was in full harmony with the phase of institutionalisation of folklore that took place in Catalonia during this period (Prats, Llopart, Prat, 1982: 60).

Among all the topics, that which recurred most regularly was folklorist Aureli Capmany's section on popular dances, which contained long articles accompanied by the corresponding harmonisation and illustrations. These were written by well-known folklorists of the period, such as Joan Llongueras and Apel·les Maestres. One of these articles shows photographs of 5- and 6-year-old students at a school of Barcelona in 1916, dancing *L'hereu Riera* (The Heir Riera). Capmany wrote about the piece: "This dance is a marvellous creation of our popular knowledge offered by Catalan folklore, as in it there are an unsurpassable number of educational elements, which are of great use for teaching rhythm, sound, and movement."¹⁹ In line with the aesthetic principles of Noucentisme, the origin of these popular Catalan dances is situated in Classical Greece. For example, the *Ballet de Déu* (Ballet of God) is executed "with an order of symmetry", where "we find the principle of aesthetics that was called *Orquestrica* by the Greek people."²⁰ The pedagogical importance attributed to traditional dances can also be seen in the teacher training courses organised by the Education Council. Along with the history of art, Latin, and geology, they included courses on traditional Catalan dances by the folklorist Capmany.

To summarize, the QdE magazine presents the formulation of an educational proposal in which the renewal of school practice involved incorporating Catalan culture focused on the tradition expressed in Catalan folklore, the principles of nationalism, and the aesthetic ideals of Noucentisme. As we can see, this pedagogical proposal is conceptually opposed to that formulated in the BEM in the way tradition is understood.

School and tradition, between agitation and redemption

The educational renewal that took place in the first third of the 20th century in Spain is a topic that has been studied extensively by authors such as Soler (2009), Pericacho (2014), or Esteban (2016), among others. All of them highlighted the structural shortfalls in the school environment at the start of the century, in particular in state schools due to the lack of educational infrastructure and the enormous limitations of an educational method that was basically authoritarian and based on rote learning. In addition, much has been said about the arrival in Spain of new educational trends from Europe thanks to the New Education movement, and how this represented a breath of fresh air. I have

¹⁹ Capmany, A. 1917, May. Ballet de l'Hereu Riera o dels Balls de Bastons. *QdE* Year 2 (Vol. 2, No. 4): 353–367.

²⁰ Capmany, A. 1917, March. El ballet de Déu. *QdE* Year 2 (Vol. 2, No. 2): 167–181.

focused on a specific aspect – the question of tradition, its rejection, and its utilisation – to understand the use and political significance of tradition in schools.

A comparison of articles published in the BEM and the QdE, two emblematic magazines from this episode in the history of education in Catalonia, revealed very few similarities. The exception is the negative opinion of non-Western cultures, called savage or primitive, that is found in both magazines. In addition, both show a fascination with social Darwinism, eugenics and authors who promote these theories. Apart from this point, the two publications contain a diametrically opposed view of tradition. What is the reason for this divergence?

The rationalist education promoted by Ferrer in the Modern School was in tune with the anticlerical sentiment that had been forged among the popular classes of Barcelona – at least since the Carlist Wars of the 19th century – and whose relationship with the educational world has not been studied extensively. Significantly, unease and popular revolt were aimed directly at religious schools on two very important occasions in historical terms. The first was the luddite revolt that took place in July 1835 in Barcelona. It went down in history because the Vapor Bonaplata, the most important textile factory in Spain in that period, was torched and destroyed. Prior to the fire in the factory, various convents in the city burned down. They had all been operating as primary schools in the previous years. After the Napoleonic occupation of Barcelona (1808–1814), the Spanish monarchy approved a Royal Decree that encouraged religious orders for men to create free schools to educate the children of Barcelona in the observance of Catholic faith. These orders were entrusted with tightening up customs that had been relaxed due to the French incursion, as stated in the Royal Decree. A clear relationship can be seen between the popular anticlerical wave and the educational activity of religious orders. As historians noted, “all the convents where classes had been given for free during the period after the Napoleonic war, were attacked on the night of 25 July 1835” (Roca, Miquel, 2021: 81).

Religious schools were again the main target of a popular revolt during the events of the Tragic Week in Barcelona (or the “Glorious Week”, according to the anarchist press of the period) in summer 1909. This revolt cost Ferrer his life. He was accused, with no evidence, of being the instigator and thus became a martyr of the international libertarian cause. During this week of protests against the sending of reservist troops to the War of Melilla (north of Morocco), 56 religious establishments were torched, of which 16 were schools (Termes, 2011: 222). Historian Xavier Diez maintains that among the originators of the fires of 1909 were many former pupils of these religious schools, who acted out of a desire for revenge for the violence, punishments and humiliations they had suffered during their childhood schooling there (Diez, 2010: 89). In addition, in the anarchist ideology, education and insurrection went hand in hand. As Ferran Aisa stated in his book on anarchist culture in Catalonia: “At the turn of the century, anarchism had two main concerns: education, which would enlighten the

workers, and general strike, with which emancipation would be achieved” (Aisa, 2006: 28). Notably, Ferrer was not only behind the *Boletín de la Escuela Moderna*. Between 1901 and 1903 he also funded and ran the newspaper *La Huelga General* (The General Strike; Marín, Martí, 2021: 64).

As is shown in this article, at the start of the 20th century two opposite ideologies coincided in Catalonia that considered education a key element in their respective projects. On the one hand, in 1910 the anarchist syndicate Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT; National Confederation of Labour) was founded in Barcelona. This was the result of decades of anarchist and syndicalist organisation and struggle, led by the working class. The CNT was the main union in Spain until the war of 1936–1939. On the other hand, in 1914 the Mancomunitat de Catalunya was created. This was also the culmination of decades of organisation of the Catalan nationalist movement, led by the bourgeoisie. In 1901, the same year that Ferrer opened the first Modern School, a Catalan nationalist, conservative party was founded, the Lliga Regionalista de Catalunya. This party was in power in Catalonia during the first two decades of the century and managed to force the Spanish Government to transfer a certain degree of political autonomy to Catalonia with the creation of the Mancomunitat. Therefore, the political context in which educational renewal took place in Catalonia was marked by two opposing ideological poles. One was led by the workers’ movement, in which anarchism was hegemonic. The other was driven by the bourgeoisie and led by the politicians and intellectuals of the Noucentisme.

At this point, it would be interesting to consider an idea proposed by the historians of education González-Agàpito, Marquès, Mayordomo, and Sureda (2002), according to which the events of the Tragic Week acted as a fuse for the Noucentisme project of educational renewal. These revolutionary events set off all alarms among the Catalan bourgeoisie and explain to a great extent the impetus received by the Mancomunitat’s educational programme. According to the cited authors:

The aim was to achieve a school that was effective in moral, civic, and democratic education. This need was accentuated after the Tragic Week. Indeed, the events of July 1909 were crucial to emphasise the educational aspect of the Noucentisme in general and of the bourgeoisie in particular, which would provide clear support for educational renewal. (González-Agàpito, Marquès, Mayordomo, Sureda, 2002: 40)

The aim of the Mancomunitat’s president Prat de la Riba was to use schools to transform society and the urban working class, to make them “good citizens” according to the terminology of the era, and to try to distance in this way the spectre of social revolution after the Tragic Week. In fact, the Mancomunitat’s political and cultural project was the culmination of a process that began in the 19th century, during which,

as shown by historian Josep M. Fradera, it began “to be defined what Catalan society was and what it should be, in accordance with, and in terms acceptable to, the bourgeois conscience” (Fradera, 1992: 125). This is where schools would play a fundamental role.

Conclusion

In this article, I have analysed two projects that were ambitious in their intent to renew the educational landscape of Catalonia. They shared the same general objective: to change society through schools. However, their aims were diametrically opposite: in one case the aim was to mobilise the working class, and in the other to redeem it through bourgeois education. This could explain the contrary use of the meaning given to tradition in both projects. For the rationalist educators, tradition was an impediment to implementing their project of creating a new society, one with no public presence of religion and without differentiation between social classes. In contrast, for the Education Council educators, tradition was a tool to create good citizens in accordance with a bourgeois, Christian view.

However, the fact that rationalist educators foreswore tradition, that the teacher Clémence Jacquinet said that they should not teach proverbs, or the folklorist Cels Gomis considered that young rural people should forget the magical stories of their grandparents, did not mean that elements of popular culture and tradition were absent from the daily life of teachers and students in rationalist schools. Some testimonies from rationalist schools of the period after the closure of the Modern School, following the death of Ferrer, attest to this. For example, the anarchist teacher Félix Carrasquer stated that in 1938, in the midst of the Spanish War, to overcome their fear during night bombardments, Republican children who were taken in at a school colony in Llançà (a small town on the Catalan coast) sang “songs of our folklore, particularly the very melodious ones of the Catalan region” (Carrasquer, 2015: 175). Or as Josep Peirats explained in his book on Emma Goldman,²¹ when she visited the school colony Món Nou (New World) in the Pyrenees close to the border with France, in autumn 1938, she was welcomed with a party in her honour, during which “*sardanas* and other classical dances of the region were played” (Peirats, 1978: 278). Given these examples, we should be able to distinguish between tradition as an element creating distance from modernity and rationalism, and tradition as an expression of living popular culture.

In fact, Ferrer and his Modern School soon became part of the revolutionary tradition. For example, during the Republican exile in France, the magazine *La Espagne*

²¹ This episode is described in Giacomoni (2018: 198). It was also referred to by Emma Goldman in her book on the Spanish War (2006: 117–118). Goldman was one of the people who introduced the legacy of Ferrer in the United States. Along with Dewey and others, she founded the Ferrer Association of New York in 1910 (Döllner, Nubiola, 2021).

republicaine (Republican Spain; 1945–1949) was published in Toulouse, when the hope of the liberation of fascist Spain by Western democratic powers and the return of the Republicans began to melt away. Aisa (2006: 202) noted that in issue 5 of this magazine there is an article by journalist Màrius Aguilar on the revolutionary tradition that reads: “One afternoon, in the dining rooms of Can Tunis I heard, in the distance, a traditional song dated thirty years ago but *made into tradition* [my italics]: In the tower of Montjuïc / is a black flag / with letters that read: / Long live the Modern School!” In this song, “made into tradition” refers to the episode of the execution of Ferrer at Montjuïc Castle in the autumn of 1909.

Throughout contemporary history, revolutionary movements have maintained a complex relationship with tradition, which is usually associated with conservative or reactionary ideologies. Marx’s opposition to embracing revolutionary tradition is known. He defined as oppressive the cult of past generations and their struggles (Straehle, 2020: 49). Nevertheless, revolutionary processes also create tradition for the coming generations. For example, the Paris Commune of 1871 generated tradition for all subsequent proletarian revolutions. According to anarchist leader and Minister of Health in the Spanish Republic, Frederica Montseny (2006: 25), it was a “symbol of eternity” in the midst of the social revolution and war in 1938. Some revolutionary processes have been carried out with a focus on tradition; revolutionary tradition, of course, but also tradition that is not so revolutionary. The most paradigmatic example is the French revolution, which was imbued with Greek-Roman myths and constantly used a traditional and sacralised language (Terradas, 1990). Revolutionary processes do not have an unambiguous, unequivocal position with respect to tradition. Sometimes they reject it. On other occasions they are reflected in it, and sometimes they even create new traditions.

In the case of the Modern School, its anti-tradition position should be attributed more to a question of disenchantment, in Max Weber’s terms, than an ideological animosity to tradition and folklore per se. In the case of the Educations Council schools, which in their way tried to modernise and revolutionise the educational landscape of the country, tradition was taken as a guide to follow in progressing the project of social regeneration through schools. All of these schools, of all types, would be taken as references in a new wave of educational renewal in Spain after the end of Franco’s dictatorship and during the Democratic Transition (1975–1978), which was known as the “second wave of educational renewal” (Pericacho, 2014). They are still taken as references today. They form part of a school tradition that seeks to change society by teaching in childhood some principles that do not differ much from those formulated by educators at the start of the 20th century. In this respect, we could consider tradition outside the traditionalist or conservative framework. Herein, I aimed to address the ambivalent, contradictory, conflictive relationship between tradition and the promoters of educational renewal in Catalonia at the start of the twentieth century, to show that even anti-traditionalism can form part of tradition.

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Tradicija in antitradicija v katalonskih šolah na začetku dvajsetega stoletja

Od začetka 20. stoletja, zlasti pa v medvojnem obdobju, se je v Evropi in Ameriki pojavilo izobraževalno gibanje, poznano kot Education nouvelle, Novo izobraževanje ali Nova šola, ki si je prizadevalo preseči staro avtoritarno šolstvo, ki je temeljilo na pifljanju. Med njegovimi najbolj znanimi predstavniki so bili Paul Robin v Franciji, Maria Montessori v Italiji, John Dewey v ZDA in Francesco Ferrer v Španiji. Ferrer je leta 1901 v Barceloni ustanovil Sodobno šolo (Escuela Moderna), ki je bila ena od paradigmatičnih šol tega

gibanja. Kakor je razvidno iz spisov Ferrerja in drugih učiteljev, je bila ena od značilnosti te šole zavračanje elementov tradicionalne kulture v šoli, saj je pri racionalnem izobraževanju otrok tradicija veljala za oviro napredku. Ta članek predstavlja analizo o vlogi tradicionalne kulture v gibanju prenove izobraževanja na začetku 20. stoletja v Kataloniji.

Sodobna šola ni bila edina pobuda tega gibanja v Kataloniji. Nasprotno, v Barceloni se je gibanju za novo izobraževanje rodilo več pedagoških predlogov, ki so se med seboj zelo razlikovali. Avtor se osredinja na dva paradigmska predloga katalonskega gibanja za novo izobraževanje, da bi preučil nasprotje v načinu pojmovanja tradicije v šolskem okolju. Na eni strani je omenjena Ferrerjeva Sodobna šola, na drugi pa šole, ki jih je spodbujala katalonska regionalna vlada pod vodstvom konservativnega in nacionalističnega meščanstva; to je v gibanju Novo izobraževanje videlo glavno orodje svojega političnega in kulturnega projekta. Delovalo je v okviru estetskega gibanja, poznanega kot Noucentisme, ki je temeljilo na načelih klasicizma, urbanosti in modernosti.

Da bi analizirali mesto tradicije v teh dveh izobraževalnih predlogih z začetka 20. stoletja, je avtor analiziral reviji, ki sta bili glasnika teh dveh gibanj: *Boletín de la Escuela de Moderna* (Bilten Sodobne šole) in *Quaderns d'Estudi* (Študijski zvezki). Analiza je pokazala, da je bila za vzgojitelje in učitelje, ki so objavljali v *Boletín de la Escuela Moderna*, tradicija breme, ki se ga je bilo treba znebiti, da bi lahko napredovali pri projektu uvajanja racionalnega izobraževanja. Nasprotno pa so vzgojitelji in učitelji, ki so objavljali v *Quaderns d'Estudi*, ki jo je izdajal Pedagoški svet katalonske vlade, v tradiciji videli instrument za vzgojo dobrih državljanov v skladu z meščansko moralo. Podrobnejša analiza razkriva ideološko razsežnost obeh izobraževalnih projektov. Medtem ko je bil namen prvega pristopa spodbujati revolucionarne družbene spremembe, je bil namen drugega omogočiti mestnemu delavstvu, da se odmakne od družbenih pretresov, ki so prežemali takratni zgodovinski trenutek. Od tod tudi različna vloga tradicije v obeh pedagoških projektih.

Namen članka je primerjati dve sočasni viziji tradicije, njuno uporabo in zavračanje. Na koncu je obravnavana možnost ponovnega premisleka tradicije onkraj spoprijema med revolucionarji in konservativci oziroma med antitradicionalisti in tradicionalisti.

SKRB ZA KRAJINE



CARE FOR LANDSCAPES

Za kaj skrbimo, ko skrbimo za krajino?: toponimi, ovce in ruševine na severovzhodni Islandiji

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Prispevek se vprašanju skrbi za krajino približa iz treh prepletenih etnografskih izhodišč, ki jih druži dejstvo, da so tesno povezana z ovčerejo: (mikro)toponimov oziroma poimenovanja krajine, ohranjanja zelenega videza krajine ter zapuščenih krajinskih elementov in ruševin na severovzhodu Islandije. Prispevek prikaže, da skrb za krajino združuje tako sporazumevalne oziroma govorne vidike kot tudi prakse in percepcije – da torej sega tako na jezikovne, materialne, zaznavne in druge razsežnosti krajine.

▪ **Ključne besede:** krajina, skrb za krajino, ovčereja, ruševine, zapuščeni kraji, toponimi, Islandija

The article approaches the questions of care for the landscape through three intertwined ethnographic perspectives, related through the fact that they are closely bound with sheep farming: (micro)toponyms or landscape nomenclature, the preservation of the desired appearance of the landscape, and the abandoned elements of the landscape and ruins in the northeast of Iceland. The contribution demonstrates that landscape preservation encompasses both communicative or linguistic aspects, as well as practices and perceptions – thus including the areas of linguistic, material, perceptual, and other dimensions of the landscape.

▪ **Keywords:** landscape, care for landscape, sheep farming, ruins, abandoned places, toponyms, Iceland

Uvod

Za kaj skrbimo, ko skrbimo za krajino? V prispevku se bom temu vprašanju približala iz treh etnografsko utemeljenih izhodišč. Prvo se nanaša na jezikovno oziroma sporazumevalno raven, ki se razkriva s poznavanjem (mikro)toponimov. Skrb za krajino bom torej v prvem sklopu uokvirila v poimenovanje krajine in krajinskih elementov, pri čemer se bom oprla predvsem na Bassovo (1988) koncipiranje govora o krajini. Drugo izhodišče je povezano z videzom krajine (Benediktsson, 2007), kjer kot nasprotujoča si krajinska elementa poudarjam ovce in drevesa. Pri tem se opiram predvsem na percepcijo krajine, ki jo sodoločajo tako zgodovinske in kulturne predstave o nacionalni krajini (gl. Kučan, 1998) kot tudi specifične prakse v krajini, npr. pašna ovčereja in pogozdovanje, ter procesi erozije in degradacije prsti. V zadnjem sklopu, ki se opira na koncipiranje praznine in praznjenja podeželja antropologinje Dace Dzenovske (2020), je obravnavano vprašanje zapuščenih krajinskih elementov, ki jih v naslovu imenujem ruševine, četudi se v prispevku dotaknem tudi zapuščenih objektov, ki (še) niso ruševine.

Če prva dva sklopa skrb za krajino opredeljujeta kot ohranjanje, vzdrževanje zaželenega stanja krajine in njenega poznavanja, se opuščanje sprva zdi temu ohranjanju nasprotno. A na podlagi predstavljenega etnografskega gradiva je mogoče sklepati, da so tudi zapuščeni elementi krajine vsaj deloma vključeni v prakse in percepcije ohranjanja krajine in skrbi zanjo. Skrb za krajine lahko torej razumemo tudi kot razreševanje protislovja časovnosti krajine, zaznamovane s kontinuitetami in zatoni, z ohranjanjem in razpadanjem.¹ Kakor bo razvidno iz primera ohranjanja imen opuščениh kmetij, se namreč ohranja tudi tisto, kar ni več podvrženo (primarni) skrbi. Poleg omenjenega protislovja drugi vidik časovnosti v skrbi za krajine temelji na izhodišču, da so prostorske in jezikovne prakse pogosto utemeljene na imperativu preteklosti – ohranjanje »tipične« krajine ali poznavanje (mikro)toponimov predstavlja vzdrževanje kontinuitete videza, agrarnih praks in krajinskega besedišča. A ravno to delovanje, skrb za krajino, ali, če si sposodimo sintagmo antropologinje Amande Hilton (2022), »prakse skrbi« (*praxis of care*) – seveda postavljeno v sedanost – se dogaja z mislijo na ohranjanje, ki je zazrto v prihodnost. Oziroma, kakor na primeru Solčavskega ugotavlja Bajič (2023: 131), domačini, »ko se obračajo v preteklost, odpirajo prihodnost«. Ob tem pa, kakor bo razvidno v sklepnem delu, prebivalci v prakse in percepcije ohranjanja krajine vključujejo tudi tisto, kar je ohranjanju navadno nasprotno, saj je rezultat neskrbi – opuščene kmetije, šole, naselje in celo ruševine letala.

Prispevek temelji na večmesečni etnografski raziskavi, ki sem jo za doktorski študij opravila leta 2019 na severovzhodu Islandije. Pri raziskovanju sem uporabljala klasične etnografske raziskovalne metode, kot so neformalni pogovori, polstrukturirani intervjuji in opazovanje z udeležbo. Pri tem so na mojo vlogo raziskovalke vplivali tudi drugi položaji: prve mesece sem kot prostovoljka delala v osnovni šoli v vasi Þórshöfn, nato sem sodelovala pri občinskem urejanju okolice in koordinirala skupine mladih prostovoljcev, ki so prihajali na to območje v okviru mednarodnih prostovoljskih taborov. Vse te – kot tudi številne druge – vloge so vplivale na etnografske okoliščine in pogovore.² Sogovorniki, ki so v ospredju prispevka oziroma katerih izjave navajam, so odrasli kmetje in kmetice, ki živijo na severovzhodu Islandije in se ukvarjajo pretežno z ovčerejo. Osrednje etnografsko gradivo tega prispevka je bilo zbrano ob terenskih obiskih in s pogovori na devetih kmetijah. Na mestih, kjer opisujem etnografske primere ali pričevanja oseb, ki z ovčerejskimi praksami niso povezani, je to razvidno iz konteksta.

Lokacijsko sem se osredinjala na občini Langanesbyggð in Svalbarðshreppur. Občini sta bili že v času mojega terenskega dela zelo povezani, poleti 2022 pa sta se združili v eno administrativno enoto. Medtem ko je Svalbarðshreppur pretežno ovčerejska občina, ki jo sestavljajo posamične kmetije, sta v Langanesbyggðu dve naselji, Þórshöfn

¹ Antropologija časovnost krajine že dolgo postavlja v ospredje (Ingold, 1993; Bender, 2002), četudi ne neposredno v povezavi s skrbo.

² Podrobneje je to opisano v doktorski disertaciji (Svetel, 2022).

(približno 370 prebivalcev) in Bakkafjörður (približno 60 prebivalcev), preostali prebivalci pa so tudi v tej občini ovčerejci, živeči na razpršenih kmetijah. Na severnem delu Langanesbyggða se razprostirata polotoka Sauðanes in Langanes. Na slednjem so ruševine ribiškega naselja Skálar, ki ga obravnavam v sklepnem delu. V prispevku se sicer osredinjam predvsem na agrarni del prebivalstva in na ovčerejske prakse – vseeno pa velja omeniti, da se na obravnavanem območju ukvarjajo še z ribolovom in ribjepredelovalno industrijo – ribja tovarna je največji zaposlovalec v občini – ter, v manjši meri, s turizmom. Za območje raziskave pa je pomembna tudi subarktična lega, s kratkimi, blagimi poletji in mrzlimi zimami, ki jih sicer omili severnoatlantski tok, ter relativno omejenim številom rastlinskih in živalskih vrst. Severovzhodni del Islandije je v primerjavi z večino drugih delov otoka reliefno precej nizek in uravnan, pobočja so gola, kamnita ali obrasla z nizkim rastjem, zaselki in kmetije so predvsem ob morju ali pa v dolinah nekaj kilometrov proti notranjosti otoka. Območje je tudi izrazito vodnato.³

Poimenovanje krajine kot izhodišče skrbi zanjo

Med pogovori s prebivalci severovzhodne Islandije je bilo (včasih tudi implicitno) razvidno, da je izhodišče skrbi za krajino njeno poznavanje. Ovčereja, ki predvideva poletno prosto pašo živali na obsežnih, neposeljenih območjih,⁴ zahteva dobro poznavanje površja in njegovih časovnih spremenljivosti oziroma sezonskih ritmov (Olwig, 2005; Krause, 2013). Poznavanje krajine je utelešena, a tudi verbalizirana oziroma jezikovna praksa, kar se sklada z Bassovimi »komunikacijskimi dejanji topografske reprezentacije,« ki odstirajo »konceptualne instrumente, s katerimi domačini interpretirajo svojo naravno okolico« (Basso, 1988: 101). Obenem Basso poudarja, da se v govoru o krajini ne kaže zgolj zamišljanje krajine kot polja domišljije, temveč tudi percepcija lastnih načinov prisvajanja in udomačevanja prostorov:

Kajti kadar koli člani skupnosti govorijo o svoji krajini – kadar koli jo imenujejo, jo klasificirajo, jo ocenjujejo ali premikajo, o njej pripovedujejo

³ Mnogim pomembnim vprašanjem, povezanim s skrbjo za krajine na Islandiji, se zaradi omejenega vsebinskega in lokacijskega fokusa prispevka ne posvečam oziroma se jih dotaknem le deloma. Tako npr. ne obravnavam vprašanj geološke in geotermalne aktivnosti na otoku, izkoriščanja naravnih (vodnih, geotermalnih) virov in s tem povezanega energetskega in industrijskega razvoja, podnebne krize, kolikor vpliva na krajinske, npr. ledeniške, spremembe, prav tako ne obravnavam vulkanskih, potresnih in vremenskih nesreč in tveganj ter pravnih okvirov in državnih politik, ki upravljajo s krajinskimi, prostorskimi, agrarnimi, energetskimi in drugimi povezanimi sektorji. Za našete kontekste gl. npr. Huijbens, Benediktsson, 2007; Jónsson, 2009; Jóhannesdóttir, 2010; Berglund idr., 2013; Pálsson, Swanson, 2016; Howe, 2019; Maguire, 2020a, 2020b.

⁴ Na Islandiji se ovce poleti prosto pasejo, pri čemer se nekatere črede same, brez pastirjev ali posegov kmetov pomikajo tudi več deset kilometrov v nenaseljeno notranjost otoka.

zgodbe – jo nezavedno predstavljajo na načine, ki so v skladu s skupnim razumevanjem, kako jo sami celovito naseljujejo. (Basso, 1988: 101)

Kulturni zgodovinar Simon Halink (2014: 209) na primeru Islandije poudarja, da je »toponomija način, kako s tem, da prostore vključimo v pripoved, ustvarjamo neko specifično vrsto občutenja krajine.« Približevanje krajini z jezikom, torej v govoru, diskurzih, zapisih, pa tudi drugih registrih simbolnega, navsezadnje omogoča, da kot antropologi sploh lahko vstopimo ali uzremo tujo izkušnjo bivanja in upomenjanja krajine, četudi se ta jezikovni oziroma verbalni vidik morda zdi prostorskemu izkustvu (kot tudi nerepresentacijskim razsežnostim, afektivnim in atmosferskim relacijam ipd.) tuj in z njim zgolj posredno povezan (prim. Burenhult, Levison, 2008; Mark idr., 2011). Navidezne izvenjezikovnosti krajine, predvsem v perspektivi njene čutne kompleksnosti, se dotakne tudi Basso:

oblike, barve in obrisi krajine, skupaj s spreminjajočimi zvoki in kadenkami domorodnega diskurza, »šinejo« v prišleka s tako živo in neposredno silo, kot da se jim dobesedno ne da ubežati. Vendar se kljub čutni vseobsegajočnosti [...] zdita krajina in diskurz neomajno zunaj dosega drugega. (Basso, 1988: 99)

Pri pašnem gospodarjenju je osrednjega pomena komunikacija o krajini, ki omogoča natančen opis lokacij, opravljenih poti in specifičnih mest. Zato so se moji sogovorniki krajinskih imen bolj oddaljenih lokacij največkrat naučili v otroštvu in mladosti, ko so starše ali sorodnike spremljali na *réttirju* in tudi na drugih poteh po svojih posestvih. *Réttir* (oziroma *göngur og réttir*)⁵ je jesenski prigon ovac, ki navadno traja nekaj dni (za etnografsko analizo *réttirja* gl. Ögmundardóttir, 2011: 180–204). Pri njem načeloma sodeluje celotna ruralna skupnost, zajema pa dve fazi: v prvi (*göngur*) ovce iščejo in zbirajo v divjini, v drugi (*réttir*) pa jih v bližini kmetij razvrščajo po lastništvu in priganjajo domov. V času *réttirja* je življenjski prostor oziroma krajina, s katero kmetje vstopajo v interakcijo, izrazito razširjena. Hkrati gredo ob *réttirju* najdlje v notranjost načeloma tisti, ki jo najbolj poznajo. Tako je obseg znane krajine opredeljen z delom leta oziroma s kmetijskimi ritmi, pa tudi z družbenim položajem posameznika. Skrbnik kmetije in njegovi potomci – vsaj tisti, ki bo verjetni prevzemnik –, načeloma poznajo krajino v največjem obsegu. Poznajo pa jo predvsem zaradi gibanja in sposobnosti ustvarjanja zanesljive in varne poti – tako za jahače na *réttirju* kot za ovce. Pri tem vzorec iskanja narekuje konfiguracija krajine (Ögmundardóttir, 2011: 186).

