

## CHILDREN AND MIGRATION. INTRODUCTION TO THE THEMATIC SECTION

Marjan Drnovšek,<sup>1</sup> Kristina Toplak<sup>2</sup>

### THE THEME

The *filis rouge* of this thematic issue is migrations and children's involvement in them, from all aspects and using theoretical and methodological approaches from various areas of the humanities and social sciences. In comparison with adults, children are a relatively unnoticed part of mobile populations. We cannot extract them from the family and the broader context, and definitions of when we are talking about children and/or youths are unclear. The line is hard to determine. They are more likely to be parts of unseen rather than noticeable events in the migration process. They are undoubtedly a part of the family environment, except in cases of forced migration, e.g. during wartime, when they become separated from their parents (Gombač 2005). Childhood is therefore relatively difficult to pin down. It is true that the world of adults prevails, and that children and youths are subordinated to the vicissitudes of the broader and not least the family environment. Particularly when they migrate abroad their lives, development and integration into the new environment is more difficult, since they face numerous obstacles, from unfamiliarity with the language in the immigrant environment to new foods, inclusion in various school systems etc. On the other hand we have to emphasize the positive aspects of their lives in immigrant environments, which include the learning of numerous languages, as they lived in many different countries and ethnic areas. They also had an advantage in education, as long as their parents encouraged them, which was dependent on their education and their desire to climb the social ladder. In Europe and overseas, e.g. in the United States of America, they had better living conditions, enjoyed the benefits of a high standard of living, but on the other hand had to work hard from an early age. There were problems for children and youths when families fell apart and were scattered over various parts of the world. This separation, particularly in early childhood, when they could not hide behind their parents' skirts, gave many of them a feeling of being unwanted and different, while many children grew up in extended families and were passed from hand to hand. At least

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<sup>1</sup> PhD History, Member of the Scientific Council; Slovenian Migration Institute ZRC SAZU, Novi trg 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana; e-mail: marjandr@zrc-sazu.si.

<sup>2</sup> PhD Ethnology, Research Associate; Slovenian Migration Institute ZRC SAZU, Novi trg 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana; e-mail: ktoplak@zrc-sazu.si.

the male part if the emigrants worked from morning to night, while the mothers raised and cared for the children. In the case of seasonal work the mothers left their children at home with relatives. The majority of the children and youths abroad grew up in the streets, and received their formal education in church or school. This is particularly true of the early days of Slovenian migration, e.g. during the period of mass emigration to the United States of America and later in the 20th century.

The attitude of homelands to their children is an interesting topic. The Catholic Church took over the role of educating emigrant children very early on, but made it possible for many parents to escape its influence abroad. The preservation and development of the Slovenian identity abroad was also entrusted to young people, who were supposed to carry on the cultural endeavours of their parents. Integration and assimilation processes were often stronger and more successful with children and youth. They frequently exchanged their parents' values for those of their new environment. Knowledge of the Slovene language declined, especially among the second, third and later generations, e.g. in Germany (Štumberger 2007: 58–83). This is not to say that the Slovenian ship went down abroad. We have to remember that the number of emigrants was much higher than the number of members of emigrants' societies around the world. From our perspective we could say that the emigrants' societies and other forms of activity in the area of Slovenian culture abroad were the tops of the pyramids peeking through the clouds, while the rest were obscured by the mist. The longest-serving institution with regard to preservation of the Slovene language among the young people were language courses, which at first were supported by the emigrant parents themselves, and later by all three countries, i.e. the first and second Yugoslavias and today the Republic of Slovenia. In short, there are a lot of unknowns in the field of children's and youth issues in migration contexts. One of the most difficult aspects in determining the attitude towards emigrant children is the fact that children rarely got the opportunity to express their opinions, and/or their behaviour was guided by adults. Their voices were often unheard or even silenced. The outward manifestations do not reflect the reality of the situations, e.g. attending catechism and church, being members of emigrants' societies, choirs etc. It is difficult to say how sincere the children were – and even harder when we speak of youths – in their attitudes towards emigrant life around the world. In the Republic of Slovenia the attitude towards immigrant children has become reinforced, so that even in the case of the development of the strategy by the Ministry of Education and Sport, there is an emphasis on the field of inclusion of immigrant children, elementary and secondary school students in the educational system (Barle–Lakota 2007).

## **THEMATIC SECTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES**

In this year's first issue, i.e. Issue 31 of *Dve domovini / Two Homelands*, our colleague Jernej Mlekuž edited a thematic section on material culture which featured original scientific articles which exposed the “chattiness of chatty artefacts” (see Mlekuž 2010).

This issue also features a thematic section. You have read about the theme of the section itself in the first part of the introduction, by Marjan Drnovšek. The second part of the introduction discusses the question of why thematic sections are so popular.

Why do we have thematic sections? The adjective thematic tells us that it is a section which has a specific *theme*, and a section means (among other things) *a distinct part or portion of something written*. In Slovene, the concept is called a *tematski sklop*, and the word *sklop* is defined as *several, usually connected and associated elements* (SSKJ). On one hand, the theme is what defines the content of the *sklop*, and on the other hand the *sklop* defines the number of its constituent elements. The concept *sklop* is fundamentally connected with the grammatical plural in the Slovene language and thus indicates importance of the number of constituent elements: *several, usually connected and associated elements* cannot be a pair, a couple of constituent elements. Particularly in Slovene, with its grammatical dual, the use of a word like *several* dictates that there have to be at least three elements in order to form a connection, a point of intersection, a conceptual whole, and finally also give the theme a certain compactness. I can support this assertion with the simple method of participant observation: thematic sections are much more noticeable and consequently more often cited by our researchers than for instance individually published articles on a certain topic. I am deeply convinced that in doing so, our colleagues are guided by their professional judgement and their belief in the excellence of the articles, and nothing else.

Migration is a very attractive research subject, since the complexity of the process can be described, broken down, analysed, thematized and problematized in many ways and through the viewpoints of numerous disciplines. The scientific journal *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* with its specific focus follows but also helps create the trend of plurality of topics, approaches and treatments. And this brings us back to the plural, which is always the essence of the thematic section. I will touch on the theme of language a third time: owing to the positive responses to the previously published thematic sections and because *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* is also gaining readership abroad, in this issue we have decided to publish the thematic section in English. Addressing our non-Slovene speaking readership allows us to engage in a professional dialogue about the topics that interest us, and gives us a way to get outside of the often stuffy and restrictive framework of national issues.

The theme of the thematic section in this issue is therefore children, childhood, growing up and socialization in migration contexts. Dealing with age groups in specific social contexts, or the generational approach, is a relatively well-established approach in research (Ariès 1962; Garb 1984; Hurrelman 1989; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001; Thane 2005), and among Slovenian researchers as well (e.g. Hočevvar-Rupnik 1965; Puhar 1982; Ule 2008), while at least for Slovenian research children and childhood in migration contexts is a new field. These seven articles thus contain some innovative approaches towards and views of migration. Through different time periods, which in fact cover the entire 20th century and reach up to the present day, we can follow the stories of the migration of the youngest members of human society. Since the authors are special-

ists in Slovenian migration, these are of course stories which are initially connected to the Slovenian cultural area and its population, which migrated all over the world. The seven authors in the section are in fact dealing with a single topic from various aspects. The approaches of the various disciplines are as different as they can be while remaining within the confines of social science and the humanities.

Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik identifies five (or six) categories of children's migration. She discusses the various positioning of children and illustrates them with examples from research of subjective migration experiences which was conducted using (auto)biographical materials and narrative methods. Several of these examples were the products of her own research. In her conclusion she notes the often forgotten fact that migrant children are today the most vulnerable part of the population of Slovenia and of Europe; we could say of the entire world. One of these categories is the children of diplomats, whose turbulent socialization and/or resocialization is discussed by Marina Lukšič Hacin. The use of the word turbulent already indicates the confusion, anxiety and turmoil associated with this process. The specificity of the migration process in which these children are involved and the different experiences of children of diplomats in the migration process lead the author to conclude that from the socio-cultural and identity perspectives, "you can't go home again", wherever that home is and whatever it means to the individual. The relationship towards one's home, as illustrated in emigrant literature, is the focus of the paper by Janja Žitnik Serafin, who analyses images of childhood in the old and life in the new homeland in the literature of Slovenian emigrants. She finds that these images affected the migration experiences of the children, their experience of family life, and particularly their worldviews and the creation of the generation gap. Jure Gombač looks at how the use of modern technologies, especially the Internet, helps form the experiences and identities of children and youths who are the descendants of Slovenian emigrants. The web-based social networks and other "digital adventures" of the descendants of emigrants lead him thinking about their identity, language, connections and communications, which are often transnational, and are less under the influence of the "analogue" cultural practices of their parents. Marjan Drnovšek's article takes us back to the times when those were the only possible practices, and when emigrants were still sending good old paper letters to the homeland. Using numerous archival sources he pieces together the story of the provision of education for the migrant population which he labels "Slovenian emigrant youth". He focuses primarily on the position of children and young Slovenes in the migration process, their formal and informal education and the progressing assimilation in various European countries in the period before the Second World War. In the same period (and also later), Daša Koprivec contextualizes the interesting migration of children caused by the migrations of their mothers, the "aleksandrinas". The author places the migrations of the children of aleksandrinas in the context of the family as well as the broader economic and political framework in the first half of the 20th century. The migrations of the aleksandrinas have been studied on numerous occasions in the past, but the migrations of their children are undoubtedly a less well-known aspect of migration. The final article in the section tells the story of a somewhat specific group of children's migrations, those

of Slovenian wartime exiles. Urška Strle traces the historiographic story on the basis of children's memoirs and testimonies and finds that children often experienced exile quite differently from their parents or other close adult relatives. The specificity of the children's experiences in this article reveals a certain dynamic of the wartime migrations, but in a more general sense once again underscores the need for comprehensive topical research which would subjectify the otherwise impersonal process of migration and highlight the various experiences of individuals of different ages and generations through time.

And finally: with the introduction to the thematic section, allow me to also make a brief introduction to issue no. 32 of *Dve domovini / Two homelands*. Although it is late, it's not too late to inform our readers that in 2010 we once again spun the "wheel of fortune" and exchanged our editorial roles (see the colophon in this issue). Nevertheless, the journal's focus remains the same, with perhaps one more thematic section in each issue.

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# OTROCI IN MIGRACIJE: UVOD V TEMATSKI SKLOP

Marjan DRNOVŠEK,<sup>1</sup> Kristina TOPLAK<sup>2</sup>

## TEMA

Rdeča nit pričujočega tematskega sklopa so migracije in vpletenost otrok vanje, in to z vseh aspektov in z teoretičnimi in metodološkimi pristopi različnih področij humanistike in družboslovja. V primerjavi z odraslimi so otroci bolj neviden kot viden del selitvene populacije. Ne smemo jih izločati niti iz družinskega niti iz širšega okolja, nejasna pa je tudi opredelitev, do kdaj o njih govorimo kot o otrocih oziroma mladostnikih, saj je ta meja težko določljiva. Čeprav so otroci lahko del bolj nevidnega kot vidnega dogajanja v migracijskem procesu, pa so nedvomno del družinskega okolja, razen v primerih prisilnega dogajanja, na primer med vojno, ko so bili oddvojeni od staršev (Gombač 2005). Otroštvo je zato precej neoprijemljivo obdobje. Drži tudi, da svet odraslih prevladuje in so v njem otroci in mladostniki podvrženi šikanam širšega in nenazadnje tudi družinskega okolja. Zlasti v tujini so bila njihova življenja, odraščanja in integriranja v nova okolja otežena, saj so na poti nalateli na številne prepreke, od neznanja jezika priseljskega okolja do nove prehrane, vključevanja v različne šolske sisteme in podobno. Na drugi strani je treba poudariti pozitivne strani njihovih življenj v priseljskih okoljih, med drugim – ker so živeli v različnih državnih in večetničnih prostorih – znanje številnih jezikov. Prednost so imeli tudi pri izobraževanju, če so jih le starši k temu spodbujali; to je bilo odvisno od izobrazbe staršev in njihovega interesa, da se povzpnejo na družbeni lestvici. V evropskem in prekomorskem prostoru, na primer v Združenih državah Amerike, so živeli v boljših življenjskih razmerah in uživali dobrobiti višjega standarda, na drugi strani pa so morali krepko in zgodaj zagrabit za delo. Ni jim bilo lahko niti ob razbitju njihovih družin in razpršenosti njenih članov po različnih delih sveta. Ločenost, zlasti v rosnih letih, ko jih pred težavami niso mogli zavarovati lastni starši, je marsikomu vtisnila pečat odvečnosti, drugačnosti, mnogo otrok pa so si odrasli znotraj širše družine in znanstev podajali iz rok v roke. Vsaj moški del izseljencev je delal od jutra do večera, matere pa so skrbele