⁵ Ker pa so moji sogovorniki, kakor je na severovzhodni Islandiji v navadi, o celotnem procesu govorili zgolj kot o *réttirju*, v prispevku uporabljam samo ta izraz.

Naloga odraslih je torej, da potomce natančno spoznajo s krajino – ne zgolj s premikanjem in ustvarjanjem poti po njej, temveč tudi z učenjem poimenovanja; to je namreč del vzgoje naslednikov, posebej bodočih prevzemnikov kmetije. Za uspešen prenos pa morajo nasledniki krajino zelo natančno (s)poznati, tako v smislu njenih fizičnih značilnosti, sezonske spremenljivosti terena kot tudi toponimov. Tega se spominja tudi Jóhanna,⁶ ki opisuje očetovo vztrajnost pri poučevanju o krajini:

Zanj je bilo zelo pomembno, da poznamo krajino, ime hriba, gore, reke, potokov in potočkov tukaj okoli. Jeseni, ko smo zbirali ovce in jih vodili domov, ni bilo dovolj reči: »Šel sem tja s konjem in pripeljal ovco.« Vprašal je: »Kam si šel? Kako dolga je bila pot? Čez kateri hrib si šel? Kateri potok si videl? Kje si se obrnil? Kje je bila ovca?« Moral si znati natančno povedati. Ni bilo dovolj reči: »Našel sem ovco, ki ne more hoditi.« »Kje je?« »Tam.« To ni bilo dovolj.

Podobna pričevanja sogovornikov navaja tudi okoljska antropologinja Helga Ögmundardóttir, ki je etnografsko raziskavo opravila v osrednjem in južnem delu otoka, v skupnosti Gnúpverjahreppur: »Moj oče je pogosto šel v gore, poznal je vsako grbino in povedal mi je imena krajev v krajini« (Ögmundardóttir, 2011: 180). Pri tem velja poudariti, da toponimi seveda niso zgolj uradna, na zemljevidih zapisana imena vrhov, jezer, zalivov, kmetij in drugih krajinskih elementov, temveč obstajajo številna lokalna krajinska poimenovanja, ki jih poznajo le prebivalci območja oziroma le tisti, ki so z območjem tesno povezani. Pogosto gre za dele krajine, ki so pomembni predvsem poleti, ko se življenjski prostor razširi, v času, ko se ovce prosto pasejo, in zgodaj jeseni, ko jih kmetje priženejo nazaj na kmetijo. Ta poimenovanja se, kot nakazujejo tudi Jóhannine besede, prenašajo v družini oziroma (navadno sorodstveni) skupnosti, ki sodeluje pri agrarnih opravilih. Mnogih lokalnih (mikro)toponimov tako ne poznajo niti prebivalci nekaj kilometrov oddaljenega Þórshöfn ali kmetij iz drugega dela občine.

Nekateri sogovorniki, ki so se na kmetije priselili kot odrasli, poudarjajo pomanjkanje natančnega poznavanja krajine in njenih (mikro)toponimov, predvsem bolj oddaljenih delov posestev, kamor zahajajo redko ali le enkrat letno, ob prigonu ovac. Emma, ki se je na kmetijo v Svalbarðshreppurju priselila ob poroki, se je bližnjih toponimov z leti seveda naučila, a na njihovem posestvu so tudi nekateri kraji, katerih imen ne pozna. So namreč predaleč, da bi jih dosegli na prostočasnih jahalnih turah ali drugih poteh, v času *réttirja*, pri katerem sodeluje na konju, pa ob sebi nima nikogar, ki bi tolmačil toponime oziroma ubesedoval krajino, saj se jahači razkropijo in ovce iščejo samostojno: »Seveda nas je nekaj [jahačev], ki zbiramo ovce, a nismo zelo blizu drug drugemu, tako da tam ne morem spraševati.« Pozneje razlaga:

⁶ Vsa osebna imena, uporabljena v prispevku, so psevdonimi.

Na naši kmetiji in v okolici je mnogo posebnih imen za določene prostore. Recimo majhna dolina s posebnim imenom, ki pa ga ni na zemljevidu, in samo domačini vedo, kaj je to in kje je. Še zdaj se tega nisem dobro naučila, verjetno bi morala veliko več spraševati, ko gremo recimo jahat. Vsakih petsto metrov bi morala vprašati, kje smo, kako se tukaj reče ... Verjetno nisem dovolj zagnana, da bi to storila.

Obenem pa lokalni prebivalci uporabljajo tudi imena, ki se razlikujejo od uradnih. Eno od vzpetin lokalno imenujejo Lítið fjall (Majhna gora), medtem ko se uradno imenuje Litla Kvígindisfjall, drugo, z uradnim imenom Stóra Kvígindisfjall, pa imenujejo Grímastaðafjall, ker je najbližja (opuščena) kmetija Grímsstaðir.⁷ V teh primerih nikoli ne uporabljajo uradnih imen.⁸ O bogastvu lokalnih ali celo mikrolokalnih toponimov razlaga Emma, rekoč, da je krajina v njihovi vsakdanji konverzaciji izredno »gosto« poimenovana:

Zelo pogosto gore ali vzpetine, tudi ko je ... ko so nižji deli krajine in potem malo višji del, greben, islandsko ás, no, je pa odvisno tudi od rastja. Lahko je ás, lahko pa je več drugih imen. Tudi male rečice, potoki in jezerca imajo svoja imena. Mislim, da ima skoraj vse svoje ime, ki ga ni na zemljevidu. Recimo mesto, kjer greš skozi ograjo na naši kmetiji, ima svoje ime. Za nas. Sosedje še vedo, v Þórshöfnu pa več ne. Pravimo mu Hala. Hali je rep živali in ker je vzpetina na treh koncih strma, samo tu, kjer jo prečka cesta, pa je dolga in ne tako strma. Torej ji rečemo rep gore. In tako našemu prehodu v ograji rečemo Na repu.

Ker so se (mikro)toponimov moji sogovorniki največkrat naučili med premikanjem po krajini (ježa, hoja, vožnja z motornimi sanmi, terenskimi vozili), je njihovo poznavanje (in poimenovanje) krajine zvezno, vpisano v potovanje, nanizano vzdolž poti (prim. de Certeau, 2007; Árnason idr., 2015; Ingold, 2015; Gregorič Bon, Repič, 2016). Obenem se, kot vidimo, lokalna poimenovanja pogosto razlikujejo od uradnih. Zaradi tega za nekatere sogovornike zemljevidi niso pomembni viri prostorskih oziroma krajinskih informacij. V tem je lahko tudi eden od razlogov za slabo branje zemljevidov. Emma se spominja, da se je množice mikrotoponimov na njihovi kmetiji skušala naučiti tako, da je pred možem Magnúsom razprla zemljevid in ga spraševala, kje je kaj, oziroma ga prosila, da ji na zemljevidu pokaže lokacije, o katerih je slišala.

⁷ Vzpetini Litla in Stóra Kvígindisfjall bi okvirno lahko prevedli kot Majhna oziroma Velika gora mladega goveda (Sigmundsson, 2014), Grímastaðafjall pa bi v približnem prevodu bila Gora kmetije Grímsstaðir.

⁸ Ob tem velja opozoriti, da imajo na Islandiji pri državnem geodetskem uradu aktivno službo za dopolnjevanje toponimov, tudi na podlagi oznak domačinov (Landmælingar Íslands, 2023). S toponimi pa se ukvarja tudi Oddelek za nomenklaturu pri osrednji nacionalni organizaciji za islandske študije, Inštitutu Arnja Magnússonar (Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, 2023).

In potem mi ni znal pokazati, ker ne zna brati zemljevida. Nikoli se ni naučil. Naučil se je iz krajine in ve: »Greš tja, tam je ta skala, potem tisto ...« Zato imam težave z učenjem. Navajena sem zemljevidov in nimam težav, če mi kdo s pomočjo karte razloži, kje je kaj. Kot par pa tega ne moreva ...

Natančno poimenovanje krajine, poznano le tistim, ki na nekem območju živijo, je v ruralni Islandiji dobro ohranjeno, ker je še zmeraj v rabi (gl. Casey, 1996). V krajini, ki je nevajenemu očesu relativno monotona, so krajinski elementi tudi opisno zelo natančno poimenovani. Da lahko kmetje iz Svalbarðshreppurja med seboj v času prigona ovac učinkovito komunicirajo, morajo seveda znati natančno locirati vsak kraj, tudi če tja le redko zaidejo. Pa tudi, če se Magnús sam odpravi na ježo, razlaga Emma, ji pove, kam bo šel in mimo katerih območij, »ker če se ne vrne, moram vedeti, kje je.« Seveda pa imajo imena tudi manj odročni deli krajine, ki so pogosteje v rabi. Emma pojasnjuje, da ima vsak njihov travnik⁹ ime, ki ga poznajo le oni in sosednji kmetje ter prijatelji – torej tisti, ki so vsaj občasno vključeni v konkretno, agrarno rabo krajine:

Vsi naši travniki, kjer dobivamo seno, imajo imena, povezana s takajšnjim rastjem ali lokacijo. Seveda so to samo naša imena, ni jih na zemljevidu, recimo eden od travnikov je Grjótás, kar pomeni malo višji del pokrajine z mnogo večjimi kamni. Ker ko so prvič tam naredili zaplato trave, je bilo veliko kamenja, in še vedno je. En travnik imamo ob robu gore, rečemo mu kar Gorski travnik. Sploh vse v naravi, kar je povezano z vodo, skalami ali višino, ima posebna imena. Povsod po Islandiji. Lokalno prebivalstvo ima svoja imena za vse to.

Poimenovanje tako dnevnega (bližnjega) kot tudi pretežno sezonskega (oddaljenega) življenjskega okolja je seveda del udomačevanja, naseljevanja krajine in skrbi zanjo. Emma pripoveduje, da so ta imena »med ljudmi zelo močno prisotna, pogosto jih uporabljajo. Zelo živa so.« Mnogi kmetje svoje ozemlje (in seveda tudi dela notranjosti otoka, ki je državna zemlja, a v rabi za poletno pašo) zelo natančno poznajo, saj se po njej premikajo in jo uporabljajo v agrarne namene. Poznavanje in poimenovanje različnih delov krajine, tako tistih v vsakdanji rabi kot tudi odročnejših, je zato temeljni vidik skrbi za krajino. Da se ohranja videz (in namembnost) »tipične« (severovzhodne) islandske podeželske krajine – pašna prostranstva, ograjeni travniki, majhna polja redkih pridelkov, ki uspevajo v subarktičnem okolju, pa tudi kmetijski objekti, mehanizacija, plastične bale in drugi, prav tako nepogrešljivi elementi krajine, kakor tudi živali, česar

⁹ Gre za območja, očiščena kamnov in grmičevja, kjer raste dovolj kakovostna trava, da jo lahko pokosijo in uporabijo za seno. Ta območja so načeloma ograjena, da ovce in druge živali, razen ptic, nimajo dostopa do njih.

se bomo dotaknili v nadaljevanju – prebivalci v tej krajini trajno aktivno (tudi verbalno in simbolno) delujejo in jo s tem seveda tudi preoblikujejo.

Zgovorno dejstvo je, da eno pomembnejših del o antropologiji krajine, ki se regionalno osredinja na severno Evropo oziroma predvsem na Islandijo in preprašuje dvojnost(i) krajine (Hirsch, 1995; gl. tudi Olwig, 1996, 2008; Baskar, 2004; Vranješ, 2005, 2008: 43–44; Benediktsson, 2007, 2008), nosi naslov *Conversations with Landscape* (2010). Katrín Anna Lund in Karl Benediktsson v uvodnem poglavju namreč opredelita pogovore (konverzacije) kot tisto, kar omogoča »pripoznanje več-kot-človeških značilnosti vseh pomembnih izmenjav, ki vključujejo ljudi in krajino« (2010: 1; prim. Widgren, 2004), hkrati pa ravno pogovori fokus razširjajo na več kot zgolj vizualno sestavino, na katero jo (lahko) omeji »pejsažistični pogled« (Baskar, 2004). Omenjeno delo nadaljuje možnost »srednje« poti (prim. Hirsch, 1995), ki pri preučevanju krajine upošteva tako fenomenološka kot strukturna izhodišča, subjektivne poglede kot objektivne danosti, tako singularno izkušnjo kot družbeni, kulturni in zgodovinski kontekst.

Za nas krajina implicira več-kot-človeško materialnost; konstelacijo naravnih oblik, ki so neodvisne od ljudi, vendar so tudi konstitutivni del procesov, s katerimi se ljudje preživljajo in s katerimi *razumejo* [poudarek A. S.] svoje lastno mesto v svetu. (Lund, Benediktsson, 2010: 1)

Govor o krajini avtorji knjige razumejo predvsem kot metaforo, ki služi kot izhodišče za rekonceptualizacijo krajine, medtem ko v našem primeru govor o krajini razumemo bolj dobesedno, predvsem v kontekstih lokalne toponimične kompetentosti prebivalcev. Ta sporazumevalna kompetenca pa ima jasno (družbeno) funkcijo – omogoča delovanje, izvajanje prostorskih praks (npr. za pašno ovčerejstvo osrednjega *réttirja*), ki soustvarjajo oziroma ohranjajo podobo krajine. Skratka, sogovorniki na severovzhodni Islandiji podrobno krajinsko (toponimično) znanje ne le generacijsko prenašajo ali si ga emotivno prisvajajo, temveč ga redno uporabljajo v svojih kmetijskih praksah. Prav te prakse pa utemeljujejo potrebo po natančnem poznavanju toponimov. A kam v to krožnost poimenovanja in rabe vstopa skrb za krajino? Zdi se, da sogovorniki za krajino skrbijo tako, da jo ohranjajo v (kmetijski) rabi, ta pa ohranja potrebo po podrobnem poimenovanju delov krajine. Obenem pa ravno utelešena in materializirana (agrarna) skrb ustvarja oziroma ohranja krajino v tistih vizualnih podobah, ki jih sogovorniki vrednotijo kot lepe, zaželene ali preprosto pravilne, čemur se bomo posvetili v nadaljevanju.



Slika 1: Bale na travnikih v bližini kmetije, Svalbarðshreppur, 15. 7. 2019. Foto: Ana Svetel.

Drevesa ali ovce – kaj sodi v krajino?

V prejšnjem razdelku smo se ukvarjali s poimenovanjem krajine in pokazali, da jo lahko razumemo kot del skrbi za krajino ne zgolj v simbolnih, temveč tudi v praktičnih vidikih. V družbenih razsežnostih pretežno ovčerejske severovzhodne Islandije se je to najizraziteje kazalo v času *réttirja*. Kot smo nakazali, gibanje oziroma paša ovac vpliva na toponimično in praktično poznavanje krajine (prim. Ögmundardóttir, 2011), vendar sogovorniki ovce dojemajo kot pomembne tudi pri vizualnih razsežnostih krajine. Tako so ovce, ki se kot nezamenljive, celo v glavni vlogi tega prispevka ves čas pojavljajo »v kadru«, tisti element krajine, ki ga velika večina sogovornikov poudarja kot zelo pomembnega pri vprašanju videza krajine. Ólafur je lastnik velike kmetije, črede ovac in konjev in ko ga obiščem v majhni kuhinji v zadnjem delu njegovega pokritega jahališča, mi na vprašanje, ali se mu krajina nikoli ne zazdi prazna, odgovori: »Saj ni. Veliko raje imam krajino z ovcami in konji kot krajino z drevesi.« Njegovo razumevanje, da so živali prav tako del krajine, kot bi bila drevesa, se pomenljivo sklada z antropološkim razumevanjem tega koncepta – krajina ni zgolj površje, temveč tudi vse, kar jo poseljuje, se skozi premika, jo preoblikuje, jo misli (prim. Ingold, 1993). Obenem pa njegove besede nakazujejo tudi širše – in na Islandiji žgoče – vprašanje (pogosto konfliktnega) razmerja med ovcami in drevesi (Benediktsson, 2010). Krajina, neporasla ali porasla z mahovi, travami in nizkim rastjem, kjer se pasejo ovce, je na severovzhodu (pa tudi marsikod drugod na otoku) razumljena kot nasprotje z drevesi

porasle krajine, ki onemogoča širok, prostran pogled. O vidljivosti, ki jo omogoča odsotnost dreves, je pisala tudi antropologinja Kirsten Hastrup:

[E]na izjemna značilnost islandske krajine je po vsej verjetnosti globoko zaznamovala občutek ljudi o njeni zgodovinski veličini, namreč njena široka vidljivost. [...] Islandci živijo v odprtem prostoru. Linije ozemlja so prostrane in nobeno drevo ne ovira pogleda. Obstajajo gore in doline, grebeni in kanjoni, a človek je vedno blizu veličastnega razgleda. [...] Prostranost in neporaščenost Islandije v kombinaciji s čistostjo zraka ustvarja občutek praznine, v kateri opazovalec težko meri razdaljo in višino. Zdi se, da razen časa ni nobenega merila, ki bi lahko določalo islandski prostor. (Hastrup, 2008: 60)

V času naselitve je bil otok sicer porasel z brezovimi gozdovi, ki pa so jih v prejšnjem tisočletju praktično popolnoma iztrebili zaradi rabe lesa, netrajnostne sečnje, pašne živinoreje in podnebnih sprememb. Podnebje se je na Islandiji namreč ohlajalo od 13., posebej intenzivno pa med 16. in 19. stoletjem (Ögmundardóttir, 2011: 142; Benediktsson, 2015: 143), kar je vplivalo na razširjanje ovčereje ter upad prašičereje in govedoreje. Ovčereja pa je dodatno prispevala k izginjanju dreves in drugega rastja ter posledično k eroziji in siromašenju prsti. Islandijo v 20. in 21. stoletju aktivno pogozdujejo – pri čemer ima pomembno vlogo zgodovinska oziroma skorajda etnomitska, tudi na sagah utemeljena (Oslund, 2002; Halink, 2014; Lethbridge, 2016) predstava o krajini v zlati dobi prvih stoletij po naselitvi. Prva islandska ženska predsednica Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, ki je bila na položaju med letoma 1980 in 1996, si je v svoji politični usmeritvi aktivno prizadevala tako za ohranjanje čistosti islandščine (pred tujkami in drugimi vplivi iz tujih jezikov) kot za vnovično pogozditev otoka (Björnsdóttir, 1996: 120; Benediktsson, 2015: 144). Ta pristop je bil zakoreninjen v prevladujočem ideološkem obzorju – tako jezik kot kulturo je treba kultivirati in ohranяти čisto in prvobitno (Pálsson, 1995), podobno pa velja tudi za krajino. To se sklada tudi z ugotovitvijo, da sta »[j]ezik in krajina enakovredni referenčni točki islandske identitete« (Hastrup, 2008: 57). Pri tem se kot mitični ideal postavlja čas sag, torej junaška prva stoletja naselitve.¹⁰ Vseeno pa se je ta orientacija v zadnjih petih desetletjih močno spremenila s priseljevanjem in drugimi kulturnimi vplivi, sploh v urbanih središčih (Reykjavik in okoliška naselja, Akureyri).

¹⁰ Na Islandiji so takoj ob neodvisnosti leta 1944 ustanovili Sklad za obnovo krajine, revegetacija pa je postala ena izmed kritičnih točk, ki so jih obravnavale okoljske politike novoustanovljene države. Leta 1974, ob 1000-letnici naselitve, pa so ustanovili sklad – njegovo ime bi lahko prevedli v Narodni dar (Þjóðargjöfin) –, ki je financiral projekte ponovnega pogozdovanja (Benediktsson, 2015: 144). Skrb za sedanje (in prihodnje) krajine se tako pogosto uokvirja v zgodovinske kontekste, predvsem v (zamišljene) krajine prvih stoletij po naselitvi.

Vprašanje pogozditve se kaže kot izrazito ambivalentno. Po eni strani je zaželeno, zaradi spopadanja z erozijo in osiromašenja prsti pa percipirano tudi kot pomemben korak pri »rehabilitaciji« površčja. Po drugi strani pa je neporasla krajina v očeh številnih sogovornikov zelo zaželeno, celo idealna. Pri tem omenjajo predvsem vidljivost. Neporasla krajina jim, kot trdijo, omogoča *videti*.

To čutno razsežnost so poudarjali skoraj vsi moji sogovorniki na severovzhodni Islandiji. Številni primerjajo svoje območje s prostori, kjer so nekdaj živeli ali jih obiskali. Sigurður npr. pove: *»Ko sem bil na Švedskem, sem lahko vozil nekaj sto kilometrov in nisem videl ničesar, ker je bil sam gozd. Morda nekaj kmetij, potem pa samo drevesa. Ljubše mi je tukaj, ker lahko vidim.«* Podobno pove tudi Teitur: *»Tako navajen sem, da ni dreves, da mi je všeč. Mislim, da ljudje sadijo preveč dreves. Nočem imeti dreves povsod, ker želim imeti razgled.«* Ko Hjálmríður vprašam o drevesih, mi pokaže na vrt, kjer raste nekaj drobnih drevesc, in reče: *»Skušam posaditi kakšno.«* Nekaj dreves na vrtu je pogosta praksa, a mnogi poudarjajo, da imajo v bližini hiše sicer radi drevo, vseeno pa imajo raje nepogozdeno krajino, kar kaže tudi Hjálmríðurino pojasnilo, zakaj ne želi, da bi zraslo več dreves: *»Ker rada vidim. Rada vidim morje in gore v daljavi ... Moram videti ocean. Mislim, da se ne bi dobro počutila, če ga ne bi videla. Ali gorá.«* Le na dveh kmetijah,¹¹ ki sem ju obiskala med raziskavo, pa so sadili drevesa in bili na uspeh tudi precej ponosni. Dejstvo, da so drevesa na otoku zvečine nizka in drobna, ponazarja tudi šala, ki mi jo je povedala neka sogovornica: *»Kaj storiš, če se izgubiš v gozdu? Vstaneš in se razgledaš naokoli.«*

V vasi Þórshöfn pa skušajo zasaditi z drevesi nekatere predele na občinskih površinah. Naloga, da z drevesi zamejijo eno stran kampa,¹² je pripadla tudi skupini prostovoljcev, mladih iz različnih delov sveta, katerih delo sem usklajevala julija 2019. Dostavili so nam sadike drevesc, a nihče od zaposlenih, niti moj nadrejeni, ni vedel, kako globoko jih saditi in kakšen je pravzaprav postopek. *»Ti boš vedela,«* je rekel in omenil, da sem iz države, kjer očitno znamo z drevesi. Medtem ko so prostovoljci sadili drevesa, mi je nekaj mimoidočih domačinov zatrdilo, da se rastline zagotovo ne bodo prijete, ker jih bo polomilo ali izruvalo prvo neurje. Ko sem o teh pripombah govorila z nadrejenim in ga vprašala, ali lahko drevesca kako zaščitimo, je dejal, naj jih preprosto posadimo čim več, da bo morda kakšno preživel. Iz tega lahko sklepamo, da so drevesa pri mnogih domačinih razumljena kot tujek, ki brez človeškega truda ne bo preživel. Morda pa tudi z njim ne. Obenem primer kaže tudi na različne modalnosti skrbi, ki jo uresničujejo po eni strani skrbno premišljene in izvedene ovčerejske prostorske prakse in po drugi veliko bolj naključjem prepuščeni načini sajenja dreves. Skrb za krajino lahko tako bolj niansirano uzremo tudi z vidika različno habituiranih ter gospodarsko in kulturno prepoznanih prioritet.

¹¹ Na eni živi islandsko-nizozemska družina.

¹² Gre za majhen kamp na robu vasi Þórshöfn, nudi le osnovno infrastrukturo.

Razlika v tem, kako resno ljudje jemljejo določene prostorske prakse oziroma kako pozorno se jih lotevajo, temelji tudi na zamislih o idealni krajini nekega okolja oziroma njenega videza. V našem primeru gre torej za (zgodovinsko uokvirjeno, pa tudi zamišljeno) podobo Islandije kot neporaščene dežele, kjer pogleda ne omejuje nič, razen vzpetin. Po drugi strani pa resnost načrtovanja in uresničevanja prostorskih praks temelji tudi na predstavah o Islandiji kot deželi, kjer je ovčereja središčna (narodotvorna) dejavnost, ki se je ideološko utrdila kot nasprotje tujim, kolonialnim (danskim), sodobnim, urbanim procesom (Pálsson, 1991) in ki je, za razliko od dreves, deležna vsakdanje, osrednje skrbi mojih sogovornikov. Seveda je pri tem nespregledljiv ekonomski vidik – za kmete severovzhodne Islandije so ovčje črede osrednji vir prihodka. Če bi se ovce pri *réttingu* izgubile ali poškodovale, bi to neposredno vplivalo na dohodke kmetije. A skrb za živali je bila med sogovorniki uokvirjena tudi v mnoge druge vidike, vključno s simbolnimi, povezanimi s predstavami o dobrem gospodarju, o veččem skrbniku črede, o poznavalcu sezonskih in vremenskih odtenkov okolja. Med krajino, ovcami, drevesi, prstjo in ljudmi lahko vidimo preplet kompleksnih ekoloških razmerij – gre za tisto, kar pri skrbi v kontekstu interakcij med človekom in okoljem Amanda Hilton (2022: 266) imenuje »ohranjanje mrež relacijskosti, v katerih živimo in iz katerih lahko črpamo preživetje.«

Vendar v našem primeru pri »konfliktu«¹³ oziroma izključujočnosti ovac na eni in dreves na drugi strani trčimo na paradoks. Paradoks ovčereje se namreč skriva v dejstvu, da je prav ta – predvsem v preteklosti, ko so se živali navadno pasle na prostem celo leto – pomembno prispevala k eroziji, degradaciji prsti in siromašenju rastja (Aldred, 2008: 303; Benediktsson, 2010: 179–180; Ögmundardóttir, 2011: 82–85, 149; Þórhallsdóttir, Júlíusson, Ögmundardóttir, 2013). Država se je z vsem tem spopadala v prejšnjih stoletjih in se še danes (Arnalds, 2005). Ovce so namreč popasle drobno rastje prehitro, da bi to sploh lahko zraslo. Poraščenost krajine se je krčila, brez rastja pa je veter hitro razpihal zgornje plasti prsti. Erozijski grebeni (*rofabarð*) so ena glavnih krajin-skih sprememb, ki danes vplivajo tako na reguliranje kmetijstva, predvsem ovčereje, kot tudi na pogozdovanje in politiko glede tujerodnih invazivnih rastlin, predvsem volčjega boba (*lúpína*), ki so ga leta 1945 prinesli z Aljaske prav zato, da bi zajezili degradacijo prsti in povrnili rastje (Benediktsson, 2015). Dodatno razsežnost pa prispeva tudi videz značilne islandske krajine (Oslund, 2002; Hastrup, 2008). Puste, skoraj puščavske krajine in gola pobočja ali ravnice, ki pričajo o dolgotrajnih procesih siromašenja tal in erozije (Arnalds idr., 2001), ki jih je v veliki meri pospešila preintenzivna pašna živinoreja – ravno ta agrarni način življenja, ki se v razmerjih med prebivalci severovzhodne Islandije in njihovim okoljem kaže kot najpomembnejši in ki je v nacionalnih percepcijah najbolj prvobitno, avtentično in čisto »islandski« (Ögmundardóttir, 2011: 132) –, pa v

¹³ Sobivanje dreves in ovc je lahko težavno tudi zato, ker ovce poleti, v času proste paše, drevesa, če niso ograjena in dokler ne zrastejo, popasejo do te mere, da se posušijo – (ne)sobivanje ovc in dreves je privedlo tudi že do sodnih sporov.

turističnem pogledu (Urry, 1990) veljajo za estetske in eksotične (Sæþórsdóttir, 2010; Karlsdóttir, 2013; Loftsdóttir, 2015). Sublimna lepota takšnih krajin presega turistično uokvirjen kontekst (Sigurjónsdóttir, 2008; Brady, 2010; Jóhannesdóttir, 2010). V tem okviru lahko skrb za krajine, spremenjene zaradi erozije ter siromašenja prsti in rastja, razumemo tudi skozi prizmo krhkosti, ki »deluje kot estetska kategorija, tj. preplet specifičnih percepcij in diskurzov« (Bajič, 2023: 118; prim. Árnason, 2010: 88), hkrati pa nakazuje ogroženost in potrebo po zaščiti oziroma skrbi.

Namesto sklepa: skrb za ruševine in zapuščeno

Prazna, gola islandska krajina je v turističnem imaginariju dobila nove, privlačne so-pomene in postala percipirana kot estetska, pogosto povezana s predstavami o Arktiki in severni odročnosti (Coates, 1994). Tudi na kmetiji na Langanesu, kjer se ukvarjajo s turizmom (prenočitve, vodene ture, t. i. arktični retreati), svojo lego promovirajo in portretirajo kot izrazito odročno, npr. z besedno zvezo »na robu Arktike« (*at the edge of the Arctic*). Praznina krajine je značilnost, ki se trži, obenem pa – vsaj v kontekstu neporaščenosti – omogoča tako zaželeno vidljivost, in to prav vidljivost *krajine*.

A praznino lahko razumemo tudi z vidikov, ki so nasprotni skrbi za krajino – če namreč skrb, kot se je implicitno kazalo v zgornjih razdelkih, povezujemo z ohranjanjem pozitivno dojete neporaščene (»prazne«) krajine, gre v nekaterih primerih islandske »praznine« za njeno negativno konotacijo, ki je rezultat opuščanja skrbi. Primer so opuščene kmetije, šole, cela naselja, za katere je značilna odsotnost skrbi. Podobno je v kontekstu (ne)skrbi za krajine opuščeno oljkarstvo na Siciliji: »opuščenje [oljčnih dreves je] delovalo kot nekaj samoumevnega, kot neizogibna eksistencialna grožnja in živeta realnost« (Hilton, 2022: 258).

Poglejmo si nekaj primerov s severovzhodne Islandije. O toponimih, s katerimi smo začeli ta prispevek, sta mi pripovedovala tudi Sif in Hákon, mlada umetnika iz Reykjavika, ki Viðarju, kmetu na polotoku Sauðanes na severnem delu Langanesbyggða vsako jesen pomagata pri prigonu ovac. Poudarila sta, da je med drugim krajina »posuta« tudi z zapuščenimi kmetijami, mnoge so v ruševinah in komaj prepoznavne, vendar je bilo za pomoč pri *réttirju* pomembno, da sta se naučila njihovih imen. Zapuščene kmetije so pogosto navigacijske točke za tiste, ki ostajajo na območju in se po njem premikajo, hkrati pa so tudi v krajino vpisani opomniki izseljevanja in opuščanja skrbi za krajino. Pogled na ruševine nekdanjih kmetij je del vedute severovzhodne Islandije in tudi nekaterih drugih odročnejših predelov otoka. Zapuščene kmetije so kot zapuščene kmetije vrisane na številne zemljevide, s čimer se ohranja spomin na imena teh kmetij. Ob opisovanju določenih krajev so se nanje sklicevali tudi moji sogovorniki. Poleg tega se ohranjajo tudi pripovedi o prebivalcih teh kmetij, ki pa s časovno oddaljenostjo pogosto prehajajo v povedke, npr. o duhovih umrlih (Svetel, 2023: 257–267).

Na severovzhodni Islandiji izrazit položaj v »izpraznjeni krajini« zaseda vas Skálar na skrajnem koncu polotoka Langanes. Razvila se je kot ribiško naselje na začetku 20. stoletja, v 30. letih je imela okoli 120 prebivalcev in izrazito sezonsko nihanje, ker so se poleti mnogi ribiči iz drugih delov Islandije, npr. z Vestmanskih, pa tudi s Ferskih otokov naselili v vasi, pozimi pa so številni možje iz Skálarja odšli na jug, kjer je bilo mogoče loviti tudi pozimi. Vas je nato zatonila zaradi niza razlogov: pristanišče ni bilo primerno za nove tipe ladij in je bilo tudi sicer precej slabo zaščiteno, morske mine, ki so jih nastavili britanski vojaki, je naplavilo v bližino naselja, kjer so eksplodirale in poškodovale nekaj objektov, slabe cestne povezave, pomanjkljiva infrastruktura brez elektrike (Jóhannesdóttir, 2009). Danes so ruševine manjša turistična znamenitost, zaradi slikovite lege pa tudi kraj, kamor ob lepem vremenu zahajajo nekateri domačini. Ena izmed zadnjih preživelih, Sigrún, ki je otroštvo do leta 1939 preživela v Skálarju in se v Þórshöfn preselila leta 1942, z žalostjo pove:

Mislím, da je grozno, da nihče več ne živi v Skálarju. Mislím, da ne bi bil zapuščen, če bi do tja vodila boljša cesta. Ker je okoli Skálarja ogromno rib, in če bi imeli dobro cesto, bi ljudje še zmeraj živeli tam. [...] Poleti se je število prebivalcev tako povečalo, da so zgradili celo penzion, Sólbakki. V Skálar sem se vračala tudi kasneje, ko je bil zapuščen. Vedno sem želela na kraj, kjer sem bila rojena, zaradi vezi. A strašno ga je videti zapuščenega. Žalosten si od znotraj. Ko se peljem v Nes, grem vedno domov. Vedno čutim, kot da sem na poti domov. To je čuden občutek, a je zmeraj z mano.

Izrazit krajinski opomnik izseljevanja in praznjenja krajine ljudi predstavljajo tudi prazne šole. V Svalbarðshreppurju so imeli osnovno šolo do leta 2013, ko so jo zaradi premalo učencev zaprli. Podobno se je zgodilo tudi s šolo v Bakkafjörðurju. Danes se vsi učenci preučevanega območja šolajo v Þórshöfnu. Prazne osnovne šole so izraziti simbolni in dejanski opomini na praznjenje podeželja kot posledico izseljevanja (prim. Dzenovska, 2020: 17), skupnosti v severnem in severovzhodnem delu Islandije pa so včasih dojete kot ranljive. Precej pozornosti se namenja poskusom oživitve teh prostorov za nove namene. V Bakkafjörðurju so v delu šole skušali odpreti turistični hostel, ki pa, vsaj v času moje terenske raziskave, ni zares zaživel. Marsikateri šolski prostori so ostali z ohranjeno, a opuščeno opremo. Omenjena šola v Bakkafjörðurju je npr. precej nova – na tleh telovadnice še zmeraj ležijo žoge, šolska knjižnica je polna knjig in učbenikov, na mizah v zbornici so še zmeraj stvari. Ker so podeželske ali vaške šole na Islandiji navadno majhne, nizke stavbe, je toliko opaznejša večnadstropna šolska stavba v sosednji vasi Raufarhöfn, kjer so šolo zgradili v času razcveta naselja, ko pa je zaradi upada ulova slaničnikov in strateško napačnih odločitev ob uvedbi ribolovnih kvot naselje začelo izgubljati prosperiteto in delovna mesta, je predimenzionirana šola ostala tihi pomnik zatona kraja, kjer je danes le še nekaj deset otrok.



Slika 2: Knjižnica v opuščeni šoli v Bakkafljórdurju, 31. 3. 2019. Foto: Ana Svetel.

Na posestvu omenjenega Viðarja, ki ima kmetijo na polotoku Sauðanes, ležijo razbitine manjšega ameriškega letala, ki je tam zaradi slabega vremena pristalo leta 1969 in se pri pristanku poškodovalo. Ker bi bilo popravilo predrago, je tam tudi ostalo. Zapuščeno letalo oziroma njegove razbitine¹⁴ so manjša turistična zanimivost severovzhodne Islandije – srečanja med kmetom in turisti, ki hodijo, predvsem pa se vozijo po tej cesti, v času gnezdenja nekaterih vrst ptic pogosto prerastejo v prepire in jezo. Zanj je zapuščeno letalo del pašnih površin za njegovo čredo ovac, v bližini pa gnezdiyo gage (*æðarfugl*), katerih puh je donosna surovina, ki jo Viðar nabira. Zapuščeno letalo je torej nekakšno »ozadje« (prim. Hirsch, 1995), medtem ko so živali »ospredje« njegovih prostorskih praks. Za turiste pa je ravno nasprotno – zapuščeno letalo je »ospredje«, vizualno mikaven objekt, ki ga želijo fotografirati; z upodabljanjem in morebitnim deljenjem na družabnih omrežjih mu torej prisojajo pomen in estetsko vrednost, ga ohranjajo v spominu. Zapuščeni objekti v krajini so torej za različne družbene skupine izrazito različno percipirani in vrednoteni.

Nanizani primeri se seveda razlikujejo in so tudi različno vpeti v intimna in kolektivna zamišljanja in prakse. A vsi kažejo, da opuščanje ostane (materialno in simbolno)

¹⁴ Predvsem so razbitine letal na Islandiji postale priljubljena točka za fotografiranje, ko je Justin Bieber med obiskom Islandije rolkal po strehi letalske razbitine (na južnem delu otoka) in posnetek vključil v videospot uspešnice *I'll Show You* in objave na družbenih omrežjih.

navzoče v krajini in se kot del krajine vedno znova interpretira in vedno znova integrira v družbeno življenje območja. Podobno poudarja Dace Dzenovska na primeru praznjenja latvijskega podeželja: praznina je »kompleksna družbena formacija – hkrati opazna realnost, način življenja in izraz, ki ga ljudje uporabljajo za opisovanje svojega življenja« (2020: 12; Dzenovska, 2018, 2019; prim. Wylie, 2009; Kozorog, 2013; Viazzo, Zanini, 2014; Hilton, 2022). Izpraznjene šole npr. dobivajo nove namembnosti kot nastanitveni prostori in muzej, ruševine naselja kot lokacija izletov in občasnega druženja mladih, opuščene kmetije za določanje položaja pri *réttirju* in, podobno kot Skálar, kot kraji uprstorjenega spomina na nekdanje prebivalce, razpadajoče letalo pa kot turistični fotografski motiv. Opuščeni elementi v krajini torej niso izzvzeti iz ohranjanja – in skrbi – zanjo, temveč se (dialektično) vpenjajo v prav to (materialno) krajino, v kateri se dogaja njeno ohranjanje.¹⁵ Hkrati pa so opuščeni elementi tudi opomniki vprašanj o prihodnosti krajine. In sicer predvsem zato, ker se opuščeni elementi krajine vztrajno ohranjajo v imenih, spominskih pričevanjih in praktičnem sklicevanju nanje, imena pa v primeru opuščene vasi, kmetij in objektov dobijo konotacijo opomnika, da se je zgodilo nekaj neželenega (izpraznjenje, opustitev, izseljevanje) in da se naj še živečim krajinam kaj podobnega v prihodnosti ne bi primerilo.

Številni sogovorniki vidijo prav agrarne dejavnosti, predvsem ovčerejo, kot temeljno prakso, ki na severovzhodni Islandiji ne ohranja le značilne krajine, temveč tudi red stvari, nekakšen naravni ustroj njihovega mikrokozmosa. Ta pa se dotika vseh treh obravnavanih plasti skrbi za krajino. Ovčereja in z njo povezano gibanje ohranjata potrebo po ohranjanju in poznavanju (mikro)toponimov, torej po natančnem poimenovanju krajine; hkrati prispevata k zaželenemu videzu prostrane, neporasle krajine in vidljivosti; obenem pa ovčereja kot osrednja agrarna dejavnost predstavlja nasprotje praznjenju podeželja in izseljevanju v manj odročne dele otoka (ter upanje zoper njiju), hkrati pa zapuščene elemente v krajini nenehno (re)integrira v sedanjost. In jih nemara ohranja tudi kot ponudke za prihodnost (Bajič, Svetel, 2023).

Naslovno vprašanje torej lahko mislimo tudi v okvirih časovnosti krajine, kot dolgoročnih krajinskih sprememb, ki so npr. posledica erozije ali zapuščenja kmetij, in tudi kot cikličnih oziroma sezonskih sprememb, na katere so vezane agrarne prakse in drugi večvrstni odnosi (Svetel, 2023). Poznavanje sezonsko in vremensko pogojene (spremenljive) krajine je osrednjega pomena septembra, ob *réttirju*. Časovno niansirane prakse skrbi – npr. politike pogozdovanja, ki se ozirajo v preteklost, izbira najprimernejših dni za *réttir*, košnjo ali spravilo sena glede na okoljsko, vremensko, sezonsko, vegetacijsko in drugo uveščinenost (Ingold, 2000; gl. tudi Pálsson, 1994; Grasseni, 2007), prenos natančnega toponimičnega znanja na potomce – kažejo, da

¹⁵ Pri tem se odpira vprašanje, ali krajino razumeti tako v njeni »objektivni«, materialni, prostorski danosti, ali jo opredeliti izključno kot stvar reprezentacije, upomenjanja, pogleda itn. Pri tem trčimo na zadrege s samim konceptom krajine (Baskar, 2004, 2013; gl. tudi Kozorog, 2009), ki je, podobno kot prostor in kraj, deloma tudi okolje (Vranješ, 2008; Harvey, 2011), izrazito večpomenski, vendar se temu vprašanju tukaj ne bomo posvečali.

so krajine izrazito spremenljivo, časovno dojete, vrednotene in uporabljane tudi v odnosih, ki bolj ali manj implicitno kažejo na razmerja med skrbnikom (kmetom, starši, državo) in objektom skrbi (krajino). Christopher Tilley in Kate Cameron-Daum (2017: 13) poudarjata, da so ljudje »materialno prepleteni in povezani s krajino in prav zato čustveno vezani na preteklost, sedanost in njeno prihodnost.« Čustveno razsežnost spoštovanja, zavezanosti, celo ljubezni, pri skrbi za krajino poudarja tudi Amanda Hilton (2022: 265). Morda se nam lahko v tem oziru zazdi dodatno pomenljiva tudi slovita Carverjeva kratkoprozna zbirka in istoimenska zgodba *O čem govorimo, ko govorimo o ljubezni* (1981), ki jo parafrazira naslovno vprašanje tega prispevka.

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What We Care About When We Care About Landscape: Toponyms, Sheep, and Ruins in Northeastern Iceland

The article focuses on the care for the landscape in northeast Iceland, approaching the main question from three ethnographically grounded perspectives. The first relates to the verbal or communicative level, which is revealed through the knowledge of (micro)toponyms. The second perspective is connected to the appearance of the landscape (Benediktsson, 2007), highlighting sheep and trees as contrasting landscape elements. In the final section, drawing on anthropologist Dace Dzenovska's conceptualization of (rural) emptiness (2020), the issue of abandoned landscape elements is addressed, referred to as ruins in the title, although the paper also touches on abandoned objects that are not yet ruins. Ethnographic examples that underlie these three perspectives were collected during anthropological fieldwork in the municipalities of Langesbyggð and Svalbarðshreppur from March until August 2019. While farming, fishing, fish processing, and tourism are all important activities in the area, the article primarily focuses on sheep farming.

In pastoral practices, communication about the landscape is of central importance, enabling precise descriptions of locations, travelled paths, and specific places. Naming the landscape and knowing (micro)toponyms, or “communicative acts of topographic representation” (Basso, 1988: 101), is important not only for interpreting the environment but also for carrying out main practices for sheep farmers. An example of this is the annual collection of sheep, or *réttir* (Ögmundardóttir, 2011). The movement of sheep influences the toponymic and practical knowledge of the landscape. For farmers to effectively communicate with each other during *réttir*, they must be able to accurately name each location, even if they rarely go there. The ability to name as a prerequisite for agrarian practices also serves as a starting point for care for the landscape.

The landscape covered with sheep was most often recognized as aesthetically desirable among my interlocutors. At the same time, sheep, as a defining landscape element, are often perceived as the opposite of a wooded landscape. In the second part, I therefore delve into the various implications that the contrast between sheep and trees plays in Icelandic social and cultural contexts (see e.g. Oslund, 2002; Hastrup, 2008; Benediktsson, 2010; 2015). Historically conditioned reforestation processes, the role of sheep farming in national discourses, land erosion and soil degradation, as well as the aspect of landscape visibility, which my interlocutors value as desirable, are brought forth. Caring for the landscape is justified, among other, by the imaginings of an ideal landscape, by aesthetic preferences that determine specific landscape practices. Ultimately, sheep farming as an activity that, in the eyes of my interlocutors, maintains

the desired appearance of the landscape also justifies practices of care (Hilton, 2022) in northeast Iceland, and serves as a reminder against rural depopulation and emigration.

Abandoned farms, remnants of the village Skálar and empty schools indicate emigration and depopulation of the countryside in the region. Through these examples, or their different interpretations and emic understandings, it is showed that abandoned objects in the landscape are perceived and valued distinctly by different social groups. However, even abandoned elements of the landscape are at least partially included in the practices and perceptions of care for the landscape, for example through new uses for empty schools or by preserving the names of farms' ruins. Abandoned elements in the landscape are therefore not exempt from preservation – and care – for it, but rather (dialectically) engage with this same landscape where its preservation takes place. At the same time, abandoned elements also serve as reminders of the future of the landscape, primarily because they persistently endure in names, memorial testimonies, and practical references to them. The names of the abandoned elements take on the connotation that care is fundamental for preserving the landscape in both symbolic and practical aspects.

Skrb za krhke krajine: krajina, skupnost in (ne)spremenljivost na Solčavskem

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Prispevek obravnava izbrane primere »recitiranja« domačinov – skrbnikov krajine in skupnosti – s Solčavskega. Dotikajo se skrbi za krajino in nekaterih njenih osrednjih torišč, in sicer institucionalnega varstva in turizma. Skrb za krajino je razumljena kot vrednotenjski in zaznavni odnos, zato govori o estetiki skrbi, kot njeno hrbtno stran pa predlaga estetsko kategorijo krhkosti. V sklepu prispevek pokaže, da je skrb del dialektike spremenljivosti in nespremenljivosti.

• **Ključne besede:** skrb, krhkost, estetika skrbi, krajina, Solčavsko

The paper addresses selected examples of the “recitings” of locals – that is, caretakers of the landscape and the community – of the Solčava region, which touch upon the issue of care for the landscape and some of its crucial domains, namely institutional conservation and tourism. Care for the landscape is understood as a value-laden relationship and a bodily-sensory practice, and hence an aesthetics of care is posited. As a kind of other-side of care, the paper suggests the aesthetic category of fragility. Finally, the paper argues that care is part and parcel of a dialectics of change and changelessness.

• **Keywords:** care, fragility, care aesthetics, landscape, the Solčava region

Uvod: od večnosti sem

Junija 2021 je Slovenija praznovala 30 let samostojnosti. Ko so nekaj več kot mesec dni pozneje na Solčavskem praznovali občinski praznik, se je prireditve osredinila prav na osamosvojitve Slovenije, pri tem pa so Solčavani in Solčavanke morda nekoliko nepričakovano tematiko samostojnosti povezali tudi z vprašanjem podnebnih in okoljskih sprememb. Ker Solčavsko leži »sredi« Alp, kjer je, kot se pogosto poudarja, »pregrevanje« še posebej hitro in opazno (Eriksen, 2016; Repič, 2021), se je organizatorjem praznovanja zdelo pomembno združiti državni praznik in temo, ki jih lokalno zadeva.

Ob praznovanju pa sta država in podnebje zanimivo zdrsnila iz govora, saj so izraze, kot so država, nacija, podnebje in okolje, v veliki meri nadomestili izrazi skupnost, rod, vreme in krajina ter njihova »pradavna« povezanost (Občinski praznik, 2021). Z navidez nedolžnim pojmovnim preskokom je praznovanje postalo trenutek »produkcije lokalnosti«, tj. ustvarjanja ideologije konkretne skupnosti in »lokalnih subjektov«, torej specifične strukture občutja oziroma izkustvene razsežnosti družbenega življenja v skupnosti (Appadurai, 1996: 179, 189). Drugače rečeno, šlo je za odsev in izraz lokalne identifikacije, procesa, v katerem se posamezniki in skupine opredeljujejo v

družbenem in kulturnem kontekstu, vzpostavljajo oziroma utrjujejo občutke pripadnosti, navezanosti in zavezanosti kraju in skupnosti.

Lokalnost in lokalno identifikacijo (kot analitični kategoriji) antropologi sicer pogosto problematizirajo, a zdi se, da med ljudmi ne izgubljata »pomena«, kot je opažala Roxane Caftanzoglou (2001: 21). Praznovanje se je dotaknilo vprašanja, kako naj ob tem, da nič ni več tako, kakor je bilo, »mi, Solčavani« poskrbimo, da bo identiteta kraja tudi v bodoče ostala takšna, kot je »že od nekdaj«. Ali, drugače rečeno, da se bo »pradavna« povezanost krajine in skupnosti nemoteno nadaljevala, (p)ostala »večna«.

Ob implicitnem vzporejanju spremenljivosti in nespremenljivosti je praznovanje artikuliralo »skrb za skrb«,¹ tj. skrb za tiste, ki za krajino in skupnost skrbijo danes, pa tudi tiste, za katere upajo, da bodo to počeli v prihodnje. Proslava je nedvoumno pokazala, da vlogo vodilnih skrbnikov na Solčavskem pripisujejo kmetom, predvsem tistim z velikih, materialno in simbolno »močnih« kmetij. To najbrž niti ni presenetljivo, ker so nekatere kmetije (in družine) tu že stoletja (domačija Macesnik v Podolševi je omenjena že leta 1355; Zwitter, Mrak, 2017: 42; Logarska dolina je bila verjetno poseljena že pred letom 1268; Vider, 1982, po Krašovic, 2022: 37) in ker je več kmetij za slovenske razmere izjemno velikih (domačija Matk v Matkovem kotu obsega nekaj manj kot 800 ha površin).² Vendar pa se v vlogo skrbnika vsaj občasno oziroma skladno s svojim početjem postavijo tudi mnogi drugi, tudi tisti, ki delujejo v turizmu, ob kmetijstvu in gozdarstvu najpomembnejši dejavnosti. Glede na »pradavnost« domačij (mnoge je sicer med 2. svetovno vojno požgala nemška vojska) in na ekološko občutljivost območja (Špes, 2009) najbrž ne preseneča, da je velik del Solčavskega tako ali drugače zavarovan. Sestavljajo ga štiri formalno evidentirane kulturne krajine, dva krajinska parka, 55 varovanih enot dediščine, štiri petine območja pa je vključenega v mrežo Nature 2000. Zdi pa se tudi, da je bila na praznovanju vloga skrbnika po tihem priznana tudi krajini sami. Praznovanje je bilo namreč osnovano okoli dialoga med tujcem, ki se ob obisku območja čudi čisti vodi, pradavnim gozdovom, obdelanim poljem, cvetočim sadovnjakom in visokim planinam ter o teh elementih krajine sprašuje domačina, ki mu odgovarja:

Pa je to, prijatelj moj, tvoja reka? ... Da ... Reka pa mi ne daje samo rib, temveč je voda, ki ima stotero dobrih rok ... Pa je to, prijatelj moj,

¹ Projekcija, ki so jo predvajali na praznovanju, je med množico izbranih podob in posnetkov Solčavskega vključevala tudi podobo človeških rok, ki držijo v Zemljo. Gre za različico znaka, ki ga sicer najdemo npr. na poštah paketih, in opozarja na krhkost vsebine ter potrebo po skrbi zanjo (*Fragile – handle with care*). Podoba je sporočala, da moramo skrbeti za (naš) krhki planet, okolje, itn.. Skrb in krhkost sta tako bili »nezavedno« postavljeni v središče pozornosti. Za splošno pripombo v zvezi z omenjenim znakom se zahvaljujem Sanji Đurin.

² Pomen domačij, njihova »večnost« in »nespremenljivost«, v razmerju s katerimi so vsakokratni lastniki zgolj začasni skrbniki, se kaže tudi v preimenovanjih nekaterih družin z večjih kmetij na Solčavskem. Na domačijah Roban in Matk so v Robanovem oziroma Matkovem kotu pred časom spremenili svoje priimke tako, da so jih ponovno uskladili s hišnimi imeni oziroma imeni dolin. V tem se na simbolni ravni izražata medsebojna pripadnost in povezanost dolin in »njihovih« skrbnikov.

tvoj gozd? ... Da ... Ne daje pa mi samo drv in živalskega plena, temveč tudi drhtenje mogočnih krošenj in skrivnostne pogovore divjadi ... Pa so to, prijatelj moj, tvoja polja ... Da ... Polja pa mi ne dajejo samo novega zlatega zrnja, temveč so moja mati preživetja, sreča in obup, življenje in smrt ...³

Čprav se prispevek dotika nekaterih, tudi v slovenski etnologiji in antropologiji ustaljenih, pogosto medsebojno povezanih področij npr. oblikovanja lokalnosti (oziroma lokalne identifikacije in lokalne skupnosti), krajine, turizma, dediščine in varovanih območij (npr. Bajuk Senčar, 2005, 2013; Bajuk Senčar idr., 2019; Vranješ, 2005, 2008; Simonič, 2006; Kozorog, 2009, 2015; Fikfak idr., 2013, 2014; Kozorog, Poljak Istenič, 2014; Repič, 2018, 2021, 2023), je primarni cilj prispevka identifikacija estetike skrbi in krhkosti. Skrb za krajino razumem kot vrednotenjski in zaznavni odnos, zato govorim o estetiki skrbi, za njeno hrbtno stran – torej tisto, brez česar tega vrednotenja in zaznavanja ne bi bilo – pa predlagam estetsko kategorijo krhkosti. Omenjeni cilj bom zasledoval tako, da bom pretresal etnografijo percepcij domačinov in domačink s Solčavskega o njihovi lastni skrbi za krajino in skupnost ter o »tujem«, tj. institucionalnem varstvu, pa tudi o dejavnosti turistov na območju, s katerimi vplivajo na skrb domačinov samih. V pomembnem delu se torej stališča, ki me zanimajo, dotikajo razmerij med domačini in prišleki. Prav te percepcije uokvirja estetika skrbi, saj nastajajo kot povezave med specifičnimi načini gledanja in govora (Ngai, 2022: b. n. s.; prim. Eagleton, 1990: 15–17) ter vodijo k specifičnemu načinu delovanja oziroma so njegov del. Predpostavka estetike skrbi je krhkost predmeta skrbi, z njo pa domačini (samo)postavljajo kot edini ustrezni in legitimni skrbniki oziroma skrbnice (v nasprotju z naravo- in kulturovarstvenimi institucijami). Prav zato se v tem prispevku osredinjam izključno na »solčavsko perspektivo«, ob strani pa puščam poglede tistih, o katerih pripovedujejo domačini in ki so sicer prav tako sooblikujejo krajino, torej že omenjenih naravo- in kulturovarstvenih institucij oziroma njihovih predstavnikov in predstavnic pa turistov in turistk. Ob tem bom problematiziral določeno antropološko, tiho normativno razmišljanje o zadevnih tematikah, ki temelji na razkolu med domnevno odtujenim in avtentičnim pojmovanjem in delovanjem. Takšno razmišljanje vestno sledi domačinskim idealnotipskim podobam (prim. Fikfak, 2005), a je lahko uporabno, ko ga vzamemo z zrnem soli, kot hevrističen razloček.

Preden se posvetim estetiki skrbi in krhkosti sledi še beseda o še potekajočem etnografskem raziskovanju, na katerem temelji tukajšnje izvajanje. Zaradi nekaterih metodoloških specifik in morebitnih epistemoloških nesporazumov si zasluži nekaj pozornosti.