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. zgodovine, znanstveni svetnik; Inštitut za slovensko izseljenstvo in migracije ZRC SAZU, Novi trg 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana; e-naslov: marjandr@zrc-sazu.si.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. etnologije, asistentka z doktoratom; Inštitut za slovensko izseljenstvo in migracije ZRC SAZU, Novi trg 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana; e-naslov: ktoplak@zrc-sazu.si.

za otroke in njihovo vzgojo. Ob sezonskih delih so matere prepuščale otroke domačim oziroma bližnjim sorodnikom. V glavnem je otroke in mladostnike v tujini vzgajala ulica, formalno pa Cerkev in šola. To je veljalo zlasti za pionirske čase migracij, na primer med množičnim priseljevanjem v Združene države Amerike in tudi pozneje v 20. stoletju.

Zanimiv je odnos vsakokratne domovine do otrok. Katoliška cerkev je zgodaj prevzela vzgojo izseljenskih otrok, mnogim staršem pa omogočila, da so se v tujini otresli njenega nadzora. K ohranjanju in razvijanju slovenske identitete v tujini so prispevali tudi mladi, ki naj bi nadaljevali kulturno delovanje starejših. Integracijski in asimilacijski procesi so bili marsikdaj močnejši in uspešnejši prav pri otrocih in mladostnikih. Vrednote staršev so pogosto zamenjale vrednote novega okolja. Znanje slovenskega jezika je upadalo zlasti pri drugi, tretji in naslednjih generacijah, na primer v Nemčiji (Štumberger 2007: 58–83); s tem pa ni rečeno, da se ladja slovenstva v tujini potaplja. Vedeti moramo, da je bilo število izseljencev mnogo večje od števila članov izseljenskih društev po svetu. Govorimo lahko o piramidi, katere vrh gleda iz oblakov (izseljenska društva in druge oblike delovanja na polju slovenstva v tujini), preostalo pa so zagrinjali temni oblaki. Še najdaljšoročnejši za ohranjanje jezika pri mladini so tečaji slovenskega jezika, ki so ga sprva podpirali sami starši – izseljenci, nato tudi vse tri države, tj. prva in druga Jugoslavija ter danes Republika Slovenija. Skratka, na področju otroške in mladostniške problematike v migracijskih kontekstih so številne neznanke. Med najtežavnejšimi v odnosu do otrok v izseljenstvu je dejstvo, da so otroci le redko dobili možnost izraziti svoja mnenja oziroma so njihova ravnanja usmerjali odrasli, njihov glas pa je bil marsikdaj neslišen in celo zadušen. Zunanje manifestacije ne odražajo realnega stanja, na primer obiskovanje pouka in cerkve, sodelovanje v izseljenskih društvih, pevskih zborih, ipd. Težko je reči, koliko iskrenosti je pri otrocih – manj pri mladostnikih – v izražanju odnosa do izseljenskega življenja po svetu? V Republiki Sloveniji se je odnos do izseljenskih otrok še okreplil. Tako tudi strategija Ministrstva za šolstvo in šport poudarja področje vključevanja otrok, učencev in dijakov migrantov v sistem vzgoje (Barle-Lakota 2007).