³ Dialog je sposojen iz romana *Kralj Samo* Ivana Sivca (2010).

Na kratko o družni etnografiji in njenih implikacijah

Terenske raziskave nisem izvajal (oziroma je ne izvajam) sam, vseskozi je šlo (oziroma gre) za skupnostno delo (Svetel, 2022: 75), po eni strani tesno povezano s poletnimi šolami »Etnološki tabor treh dolin«, ki potekajo na Solčavskem, po drugi pa z delovanjem raziskovalne skupine projekta DigiFREN.⁴ Raziskovalna skupnost več etnografov je omogočila, morda celo vsilila prav takšno premišljevanje in interpretiranje mojih oziroma naših opažanj in izkušenj. Kako, torej, je potekala »družna etnografija«, kot smo jo poimenovali nekoliko v šali?

Etnografsko terensko delo je vključevalo opazovanje z udeležbo, neformalne pogovore in polstrukturirane intervjuje (predvsem slednji so bili zanimivi za udeležence in udeleženke taborov), pa tudi različne prvine etnografskih sprehodov, digitalne, vizualne in čutne etnografije. Začelo se je leta 2020 s pripravami na prvi »Etnološki tabor treh dolin«, nadaljevalo na sami poletni šoli, njenih ponovitvah v letih 2021 in 2022 ter ob sporadičnih obiskih v času treh let (ob pisanju tega prispevka je zadnji obisk potekal julija 2023). Raziskovali smo (skoraj) vsi sodelujoči.⁵ Poletne šole so sestavljala predavanja na izbrane tematike, terensko raziskovanje, skupinske refleksije in javne predstavitve prvih ugotovitev. Zbrano oziroma ustvarjeno gradivo, večina so transkripcije pogovorov ter fotografije sogovornikov, predmetov in lokacij, terenski dnevniki in refleksije, smo prenašali na spletno platformo za hrambo, sistematizacijo in izmenjavo datotek. Gradivo se tako nenehno dopolnjuje in nadgrajuje, obenem pa je ves čas na razpolago vsem vpletenim. Tak način dela, ki v našem prostoru seveda ni brez prednikov (npr. Orlove terenske ekipe; Etnološka topografija slovenskega etničnega ozemlja; Krmel Umek, Šmitek, 1987; Bajič, Abram, 2019; Rogelja Caf, Ledinek Lozej, 2021), tudi na Solčavskem (Anterić, Clarke, 2009),⁶ nam je omogočil iskanje vzporednic, sečnic in mimobežnic ter s tem spodbujal različne rabe gradiva in njegove interpretacije (Bajič idr., 2021; Svetel idr., 2022; tudi Svetel, 2022; Vršnik, 2022). Praviloma so se razvijale v pogovorih iz oči v oči, ne le med raziskovalci, temveč tudi z na tabor povabljenimi predavatelji in naposled z domačini. Razprave in premisleki so se praviloma začenjali

⁴ Projekt Digitalna estetizacija krhkih okolij (Digital Aestheticization of Fragile Environments) se etnografsko in zgodovinsko loteva estetizacije okolja in okoljskih sprememb ob uporabi digitalnih medijev in tehnologij v kontekstu vsakdanjega življenja in prostočasnih dejavnosti v naravi. Raziskava poteka v Sloveniji, na Hrvaškem, Poljskem, Finskem in Norveškem.

⁵ V različnih vlogah so sodelovali Sandi Abram, Ema Babnik, Blaž Bajič, Tatiana Bajuk Senčar, Alenka Bartulović, Sebastjan Brumat, Maša Čas Zajc, Vanja Germ, Petra Goljevšček, Vito Hazler, Božena Hostnik, Taja Ivanc, Tajda Jerkič, Barbara Klanjšek, Pia Krampl, Tina Krašovic, Pika Kristan, Žiga Korbar, Sarah Lunaček Brumen, Miha Kozorog, Boštjan Kravanja, Andraž Magajna, Eva Malovrh, Peter Mikša, Tara Miličinski, Tina Mlinarič, Rajko Muršič, Nina Ošep, Vesna Petrič, Saša Poljak Istenič, Jaka Repič, Saša Roškar, Sara Sakač, Marko Senčar Mrdaković, Mateja Slovenc, Staša Sušjan, Ana Svetel, Lina Troha, Elizabeta Vršnik, Matej Zabret, Polona Zabret, Veronika Zavratnik, Neža Zore, Julija Zupan in Simona Zupanc.

⁶ V letih 1932, 1970–1972 in 2004–2007 so na Solčavskem potekale britanske antropološko-turistične odprave društva Le Play, raziskave skupine Brathay oziroma skupno terensko delo Univerze v Londonu in Univerze v Ljubljani (gl. Anko idr., 2008).



Slika 1: Udeleženci in udeleženke etnografskega tabora ob večerni diskusiji, september 2022. Foto: Blaž Bajič.

že pri predavanjih, ki so tematsko uokvirila vsak posamičen dan, v manjših raziskovalnih skupinah so potekale čez dan, zvečer v nekoliko bolj formaliziranih debatah, se nadaljevale z mentorskimi konzultacijami prek spletnih komunikacijskih kanalov ali osebno, ob občasnih srečanjih med tabori in konzultacijami, v obliki komentarjev k besedilom, naposled pa tudi na vseh terenskih obiskih. Toda tovrstne intervencije je treba razumeti kot del trajajoče razprave, saj – ne glede na vključene posameznike in posameznice – vsaj implicitno nadaljujejo diskusije, začete v preteklih letih, ter hkrati začenjajo nove, ki se porajajo med različnimi prispevki in z njihovimi sopostavitvami (Svetel idr., 2022: 20).

Eno izmed interpretacij, ki se je razvila v tem, v praksi dobesedno anarhičnem procesu, predstavlja tudi to besedilo – tudi to je pot začelo v kolektivnem delu (Zavratnik idr., 2021; Bajič, Zavratnik, 2022). V tem smislu lahko ponovim (in nekoliko priredim) besede Cindy Milstein (2010: 7), ko pravi, da na prvo stran postavljeno (moje) ime zakriva dejstvo, da imamo, kakor pri vsem anarhičnem delovanju, opraviti z načrtnim, skupnostnim delovanjem. Toda (tudi) ob takšnem načinu dela se srečamo z neprijetnimi vprašanji napačnega razumevanja in težavami, ki izhajajo iz prisvajajo skupnega, saj (pre)hitro trčimo ob realno akademskega točkovanja (zagata je – navkljub prizadevanjem za razvoj sodelovalnega raziskovanja in pisanja – najbrž inherentna etnografskemu delu, morda nasploh produkciji akademske vednosti (Dolar, 2015)).

Po drugi strani pa takšno družno delo in njegovi proizvodi, ko jih postavimo pod epistemološki drobnogled, razgrinjajo problem »fetišizma besede« in »fetišizma soglasja«. Kolikor se nekritično zanašamo najprej na povedano, potem pa na transkribirano, se znajdemo v položaju, ko dokumentaristično reproduciramo »dejstva«, tj. ustaljene (samo)stereotipe in (samo)vednost, ter spregledamo »neravnine vsakdanje resničnosti« (Fikfak, 2005: 75–77). Najmanjši skupni imenovalac med opažanji soudeleženih raziskovalcev ali pa nekakšen seštevek teh opažanj, še posebej, če se sklada s stališči domačinov, se lahko zazdi kot popolna rešitev (nekako v smislu »resnica je nekje vmes« oziroma »več glav več ve« oziroma »če domačin tako pravi, potem je to nespodbitno res«). Takšno razumevanje je seveda problematično; zdi se, da je v ozadju nekaterih pojmovnih distinkcij, ki strukturirajo vplivno antropološko razumevanje topik, kakršni sta mdr. skrb in krajina, in ki veliki meri ustrezajo domačinskim idealnotipskim podobam, obenem pa prikrivajo dejansko delovanje ljudi. Zgolj partikularna, neizbežno jezikovno posredovana izkušnja sodelovanja in soudeleževanja lahko proizvede novo, potencialno posplošljivo razumevanje resničnosti onkraj »vsem nam« domačih prepričanj (Muršič, 2022). To pa nikakor ne pomeni, da ujame resničnost kot tako, v njeni celoti. Nasprotno, tudi znanstveno razumevanje oziroma znanstveni govor je obsojen na predstavljanje resničnosti »na način bodisi delnih predstavitev bodisi predstavitev delnih vsebin« (Fikfak, 2008: 27).

Zato je na eni strani treba domačinske »recitacije« (Green, 2012: 118) – način pripovedovanja, ki vključuje ponavljanje in potrjevanje poznanih retoričnih vzorcev, idealnotipskih podob, kulturnih prepričanj in ideoloških stališč, pa tudi etičnih in estetskih drž, s katerimi se ljudje družbeno umeščajo, skratka, govorjenje, ki ustvarja skupne »resnice« in jih spontano reproducira – obravnavati kritično, pristransko. Navsezadnje se o svojih lastnih recitacijah sprašujejo tudi domačini sami, ko pripovedujejo o doživetih dogodkih in neposrednih izkušnjah, četudi jih ne povsem zavržejo – kar, mimogrede, lahko ustvarja vtis, da tudi naključni pripetljaji sledijo natančno določenemu scenariju (Green, 2012: 119) oziroma da se spremenljivost ravna po nespremenljivosti. Podobno pa gre na drugi strani razumeti tudi »družno etnografijo« kot anarhično, skupnostno prakso raziskovanja in branja, ki lahko prav zaradi neizbežne delnosti razumevanj ustvarja vedno nova različna razumevanja (in razumevanja različnosti) (Fikfak, 2008: 27–28), ki pa vseeno sledijo (in soustvarjajo) resničnosti (Carrithers, 2014). Kolikor je tudi pričujoča interpretacija nastala v tem procesu, je nastala le v svoji pristranskosti, delnosti, različnosti, v razmerju z drugimi.

V čem je torej razlika, ki jo prinaša to besedilo? Razlika je, upam, v uvodoma omenjenih pojmih estetike skrbi in krhkosti. Gre za izraza, ki ju med domačini ne bomo slišali prav pogosto, če sploh. »Etnografsko-dogmatično« gre za izmišljotini, za teoretski oziroma etnografski fikciji, toda za fikciji, ki lahko izrazita določeno slepo pego, »resnico«, onkraj dokumentarnega poročanja o dejstvih. Kako torej razumeti skrb? In kako krhkost?

Skrb in krhkost

Patrick McKearney in Megha Amrith (2021) sta skrb opredelila kot družbeno univerzalno vrsto odnosa, obenem pa ugotavljata, da si družbe zamišljajo, organizirajo in izvajajo skrb zelo različno, celo na (kvazi)diametralno nasprotno načine (prim. Alber, Drothbom, 2015; Thelen, 2021). Skrb se praviloma odvija v okoliščinah družbene, tj. politične, ekonomske, etnične, razredne, zdravstvene, starostne in spolne neenakosti, pa naj bo organizirana v sorodstvu, skupnosti, državi ali na tržišču. In, končno, gre za odnos, ki »materialno eksistira« (Althusser, 2000) v neskončnem nizu institucij, praks in diskurzov, v katerih se opredeljuje, kdo (ali kaj) so legitimni (in tudi legalni) oskrbovanci in kdo skrbniki. Med oskrbovanci se kot eksemplarični primeri ponujajo bolni, ostareli in otroci, med skrbniki pa članice družine, poklicno osebje, kot so negovalke in zdravniki (sic!), varuške, socialni in humanitarni delavci. Vendar je mogoče obe kategoriji precej razširiti, pa tudi relativizirati (npr. Spaid, 2022). Mnogi, velikokrat tisti, ki se navdihujejo pri »etiki skrbi«, skrb povezujejo s pozornostjo, empatijo in odzivnostjo (Hamington, Flower, 2021).⁷ Angažirano podarjajo tudi, da je skrb nujna sestavina solidarnosti in soodvisnosti (in nasprotno), da zahteva in ustvarja pravičnost in enakopravnost, ter zagovarjajo demokratizacijo oziroma politizacijo skrbi – tudi v odnosu do »več-kot-človeških« entitet (Tronto, 2013; The Care Collective, 2020; Thompson, 2020). Za tukajšnji premislek pa je najpomembnejše, da je tudi antropologija v zadnjem času, pod vplivom t. i. večvrstne etnografije (npr. Kirksey, Helmreich, 2010; Kozorog, 2020) oziroma splošnejšega obrata k »več-kot-človeškemu« (npr. Haraway, 2008; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017), opazila odnose skrbi, ki vključujejo tudi rastline (Hartigan, 2017), živali (Salazar Parreñas, 2018) in krajine (Hilton, 2022).

Na kratko se velja ustaviti pri delu Amande Hilton (2022); avtorica namreč opaža, da so predmet skrbi tudi konkretne krajine, v katerih in s katerimi si ljudje ustvarjajo svoja življenja. »Prakse skrbi« (*praxis of care*) je opazovala med sicilijskimi oljkarji. Te so izraz lokalne moralne ekonomije, vrednot, ki so za oljkarje utelešene v nasadih oljk. Spoštovanje, predanost, celo ljubezen so v »dialektični napetosti s kontekstom ekonomskega in ekološkega propadanja, ki ga najbolje ponazarja opuščanje [oljkarstva, zemlje], do katerega so pripeljala stoletja politične marginalizacije in razvrednotenja oljgarskih krajin ter načinov preživetja« (Hilton, 2022: 264). Ob njenem premisleku velja omeniti, da se sklicuje na etiko skrbi Marie Puig de la Bellacasa (2010, 2011), po kateri etika skrbi narekuje afektivno, materialno-vitalno, etično-politično zavezo predmetu raziskave in njegovemu postajanju, primarni nosilci etike skrbi pa

⁷ Etika skrbi je sicer področje feministično-filozofske etike, ki se je oblikovalo v 90. letih prejšnjega stoletja. Namesto abstraktnih konceptov, kot sta pravica ali pravičnost kot vir in privilegirano mesto etičnega delovanja, poudarja konkretne človeške odnose in vsakdanje, tudi intimne dejavnosti.

so raziskovalci.⁸ Na kratko, po Puig de la Bellacasa je etika skrbi normativna (Spaid, 2022), postkritična, afirmacionistična raziskovalna etika. Toda tudi če zanemarimo očitne teoretske težave s tovrstno, v sodobnem družboslovju in humanistiki domala vsenavzočo držo (Noys, 2014; za specifično antropološki primer gl. Bajič, 2016), se ob njeni pretvorbi v interpretativni pristop srečamo z etnografskim problemom: ljudje, katerih delovanje (domnevno) opisujemo, kaj hitro postanejo utelešenja etike skrbi, s tem pa tudi normativnosti, s katero se identificira sam raziskovalec (to samo sicer nujno še ne pomeni, da ne more zadeti »resnice«), obenem pa spregledamo drugačne, nevšečne, nemara politično nekorektne itn. oblike skrbi. Težnja, da opisovani ljudje postanejo utelešenja te etike, je razvidna tudi v delu Amande Hilton, ko – ob siceršnji »etnografski prekrstitvi« etike v prakso, ki bi jo zaradi združevanja telesnega in konceptualnega (Hilton, 2022: 264) ter njenega nihanja med kategorijami »trpkosti in lepote« lahko imenovali tudi estetika skrbi (gl. v nadaljevanju) – zanemari »vsakdanjo etiko« (Lambek, 2010), ki je tudi pragmatična, kritična, celo protestna.

Po čem naj torej prepoznamo skrb, če velja, da so njene pojavne oblike družbeno zelo različne, so postavljene tako v razmerja (politične, ekonomske, spolne, starostne itn.) neenakosti kot enakosti, vključujejo različne akterje, afektivnosti, prakse ipd., da je skrb, skratka, kontekstualno oziroma situacijsko pogojena?⁹ Drugače rečeno, kaj je skupno množstvu raznoterih odnosov ohranjanja, podpore in nege, kaj je unarna poteza – zgoraj omenjena fikcija – skrbi? Kolikor razumemo skrb kot odnos, hitro ugotovimo, da se v njem vzpostavljajo oskrbovanci in skrbniki, da prve zaznamuje krhkost, potreba po tem, da se zanje skrbi, druge zmožnost, da skrbijo za blaginjo prvih (Lambek, 2010: 15; Spaid, 2022: 135). Enako velja tudi za okolje, kakor v kontekstu razprave o globalnih podnebnih spremembah pravi Thomas H. Eriksen (2016: 17): »V sodobnem svetu se je narava nekako sesula v kulturo: narava ni več ogrožajoč Drugi, danes je pogosto prikazana kot krhka in šibka, sama ogrožena in potrebna zaščite skrbnih in sočutnih ljudi, ki se zavedajo svoje odgovornosti za ves planet«. ¹⁰ Še več, po Juno Salazar Parreñas (2018) so odnosi skrbi utemeljeni ne le v sobivanju in soodvisnosti oskrbovancev in skrbnikov (Thompson, 2020; prim. Vršnik, 2022: 148), temveč tudi

⁸ V tem sledi Brunu Latourju (2004), ki je za prvi korak od domnevno objektivnih dejstev (*matters of fact*) predlagal izraz »zadeve zanimanja« (*matters of concern*), Puig de la Bellacasa pa je za naslednji korak predlagala izraz »zadeve skrbi« (*matters of care*).

⁹ Najbrž ni treba posebej poudarjati, da navedeno ne izključuje možnosti, da je konkretna oseba vpletena v več takšnih odnosov hkrati, da je enkrat skrbnik, drugič oskrbovanec, da torej prihaja do »verženja« odnosov skrbi (Kittay, 1999 v Dalmiya, 2021: 69–70).

¹⁰ Obenem je seveda res – kot nadaljuje tudi Eriksen (2016: 17) –, da naravo danes dojemamo tudi kot ogrožajočo: vremenske ujme, suše, poplave, požari, ipd. grozijo, da bo naš planet sčasoma postal docela neprimeren za človeško življenje. Nakazano dvojnost narave lahko vidimo tudi v opažanjih sogovornikov in sogovornic s Solčavskega. V neformalnem pogovoru je domačinka iz Logarske doline, ki dela v turizmu, poudarila, da skala okoliških gora zaradi vedno bolj nestanovitnih zim postaja vse bolj krušljiva in zato nevarna za obiskovalce; ker nismo skrbeli za – v tem primeru – dobesedno krhko naravo, ta postaja še krhkejša in »neskrbna«. Kako bodo na dojetje narave vplivale katastrofalne poplave, ki so zgodile v začetku avgusta 2023, pa je zaenkrat vprašanje brez odgovora.

priznani skupni krhkosti – to tudi ločuje skrb od na nadzoru temelječega varovanja, kakršno poznamo v konvencionalnem, (post)kolonialnem naravovarstvu (ali pa, recimo temu, zgolj utilitarne nege ali vzdrževanja). Krhek, tj. tak, čigar blaginja je zaradi teh ali onih sprememb ogrožena (Mortari, 2021), torej ni le oskrbovanec, temveč potencialno tudi skrbnik. Skrb je torej razmerje oziroma soodvisnost med oskrbovanci in skrbniki, je razmerje med krhkostjo in zmožnostjo (oziroma, kot bomo videli, odvisnostjo in avtonomijo, nemara tudi spremenljivostjo in nespremenljivostjo), kar pa ne pomeni, da smemo skrb razumeti zgolj in samo kot »formalno« razmerje.

Skrb, trdi Michael Lambek (2010: 15), presega razlikovanje med čutnim in razumskim (to mimogrede omeni, kot že rečeno, tudi Hilton (2022: 264)).¹¹ V tem pogledu lahko opazimo sorodnosti z estetiko, če jo razumemo kot povezave med načini gledanja (oziroma zaznave) in vrednotenja (oziroma diskurzom) (Eagleton, 1990: 15–17; Ngai, 2022: b. n. s.). Zato ni presenetljivo, da v zadnjem času več avtorjev razpravlja ne le o etiki, temveč tudi o estetiki skrbi (Thompson, 2015, 2020; Spaid, 2022; Sutton, 2022).¹² V splošnem se ta nanaša na »vrednote, ki jih uresničimo v relacijskem procesu [skrbi] med posamezniki ali skupinami [pa tudi živalmi, rastlinami, krajinami] skozi čas«, gre za »čutno etično prakso, [...] ki vključuje ne le učenje pozornosti in potrpežljivosti, načinov poslušanja in odgovarjanja, temveč tudi premišljevanje o lastnem odnosu do drugačnosti in izključenosti« (Thompson, 2015: 44). Drugače rečeno, vključuje »uveščinjeno« (Ingold, 2000) »navezovanje-v-delovanju« (zmožnega) skrbnika (npr. gledanje; Grasseni, 2009) na (krhkega) oskrbovanca.

Oba izraza – »estetika« in »krajina« (Cosgrove, 1984; Hirsch, 1995: 2–3) – velikokrat povezujemo s praksami v umetnosti, predvsem s slikarstvom in fotografijo, vendar je njun pomen (lahko) precej širši: prva se nanaša tudi na prekrivanje zaznavnega in diskurzivnega (Eagleton, 1990; Ngai, 2022), druga na konkretno okolje, odnos in kulturni kontekst, ki ga oblikuje (Kozorog, 2009: 52). Ob dvojnosti obeh pojmov lahko po Joju Vergunstu idr. »začrtamo jasno mejo med estetiko krajine [*landscape aesthetics*], ki oblikuje pogled in zahtevo slikovitosti, ter krajinsko estetiko [*aesthetics of the land*], ki je vpeta v vsakdanje, praktično delovanje v okolju«; to v sebi nosi »pomene in vrednote« skupnosti (Vergunst idr., 2012: 8; prim. Lewis, 2012) oziroma »na kraju utemeljeno moralno ekonomijo«

¹¹ Poleg tega pa gre za afektivno kompleksen odnos, saj lahko – pogosto hkrati – vključuje tako občutke povezanosti in pripadnosti kot zavračanja in osamljenosti, željo in prisilo, nežnost in ostrino, naklonjenost in odpor (in še kaj).

¹² O estetiki skrbi so pisali predvsem v zvezi z različnimi področji umetnosti, kar pa nikakor ne pomeni, da ni del drugih področij družbenega delovanja. Teatrolog James Thompson (2020: 219) npr. navaja primere gledaliških predstav in delavnic, ki s tem, ko na novo »distribuirajo čutno« (tako se je v zvezi temeljni politike izrazil Jacques Rancière (2004)), »spodbujajo in nemara ustvarjajo medčloveške odnose, globoko zaznamovane z medsebojno skrbjo«. Čeprav Thompson poudarja vprašanje, kako lahko umetnost spreminja estetiko skrbi v smeri »pravičnejše porazdelitve skrbi in povečanja zmožnosti udeležencev, da skrbijo in so oskrbljeni,« pa je jasno, da lahko estetiko skrbi prakticiramo tudi v »resničnem« življenju. Do podobnih sklepov je v krajši razpravi o tem, kako vrtnarji skrbijo za rastline in vrtove, prišla tudi Sue Spaid (2022: 134–136), ko pravi, da skrb vedno vključuje preusmerjanje percepcije (Spaid, 2022: 142).

(Hilton, 2022: 264).¹³ Posledično je smiselno govoriti o estetiki skrbi za krajino, tj. o čutnem in vrednotenjskem odnosu, ki je usmerjen v ohranjanje, zagotavljanje oziroma povečevanje dobrobiti krajine. V tem odnosu se krajina »samodejno« predpostavlja kot krhka, tj. odvisna od (ustrezne) dejavnosti skrbnika, ki je tudi sam odvisen od njene dobrobiti. Krhkost, drugače rečeno, deluje kot estetska kategorija, tj. preplet specifičnih percepcij in diskurzov. »Solčavsko različico« teh predstavljam v naslednjem razdelku.

S spoznanjem, da imamo tudi pri skrbi oziroma krhkosti opraviti s specifičnim odnosom oziroma kategorijo, in implikacijo, da sta del množice drugih, kot so npr. varovanje ali nadzor oziroma lepo, sublimno, norčavo, zanimivo ali ljubko, se izognemo nevarnosti, opazni pri nekaterih obravnavanih avtorjih, da bi se omejili na »deleuze-guattarijevsko« alternativo med oddaljenim, odtujenim, objektivirajočim pogledom in intimnim, angažiranim, avtentičnim, »sprejemajočim« gledanjem, ki v mnogočem posnema domačinske recitacije in stališča. Zato oziroma tudi zaradi tega je treba poudariti, da lahko opisano razumevanje oziroma razloček med estetiko krajine in krajinsko estetiko, podobno kot omenjeni razloček med varstvom in skrbjo, razumemo bolj v smislu hevrističnih distinkcij kot celovitega opisa percepcij. Lahko nam pomagajo razumeti razločke, ki jih postavljajo naši sogovorniki in se dotikajo domačinskega samorazumevanja oziroma konstrukcije Drugega. Toda, kakor uvodoma omenjeno, nas morebitno »ujemanje« etskega in emskega pogleda ne sme zavesti. Zanikanje pristranskosti hitro pripelje do esencijalizacije, npr. turistov, varstvenikov in konservatorjev kot »odtujenežev«, domačinov pa kot »vpletenežev« (prim. Hirsch, 1995: 13; Palmer, 2018; Gruppuso, 2020).

Torišča skrbi

Četudi oziroma prav zato nas lahko opisano razumevanje – ker zvede množstvo mogočih pozicij na preprosto distinkcijo, osnovano vzdolž razlike med domnevno avtentičnim in odtujenim pogledom –, elegantno uvede v solčavsko »krajino«, saj v določenih razsežnostih v njem odseva tisti razloček, ki ga domačini kot skrbniki krajine postavljajo (tudi) v odnosu do varstvenih režimov in turizma.¹⁴ Drugače rečeno, razloček med varstvom in skrbjo ter estetiko krajine in krajinsko estetiko, še več, med »nepravilnim« in »pravičnim« odnosom do domačinov in krajine je uporaben, ker je sam del domačinskih

¹³ Zgledi za to distinkcijo so paradigmatično zastavljeni v delu Tima Ingolda (Bajič, 2016). Vendar pa je, kot je že pred časom na primeru razhajanj med biologi in ribiči pokazala M. Estelle Smith (1995), z etnografske pozicije smiselneje govoriti o različnih aksiomih, predpostavkah in pojmi (četudi morda katerji uporabljajo iste besede, kar rado vodi v nesporazume) – teh je lahko načeloma nešteto in se ni smiselno omejevati z vnaprej postavljenimi alternativami. Njenemu zgledu deloma sledim v nadaljevanju, ko omenjam različne odnose in estetske kategorije, pa tudi ko govorim o (ne)razumevanjih dediščine in narave.

¹⁴ Poleg zgoraj omenjenih lahko opazimo vzporedno distinkcijo tudi v razmerju z institucijami na področju lova, gozdarstva, okolja, gorništvu, arheologije, naposled tudi države in naddržavnih zvez.

recitacij (Jerkič, Kristan, Mlinarič, 2021; Korbar, Krašovic, Troha, 2021; Lenar, 2021; Vršnik, 2022; prim. Vranješ, 2005; Lewis, 2012; Hilton, 2022). Poglejmo si nekaj teh.

Varovanje in skrb, dediščina in zapuščina

Kakor omenjeno, je velik del Solčavskega naravo- ali kulturnovarstveno zavarovan (in nadzorovan). Pri nastajanju varovanih območij in dediščinjenju, ne glede na specifičen režim oziroma pravno-formalni status, ki se ob tem uveljavi, lahko, podobno, kakor bomo videli ob turistifikaciji, opazimo, da predpostavlja izvzetje »stvari« iz procesov, v katerih sicer nastajajo, tj. izbiro in povzdignjenje v izjemo. V tem postopku se kraji in predmeti preoblikujejo iz funkcionalnih »stvari« v »objekte« predstavljanja in razstavljanja (Harrison, 2013: 69). Varovani »objekti« so razglašeni – odločitev za varovanje je v svojem jedru politična in ekonomska (Simonič, 2006; Muršič, 2010) – za nosilce izbranih vrednot (kolektivnega spomina, biodiverzitete itn.) in postavljeni »v razliko« med preteklostjo in sedanostjo, večnostjo in minljivostjo, skupnostjo in kapitalom, profanim in svetim. Zato ni presenetljivo, da so tudi ljudje, katerih načine življenja zadevajo takšni režimi, sami (velikokrat) v negotovosti ter da prihaja do razhajanj v razumevanjih in sporov glede varovanja oziroma skrbi. To, da želijo varstvene institucije »zamrzniti« krajino in njene »sestavine«, opažajo tudi domačini (prim. Bajuk Senčar, 2013: 21).