## TEMATSKI SKLOPI IN PERSPEKTIVE

V 31. številki *Dveh domovin / Two Homelands* je kolega Jernej Mlekuž uredil tematski sklop o materialni kulturi, v katerem je zbral izvirne znanstvene članke, ki so razkrinkavali »klepetavost klepetavih predmetov« (glej Mlekuž 2010). Tudi v pričujoči številki objavljamo poseben tematski sklop. Razmišljanje o njem ste prebrali v zgornjih vrsticah, ki jih je napisal kolega Marjan Drnovšek. Zakaj so nam tematski sklopi tako ljubi, pa je vprašanje, na katerega odgovarjamo v drugem delu uvodnika.

Zakaj torej poseben tematski sklop? Kot napoveduje pridevnik tematski, je to sklop z določeno *temo*, sklop pa pomeni *več, ponavadi povezanih, združenih stvari* (SSKJ). Tema je na eni strani tista, ki opredeljuje sestavine sklopa, na drugi strani pa sklop definira tudi število njegovih sestavnih elementov. Sklop je temeljno spojen s slovnično množino slovenskega jezika in je s tem kazalnik pomena števila sestavnih elementov: *več, ponavadi*

*povezanih, združenih stvari* ne more predstavljati dvojica, par sestavnih elementov. Nujno morajo biti vsaj trije, da lahko tvorijo povezavo, stičišče, smiselni krog in navsezadnje dajo temi določeno kompaktnost. Navedeno ugotovitev podpiram s preprosto metodo opazovanja z udeležbo: tematski sklopi so veliko bolj opazni in posledično citirani med našimi kolegi raziskovalci, kot na primer osamelci, to je posamezni objavljeni članki na določeno temo. Globoko sem prepričana, da naše kolege pri tem vodita strokovna presoja ter prepričanje v odličnost člankov in popolnoma nič drugega.

Migracije so zelo privlačne za raziskovanje, saj se da kompleksnost procesa opisati, razčleniti, analizirati, tematizirati in problematizirati na veliko načinov in z več disciplinarnimi pogledi. Znanstvena revija *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* s svojo specifično usmerjenostjo sledi, a tudi ustvarja trend pluralnosti tem, pristopov in obravnav. In smo ponovno pri pluralu, množini, ki je vsakokratna esenca tematskega sklopa. Še tretjič se dotaknem jezika: zaradi pozitivnih odzivov na že objavljene tematske sklope in ker ima revija *Dve domovini / Two Homelands* vse več bralcev tudi v tujini, smo se tokrat odločili za objavo v angleškem jeziku. Nagovor neslovensko govorečega bralstva nam omogoča strokovni dialog o temah, ki nas zanimajo, in pomeni izhod iz pogosto zatohlega okvirja nacionalnih omejitev.