Solčavani, sploh tisti, katerih domačije so zavarovane, se, ko gre za njihove predstave glede »normalnega« vsakdanjega življenja, ob varstvenih in konservatorskih režimih pogosto srečujejo in sprijemajo z omejitvami. Zlasti dejavnosti Zavoda za varstvo kulturne dediščine (ZVKD) razumejo kot problematične, nepravilne, arbitrarne.¹⁵ Sogovornica iz Robanovega kota, ki deluje na turistični kmetiji, na podlagi svojih izkušenj poudarja, da bi bil sprejemljivejši in produktivnejši »spodbujevalen pristop«. Po njenem bi ZVKD moral

*ponujati, spraševati – »A boste kaj naredili? Dajte, naredimo skupaj!«
Ne moreš pa ti zdaj tiste ljudi tukaj kaznovati, ker itak skrbijo za krajino
za vse. [Ni sprejemljivo], da jim boš pa ti skoz nekaj [ukazoval]. Kar
je, je, ne moreš jim ti zdaj neke kazni devat [dajati]. Mislim, zakaj bi.*

¹⁵ Občutek, da so domačini obravnavani neenakopravno, je bil posebej izrazit med prebivalci Logarske doline v času načrtovanja in graditve nove planinske koče na Okrešlju. Ko je leta 2019 pogorel dobrih 100 let star Frischaufov dom (v času obstoja sicer večkrat prenovljen in povečan), je ob odobritvi ZVKD PD Celje-Matica na natečaju izbral izrazito »moderno« zasnovano kočo. Mnogi domačini so poudarjali, da je bilo planinsko društvo deležno izjemno »naklonjene« obravnave, zanje pa da veljajo drakonski predpisi. Na neki način so sicer imeli prav, saj knica, kjer danes že stoji skoraj dokončana postojanka, leži zunaj mej zaščitene kulturne krajine – a prav to se ni skladalo s percepcijo domačinov, saj so planine zanje nujno del domačij. Vendar pa jih tudi poznavanje formalnih mej varstvenega režima ne prepriča: domačini večinoma ostajajo nenaklonjeni izbiri PD-ja, saj menijo, da se takšna arhitektura nikakor ne sklada s krajino. Redki, posebej tisti, ki si v dolini želijo bolj mondenega turizma, jo podpirajo (kritizirajo pa dosedanje pomanjkanje prenov planinskih domov na območju).

*Pa samo slabo voljo delati, ker že itak ni tako enostavno tu preživeti. [...] Tako da ne moreš ti živeti v enih plesnivih okvirjih hiš, ki so bile res slabo narejene, pa si kvarit zdravje pa vse.*¹⁶

Na prvi pogled pa se vseeno zdi, da bi bilo napačno, če bi domnevali, da nasprotujejo »varstvu« in »dediščini«. Prav nasprotno, oboje, tako pravijo, podpirajo (Jerkič, Kristan, Mlinarič, 2021: 88). Od kod torej razhajanja in trditve domačinov, da so podvrženi nerazumnim omejitvam? Če drži, da varovanje predpostavlja izvzetje v »medsvetje« (Muršič, 2010: 6–7) med vsakdanjim življenjem in povzdignjenimi ideali, praktičnim in nedotakljivim, potem se zdi, da predvsem Območna enota ZVKD teži k varovanju kot konzervaciji, »zamrznitvi« v času neke zamišljene preteklosti skupnosti, da, skratka, poudarja »drugi pol«. Toda domačini svojo prakso opisujejo ne toliko v smislu vsakdanjega življenja *vis-à-vis* povzdignjenim idealom oziroma »prvemu polu« samemu po sebi, temveč pogosto mimo dihotomije, kot skrb, ki je mogoča le, če vključuje prilagajanje in spreminjanje glede na njihove potrebe v danem trenutku in pričakovani prihodnosti. Domačijski očitek je tako v tem, da so institucije neuvidevne, ker ne priznajo pomena celote tistega, kar so jim predniki zapustili v zgolj začasno skrb, ter vseh dejavnosti, ki določajo in ustvarjajo njihovo skrb, ta pa se mora sama »smiselno posodabljati« (uvajati prilagoditve okoljskim spremembam, kot so nove vrste živali in rastlin, uporabljati nove gradbene materiale, uvajati novo kmetijsko mehanizacijo ipd.; Zavratnik idr., 2021; Bajič, Zavratnik, 2022; Krašovic, 2022). »Smiselno posodabljanje« oziroma vsakdanje življenje samo mora (p)ostati nedotakljivo, če naj domačini skrbijo za krajino in vse njene »sestavine« na način, ki bo ustrezal njihovim merilom. V njem je skrb za krajino obenem tudi skrb za lastno blaginjo in, v podaljšku, za skupnost. Lahko bi kvečjemu rekli, da vsakdanje življenje zanje je povzdignjen ideal, praktično pa je nedotakljivo. Gospodar največje domačije v Logu v Logarski dolini je svojo vlogo (začasnega) oskrbnika (»večne«) domačije jasno artikuliral in dodal, da bo tudi v prihodnje kljub vmešavanju ZVKD skrbel za »svojo« kulturno dediščino:

*Kmetija gre iz roda v rod, v bistvu jaz pravim, da sem oskrbnik, pa bom dal naprej svojemu otroku enemu, kateri pač bo. [...] Taka je tradicija, naj bi bila. Kmetija se naj ne deli, ker mora ostati taka, kot je. [...] Tisti, ki je zaveden, tak kmet, ne bo prodal svoje zemlje, za boga ne. [...] [Ukvarjanje z dediščino se mi ni] zamerilo, ne, jaz bom tako delal po svoje. Samo škoda je časa, da se moraš kregati [z ZVKD] pa doprinašati, škoda je časa. Jaz bom tako ali tako naredil, kot sem si namislil. Samo v sklopu te kulturne dediščine.*¹⁷

¹⁶ Intervju so opravili Petra Goljevšček, Žiga Korbar, Pika Kristan in Elizabeta Vršnik.

¹⁷ Intervju so opravile Tina Mlinarič, Lina Troha in Tina Krašovic.

Čprav oboji govorijo o dediščini, je – s hevristično-analitične perspektive – nujno, da razločimo ne samo med različnimi razumevanji dediščine, npr. med postvarjajočim in angažiranim pogledom, temveč tudi med docela različnimi »objekti«, med v sedanjosti bivajočimi ostanki preteklosti, kot jih izbirajo in uokvirjajo pristojne institucije, tj. dediščino, in sledni prednikov, kot jih dojemajo, si jih prisvajajo in uporabljajo domačini, tj. zapuščino (prim. Baskar, 2005: 41–42; Harrison, 2015). Institucionalno varovanje dediščine je za Solčavane (pre)pogosto poseg v njihovo – osebno in skupnostno – avtonomijo, poseg, ki izhaja iz nerazumevanja zapuščine in skrbi, pri čemer ne preživijo ne domačija ne domačini, če se ne prilagajajo spremembam (Vršnik, 2022).¹⁸ Pa vendar, k tem sodijo tudi pragmatična, koristoljubna prizadevanja za sodelovanje z varstvenimi institucijami, saj tako domačini lahko pridobijo finančna sredstva za obnove, subvencije, za posodabljanje kmetijske mehanizacije (ta prizadevanja so sicer individualna, a se sklicujejo in izražajo kolektivno »skrb za skrb«, se osmišljajo med osebnim in recitacijskim). Dediščina tako na neki točki postane »sestavina« zapuščine, varovanje pa del skrbi.

Shajati s turisti

Solčavsko mnogi poznajo kot turistični cilj, kraj za oddih v neokrnjeni naravi, planinarjenje in gorništvu. To ni presenetljivo, če upoštevamo zgodovino razvoja turizma na območju (začetki segajo v drugo polovico 19. stoletja, ko so v gore nad Solčavskim začeli zahajati gorniki in ljubitelji narave, sicer pa se je intenzivneje začel razvijati po 2. svetovni vojni; Kocbek, Kos, 1894; Režek, 1959; Clarke, 2007), predvsem pa močno turistično promocijo. Krajina Solčavskega je bila npr. poudarjena tudi v znameniti (in vplivni) akciji »Slovenija, moja dežela«. Z videom *Gostje prihajajo* (rež. Jaka Judnič, 1986) so predvsem Logarsko dolino povzdignili med najprezentativnejše krajine,¹⁹ pomembne tudi za oblikovanje nacionalne identitete (Kučan, 1998; Klaus, 2014).²⁰ V zadnjem času pa so na medmrežju postale viralne tudi podobe Robanovega travnika in Ojstrice ter panoramski posnetki z brezpilotnimi letalniki (s prvimi na domačiji Roban nimajo težav, saj slike nastajajo dobesedno s poti, ki vodi mimo travnika, z drugimi pač, saj posnetki zahtevajo prehajanje meja poti in sprejemljivega; gl. nadaljevanje).

Takšne podobe – če sledimo opisanemu razumevanju – varujejo oziroma nadzorujejo krajino, so del estetike krajine. Krajino predstavijo kot »objekt«, kot nekaj nam zunanjega in od nas neodvisnega, nekaj, kar je tam zato, da opazujemo ali izrabimo, porabimo, uokvirimo in zamrznemo (Lewis, 2012: 99). Drugače rečeno, gre za oblikovanje

¹⁸ Velja tudi nasprotno: s perspektive konservacije je (domačijska) skrb za zapuščino videti kot namerna brezobzornost do dediščine (Hostnik, Klanšek, 2021: 74).

¹⁹ Fotografiranje z vstopa v dolino ali spred Hotela Plesnik z razgledom proti zatrepu doline je danes tako ali tako turistični »must do« (gl. Slika 2).

²⁰ Deli omenjenega videa so bili predvajani tudi na uvodoma omenjenem praznovanju.

»turistične krajine« (Kozorog, 2009: 44–54), za konstrukcijo elementov za »turistični pogled« (Urry, Larsen, 2011). Po Henriju Lefebvru (1991: 132) je to nezadostna, meščanska percepcija krajine kot nedotaknjene narave. Nezadostnost teh podob oziroma percepcije je v tem, da v preoblikovanju in ohranjanju krajine spregledajo vlogo dela oziroma skrbi (v tem spregledu tiči tudi njena politična oziroma ideološka razsežnost). Z drugimi besedami, prezrejo ljudi, ki živijo v krajini in z njo. In, če sledimo opažanjem domačinov, tudi na Solčavskem »zunanji«, ki domnevno izvajajo estetiko krajine, pogosto sploh ne opazijo (in zaradi tega tudi ne priznajo) dela domačinov:

Meni se zdi, da so vsi naši kraji zelo dobro ohranjeni. Meni se zdi, da bi včasih lahko tudi kaj pohvalili. Kakor je tukaj zelo ohranjeno. In koliko je to truda notri. Dostikrat je tudi prišla skupina študentov, pa vsega, da jim predstavimo kmetije pa način življenja. In v bistvu se sploh ne vidi, da se kaj na kmetiji dela. Tako, kakor da je vse samo. Kar, da je. Prideš sem in kar je. Ampak notri so vlaganja od jutra do večera. Ne morete vi sploh videt. [...] Recimo, človek pride in če nisi iz takega poklica, ti sploh ne veš, koliko je notri truda. Da to vse, te robove pokosimo, pograbimo, da se vse to obnavlja. Ker če mi tukaj ne bi živeli, recimo v dveh letih je čisto druga krajina. In to ni prav, da tega ne spodbujajo. Da bi enkrat rekli: »Hvala, da tako živite, ker imamo še mi nekaj od tega.«²¹

Krajina, kakršna je danes, je začasni rezultat dolge zgodovine oblikovanja in preoblikovanja, neskončnega niza opravil (Ingold, 2000: 189–208), na Solčavskem primarno gozdarskih in živinorejskih, a tudi nalog, ki niso bile opravljene, npr. opuščanje visokogorskih pašnikov in posledično zaraščanje.²² Toda za spoznanje, da je krajina, kakršna je danes, njena ohranjenost oziroma dobrobit, odvisna od skrbi domačinov, je potrebno »uveščinjeno gledanje« (Grasseni, 2009). Poleg tega percepcijske veščine, ki se jih naučimo s participacijo v specifičnih skupnostih, omogočajo tudi prepoznavanje lepote, drugačne od lepote turističnega pogleda (prim. Vršnik, 2022: 139–140; tudi Vranješ, 2005). Kot je povedala gospodarica turistične kmetije iz Matkovega kota:

Kar imamo živinoreje, [imamo] predvsem, da se ohranja krajina, ne zato, ker bi nam bil to vir dohodka, da se vse pokosi, da se ne zarastejo travniki, da malo lepše zgleda, da imamo lastno mleko in meso, kokoši, da imamo svoja jajca, smo recimo delno samooskrbni.²³

²¹ Intervju so opravili Petra Goljevšček, Žiga Korbar, Pika Kristan in Elizabeta Vršnik.

²² Zaraščanje je zaradi sprememb načinov gospodarjenja opazno od 2. svetovne vojne naprej (Fajgelj, 1953; Meze, 1963; Anko idr., 2007; Vršnik, 2022), a se nekatere planine v zadnjem času, potem ko so zgradili več dostopnih cest, obnavljajo.

²³ Intervju sta opravili Taja Ivanc in Vanja Germ.



Slika 2: Obiskovalki Logarske doline fotografirata krajino, kot se kaže pri vходу v dolino, junij 2022. Foto: Blaž Bajič.

Vidimo lahko, da je percepcija domačinov estetska, da sicer meri na lepoto, a obenem zaznava krhkost krajine, ki kliče po (o)skrbi.

Lepota in krhkost sta bili posredi tudi ob ustanavljanju Krajinskega parka Logarska dolina in Krajinskega parka Robanov kot (Roban, 1991: 1; Prelesnik, 2022: 4), ki sta (bila) zamišljena kot »orodji« za lažje upravljanje z obema dolinama.²⁴ Krajinski park Logarska dolina je predstavljal enkratni primer upravljalvske prakse v evropskem kontekstu (Anterić, Clarke, 2009: 16), saj so med letoma 1992 in 2016 park vodili

²⁴ V sedanji obliki sta parka nastala leta 1987, med obema vojnoma pa bi skoraj prišlo do ustanovitve Nacionalnega parka Logarska dolina-Okrešelj. Robanov kot je bil sicer že leta 1949 zavarovan kot naravna znamenitost (Roban, 1991: 1).

prebivalci Logarske doline.²⁵ Ocene uspešnosti oziroma ciljev delovanja podjetja domačinov, ki so imeli koncesijo za upravljanje s krajinskim parkom, so bile sicer različne, vse pa so izhajale iz estetike skrbi oziroma se sklicevale na dobrobit krajine (Prelesnik, 2016). Nesoglasja so nazadnje pripeljala do odvzema koncesije, a zdi se, da je podjetje predstavljalo, če nič drugega, pomemben simbolni trenutek, ko so domačini vsaj nominalno odločali o svoji dolini. Dolino so pred ustanovitvijo parka pestile težave, povezane s prometom in (pre)velikim številom (dnevnih) obiskovalcev. Toda, kot je poudarila domačinka, ki deluje v turizmu:

Dejansko se stanje z razglasitvijo [krajinskega] parka ni spremenilo, sploh ne, ampak s tem potem, ko so se zagotovile finance, da se je uredila dolina. Dejansko se stvari niso začele urejati, dokler se niso domačini dogovorili, ustanovili podjetje Logarska dolina, d. o. o., in začeli z urejanjem Logarske doline in se odločili, da se bo začela pobirati vstopnina. In je bil prvi tak primer v Sloveniji oziroma kjer je Logarska dobila koncesijo za upravljanje, pa tudi domačini so vsako leto sprejemali plan dela, pa določali, kaj se bo delalo za ta denar, ki je prišel od parkirnine.²⁶

Nekateri domačini so si, da bi zagotovili zanesljivejše temelje za upravljanje in večjo prepoznavnost kraja, prizadevali, da bi projekt nadgradili s preoblikovanjem oziroma vključitvijo Krajinskega parka Logarska dolina (in drugih delov Solčavskega) v nastajajoči regijski park Kamniško-Savinjske Alpe. Nekdanji direktor Logarske doline d. o. o. in eden od pobudnikov ustanovitve regijskega parka je pripovedoval, da so parki »za razvoj turizma izjemno pomembni, zavarovana območja vedno bolj [zaželeni] ..., tam naj bi bil lepši zrak, ohranjena narava, tradicionalna prehrana in to, te parkirne službe stvari vzpodbujajo.« Tudi v tem primeru bi lahko rekli, da sta se povzdig v izjemo in vsakdanje življenje, varovanje in skrb prekrila, prizadevanja za ustanovitev regijskega parka pa so to težnjo želela nadgraditi. Vendar do ustanovitve regijskega parka ni prišlo, saj so nekateri temu nasprotovali, čeprav »niso vedli prav dobro povedat, zakaj so proti, ampak je to bil nek prastrah na varovanem območju, [češ da bo] potem pa vse prepovedano in tako naprej.«²⁷ Leta 2016 je ob naraščajočem številu turistov in pod vplivom razhajanj o prihodnji obliki skrbi za dolino, bojzani nekaterih pred strožjimi omejitvami v kmetijstvu, neugodnem finančnem položaju in domnevnih nepravilnostih koncesijo za upravljanje s krajinskim parkom prevzela občina. Ta velik del svoje skrbi usmerja v graditev in vzdrževanje turistične infrastrukture, predvsem poti in informacijskih tabel (Prelesnik, 2022).

²⁵ Za podrobnejši opis zgodovine oblikovanja parka gl. Krašovic (2022: 36–41).

²⁶ Intervju so opravile Tina Krašovic, Tina Mlinarič in Lina Troha.

²⁷ Intervju so opravile Tina Krašovic, Tina Mlinarič in Lina Troha.

Velik del ozemlja Krajinskega parka Robanov kot je v lasti družine Roban (domačija je bila prvič omenjena leta 1624), ki je zadržana glede razvoja turizma oziroma se z njim skoraj ne ukvarja. Tu je manj turističnih nastanitev, infrastruktura cest in poti je manj razvejena, dolina pa je v veliki meri namenjena travniku, pašniku oziroma varovanemu in gospodarskemu gozdu. Tudi nekdanji gospodar z domačije Roban je večkrat omenil neuvideven in nespoštljiv odnos obiskovalcev doline, ki se kaže v njihovem »stikanju« okoli domačije, zahajanjih s poti, motenju živine in podobnem. V zgornjem delu doline – od domačije navzgor proti kotu oziroma planini – je cesta zadnjih 25 let registrirana kot cesta za potrebe kmetije, ne pa npr. kot gozdna cesta, s čimer so si zagotovili nekoliko večjo avtonomijo ter poskusili omejiti gibanje preradovednih turistov (gornikom in pripadnikom gorske reševalne službe gibanja niso nikoli omejevali). Po mnenju nekdanjega gospodarja domačije je težava v tem, da status krajinskega parka ne prinaša posebnih omejitev, vsaj ne za obiskovalce.

Ja, pogrešam [jasnejša, strožja pravila], samo ne za sebe, [temveč] za ostale, za obiskovalce. Imam občutek, da nekdo, ki pride, obiskovalec ali pa gost, ko vidi, da je to park, krajinski park, dobi občutek, da je to nekaj splošnega, državnega, kjer lahko dela, kar hoče. Da to [zemlja, gozd, pašniki], sploh ne pripada kmetiji, da je to neko splošno dobro.²⁸

Tavanju turistov mimo poti – in »vdiranju« v »skrite kraje« – nasprotujejo tudi tisti, ki delujejo v turizmu. O tem je izjemno zanimiv premislek domačinke iz Logarske doline, kjer tudi vodi turistično kmetijo. Ko smo se odpravili na organiziran etnografski sprehod od Doma planincev do Logarskega kota in še malce višje v smeri Melišča pod Planjavo, je navdušena pohodnica in fotografinja pripovedovala o turistično bolj in manj obleganih delih doline. Melišče je ena njenih najljubših lokacij za fotografiranje, saj na določenem delu, v t. i. hladilniku, gorsko cvetje uspeva veliko nižje kot sicer in je zato po njenem pripovedovanju enkratno. Območje pa ni zavarovano niti ni splošno znano, kje sploh leži, in prizadeva si, da tudi ostane nezaščiten, neoznačen in neznan, da ne bi tja začeli zahajati turisti. Podobno velja za njej vsečne poti, ki vodijo na Ute, Krofičko, Rjavčki vrh, Klemenčo jamo in Ojstrico (naša pot je tisti dan sledila glavni cesti, saj je bilo zaradi snega močno oteženo pohajanje po gozdu, kjer sicer navadno hodi). Te poti, je poudarila, »držijo zase«.²⁹ Goste, za katere oceni, da so dovolj dobro pripravljene, raje napoti na že turistificirani Okrešelj in okoliške vrhove, le dolgoletne goste svojega penziona s specifičnim zanimanjem za cvetje na njihovo izrecno prošnjo pripusti na »skriti kraj«.³⁰

²⁸ Intervju so opravili Jaka Repič, Ana Svetel in Veronika Zavrtnik.

²⁹ Povedno je tudi, da s potmi in postojankami na vzhodni strani doline upravlja PD Solčava, ne PD Celje-Matica, ki bdi nad Domom planincev, Orlovim gnezdom ob slapu Rinka, in, kot že omenjeno, Frischaufovim domom na zahodni strani doline – slednji je turistično občutno bolj obiskan.

³⁰ Na etnografskem sprehodu so sodelovali Blaž Bajič, Sanja Đurin, Jaka Repič in Ana Svetel.

Fotografije z njenih pohodov uporabi za lažje usmerjanje turistov, nekatere – občasno tudi tiste, nastale vzdolž »domačijskih« poti – pa končajo na spletnih družabnih omrežjih. S tem, ko instrumentalizira estetiko krajine za potrebe ohranjanja možnosti krajinske estetike, če uporabim Vergunstov razloček, za usmerjanje turistov, in s tem, ko jim olajša oziroma oteži dostop do določenih lokacij, se sogovornica, podobno kakor omenjena kmeta, postavlja kot skrbnica krajine in skupnosti. (So)odloča, komu se kaj pokaže in kaj ne, komu kam pusti iti in kam ne, pod kakšnimi pogoji in s kakšnimi razlogi; skratka, ustvarja prostorsko in družbeno distinkcijo. In s prikazanimi podobami »mimogrede« usmerja percepcijo – tudi zato ni presenetljivo, da ne usahne (re)produkcija ustaljene estetike krajine skozi nepreštevno množico bolj ali manj podobnih si turističnih podob, ustvarjenih na skoraj istih krajih. Po eni strani tudi sama morda vizualno nadzoruje krajino, jo dela »takoj prepoznavno« itn., toda po drugi strani sta v njenih rokah fotografiranje in »turistično reprezentiranje« orodji skrbi. Drugače rečeno, ker strateško izrablja strukture estetike krajine oziroma turističnega pogleda in jih za potrebe krajinske estetike oziroma estetike skrbi do neke mere soustvarja in reproducira, se pokaže, da v kontekstu skrbi meja med estetiko krajine in krajinsko estetiko ni tako jasna, kot se morda sprva zdi. Nemara tak pristop sogovornice narekuje odpoved tistemu, kar ni »njeno« ne v pravno-formalnem ne v afektivnem smislu, a omogoča lažje ohranjanje izbranih krajev za domačine. Omogoča skrb, ki meri na to, da turistični tokovi ne kvarijo doline in vsakdanjega življenja v njej.

Skrbniki krajine na Solčavskem po eni strani v svojih »recitacijah« uporabljajo ustaljene normativne, idealnotipske, tudi ideološke distinkcije med varstvom in skrbjo, dediščino in zapuščino, estetiko krajine in krajinsko estetiko, tujim in domačim (čeprav ne uporabljajo nekaterih omenjenih izrazov!) ter jih reproducirajo, po drugi strani pa v neposrednih izkušnjah in partikularnem delovanju prav o teh distinkcijah in kategorijah dvomijo, jih kombinirajo in spajajo, ko brkljajo in uveljavljajo lastne interpretacije. V dialektiki obojega si zamišljajo in producirajo – *skrbjo za* – »svojo« krajino in skupnost, v razmerju s katerimi se oblikuje lokalnost, ki je tudi sama krhka tvorba, kakor je opazal že Appadurai (1996: 198–199). Njena tvarina so (skupne) izkušnje, spomini, aspiracije, povezane z izbranimi krajinami, priljubljenimi potmi, prostori dela in druženja. Toda zdi se, da domačini s skrbjo za navedeno obenem reflektirajo lasten položaj v razmerju z Drugimi (institucijami, turisti idr.) in ga, tako kot svoje ravnanje, legitimirajo – s tem pa se prej ali slej srečajo z vprašanji spremenljivosti oziroma nespremenljivosti. Postavlja se (jim) vprašanje o pomenu teh izrazov.



Slika 3: Etnografski sprehod po Kotu v Logarski dolini, februar 2023. Foto: Blaž Bajič.



Slika 4: Skrb za krajino – posek po pripovedovanjih s podlubnikom »okuženih« dreves in usmerjanje percepcije obiskovalcev na turistično pomembni točki v Logarski dolini, julij 2023. Foto: Blaž Bajič.



Sklep: od tod do večnosti

Prvi razlog [da mladi zapuščajo Solčavsko, da je vedno manj prebivalcev] je, da je morat [mogoče] v sami vasi zdaj malo delovnih mest, takih stabilnih. Drugi je, da se ti eksperimenti socializma, ki so bili, da se še niti ne zavedamo, kako škodo so naredili. Kmetje so se nekako obdržali, obdržali svojo štreko [smer]. Nikoli se niso poistovetili s sistemom, vas se je pa. In vas je danes skoraj mrtva ali pa stara, brez otrok. Kmetije niso. Tretji [razlog] [...] je, da je zmeraj večje vtikanje inštitucij v naše življenje, v naše načrtovanje. Zmeraj bolj pogosto se vtikajo raznorazni zavodi, hočejo imeti besedo, se vtikajo, kaj boš ti naredil, kako boš naredil, ali smeš, ali ne smeš. To je za tisto osebno svobodo, ki jo kmetijstvo pravzaprav v sebi nosi, ali pa tak način življenja, ki ga mi imamo, pa smo ga vseskozi živeli, zelo pomembno. In če ti tisto svobodo začnejo eni cepci birokratski jemat, morat [morda] počasi obcagaš [obupaš]. En cajt [čas] se boriš, ne vem ... [...] Nasploh se mi zdi vse to varovanje, ki je bolj varovanje zaradi služb, zaradi samega sebe, da obstajajo pa da prodajajo svoj obstoj, bolj kakor pa da bi oni pripomogli k temu, da mi ohranjamo. V zavesti vsakega posameznika, se mi zdi, na Solčavskem je nekako ohranjanje narave. Narave, stavbarske kulture, dediščine, vsega, a ne. In oni so tam samo zato, da nas jebejo v glavnem. Drugače pa vsak cimper pa, ko ga greš delat, seveda ima zdaj ene sodobne oblike tudi, ki jih zaradi mašinerije [kmetijske mehanizacije] nekaj moraš naredit, samo zmeraj se boš pa potrudil, da bo pa eden koren ali pa eno bistvo, da bo pa tako kakor mora biti. To je neodvisno od, res, neodvisno od vseh inštitucij. [...] Varuješ ti, ki tam živiš. Ti imaš tisti pogled, zdravo pamet, kaj je treba. [...] Jaz ne rečem, jaz sem drugače zelo za ohranjanje, zelo za ohranjanje. Če se količkaj da. Samo oni nič ne prinucao [pripomorejo] pri temu, vse te službe. Za moje pojme ne. [...] Če se jaz odločim eno vlako naredit za eno gozdno parcelo – najprej [so mi] trije strokovnjaki, ki so trenutno v službi, še mogoče 15 let, rekli ne! Pa jih čez 20 let ne bo nikjer več v zgodovini za videti. Nikjer več. Naši rodovi so pa 600 let tu. [...] Treba je spoštovat človeka. Človeka, ki tam živi. Ker to ni ... tisti človek ni od včeraj. Saj jaz verjamem, da se tudi arhitekturni kiksi naredijo [v kontekstu domačinske skrbi], sploh, ko se spreminja mašinerija [kmetijska mehanizacija], ko se [spreminja] način gospodarjenja. Samo povsod se tudi v eni določeni meri spreminja [domačije, kulturne krajine].³¹

³¹ Intervju sta opravili Pika Kristan in Elizabeta Vršnik.

»Recitiranje« gospodarja kmetije v Matkovem kotu poudarja pretekla in sodobna dogajanja, ki so zaznamovala življenje domačinov. Kot rečeno, pogosto domačini sami privilegirajo kmete in kmetije kot nosilce »solčavske identitete« in je zato njihova beseda odmevna, vendar pa na zelo podoben način svoja videnja in delovanje utemeljijo tudi drugi domačini. Ko je direktorica največjega turističnega obrata na Solčavskem pripovedovala o zahtevah območne enote ZVKD, je dejala:

Sploh nimajo enega posluha, nočejo nič [slišat], oni samo neke rušitve pa odstranjevanja [zahtevajo] pa [prepovedujejo] ... kaj smo pa s tem uničili [ko smo postavili nadstrešek na prehod med hotelskima stavbama]? Kaj smo pa s tem uničili?! Zakrivamo gozdno zaledje?! Pa saj imaš gozd kamorkoli pogledaš!

Svoje stališče in boljše poznavanje lokacije, njene zgodovine in »vsakdanjega življenja hotela« od »narave pa kulture«, tj. zadevnih zavodov, pa je utemeljila z besedami, da

ti živiš tu, sam, investiraš denar, držiš se vseh umestitev ... Naša družina je tu v dolini že skoraj 700 let. Kdo mislite, da bo čuval pokrajino, da je taka, kot je, in ohranjal, zavod za varstvo kulture pa narave sigurno ne. Pač obstaja en čisto kratek cajt [čas].³²

Oba sogovornika tako poudarjata antagonizem med strokovnjaki in domačini, nasprotje med (naravo- oziroma kulturo-)varstvenimi institucijami in dediščino ter skrbjo domačinov in zapuščino, nasprotje med Državo in Solčavskim. Sogovornika protestirata in kritizirata, artikulirata »na kraju utemeljeno [*place-based*] moralno ekonomijo«, tj. »družbena in etična razumevanja družbenoekonomske pravičnosti in poštenosti [*justice and fairness*]«, ki se »navadno zoperstavljajo kapitalističnemu privilegiranju tržnih dinamik ter opravičevanju iz njih izvirajočih neenakosti« (Hilton, 2022: 264). Kakor vidimo, so nasprotovanja lahko – v prvem primeru najbrž zaradi specifičnih zgodovinskih izkušenj nacionalizacije po 2. svetovni vojni – uperjena tudi v Državo, njene institucije in posege v lokalni način življenja. Če trdimo, da je kritika navsezadnje uperjena v isti cilj, spregledamo njen »solčavski značaj«. Medtem ko v solčavski moralni ekonomiji globalni kapitalistični sistem in njegova posledica, da »[v]se trdno in stalno se razblinja« (Marx, Engels, 2012: 98–99), veljata le še za en vir sprememb. Te jih spremljajo »od vekomaj« in jih morajo upoštevati v svoji skrbi za krajino in skupnost, a jim delovanja ne predpisujejo, ampak kvečjemu omogočajo, saj jih »obsojajo na svobodo«, ki jo tako ali tako razumejo kot nujen del njihovih življenj. Država pa je dojeta kot nova, minljiva, v razmerju do »pradavnih«, celo »večnih«

³² Intervju sta opravila Sandi Abram in Blaž Bajič.

domačij in rodov kratkotrajna tvorba, ki skuša posegati v njihov način življenja in skrbi, jih »obsoja na hlapčevstvo« – to pa zanje preprosto ni sprejemljivo (Državo krivijo tudi za padajoče cene lesa in kmetijskih pridelkov, slabo turistično promocijo območja itn.). Težava torej ni toliko v tem, da bi danes izgubljali »nadzor in moč nad upravljanjem z območjem, ki ga, tako rekoč, naseljujejo 'že od nekdaj'« (Krašovic, 2022: 66). Že v preteklosti so bili priče, odvzemanju – oziroma poskusom odvzemanja – zmožnosti za skrb oziroma avtonomije. »Če pomisliš,« je nadaljeval sogovornik iz Matkovega kota, »stoletna kmetija, iz roda v rod. Pol so pa prišli čisto drugi cajti [povojna sprememba političnega sistema, nacionalizacija], ane. Je bilo to [uveljavljen način gospodarjenja, način življenja] nespoštovano čist. Dobro, da so se obdržali.« In, kot je nemudoma dodal gospodarjev oče, »saj so jih že prej skušli zlomit. Preden je do tega prišlo.« Tudi v turizmu sogovorniki pripovedujejo, tako npr. vodja hotela Plesnik, da je – glede na zgodovino odnosa s Celjem, mestom, ki velja za središče dolgotrajnih poskusov nadzorovanja in izkoriščanja Solčavskega od zunaj – »vedno [prisotna] bojazen, da nas [Solčavanov] [...] nihče ne jemlje resno, kot resnega partnerja, ki ima pravico do neke besede pa odločanja, čeprav ustvarijo kar nekaj nočitev«, po njenem prepričanju zato, ker so turistični obrati majhni in ker ima občina malo prebivalcev.³³ Morda lahko celo rečemo, da je njihova avtonomija inherentno ogrožena, da je avtonomija sama krhka, saj je vržena v družbene, politično-ekonomske in okoljske spremembe (nadzora, strogo vzeto, nikoli niso imeli). »Težava«, se pravi tista dimenzija skrbi, ki zadeva premišljevanje lastnega položaja in odnosa do razlik in drugačnosti in jo omenja James Thompson (2015: 44), je tako bolj v tem, da jim »pravila igre« narekuje na prvi pogled nadrejen, dejansko pa dojet kot podrejen, v časovnem, prostorskem in kulturnem smislu neenakovreden sogovornik. Ta poleg vsega ne izraža ustreznega spoštovanja, se ne zaveda »resničnega« razmerja in »resničnosti« razmer, se pravi tega, da so pravi gospodarji, skrbniki »že od nekdaj« domačini. Tega Država ne more in ne sme spreminjati; vsakdanje življenje zato, da se ohranja oziroma ne spreminja, zahteva nenehno prilagajanje, nenehno vključevanje takšnih in drugačnih sprememb, ki poteka iz »roda v rod«.

Skrb solčavskih skrbnikov, skratka, pomeni nadaljnje ohranjanje in produkcijo »pradavnega«, potencialno »večnega« v vsakdanjem življenju – krajine in skupnosti – s prisvajanjem sprememb in z njimi ter obenem borbo, da se spreminjanje, ki sledi »večnemu« in ki je lastno vsakdanjemu življenju, ne bi nikoli spremenilo. V tej borbi pa je glavno vprašanje, kaj je sprememba in kaj ni. Enoznačnega odgovora ni in ne more biti, vsaj ne takega, ki bi meril na neko trdno, nedvoumno »stvar«. Spremenljivost in nespremenljivost sta (potencialno) vse tisto, kar akterji zaznajo, začutijo in koncipirajo kot razlike oziroma kontinuitete v času in prostoru, kar pa je odvisno od (samo)stereotipizacije in (samo)vednosti, ki se ustvarja in poustvarja z »recitiranjem«.

³³ Intervju sta opravila Sandi Abram in Blaž Bajič.

Hkrati pa so zaznave, občutki in koncepcije odvisne od partikularnih (samo)umestitev in izkušenj, spetih z motivacijami, interesi, željami in zamišljanji (Bajič, Svetel, 2023). Ko sogovornice in sogovorniki govorijo o spremenljivosti in nespremenljivosti, uporabljajo nekakšne lebdeče označevalce, ki so dovolj ohlapni, da različnim akterjem v različnih obdobjih in različnih prostorih pomenijo različne »stvari«, a hkrati tudi dovolj natančni, da spodbujajo delovanje v določeni smeri (Smucker idr., 2012: 234). V končni (ali pa začetni) fazi gre za »izraze« različnih položajev v razmerjih moči ne zgolj med domačini in »tujci«, temveč tudi med domačini samimi (kar pa v pripovedovanju pogosto ostane neizrečeno). Razlikam navkljub gre za skrb za krajino in skupnost, ki je zamišljena tako, da bosta ti v zameno skrbeli »za nas Solčavane«. Povedano še drugače: ko se obračajo v preteklost, odpirajo prihodnost, in ko iščejo »večno«, najdejo spremembe. V spremembah pa se jim razkriva nespremenljivost – krajine in skupnosti.

Če je praznovanje občinskega praznika leta 2021 govorilo o spremembah – družbenih in podnebnih –, a je v njih odkrivalo nespremenljivost, bi bilo izjemno zanimivo videti, kaj bi izrazilo praznovanje leta 2023, saj se (na podlagi spodaj navedenega nagovora) zdi, da je bil namen obravnavati nespremenljivo. Na prireditve, naslovljeno »Naša zemlja je sveta«, so organizatorji vabili z naslednjimi besedami:

Solčavsko je obvarovalo svojo krajinsko identiteto, ljudje pa so ohranili ponos in ozaveščenost, zahvaljujoč tudi nezaupljivosti do vsega, kar prihaja od drugod. Ta nezaupljivost je značilnost starih narodov v Alpah. Brez njih bi izgubili svojo samobitnost, svojo zemljo, svojo kulturo.³⁴

Prireditev je bila v zadnjem trenutku odpovedana, saj je tisti večer tudi na Solčavskem udarilo realno – družbenih in podnebnih – sprememb.

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³⁴ Vabilo je dostopno na spletni strani občine Solčava (Solčava, 2023).

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Caring for Fragile Landscapes: Landscape, Community and Change(Lessness) in Solčavsko

The paper addresses selected examples of locals' "recitings" (Green, 2012) – of the caretakers of the landscape and the community – from Solčavsko or the Solčava region, discoursing with the issue of care for the landscape and some of its crucial domains, namely institutional preservation and tourism. Based on a brief review of anthropological dealings with the topic of care, especially care for the landscape, and its framings as ethics and praxis, the paper – following recent writings on the topic – proposes an understanding of care as aesthetics. Care aesthetics is understood as a value-laden relationship and a bodily-sensory practice, in the present case related to the valleys and mountain ridges of the Solčava region. In parallel to care aesthetics, the paper suggests that we think of fragility as an aesthetic category, referring to the sensed, felt, and discussed aspects calling for one's, i.e. the caretaker's, attention. The paper, however, begins by outlining the methodological aspects of the research on which the discussion is based. These must be stressed as they include multiple researchers and ongoing discussions with research participants and may lead to crucial epistemological oversights. Ethnographically, the paper focuses on the local recitings of the relation between the local community and the regional institute for the protection of cultural heritage on the one hand; and the local community and tourists visiting this Alpine region in Northern Slovenia, much of which is included in various nature conservation regimes, on the other. The recitings articulate established beliefs and ideological viewpoints regarding the community and its historical role as caretakers from and of Solčavsko against outsiders. These views, in other words, are based in and reproduce a "place-based moral economy" (Hilton, 2022). Through the discussion, some distinctions, e.g. between conservation and care, landscape aesthetics and aesthetics of the land, are problematized. Finally, the paper argues that, in the Solčava region, care is part and parcel of the dialectics of change and changelessness, that is to say efforts to retain the seemingly "eternal" connections between the local community and the land by incorporating the "fleeting" occurrences of everyday life.

Skvotiranje in direktna skrb za urbani prostor: primer Participativne ljubljanske avtonomne cone (PLAC)

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Prispevek se ukvarja z vprašanjem, kako skvoterska skupnosti razume in uresničuje direktno skrb za urbani prostor v razmerah gentrifikacije in elitizacije mesta. Na primeru Participativne ljubljanske avtonomne cone (PLAC), zaskvotiranega ozemlja nekdanje delavske menze, besedilo tematizira uprstorjenje skrbi v krajini, skozi krajino in za krajino kot izkušnje solidarnosti in odnosov v vsakdanjem materialnem življenju ljudi in neljudi, ki zajema relacijske, prostorske in politične razsežnosti skrbi.

▪ **Ključne besede:** skrb, direktno skrbstveno delo, skvotiranje, urbani prostor, avtonomni prostori, Participativna ljubljanska avtonomna cona (PLAC)

The paper explores how the squatting community comprehends and implements direct care for urban space in the context of gentrification and elitisation of the city. Drawing on the case of the Participatory Ljubljana Autonomous Zone (PLAC), a squatted area previously serving as a workers' canteen, this examination foregrounds the spatialisation of care within, through, and for the landscape as a way to demonstrate solidarity and foster relationships in the everyday lives of both humans and non-humans, encompassing relational, spatial, and political realms of care.

▪ **Keywords:** care, direct care, direct care work, squatting, urban space, autonomous spaces, Participatory Ljubljana Autonomous Zone (PLAC)

Uvod

Pisali so se zimski meseci leta 2020, ko so nas doleteli izredni ukrepi za zajezitev širjenja novega koronavirusa. Tedanje izredne razmere niso prinesle zgolj omejitve gibanja, prepovedi združevanja, obveznega nošenja mask, razkuževanja rok in policijske ure, temveč so mnoge na družbenem robu prikrajšale za osnovno pravico do dostojnega življenja. Ukrepi, zaradi katerih se je zaprl marsikateri del javne infrastrukture, so namreč za najranljivejše skupine, kot so npr. brezdomne osebe, pomenili grobo okrnitev dostopa do začasnega varnega zatočišča, rednih toplih obrokov, pitne vode in drugih osnovnih higienskih, zdravstvenih in preventivnih razmer za dostojno življenje. V takšnem distopičnem kontekstu, ki je vodil v propad glavnine institucionalnega humanitarnega sistema in stopnjevanje socialnih stisk, je bila krilatica *#ostanidoma* kvečjemu ciničen odsev popolne brezbriznosti vladajočih. Pa vendar so, če parafraziram besede Antonia Gramscija, razmere pesimizma intelekta rodile optimizem volje. Ena izmed značilnosti korona-križe je bila prav solidarnost, ki je v Ljubljani dobila središče v avtonomnih prostorih. Na razmere se je Avtonomna

tovarna Rog, podobno kot med begunsko krizo, nemudoma odzvala s političnim projektom, v okviru katerega so na terenu obiskovali brezdomne osebe. Oskrbovali so jih z osnovnimi življenjskimi potrebščinami in s pogovorom, druženjem, toplimi obroki in osnovno zdravstveno oskrbo lajšali njihov vsakdan na ulici. Z izobešanjem letakov, kjer je vsak lahko napisal, kaj potrebuje in kaj lahko ogroženim skupinam nudi, si je samoorganizirana skupina obenem prizadevala stkati neformalne skrbstvene mreže v neposredni sosesčini Roga.

V prispevku, podobno kot v uvodnem primeru, premišlujem o direktni skrbi za urbano krajino v avtonomnih prostorih v času skrbstvene, stanovanjske oziroma, kot to splošno imenujejo, »urbane krize« (Weaver, 2017).¹ Medtem ko so se raziskave pri nas prvenstveno ukvarjale z družbenimi gibanji in avtonomnimi prostori kot viri direktnega socialnega dela (Flaker, 2012; Hrvatina, 2016), me v tem primeru zanima, kako se direktno skrbstveno delo iz avtonomnih prostorov vpenja v širši urbani prostor. Direktno skrb oziroma direktno skrbstveno delo (*direct care work*) pojmujem kot obliko političnega udejstvovanja, pri katerem si posamezniki ali skupine ob nenehni refleksiji in samokritiki prizadevajo zamišljati nova načela udejanjanja skrbi in (so)ustvariti razpršene mreže brez posrednikov ali legalističnih okvirov, da bi uresničili skrbi v nasprotju, a vseeno v trenutnem družbenem redu. Direktna skrb se lahko kaže kot oblika zunajinstitucionalnega dela v samoniklih skupnostih v začasnih ali trajnih avtonomnih prostorih in je osnovana na načelih direktne demokracije, samoorganizacije, nehierarhičnosti, solidarnosti in vzajemne pomoči s ciljem doseči zeleno družbeno transformacijo. Direktno skrbstveno delo se opira na in prepleta z zapuščino radikalnega, neposrednega, ljudskega in samoorganiziranega socialnega dela in družbenih gibanj (gl. Hrvatina, 2016).

Na primeru Participativne ljubljanske avtonomne cone (v nadaljevanju PLAC), zaskvotiranega območja nekdanje menze v Ljubljani,² skušam razumeti, kako PLAC

¹ Urbana kriza se na poveden način kaže tudi v rasti števila nepremičninskih oglasov na območju Ljubljane, v katerih zasledimo, da določeni najemodajalci v zameno za nevidno skrbstveno delo (oskrba starejših in otrok, hišnih ljubljencev ipd.) ponujajo sorazmerno nižjo najemnino. Takšne izkoriščevalske prakse poglabljajo neenakosti in razmerja moči, saj prihaja do vse večjega prepletanja med poblagovljenjem, privatizacijo in financiacijo tako oskrbe kot stanovanj v urbanem prostoru.

² Za sodobno urbano skvotiranje ali skvotanje, predvsem tisto, kakor se je v evropskem prostoru razvijalo od 80. let 20. stoletja, sta značilni zasedba in priposestvanje praznih, nenaseljenih in neuporabljenih prostorov ali zemljišč, da bi jih ponovno uporabili brez soglasja lastnika nepremičnine (Babić, 2013; Vasudevan, 2017). Skvotiranje je zgolj ena od praks ustvarjanja avtonomnih prostorov, kjer si »ljudje z združevanjem upora in ustvarjalnosti prizadevajo za vzpostavitev nekapitalističnih, egalitarnih in solidarnostnih oblik politične, družbene in ekonomske ureditve« (Pickerill, Chatterton, 2006: 730). Avtonomni prostori so lahko začasni ali trajni (prim. Foucault, 2008). Začasni avtonomni prostori so tisti trenutki upora, ki se jim posreči osvoboditi prostor, čas ali domišljijo (Bey, 1985), npr. protestne akcije na ulici, zasedbeniška taborjenja in delavske blokade pred tovarnami. Trajni avtonomni prostori so stalnejše in dolgotrajnejše oblike uprostorjenja alternativnih samoorganiziranih skupnosti, npr. hekerske mreže, komune ali skvoti (Bey, 1993). V Sloveniji se skvoti oziroma avtonomni prostori tesno prepletajo s »samoniklimi prizorišči« (Muršič, 2011), ki jih opredeljujemo kot nevladne, neformalne in nehierarhične organizacije, javne skupnostne prostore ter skupnosti mladih (prav tam).

kot samonikla skupnost v razmerah privatizacije javnega uresničuje direktno skrb za urbani prostor z »razvezo« (Mignolo, 2007) od kapitala in države ter onkraj intimne in zasebne sfere. Prav tako želim prikazati oblike politizirane skrbi za nekdanje degradirano območje, sosesko in splošneje za prihodnji razvoj mesta, ki naj bi kolektivno ustvarjal samoniklo skrbstveno infrastrukturo kot temeljni pogoj solidarnosti in skupnostnega delovanja. V besedilu tematiziram epistemološke težnje razmeroma novega skrbstvenega obrata. Nadalje v prispevku izpeljem idejo »skrbi v« (*care within*) kot uprostorjanja skrbi v krajini, skozi krajino in za krajino. »Skrb v« pojmem kot relacijsko izkušnjo solidarnosti in kot odnos soudeležbe v vsakdanjem življenju ljudi in neljudi; sestavljajo jo in nenehno preoblikujejo tudi kraji in prostori, v katerih vznikajo.

Prispevek temelji na etnografskem terenskem raziskovanju v PLAC-u med septembrom 2022 in marcem 2023. V tem času sem se neposredno udeleževal tamkajšnjih odprtih dogodkov, nemalokrat sem zavihal rokave pri raznoterih internih aktivnostih ali pa se s tovariši, prijatelji, kolegi, znanci in novimi sogovorniki pomenkoval o skvotu med hojo ali kolesarjenjem med mestnim središčem in PLAC-om. Ob raznih interakcijah v PLAC-u in zunaj njega sem opravil na desetine neformalnih pogovorov, ves čas pa sem opazoval s soudeležbo, pisal terenski dnevnik in fotografsko dokumentiral dogajanje. Na podlagi opažanj sem z osmimi osebami, ki so bile med aktivnejšimi v PLAC-u, opravil še poglobljene polstrukturirane intervjuje. Od začetka reapropriacije prostora sem zbiral tudi najrazličnejše gradivo, npr. medijske objave, uradne odzive, objave na družbenih omrežjih, pisma podpore, transkripcije tiskovnih konferenc ipd. Prispevek temelji na militantni etnografiji kot alternativni raziskovalni metodi in politični *praxis*, ki predpostavlja politično angažirano in sodelovalno obliko opazovanja s soudeležbo v levičarskih družbenih gibanjih *in* skupaj z njimi (Juris, 2007; gl. tudi Tamše, 2013).

Od skrbi zase do skupninjenja skrbi

Skrb je bila predmet številnih debat v filozofiji (Vezeau, Schroeder, 1991; Tronto, 2013; Hrženjak, 2018; Groys, 2022), zasluge za kritično obarvan premislek skrbi na polju družboslovno-humanistične misli pa so imeli predvsem feministični tokovi od 70. let prejšnjega stoletja. Med tedaj najvplivnejšimi teorijami in praksami so bila prizadevanja za priznavanje reproduktivnega dela, premisleki o skrbi in gospodinjstvem delu ter rekonceptualizacije skrbi kot etičnega delovanja (Gabauer idr., 2022: 4). Feministični pristopi in preišljevanja skrbi so v nadaljnjih desetletjih vtisnili neizbrisen pečat v številnih disciplinah, mdr. tudi v raziskavah urbanega prostora, migracij in državljanstva (prav tam; gl. tudi Tsavdaroglou idr., 2019), niso pa zaobšli niti antropologije (npr. Alber, Drotbohm, 2015; Buch, 2015; Cook, Trundle, 2020). Povedano drugače, polje skrbi odpre vrata novim epistemološkim in metodološkim razumevanjem medsebojnih odnosov, ki ponujajo svež okvir za razumevanje vsakdanjih družbenih praks.

Vprašanju (re)politizacije družbene reprodukcije v vsakdanjem življenju sta sicer namenili pozornost že Berenice Fisher in Joan C. Tronto (1990) v poglavju 'Toward a Feminist Theory of Caring' (K feministični teoriji skrbi). Pri njenem premisleku koncepta skrbi gre pravzaprav za pronicljiv, po nekaterih kritikah nemara tudi preširok (Tronto, 2013: 19) prispevek k upomenjanju skrbi v registrih telesa in prostora. V znameniti in pogosto navajani definiciji namreč pravita, da moramo skrb obravnavati kot dejavnost, »ki vključuje vse, kar počnemo z namenom, da bi ohranili, nadaljevali in vzdrževali svoj 'svet', da bi lahko v njem čim bolje živeli. Ta svet zajema naša telesa, nas same in naše okolje, torej vse, kar skušamo medsebojno preplesti v kompleksno mrežo za ohranjanje življenja« (Fisher, Tronto, 1990: 40; poudarek v izvorniku).

Zdi se, da feministična zapuščina teoretizacije skrbi in njen dokaj nedaven prenos v urbane raziskave, naposled pa tudi njen prevzem v drugih sorodnih vedah, na inovativen način obudijo marksistično razumevanje produkcije prostora. Premisa uprostorjenja skrbi, ki se nam nemara dozdeva v obliki artikulacije »skrbstvenega obrata« (gl. spodaj), se ujema z Lefebvrovo trditvijo (2013), po kateri je (urbani) prostor vedno družben in v nenehni (družbeni) produkciji. Lefebvre je prevladujočo obliko poblagovljenja prostora v kapitalizmu namreč imel za abstraktni prostor; zanj je to prostor, ki je zvezan z državo, tehnokracijo in patriarhatom. Nasproti mu je postavil čutni prostor kot obliko prostora emancipacije, ki uhaja poblagovljenju, saj se osredinja na telo, telesno zaznavo (Lefebvre, 2013) – in, po analogiji (Fisher, Tronto, 1990), na skrb. Tako kot skrb tudi prostor ni nikoli dan sam po sebi, temveč je v nepretrganem zamišljanju, transformaciji in nastajanju. Je produkt različnih interesov, kapitalov, bojov. Prakse, režimi in strukture skrbi, ki jih lahko najdemo v mestu, v lokalnih institucijah, soseskah, sorodstvih ali gospodinjstvih, tako niso zgolj domena od zgoraj navzdol sprejetih nacionalnih, regionalnih ali lokalnih predpisov, ampak se oblikujejo samoniklo, od spodaj navzgor (*bottom-up*) oziroma horizontalno (*bottom-bottom*), kot prakse skrbstvenih skupnosti (Gabauer, Lebuhn, 2022: 167; gl. tudi Mody, 2020; Gutiérrez Sánchez, 2021). Zaradi izkušenj, praks, režimov in struktur skrbi je zato pozornost usmerjena še na širši družbeni in politični kontekst – v tem primeru na urbani prostor. Če strnemo, sta skrb in oskrba »povsem družbeni dejavnosti, vedno sestavljeni iz vidikov krajev, v katerih nastajata« (Parr, Philo, 2003: 472).

Iz razumevanja pomena kraja v odnosu do skrbi je naposled vzklil koncept »skrbstvenih krajin« (*carescapes*). Geografinja Sophie Bowlby (2012) je izraz prvič uporabila pred več kot desetletjem, da bi prikazala prostorsko-časovni kontekst dostopa do virov in storitev oskrbe (prim. McKie idr., 2002; Lawson, 2007; Milligan, Wiles, 2010). Pozneje se je koncept uveljavil v različnih disciplinah, tudi v medicinski antropologiji (npr. Seo, 2020), redkeje pa v urbani antropologiji. Shu-Mei Huang (2015: xvi) je npr. z urbanimi skrbstvenimi krajinami pojasnila, kako je lahko skrb osrednji element preučevanja urbane krajine in vsakdanjega življenja. Z interdisciplinarnim pristopom je na primeru Hongkonga pokazala, da se skrbstvene krajine »dogajajo ob vprašanjih

stanovanjske oskrbe, socialnega varstva, porodniškega varstva in oskrbe starejših« (Huang, 2015: 8). Mestne politike in urbanistično načrtovanje, ki je osredinjeno izključno na skrbi za dobiček, neizogibno prispevajo k razmahu družbenega razslojevanja, saj spremenijo prostore, prej namenjene skrbstvenim praksam, v prostore za nepremičninske špekulacije in naložbe (prav tam).

Produkcija (abstraktnega) prostora, v kateri zaradi privatizacije za ceno življenja Drugih prihaja do izrazitega »skrbstvenega primanjkljaja« (Mee, 2009), ni nujno premočrtna. »Neusmiljenemu buldožerju homogenizacije« (Zukin, 2010: 7) urbanega prostora pogosto nasprotujejo politični subjekti, popisani v številnih etnografskih raziskavah (trans)lokalnih in transnacionalnih skvoterskih pobud, samoorganiziranih kolektivov in družbenih gibanj. Isabel Gutiérrez Sánchez (2021) je na primeru Aten obravnavala odziv lokalnih političnih pobud na begunsko krizo, ki tudi v času vse večjega razlaščenja, izključevanja, zapiranja in zatiranja uspešno ustvarjajo samonikle skrbstvene solidarnostne strukture. Na osnovi etnografskega preučevanja ljudske kuhinje, nastanitvenega centra za migrante in begunce ter skupnostnega centra v prestolnici Grčije je poudarila pomen temeljnih praks samoorganiziranih kolektivov in iniciativ. V večini primerov njihovo delovanje določajo skrb, sodelovanje, vzajemna pomoč in skupninjenje (*commoning*).³ Z vidika skrbstvenega dela, reappropriacija, rekonfiguracija in reaktivacija večinoma zapuščenih oziroma zanemarjenih stavb za naslavljanje vsakdanjih potreb določene deprivilegirane skupine (v njenem primeru migrantov in beguncev) ne pomeni zgolj aktivnega vpisovanja v urbani prostor, temveč vanj neposredno uvaja množico aktivnosti družbene reprodukcije, ki je bila dotlej vezana na gospodinjstvo, s tem pa prepuščena zasebni sferi nevidne, skrite in nepolitizirane skrbi (Gutiérrez Sánchez, 2021: 160).

Takšno politizacijo skrbi zagovarjajo teoretizacije etike skrbi (Tronto, 2013; Hrženjak, 2018) kot tudi množica nedavnih razprav o raznoterih skrbstvenih skupninah (*care commons*). Manuela Zechner je denimo na primeru soseske v Barceloni etnografsko preučevala skupninjenje skrbi, varstva in nege otrok (*childcare commons*) na treh ravneh: v neformalnih mrežah in lokalni solidarnostni ekonomiji, v samoorganiziranih vrtcih in v feministični mikropolitiki gibanja (in pozneje stranke) Barcelona en Comú. Vse tri ravni skupaj, tako Zechner (2022: 22), tvorijo skupnostni »ekosistem vzgoje in varstva otrok, ki deluje kot počasen, globok in daljnosežen proces družbene in politične preobrazbe« (gl. tudi Zechner 2021).

V nadaljevanju se bom z gledišča doslej navedenih tematizacij skrbi in skrbstvene krajine podrobno posvetil Participativni ljubljanski avtonomni coni.

³ Glagolnik skupninjenje uporabljam kot izpeljanko termina 'skupnina' (vs. 'skupno'), slovenske ustreznice angleškemu izrazu *commons* (glej Bogataj, 2012: 26). V prvotni, skoraj pozabljeni rabi je skupnina označevala skupno zemljo, na kateri so pasli kmetje in kajzarji (Makarovič, 1999: 295).

Avtonomni prostori in nastanek PLAC-a

PLAC je nedaven skvot v Ljubljani v južnem delu Bežigrada, v neposredni bližini Savskega naselja. Zapuščeno stavbo na Linhartovi cesti 43 je v zgodnjih dopoldanskih urah v soboto, 3. septembra 2022, za avtonomno cono razglasilo okoli 100 ljudi. Prostori nekdanje delavske menze Cestnega podjetja Ljubljana so po njegovem stečaju leta 2014 prešli pod Družbo za upravljanje terjatev bank (DUTB).⁴ Z ukinitvijo DUTB-ja konec leta 2022 sta bila celoten nepremičninski portfelj in premoženje DUTB-ja, vključno z okoliškim zemljiščem PLAC-a v izmeri približno 18.000 m², prenesena na Slovenski državni holding (SDH). V času pisanja prispevka je bila pravni lastnik nepremičnine bivšega cestno vzdrževalnega podjetja država, *de jure* si jo lasti SDH, *de facto* pa jo priposestvuje skvoterska skupnost.

Odzivi na reappropriacijo nepremičnine nekdanjega prehranskega obrata so bili raznovrstni, predvsem pa povedni. PLAC je v pičlih nekaj dneh po zasedbi prejel številna pisma podpore tako posameznikov kot tudi političnih skupin, družbenih gibanj, socialnih prostorov, sindikatov, zavodov, inštitutov in drugih organizacij na lokalni ter nacionalni ravni.⁵ Izjave v podporo PLAC-u so podpisale tako leve zunajparlamentarne stranke (npr. Pirati) kot tudi koalicijska Levica. Množični mediji so vse od prvega dne zasedbe o skvoterskem dogajanju obširno poročali v izrazito afirmativnem diskurzu.⁶ Zasedba je kaj kmalu dosegla tudi najvišje državne in občinske predstavnike. Ljubljanski župan in predsednik vlade sta bila v tednu dni po zasedbi pozvana, da posredujeta svoje mnenje o novoustanovljeni skupnosti.⁷ Skratka, PLAC ni zasedel zgolj stavbne strukture in okoliškega območja, temveč je zgolj v nekaj dneh dosegel vso slovensko javnost.

Čeprav se v tistem trenutku še nisem zavedal, se je moj vstop na etnografski teren pravzaprav začel že s prvim dnevom zasedbe PLAC-a, ko sem na popoldanskem dogajanju izrazil osebno podporo zasedbeni skupnosti. Namera o novem avtonomnem prostoru v

⁴ DUTB je bila ustanovljena leta 2013, da bi rešila slovenske banke z odkupom njihovih nedonosnih dolgov oziroma sredstev in preprodajo slednjih na trgu.

⁵ Prvi dan zasedbe so izjave podpore spisali Anarhistična pobuda Ljubljana, Študentska Fronta, Študentsko društvo Iskra in Glas kulturi. V naslednjih dveh dneh so podporo izrazili Gibanje za dostojno delo in socialno družbo, Študentske domove študentkam in študentom, Inštitut 8. marec, Ljubljana Odprto Mesto, Rdeča pesa, Rezistenca in Zadruga urbana. Do konca septembra so se jim pridružili še KUD Pekarna, stranka Levica, Organizacija za participatorno družbo, Poligon, Pritličje, Mladi za podnebno pravičnost, Radio Študent, Inštitut za politike prostora, Zavod Razvoj Maribor, Ustanova fundacija Sonda, Ambasada Svetlane Makarovič, Društvo za razvoj filmske kulture Maribor, Moment Maribor, Društvo Hiša!, Mladi za podnebno pravičnost Maribor idr.

⁶ Iz tedanjega diskurza množičnih medijev sta odstopala le dva medija – Nova24 in 24ur.com, ki sta PLAC komentirala izrazito negativno.

⁷ Ljubljanski župan je menil, da PLAC primarno ni zadeva občine, temveč je nadaljnja obravnava v rokah države, ki se pa bo morala odločiti, kaj »je bolj nujno – ali stanovanja, ali avtonomna cona« (Jankovič, 2022). Predsednik vlade je novo avtonomno cono načeloma pozdravil, a da bo (nelegalno) [sic!] zasedbo podpiral, zgolj dokler nepremičnina ne bo namenjena za kakšen drug, družbeno koristnejši namen, npr. stanovanjski, ko bo »računal na razumevanje skupnosti, da najde svoj prostor v k[a]kšni drugi opuščeni stavbi, ki ne bo imela take namembnosti. Ker nihče ni nad zakonom« (Golob, 2022).

Ljubljani je namreč med nekaterimi aktivističnimi skupinami radikalne levice že nekaj časa visela v zraku. O iskanju primernih prostorov za novo skupnost se je šušljalo že dlje časa.

V tem kontekstu velja omeniti, da je bila zadnja javna zasedba pred PLAC-om v Avtonomi tovarni Rog (v nadaljevanju AT Rog) leta 2006, njena skvoterska zgodba se je končala z nasilno deložacijo uporabnikov januarja 2021, v času krize ob epidemiji koronavirusa. Po letu 2020 sta močan politični zagon začela pridobivati mladinsko aktivistično organiziranje, z Mladinsko aktivistično organizacijo (MAO) v ospredju,⁸ in anarho-kvir gibanje.⁹

Hkrati je nujno omeniti še politično vrenje in instrumentalizacijo izrednih razmer med epidemijo. V luči tedanjega dogajanja je Anarhistična pobuda Ljubljana pozvala k ljudskemu protestu z balkonov in na začetku aprila 2020 sklicala prvi protest vrste *cacerolada*, pri katerem se z udarci po loncih povzroča hrup in izraža nezadovoljstvo. Upor z balkonov se je s kolesarskim protestom prvič preselil na ljubljanske ulice. V naslednjih mesecih so organizacijsko strukturo rednih petkovih protestov prevzeli drugi subjekti, združeni v politično iniciativo pod krovnim imenom Glas ljudstva (Anarhistična pobuda Ljubljana, 2021; Žagar, 2021). Po koncu rušilnih valov pandemije je po parlamentarnih volitvah 24. aprila 2022 oblast zasedla nova politična garnitura s koalicijo strank v sestavi Socialnih demokratov, Levice in Gibanje Svoboda.

Za PLAC je navedeni historiat pomemben, saj je protestniško gibanje Glas ljudstva v tedanji predvolilni kampanji vsem kandidacijskim strankam na državnozborskih volitvah premeteno podalo zahtevo, da se opredelijo o zaščiti avtonomnih prostorov (tedaj je bila pod vlado Janeza Janše na udaru še stavba na Metelkovi ulici 6, s tem pa tamkajšnje rezidenčne organizacije) oziroma iskanja nadomestnih (kot v primeru AT Rog). Podpore avtonomnim prostorom so tedaj obljubile stranke v bodoči koaliciji (tj. Socialni demokrati, Levica in Gibanje Svoboda) (Glas ljudstva, 2022). Marko, dejaven na takratnem zborovanju, opiše vzdušje:

Že v predorganizaciji nam je uspelo postaviti to zahtevo bodočim vladajočim. V svoji nevednosti so dejali, da bodo podpirali avtonomne prostore neodvisne kulture. Po dobrih stotih dneh njihovega vladanja so se skupinice začele združevati, PLAC je bil ogledan. Glede na to, da

⁸ Mladinska aktivistična organizacija (MAO) je levičarsko mladinsko gibanje, ki je od leta 2020 pa do samoukinitve leta 2022 spodbujalo mlade med 14. in 18. letom k raznovrstnim oblikam političnega angažmaja. MAO se je v javnih izjavah in drugih dokumentih (npr. v statutu) opisoval kot prostovoljno, samoorganizirano in demokratično aktivistično mladinsko gibanje. Člani MAO so aktivno sodelovali na protivladnih protestih (2020–2022) in skupaj z drugimi skupinami (npr. Mladimi za podnebno pravičnost) soorganizirali okoljske shode.

⁹ Kvir anarhizem ali anarho-kvir oziroma anarho-kvir-feminizem je anarhistična teorija in praksa, ki se osredinja na zahtevo po avtonomiji od patriarhata, države, kapitala, imperializma in kolonializma ter radikalno kritizira asimilacijo, komercializacijo in komodifikacijo gibanja in skupnosti lezbijk, gejev, biseksualnih, transspolnih in drugih oseb. Zavzema se za osvoboditev spolov, revolucijo seksualnosti in skupnostne oblike bivanja, pri čemer zavrača vse oblike hierarhije, izključevanja, dominacije in nasilja (Avtonomne feministke, 2017; Daring idr., 2012).

je nudil vso infrastrukturo, je bilo treba naštudirati še taktiko, kako bo s to otvoritvijo, interpretacijo predzgodbe. (Marko, 2023)

V tem kratkem orisu razberemo, da PLAC torej nikakor ni nastal *ex nihilo*, temveč se je prvo poglavje skvota začelo pisati že veliko prej, v posebnem družbeno-političnem ozračju,¹⁰ in v procesu, ki ga skvoterji danes preprosto imenujejo »predorganizacija«. ¹¹ Kaj pa so v materialnem smislu pomenile predpriprave na »reapropriacijo«? Sprva so obsegale predvsem iskanje primernih lokacij, ki bi nudile primerno zatočišče z zadostno infrastrukturo v objektu. »V neki točki sem se fiksiral, da je treba nekaj zaskvotati,« razloži 17-letni Valter, dejaven pri organizaciji skvotiranja od samega začetka, »vsakemu človeku, ki sem ga srečal, sem mu govoril, da je treba nekaj zaskvotati.« »Skavting« ali terenski ogledi potencialno zanimivih objektov so potekali že v prvih mesecih leta 2022.

Na neki točki, ko nisem mogel spati, sem vzel zemljevid Ljubljane. Potem naredil »perimeter« dva kilometra okoli Metelkove, ga razdelil na kvadrante, in potem smo šli po kvadrantih malo hodit in iskati lokacije. Skupaj z drugimi iniciativami se je nabral kar obsežen seznam prostorov, ki bi se jih dalo zasedeti, istočasno pa sta imeli še vsaj dve drugi iniciativi idejo odpreti prostor. (Valter, 2023)

Primerne prostore za skvotiranje je istočasno iskalo več skupin, pri čemer so, po Valterjevih besedah, z nekaterimi sodelovali intenzivneje, z drugimi pa nekoliko manj. Po izbiri lokacije je stekel dvomesečni proces tehnične, vsebinske in politične koordinacije zasedbe. Za jedro skvoterjev je bil poseben izziv politično usklajevanje, saj je bilo med aktivisti potrebno predhodno razširiti idejo o zasedbi, ne da bi vnaprej razkrili mikrolokacijo. Vsebinska uskladitev je zajemala notranji premislek o artikulaciji namere zasedbe, strategiji obveščanja javnosti, pogovore o usmeritvi, premislek o preteklih negativnih izkušnjah iz skvotov in podobno. »Spomnim se, da sem imel tri, štiri, pet strani osnutkov z imeni ljudi, ki bi mi lahko kaj povedali, delili kakšno izkušnjo, refleksijo,« ponazori Valter osebno vpletenost v koordinacijo, »iz česar sicer direktno ne izvira ta zasedba, ampak mi je vsaj dala misliti ful enih stvari.« Hkrati je tehnična koordinacija narekovala iskanje »nosilnih hrbtov« (Muršič, 2012 po Breclj), ljudi s praktičnimi izkušnjami, z znanjem »priklopljanja elektrike, vode, kar se mi zdi ključno. Drugače nekaj zasedeš, ostaneš par dni noter, ne moreš pa furat neke kontinuirane, udobne zasedbe,« še pove Valter.

¹⁰ Ravno tako je pomembno poudariti, da se je skvotiranje izvedlo nekaj mesecev pred lokalnimi občinskimi volitvami, 20. novembra 2023, v času, ko se je Zoran Janković petič potegoval za župansko funkcijo.

¹¹ Vsi dobesedni navedki v kurzivi so, razen ko je drugače navedeno, prepisi pogovorov s skvoterji, ki so zaradi lažje berljivosti lektorirani. Psevdoanonimizirani so vsi osebni podatki, s katerimi bi lahko potencialno razkrili osebno identiteto udeležencev raziskave.

Plod večmesečnega nevidnega dela se je prvi dan otvoritve PLAC-a razkril kot vnaprej pripravljena prostorska, organizacijska, skrbstvena in politična infrastruktura. Spominjam se, da se mi je v trenutku, ko sem prvič vstopil v PLAC, pogled ustavil na entuziastičnem delovišču ljudi, večinoma mladih, ki so preurejali prostore nekdanje jedilnice, kuhinje, shramb, sanitarij, podzemnega skladišča, garaže, dvorišča in številnih drugih medprostorov. Tekoča voda je tedaj že curljala iz pipe, prav tako so nekatere kanalizacijske cevi že požirale odplake. Nekje v daljavi je brnel osamljeni električni generator, žarnice pa so pogledu osvetljevale temne kotičke notranjosti. Vrvež je z zahtevo po identifikaciji nekaterih posameznikov sicer zmotila policija, a se je navkljub intervenciji kaj kmalu dogajanje nadaljevalo z lutkovno predstavo. Po koncu kulturnega programa, ko je ura odbila sedmo zvečer, je bila na sporedu prva skupščina, v kateri je sodelovalo prek 100 ljudi. Besedilo letaka, ki so mi ga v roke pomolili prvi dan zasedbe, lepo povzame predhodno oblikovane politične temelje, skrbstven odnos do prostora in strateške smernice delovanja.

Stavba, v kateri je zaživela Participativna ljubljanska avtonomna cone (PLAC), je bila vrsto let zapuščena in zanemarjena.¹² Od danes naprej je odprta za javnost. Iz zapuščenega, opuščenega in propadajočega si želimo ustvariti nekaj živega, avtonomnega in navdihujočega, nekaj, kar dejansko koristi skupnosti, ne pa zgolj dobičku. Stremimo k [vz]postavitvi varnega prostora, ki bo nudil možnost drugačnega osmišljenja sveta, vključujoče organizacije družbe ter vzpostavljanja enakopravnih odnosov. [...] Naš glavni cilj je ustvarjanje skupnega dobrega. [...] Načrtujemo razne aktivnosti in dogodke, katerih glavni namen je vzpostavljanje in povezovanje lokalne skupnosti ter odpiranje prostora za izražanje.

V naslednjih mesecih, ko je bilo iz pogovorov s pripadniki skupnosti zaradi morebitnih sodnih postopkov¹³ mogoče izluščiti občutek začasnosti zaradi grožnje po deložaciji in ranljivosti, je skupnost PLAC samoorganizirano pripravila obsežen zbir javnih kulturnih, športnih, izobraževalnih, političnih in drugih dogodkov. Naj za boljšo ponazoritev naštejemo, s kakšnimi dogodki so med mojim terenskim delom od ponedeljka do nedelje sporadično ustvarjali »skupno dobro«: cirkuške, lutkovne in impro

¹² Predhodno stanje stavbe na Linhartovi ulici so skvoterji dokumentirali in objavili na socialnem omrežju (avtonomni_plac, 2023).

¹³ DUTB je pred prenehanjem veljavnosti posestnega varstva 30. septembra 2022 na Okrajno sodišče v Ljubljani vložil tožbo zaradi motenja posesti nepremičnine proti 47 osebam, ki so se, tako je zapisano v tožbi, 3. in 4. septembra 2022 nahajale na zemljišču PLAC-a. Po ukinitvi DUTB, ko se ni posrečil prenos zazidljivih zemljišč *en masse* iz DUTB na Stanovanjski sklad Republike Slovenije, so stekla pogajanja v vladi, po katerih naj bi zemljišče PLAC-a, takrat že v rokah SDH, prešlo na Ministrstvo za kulturo (DUTB, 2022a). V poznejših pogovorih je pobudo za prevzem navedene nepremičnine izrazilo Ministrstvo za solidarno prihodnost, ki naj bi na območju gradilo novo soseko z javnimi neprofitnimi stanovanji.

predstave, branja poezije, projekcije filmov z razpravami, glasbeni koncerti, zborovski nastopi, ustvarjalne delavnice (šiviljska, sitotisk, izdelovanje zinov¹⁴), izmenjevalnice raznih dobrin, umetniški performansi, športne vadbe (joga, borilne veščine), inštrukcije, družabne igre, razstave, bralni krožki (feministični, marksistični), politične čajanke, okrogle mize, zbiranje prostovoljnih prispevkov, skupnostni obroki, čistilno-delovne akcije in podobno so bili del raznovrstnega programa skupnosti PLAC-a. Negotovost, krhkost ter prekernost na eni strani in festivalskost obstanka PLAC-a na drugi posebejla vsakomesečna proslava zasedbe – pravijo ji kar »obmesečnica«.

»To skupnost je treba graditi še naprej. Mogoče ne bo[mo uspeli] danes ali jutri. Ampak korak po koraku pa prideš do cilja,« mi je zaupala Ilnika, starejša politična aktivistka, ki je v PLAC-u dejavna od samega začetka. Ko je bila v prvih dneh zasedbe navzoča na »infotočki«, tj. komunikacijskem središču PLAC-a, so do nje prihajale starejše osebe z vprašanji o možnostih vključevanja v PLAC, zato rada poudari, da je treba medgeneracijsko interakcijo in sodelovanje (ali kot mu sama pravi *»sožitje med generacijami starejših in mlajših«*) ohranjati še naprej. Čeprav je ob najinem novembrskem pogovoru leta 2022 menila, da *»se ljudje niso še toliko povezali«*, ker je avtonomni prostor *»nekaj zelo novega«*, v njem vseeno vidi ogromno možnosti za nadaljnji razvoj solidarnostne skupnosti. Ilnikina opažanja so dragocena ne zgolj zaradi njene dolgoletne vključenosti v razne politične pobude in radikalne aktivistične skupnosti, marveč tudi zato, ker neguje živ spomin na doživljanje transformacij v Ljubljani. V spodnjem navedku tako na primeru pomanjkanja neprofitnih, skupnostnih prostorov v bližnji soseski premišljuje o tem, kar bi nemara lahko imenoval kar privatizacija javnega.

Saj ni prostora. Kaj pa imaš za Bežigradom? Razen [mladinskega centra] Bob, nimaš proprio niente [prav nič]! Edino stvar, ki so jo imeli v Savskem [naselju], so bili objekti krajevne skupnosti, ki so jih bojda jim vzeli. PLAC je edini prostor, kamor lahko greš. Vse so pobrali! Prej so imele krajevne skupnosti svoje prostore, zdej ni nič. (Ilnika, 2022)

Ilnika je podobno zadržana do projektov »participativnega urbanizma« (Poljak Istenič, 2019) v bližnjih stanovanjskih soseskah, češ da projektni vodje ne vključujejo okoliških prebivalcev, *»ki bi projekt nadaljevali na prostovoljni bazi.«*

V kontrapunktu z dominantno paradigmo produkcije prostora, ki običajno vključuje rušenje razvrednotene infrastrukture in jo nadomešča z novimi zgradbami ali v najboljšem primeru s fasadizmom (ohranjanje zgolj stavbne lupine in popolna rekonstrukcija

¹⁴ Zin (krajšava za 'fanzin') je oblika alternativnega tiskanega medija, ki se običajno izdaja kot nekomercialna periodična publikacija v samozaložbi in z nižjo naklado. Avtorstvo zinov je lahko individualno ali kolektivno, pogosto tudi anonimno. Zaradi preprostega načina produkcije, reprodukcije in distribucije, ki sledi načelu »naredi sam«, so se zini v Sloveniji pojavili v 70. in 80. letih 20. stoletja predvsem kot glasnik raznih (mladinskih) subkultur, subpolitičnih skupin in drugih interesnih krogov.

interierja), se PLAC po besedah in izjavah skvoterjev deklarira za radikalno odprtega, z vključujočo ponovno uporabo stavbe pa se samopozicionira kot glasnik novega načina razumevanja, oživljanja in razvoja degradiranega prostora v soseščini Savskega naselja, v katerem si skuša zamišljati in uresničevati nove, alternativne družbene, politične in naposled skrbstvene odnose. Skvoterji so npr. prvi dan zasedbe zatrjevali, da ne »verjamemo v rušenje in gradnjo novih luksuznih prostorov, ampak si želimo možnosti postopne obnove in prenove, ki bosta skladni s potrebami ljudi in okolice ter bosta spoštovali naravo in ljudi« (PLAC 2022). K temu so slikovito dodali: »Objekt, v katerega vračamo življenje, je od svojega začetka služil potrebam skupnosti. Želimo si raziskovati in ustvarjati drugačne družbene odnose – trenutni, kot vidimo, vodijo človeštvo v nepovraten propad« (prav tam).

Samonikla in neposredna skrb

Ob raznih priložnostih so skvoterji tudi radi opozorili, da PLAC skrb za skupnost postavlja nasproti dobičku, kajti pravni lastnik, tj. DUTB, je dal nekdanje stavbno zemljišče delavske menze in širše okolice prvotno naprodaj najboljšemu ponudniku za šest milijonov evrov. »Nepremičnino v naravi predstavlja poslovni kompleks, ki ga sestavljajo objekti potrebni obnove oz. so predvideni za rušenje. [...] Zemljišče je odlična investicijska priložnost za razvoj dodatnih namestitvenih kapacitet za primerno oskrbo starejših,« se je glasil nepremičninski oglas DUTB-ja (2022b). Nasproti dobičkonosnosti nekateri skvoterji razumejo PLAC kot prostor potencialne raznovrstnosti, celo duhovne dobrodejnosti po nedavno doživeti kovid-izolaciji in zamrznitvi družbenega in političnega življenja v mestu.

Cilj [PLAC-a] je vzpostaviti več krajev, ki so zdravilni po tej brutalni izolaciji in koroni [pandemiji Covid-19]. Dati vedeti, da so ti kraji potrebni bolj kot kdaj koli prej. [...] Vabimo ljudi, da tu niso zgolj potrošniki, ampak da zraven sodelujejo. Veliko je stvari, ki jih je treba storiti: od kulturnega programa, infrastrukture do delovanja za skupno dobro. (v Zeneli, 2023)

Skupnost PLAC tako s pomočjo neodvisne in neprofitne produkcije kulturnih, izobraževalnih, športnih in drugih vsebin upa, da bo preoblikovala degradiran poslovni kompleks v vključujoč prostor, v katerem bi bila direktna samonikla skrb za prostor obenem tudi skrb za skupnost (glej tudi Muršič, 2012). Zmotno bi namreč bilo predpostavljati, da avtonomni prostori sami po sebi pomenijo nastanek idealne skvoterske skupnosti, saj so prav tako prežeti s konflikti in družbenimi hierarhijami ter nevidnim izkoriščanjem, kar pa skušajo aktivno problematizirati in obravnavati. Prav novo

tvorjenje skupnosti, torej neposredna izkušnja tvorjenja povsem nove skupnosti v novem avtonomnem prostoru, pomeni, da dejansko samoniklo oblikujejo tudi skrb za to, kako se bo ta skupnost obdržala. Ena izmed sogovornic, vpeta v premisleke o tem vprašanju, kot mu sama pravi, »nevidnega reproduktivnega dela« in problematičnih medosebnih odnosih v avtonomnem prostoru, pozdravlja naravnost PLAC-a k direktni skrbi za skupnost.

Verjamem, da je imel marsikateri avtonomen prostor tako velike, zakoreninjene težave in nepremagljive vzorce, da se s tem ni bilo mogoče ukvarjati. Tudi če se je nekdo s tem ukvarjal, ni pomenilo neke velike razlike. Medtem ko je tu [v PLAC-u] res fajn, ker smo na novo začeli. Tako politično nismo še zares opredeljeni in veliko več je nedefiniranosti, kar ustvarja [...] to, da imamo maneverski prostor za razmišljanje o novih praksah, o novih mehanizmih, načinih obnašanja. To pa nikakor ne izključuje, da se včasih počutimo, kot da tulimo v prazno. [...] Še vedno smo široka in odprta skupnost, in to, da nismo politično nedefinirani, s sabo prinese cel spekter diskriminacije. [...] Vseeno večina ljudi, ki so, smo tukaj bolj aktivni, prepoznavajo pomembnost takšnih tem. (Grolica, 2023)

Opisano prizadevanje za ustvarjanje drugačnih družbenih razmerij, s tem pa snovanje »infrastrukture skrbi« (Schilliger, 2022), lahko ponazorim s tem, kar razumem kot interne skrbstvene prakse. To so kolektivne prakse v urbanih skvotih, temelječe na načelih direktne skrbi, solidarnosti, vzajemne pomoči in skupninjenja, s katerimi se aktivisti zavzemajo za večjo enakost, pravičnost in opolnomočenje v skupnosti sami.

Prva izmed takšnih praks je oblikovanje »ozaveščevalne skupine« (*awareness team*), ki si je z različnimi strategijami in prijemi prizadevala, četudi ne vedno najuspešneje (gl. v nadaljevanju), za kritično obravnavo razmerij moči in z njimi povezanih medosebnih odnosov, ki jih strukturirajo spol, razred, etničnosti, starost in druge družbene diferenciacije skvoterjev (gl. Sliko 1). Po mnenju ene od pripadnic ozaveščevalne skupine so se v PLAC-u, sicer deklarirano antifašističnemu prostoru, na začetku spoprijemali z izzivom osnovnega politično-ideološkega samodefiniranja in interpretacijami medosebnih odnosov »v smislu, kaj za nas pomeni horizontalno organiziranje, nasilje«, pravi Grolica iz anarho-kvir skupine, ki jo sestavlja nekaj »žlinta«¹⁵ oseb. V nadaljevanju podrobneje opiše, kako so v ozaveščevalni skupini v PLAC-u prakticirale politično etiko skrbi.

Najbolj očiten del našega delovanja kot flinta osebe je bil awareness team, vzpostavljanje in opozarjanje na nasilje, ki se dogaja v PLAC-u,

¹⁵ FLINTA, oziroma v slovenščini ŽLINTA, je akronim za ženske (*female*), lezbijke in interspolne, nebinarne, transspolne ter aseksualne osebe.

in naslavljanje tega skozi izobraževalne dogodke, delavnice in skupno razmišljanje o tem, da te teme nagovarjamo skupaj, da skupaj razmišljamo, kako jih zaobjeti. [...] Čim več takih tem bi želele nagovarjati s čim širšo skupnostjo, da ne bi skrbstveno delo bilo v domeni ožje, spolno zelo specifične skupine, ki bo poskrbela za to, da se bomo vsi dobro razumeli, ampak da bi bila to skupna skrb vseh ljudi, ki tu delujemo. (Grolica, 2023)

Drug primer spoprijemanja s konfliktnimi, naturaliziranimi, ospoljenimi odnosi in razmerji moči v skupnosti je bila vpeljava t. i. instituta refleksij. »Čeprav smo levičarski skvot, to še ne pomeni, da ni patriarhalnih odnosov, in s temi refleksijami te tudi naslavljam,« meni Rožle o uresničevanju te skrbstvene prakse. Za razliko od rednih tedenskih skupščin, na katerih je jedro soglasno sprejemanje sprotnih odločitev, imajo po njegovem mnenju refleksije drugačno funkcijo, saj ustvarjajo ozračje, »v katerem ne gre za branjenje ali napadanje en drugega, ampak da si vnaprej povemo, da tu govorimo o svojih doživljanjih, občutkih. [...] Ljudje imajo na refleksijah prostor, da se izrazijo,« sklene Rožle, nekdanj dejaven v AT Rog. Druga sogovornica pravi, da skrb za obravnavo ospoljenih vlog izvira prav iz problematičnih izkušenj v nekdanjih avtonomnih prostorih:

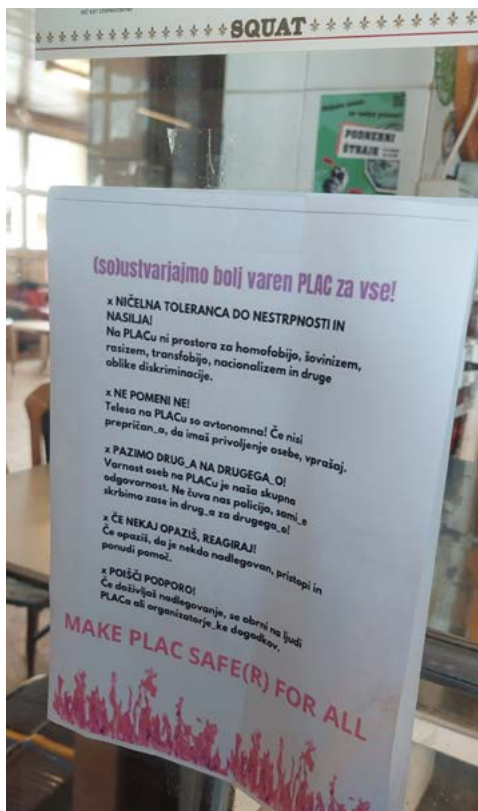
Že pri ideji, da bi se odprl nov prostor v Ljubljani, je s strani Rogovcev denimo prišla pobuda, da bi se radi boljše naučili antipatriarhalnega delovanja. Analiza je bila, da se morajo več naučiti pri naslednjem projektu. Moje opažanje je, da do tega zavedanja ni prišlo zgolj generacijsko, ampak [izhaja] tudi iz prejšnjih izkušenj in iz želje po drugačnem delovanju. [...] Refleksije so prišle kot izkušnja iz različnih struj. Ena izmed pomembnejših so izkušnje z organiziranjem s tovarišicami iz severozahodnih držav, [...] pa tudi rožavska,¹⁶ ki ima velik poudarek na refleksiji in samokritiki znotraj skupnosti. (Lina, 2023)

V tem smislu se PLAC postavlja v – evidentno pa tudi bojuje zoper – odnose in razmere, v katerih se zdi, da so razmere življenja in dela, pa tudi zasebna, družbena in politična, s tem pa tudi skrbstvena sfera prepuščeni nevidni roki kapitalizma, zamejeni z dogmo zasebne lastnine ali pa zatonejo v državnih, mestnih ali sorodstvenih strukturah. Prav tako PLAC skrbi ne prepušča golemu naključju ali delegirani skupini, temveč jo skuša sistematično vgrajevati v skupnost in jo soustvarjati z neposrednim okoljem. Takšno držo ponazori besedilo plakata ozaveščevalne skupine (gl. Sliko 1), v katerem je izražen apel po (so)ustvarjanju skrbi v območju skupnega: »Telesa na PLACu so avtonomna! [...] Varnost oseb na PLACu je naša skupna odgovornost. Ne čuva nas

¹⁶ Avtonomna, samoorganizirana regija Rojava na severovzhodu Sirije.

policija, sami_e skrbimo zase in drug_a za drugega_o!«

Tretji primer, kako so v PLAC-u aktivno reflektirali in redefinirali lastne prakse skrbi, se je zgodil med pisanjem tega prispevka. Konec aprila 2023 je bila za vse večje potrebe prepoznave, razbremenitve in sistematizacije t. i. nevidnega dela v PLAC-u ustanovljena »Skupina za reproductivno delo«, kar nam ponovno kaže na gnetljivost forme skupnostnega političnega delovanja pod eno streho – na nenehno izumljanje novih mehanizmov spoprijemanja s perečimi izzivi skrbi v avtonomnih prostorih. Na tem mestu je treba poudariti, da sta tako »reproductivno delo« kot tudi »nevidno delo« emska termina skvoterske skupnosti PLAC, s katerima označujejo različne oblike skrbi za prostor (predvsem gre za razna opravila čiščenja, pa tudi za urejanje okolice, kuhanje, pospravljanje prostorov, vzdrževanje infrastrukture ipd.). Eden izmed razlogov, da je nastala »skupina za reproductivno delo«, je bil tudi v tem, da so večino »nevidnega in reproductivnega dela« opravile tiste osebe, ki so v PLAC-u tako ali drugače preživljale večino svojega časa.



Slika 1: Ozaveščevalni plakat v PLAC-u »(so)ustvarjamo bolj varen PLAC za vse!« Foto: Sandi Abram.

Razsežnosti skrbi

Pri razumevanju PLAC-a kot samonikle skrbstvene infrastrukture v kontekstu nastajanja, si lahko pomagamo z različnimi oblikami skrbi, kakor sta jih opredelila Fisher in Tronto (1993: 41–45). Pri prvem procesu, definiranem kot »skrbeti o« (*care about*), gre za prepoznavanje neuresničenih potreb po skrbi. Šele ko se potrebe identificira, lahko skupina ali posamezniki prevzamejo odgovornost za to, da se jih naslovi in zadovolji. Slednje imenujeta »skrbeti za« (*care for/of*). Naslednji korak, »nudenje skrbi« oziroma »oskrba« (*care-giving*), zahteva od nosilcev »skrbi za«, da je skrbstveno delo dejansko opravljeno. Šele potem lahko govorimo o »prejemanju skrbi« (*care-recvieing*), kot o delu, na katerega se odzovejo oskrbovani ljudje in neljudje: »Ko je skrbstveno delo

opravljeno, bo prišlo do odziva oskrbovane osebe, stvari, skupine, živali, rastline ali okolja« (Tronto, 2013: 22). Ker imajo (skoraj) vse kategorije nastavke za dojetanje skrbi tudi do neljudi (prim. Fisher, Tronto, 1993: 44; de la Bellacasa, 2017; Seo, 2020), je potrebno opredeliti še peto razsežnost, in sicer »skrb s/z« (*care with*).

»Skrb s/z« je intelektualni domislek poznejšega nastanka, ki ga je Tronto (2013) zapisala pri premišljevanju o razmerju med novimi političnimi imaginariji skrbi in demokracijo. Skrb s/z se nanaša na poziv k demokratizaciji skrbi, k pojmovanju skrbi kot »javne vrednote in zbira javnih praks« (Tronto, 2013: 18), v kateri potrebe po skrbi in njihovo uresničevanje sledijo načelom pravičnosti, enakosti in svobode za vse. »[B]rez bolj javnega razumevanja skrbi je nemogoče ohranjati demokratične družbe,« pravi Tronto (prav tam). Čeprav lahko vsako fazo skrbi mislimo v paru s specifičnimi etičnimi lastnostnimi (tj. pozornost, odgovornost, kompetence, odzivnost), šele »skrb s/z« poseblja ključna etična načela za skrb v demokratični družbi: pluralnost, komunikacijo, zaupanje, spoštovanje in solidarnost (Tronto, 2013: 34–35). Podobno poudarjajo avtorji in avtorice knjige *The Care Manifesto* (Manifest skrbi), ki zagovarja kvir, feministično, protirasistično, ekosocialistično koncepcijo skrbi. Pravijo, da mora (so)ustvarjanje novih imaginarijev skrbi na globalni ravni temeljiti na soodvisnosti ljudi in neljudi, torej na podlagi »razumevanja, da kot ljudje obstajamo skupaj in v povezavi z vsemi človeškimi in nečloveškimi bitji, pa tudi [da smo] odvisni od živih [*animate*] in neživih [*inanimate*] sistemov in mrež, ki vzdržujejo življenje po vsem planetu« (The Care Collective, 2020: 94).

V tem več-kot-človeškem pojmovanju »skrbi s/z«, ki uhaja reproduktivni dimenziji zasebnega, se skrb in kraj ustvarjata recipročno, kajti »vsak kraj [je] 'sestavljene' in proizvedene, vsaka skrbstvena krajina je kompleksna in heterogena« (Ivanova, Wallenburg, Bal, 2016: 1344). Skrb je v tem teoretskem horizontu relacijska (Tronto, 2013), prepojena je s širšim razumevanjem prostora ali krajine, v katerem nastaja in se uresničuje. Ker je prostorska razsežnost skrbi razumljena kot nenehna družbena praksa tako oskrbovancev kot skrbnikov, ne pa proces drugačenja in neavtonomnosti prejemnikov, neposredno zadeva polje političnega (Hrženjak, 2018: 220, 225–226). Kot zatrjuje Bo Kyeong Seo, je skrb »razmerje soudeležbe, ki ga tisti, ki v njem sodelujejo, nenehno preoblikujejo« (Seo, 2020: 6). Na primeru njenega etnografske raziskave sistema splošnega zdravstvenega varstva na severnem Tajskem zato pravi, da lahko skrb pojmuje v čustveni, osebni, institucionalni, biomedicinski, duhovni in navsezadnje fizični obliki (prav tam).

Nadalje lahko interpretiramo »skrb s/z« v smislu vključevanja Drugih v skrb in skrbstveno krajino, vključno z neljudmi, kot akterji pri neodtujenih, demokratičnih produkciji, reprezentaciji in prezentaciji vednosti (gl. Bajič, Abram, Muršič, 2022: 22), kar je nepresenetljivo epistemološko stičišče skrbstvenega obrata s sorodnimi obrati v humanistiki in družboslovju (ontološki, čutni, afektivni itn.). Če posplošim, ti izhajajo iz temeljnega antidualizma med ljudmi in svetom, po katerem »karkoli in kakorkoli

že raziskujemo, to počnemo ob ljudeh in skupaj z njimi, pri tem pa ne glede na morebitne razlike ustvarjamo novo, skupno resničnost« (prav tam). Ko gre za etiko skrbi, feministična epistemologija zavrača predpostavljen pogled na skrb ter raje poudarja partikularnost vsakokratnega konteksta in okolja skrbi, v katerem afekti, čustva, intuicija, empatija in relacijskost postanejo spoznavna in motivacijska sredstva za premoščanje dualističnih delitev (npr. zasebno/javno; narava/kultura ipd.) (Hrženjak, 2018: 218–219).

Iz predstavljenega posthumanističnega razumevanja skrbi nemara lahko izpeljem še šesto dimenzijo skrbi, za katero bom predlagal koncept »skrb v« (*care within*). »Skrb v« označuje uprostorjenja skrbi, torej prostorski ovoj in materialni kontekst kopice heterogenih skrbstvenih praks in procesov. Ti so vključeni tudi v prejšnje razsežnostih skrbi in tem se še najbolj približa izraz »skrbstvena infrastruktura«. Obenem »skrb v« napeljuje na širše razumevanje uprostorjenja *skrbi v krajini, skozi krajino in skrbi za krajino*, kakor jih omogočajo in sestavljajo različni elementi in razmerja med akterji skrbstvene krajine. Z drugimi besedami, »skrb v« uprostori skrb in nam odpira polje prepoznavanja skrbi kot izkušnje solidarnosti in odnosov v vsakdanjem materialnem življenju ljudi in neljudi, ki jo venomer sestavljajo tudi kraji in prostori, v katerih vznikata. Shematično bi lahko proces »skrbi v«, kakor se je npr. odvijala v PLAC-u, prikazal s pomočjo treh prekrivajočih, a nujno idealnotipskih procesov: reapropriacijo, rekonfiguracijo in reaktivacijo.

Prvič, reapropriacija pogosto zajema neopaženo, nepriznano in neovrednoteno skrbstveno delo, ki vodi do začetnega priposestevanja in ponovne uporabe tistih poznejših avtonomnih prostorov in območij, ki so doživljeni kot degradirana ali zapuščena, obenem pa od zasedbeniških afinitetnih skupin terja strukturirano nestrukturiranost (gl. tudi Freeman, 1972) medosebnih, tovariških odnosov; vanjo se tesno vpletejo neformalne solidarnostne, neposredno demokratične in etične mreže v fluidnih kolektivnih sestavih. V zgornji etnografski vinjeti so skvoterji npr. to fazo poimenovali »predorganizacija«.

Drugič, rekonfiguracija se nanaša na materialno preoblikovanje in ponastavitev predhodnega stanja v kraju in skupnosti, da bi gradili in vzdrževali skrbstveno infrastrukturo, hkrati pa označuje potrebo po ohlapanem strukturiranju nestrukturiranih medosebnih odnosov – ne samo med skvoterji in političnimi subjekti kot pri priposestevanju, pač pa tudi z zunanjimi »drugimi«, tj. uporabniki skrbstvene infrastrukture in drugimi osebami (npr. obiskovalci, sosedi, udeleženci, simpatizerji, tovariškimi skupinami). Gre torej za prepoznavanje skupnih potreb in posledično ustvarjanje drugačnih nepatriarhalnih in antikapitalističnih medsebojnih odnosov, v katerih so-vznikata skupnina in skupnost (Zechner, 2021: 34–35). V rekonfiguracijo je vpisan raziskovalni proces poskusov in napak, ki nosi potencial konsolidiranja, pa tudi prepraševanja in problematiziranja skupnosti in skupnine. Namesto drugačenja, v katerem je skrb dodeljena Drugim, prejemnik pa zato transformiran v Drugega, so poudarjene soodvisnost, ranljivost in avtonomija vseh, ne zgolj nosilcev moči (Hrženjak, 2018: 220–221).

Med mojim terenskim delom je proces rekonfiguracije najprej odstiral predelane prostore v ponovni rabi in uporabi, v katerih je zaradi zanesenjaškega ustvarjanja in dela lahko sploh potekala množica internih in eksternih dogodkov, angažiranje »nosilnih hrbov« med člani skupnosti, delovne skupine (strateška, programska, kuharska, infrastrukturna, PR-medijska, športna, filmska, vrtičkarska ipd.), afinitetne skupine (primarno ozaveščevalne skupine), kolektivne mediacije,¹⁷ redne skupščine in refleksije skupnosti PLAC. Na tej točki skupnost metodično (ne pa vedno uspešno, kaj šele nekonfliktno) problematizira »nevidno reproduktivno delo«, si prizadeva skrb postaviti v sfero političnega in skupnega (ne pa zgolj javnega), navsezadnje pa tudi preskuša in izumlja mehanizme spoprijemanja z razmerji med ljudmi in neljudmi.

Tretjič, reaktivacija (vs. revitalizacija)¹⁸ meri na ponovno oživitvev v okolico vpetih avtonomnih prostorov, v katerih pričakujejo, da bodo kolektivno spremenili pogoje skrbi; skušajo uresničiti politizirano direktno skrb za ljudi, skupnost in (urbano) krajino. Reaktivacija je direktno skrbstveno delo iz – v in onkraj – samoniklih prostorov. Na tem mestu je skrb nova oblika družbene prakse, izkušnje in prostorski v skupnini (gl. Kussy, Palomera, Silver, 2022). Da je težnja k reaktivaciji med skvoterji vidna, nam oriše primer, ki nakazuje namero po kolektivnem zamišljanju in uresničevanju skrbi za urbano krajino.

Takšna vizija se je izoblikovala v delavniškem modelu na januarskem dogodku, poimenovanem »delavnica so-kreacije vizije PLACa«, s sodelovanjem nekaj rednih uporabnikov PLAC-a, ki so kritično obravnavali predlog razvoja načrtovanih novih zgradb v neposredni soseščini (gl. Delavnica d. o. o., 2022) in hkrati pokazali na potencialne smeri prostorsko-družbenega razvoja mikrolokacije – tudi z grafičnimi analizami in likovnimi upodobitvami (Bokal idr., 2023). Rezultate sodelovalne metode kartiranja in skupinske imaginacije materialne prihodnosti so nato lično sintetizirali v slikovni opremi članka, objavljenega v marčevski številki glasila *Prelom* (Bokal

¹⁷ Čeprav se morda na prvi pogled zdi, da so eksperimentalne, improvizacijske sestavine političnega zamišljanja in konceptualne novosti vpisane v partikularni okvir lokalnih projektov avtonomnega samoupravljanja in mehanizmov politične rekonfiguracije, je znova treba poudariti, da se pogosto napajajo v globalnem bazenu epistemologij in metodologij družbenih gibanj novega internacionalizma. Omenjen institut mediacij v PLAC-u je npr. lokalni primer »medkulturnega prevoda«, če si sposodim izraz Boaventure de Sousa Santosa (2016), metode radikalne skrbi in politizacije skrbi, kjer je določena politična grupacija (v primeru PLAC-a je to bila anarho-kvir skupina) skušala v lokalno skupnost vpeljati mehanizme neposredne demokracije iz sestrskih oziroma sorodnih antiavtoritarnih družbenih bojev v tujini. Prav omenjene kolektivne mediacije, refleksije oziroma (samo)kritike, poznane pod skupnim pojmom *tekmil*, izvirajo iz kurdskega revolucionarnega gibanja za samoodločbo v Siriji, v jedru katerega so imele osrednjo vlogo ženske in njihov boj za emancipacijo izpod jarma patriarhata in avtoritarnih režimov (gl. Flach, Ayboğa, Knapp, 2019; Dirik, 2022; Tekošina Anaršist, 2022). V tem kontekstu je *tekmil* kot metoda radikalne skrbi v revolucionarnih obdobjih neločljivo povezana z etično-političnim dojemanjem *hevaltî*, opredeljenim kot globoko duhovno vezjo in brezkompromisno tovariško predanostjo med militantnimi subjekti kurdskega osvobodilnega gibanja, da bi prišlo do totalne družbene transformacije (Sarican, Dirik, 2022).

¹⁸ V dominantnih diskurzih se termin revitalizacija prepogosto uporablja kot apolitični *terminus technicus*, v resnici pa legitimira perverzno negacijo in destruktiven izbris celotnih (urbanih) heterotopij. V primeru avtonomnih prostorov v Sloveniji je bila npr. revitalizacija instrumentalizirana za opravičevanje pokopa že oživetih prostorov AT Rog (Abram, 2017).

idr., 2023). Ilustracija, ki povzema osnutke in skice delavnice, predstavlja PLAC kot vključujoč sestavni del bodoče soseske, ki ima funkcijo socialnega centra, neločljivo povezanega s skrbstveno, politično, družbeno in ekonomsko funkcijo novih skupnostnih prostorov in javnih površin. V vizualizaciji t. i. »modela za kolektivno situacijo« (prav tam) so poleg trenutne infrastrukture (park BMX, teniško igrišče, balinišče) zarisani še oskrbovana in zadružna stanovanja, skupni vrtilčki, izmenjevalnica, skupna pralnica in kuhinja, tržnica, amfiteater, knjižnica, bazen in skejterski park. Maja in junija so nato pod naslovom »Kaj bomo s Stolpniško?« nadaljevali z delom in organizirali voden sprehod po soseski, delavnico in prenovi igral na sosednjem otroškem igrišču (Slika 2). Čeprav se je dogodkov udeležila peščica sosedov iz Savskega naselja, uporabnikov bližnjega balinišča Zarja in športnega parka ter predstavnikov zainteresirane javnosti, so bila, vsaj tako je bilo zaznati, pričakovanja pobud za vključujoč razvoj Stolpniške ulice vseeno večja. Valter je npr. kritično komentiral ustvarjanje politične, samonikle skupnosti v trenutnih družbenih razmerah.

Po mojem je vsak poskus grajenja skupnosti v materialnih razmerah, ki jih imamo na Zahodu, tako kot jih ima PLAC, obsojen na propad. Skupnost in kooperacija med posamezniki bosta lahko možni na dolgi rok šele, ko bo ekonomska in eksistencialna nuja zanje. Torej, ko bo vsak posameznik prišel sem in bo njegovo življenje in preživetje odvisno od sodelovanja v tej skupnosti, kar pa [trenutno] ni. (Valter, 2023)



Slika 2: Plakat z artikulacijo prednosti, slabosti, priložnosti in nevarnosti, kot so jih identificirali udeleženci delavnice »Kaj bomo s Stolpniško?«, 15. 6. 2023. Foto: Sandi Abram.

Sklep: krhkost sveta, politike mesta in potreba po skrbi

Feministične opredelitve skrbi po eni strani poudarjajo razumevanje naše telesne krhkosti, ranljivosti in prekarnosti, po drugi pa nedavne tematizacije skrbi omogočajo produktivne razprave o krajinski oziroma okoljski krhkosti in ranljivosti v času »pospešenih okoljskih sprememb in pregrevanja« (Eriksen, 2016). Kakor je zapisal Will Wright (1992: 15), »se moramo začeti zavedati, da naše naravno okolje ni absolutno in imuno ter da ga moramo zavestno začeti pojmovati kot krhko, v enaki meri kot smo intuitivno vedno razumeli krhkost naših teles.« Takšno enačenje telesne krhkosti in okoljske krhkosti najdemo tudi v politično angažiranemu delu Williama E. Connollya (2013). Connolly namesto ločevanja (npr. človeška krhkost in krhkost narave, okolja) raje pojmuje krhkost v kontekstu širjenja, krepitve in pospešitve neoliberalizma v smislu »sodobne krhkosti stvari« na družbenem, političnem ali ekološkem polju (Connolly, 2013: 10–11, 32–33). Po njegovem prav krhkost razodeva pomembnost »skrbi za svet«, s katero meri na sedanjo »pozornost do širšega poteka stvari«, ki ga »prežema pozitivna naravnost do najosnovnejših pogojev človeškega obstoja in nečloveških prepletanj [*entanglements*]« (Connolly, 2013: 124). Vendar moramo pri tej koncepciji, po kateri lahko razumemo skrb kot nekakšen pendant krhkosti, in zadržanosti tudi do posthumanizma (Connolly, 2013: 204), vseeno izraziti previdnost pred morebitno komodifikacijo koncepta. Zaradi bojazni pred poblagovljenjem emancipatornih umotvorov zato Silvia Federici (2019: 93) razume prav avtonomne prostore kot osnovno skupnino, v kateri je mogoče kolektivno ustvariti nove oblike produkcije in reprodukcije življenja; v njih potekajo prakse postajanja skupnega (prav tam), vštevši skrb, ki so »razvezane« (Mignolo, 2007) od blagovnih tokov (gl. Hrvatin, 2016; Zechner, 2022).

V prispevku sem skušal prepoznavati različne manifestacije direktnega skrbstvenega dela, kakor se je odvijal v PLAC-u, pri čemer ima njegova političnost v praksi pogosto le omejen domet. Ali, kakor je politično delovanje PLAC-a koncizno strnil eden izmed mojih sogovornikov: »*Želimo biti skvot po vsebini, ne po izgledu.*« V etnografskih orisih smo videli, da je političnost direktnega skrbstvenega dela sicer deklarativno vpeta v raznotere skrbstvene prakse v avtonomnem prostoru, kar pa nujno še ne pomeni, da je tudi zadosten pogoj za dejansko realizacijo direktne skrbi. Da je pot uresničevanja direktne skrbi za (širšo) skupnost in (avtonomni) prostor polna ovir, se zavedajo tudi nekateri pripadniki skupnosti PLAC. Pri tem kot glavni razlog večkrat navajajo politično nedefiniranost in radikalno odprtost prostora. Vzdrževanje tega paradoksa jim sicer po eni strani omogoča produktivno diferenciacijo od drugih avtonomnih prostorov in eksperimentiranje z novimi političnimi imaginariji in praksami – tudi na področju tistega, kar sem imenoval direktno skrbstveno delo –, po drugi pa je natanko takšna zasnova pravzaprav vir kopice nespornostov in konfliktnih situacij, ki jih bo treba obravnavati v prihodnje.

Tako se znova znajdemo na polju zamišljanja in uresničevanja alternativnih prihodnosti. Transformativni potencial neposredne demokratične reimaginacije in samoorganiziranje lokalnih skupnosti je Arturo Escobar (2018) imenoval kar avtonomno snovanje. Meni namreč, da »vsaka skupnost prakticira snovanje same sebe« kot množico transformacijskih iniciativ in gibanj, s katerimi samooblikuje življenjske ustroje (Escobar, 2018: 5). Pripadniki raznih ozemeljskih grupacij nam, po Escobarju (2018: 220), danes sporočajo pomembno lekcijo, »da je skrb za skupnostna ozemlja/svetove temeljna politična naloga našega časa.« In prav lokalne inovacije (Escobar, 2018: 207) omogočajo ustvarjanje struktur skrbi v smeri vzdržnosti in trajnosti. V časih negotove prihodnosti se zato zdi smiselno usmeriti pogled na ljudske, avtonomne in samonikle snovalske prakse, kulture in mikropolitike, ki na novo osmišljajo, snujejo in skrbijo za (urbano) krajino in širše okolje. Njihov boj za prostor je tesno prepleten z bojem za skrb. Naj sklenem z besedami Connollyja (2013: 19), ki pravi, da je v času, ko je krhkost stvari postala še kako oprijemljiva, politični aktivizem, z njim pa skrb za svet, nujen na raznoterih področjih, vključno, če dodam, s tistim v urbani krajini.

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Squatting and Direct Urban Space Care: The Case of the Participatory Ljubljana Autonomous Zone (PLAC)

This paper explores the understanding and workings of Ljubljana's squatter community. Through an ethnographic study of the Participatory Ljubljana Autonomous Zone (PLAC), a former workers' canteen, the author seeks to understand how the spatialisation of care within, through, and for the landscape fosters expressions of solidarity and interconnectedness in the daily lives of the squatter community and beyond.

The introduction highlights the concept of direct care for urban spaces and its interplay with social movements and autonomous spaces. Direct care entails a political action where individuals or groups, through constant reflection and self-criticism, endeavour to enact care based on principles like direct democracy, self-organisation, non-hierarchy, and mutual aid.

Direct care is exemplified by the autonomous space PLAC, where an alternative model of care is attempted. This model is based simultaneously on

grassroots care for the autonomous space and on community care. In its first year of operation, squatters faced challenges such as political coordination, content planning, and identifying suitable occupation spaces. The text presents the internal practises of PLAC's direct care work, focusing on the interpersonal and power relations within the squatter community. In particular, the "awareness group" and the "reflection institute" are described as strategies for promoting equality, justice and empowerment, as well as addressing conflicts.

In the final section, the author discusses the various dimensions of care with special attention given to the democratisation of care as the realisation of core principles such as pluralism, communication, trust, respect, and solidarity. To understand PLAC as an infrastructure of care, the author proposes the notion of "caring within". This concept refers to the spatialisation of care in, through and for the landscape as an experience of solidarity and relationships in the everyday material existence of both humans and non-humans.



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