Tema tokratnega sklopa so torej otroci, otroštvo, odraščanje in socializacija otrok v migracijskih kontekstih. Obravnava starostnih skupin v specifičnih družbenih kontekstih ali generacijski pristop je precej uveljavljen raziskovalni pristop (Ariès 1962; Garb 1984; Hurrelman 1989; Suárez-Orozco in Suárez-Orozco 2001; Thane 2005) tudi med slovenskimi raziskovalci (na primer Hočevar-Rupnik 1965; Puhar 1982; Ule 2008); otroci in otroštvo v migracijskih kontekstih pa so vsaj za slovenski prostor nova tema. Sedem člankov tako razkriva inovativne pristope in poglede na migracije. V različnih časovnih obdobjih, ki pravzaprav obsegajo vse 20. stoletje, posegajo pa tudi v aktualno sedanost, sledimo zgodbam selitev najmlajših članov človeške družbe. Ker so avtorji strokovnjaki za slovensko izseljenstvo, so to seveda zgodbe, ki so izhodiščno povezane s slovenskim prostorom in z njegovim prebivalstvom, ki se je selilo po vsem svetu. Sedem avtorjev in avtoric sklopa obravnava eno samo temo z različnih vidikov. Kljub temu, da ostajajo znotraj družboslovja in humanistike, so disciplinarni pristopi kar se da različni. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik selitve otrok umešča v pet oziroma šest kategorij migracij otrok. Oblike različnih pozicioniranj otrok razloži in ilustrira s primeri iz raziskav subjektivnih migracijskih izkušenj, izvedenih na avto/biografskem gradivu in z narativnimi metodami. Med njimi je tudi več njenih lastnih raziskav. V zaključku avtorica opozarja na prepogosto pozabljeno dejstvo, da so migrantski otroci danes najranljivejši del prebivalstva Slovenije in Evrope; lahko bi rekli kar sveta. V eno od omenjenih kategorij spadajo tudi otroci diplomatov, ki jih v turbulencah socializacije oziroma resocializacije obravnava Marina Lukšič Hacin. Že z besedo turbulenca nakaže na zmedo, nemir in vrtince v opisanem procesu. Specifičnost migracijskega procesa, v katerega so vključeni, in različne izkušnje otrok diplomatov v migracijskem procesu vodijo avtorico do zaključka, da je »vrnitev« v družbeno-kulturnem in identitetnem smislu nemogoča. Seveda govorimo o vrnitvi »domov«, kjerkoli dom je in karkoli posamezniku pomeni. Prav odnos do doma, kot se izrisuje v izseljenski literaturi,



je v središču razprave Janje Žitnik Serafin. Predmet analize so podobe otroštva v stari in življenje v novi domovini v književnosti slovenskih izseljencev. Avtorica ugotavlja, da so te podobe vplivale na migracijske izkušnje otrok, doživljanje družinskega življenja, predvsem pa na njihov pogled na svet in vzpostavljanje medgeneracijskega prepada. Kako raba modernih tehnologij, predvsem interneta, sooblikuje izkušnje in identiteto otrok in mladih, potomcev slovenskih izseljencev, je preučil Jure Gombač. Spletna družabna omrežja in druge »digitalne dogodivščine« potomcev izseljencev ga v članku vodijo k razmisleku o identiteti, jeziku, povezavah in komunikaciji, ki imajo pogosto transnacionalni značaj in so manj pod vplivom »analognih« kulturnih praks staršev. V čas, ko so bile te edina možna praksa in so izseljenci v domovino še pošiljali dobra, stara papirnata pisma, nas vrne članek Marjana Drnovška. S številnimi arhivskimi viri je stkal zgodbo o šolski skrbi za migrantsko populacijo, ki jo imenuje »slovenska izseljeniška mladina«. V središču so predvsem položaj otrok in mladih Slovencev v migracijskem procesu, njihovo formalno in neformalno izobraževanje ter napredujoča asimilacija v nekaterih evropskih državah pred drugo svetovno vojno. V isto obdobje (a tudi poznejše) umešča Daša Koprivec zanimive migracije otrok, ki so jih sprožale migracije njihovih mater – aleksandrink. Avtorica obravnava migracije otrok aleksandrink v družinskem in tudi širšem ekonomskem in političnem kontekstu prve polovice 20. stoletja. Migracije aleksandrink so bile doslej že večkrat obdelane, medtem ko so migracije njihovih otrok zagotovo manj znan vidik migracij. Zadnji članek v sklopu odkriva zgodbo nekoliko specifičnih migracij otrok, in sicer medvojnih pregnancev s slovenskega ozemlja. Urška Strle niza zgodovinopisno pripoved na podlagi spominov in pričevanj otrok, in pri tem ugotavlja, da so otroci pogosto drugače doživljali pregon kot njihovi starši oziroma drugi odrasli sorodniki. Specifičnost otroških izkušenj nam v pričujočem članku razkriva določeno dinamiko medvojnih migracij, a v bolj splošnem smislu ponovno poudarja potrebo po poglobljenih tematskih raziskavah, ki subjektivizirajo sicer neosebni proces migracij in poudarjajo raznolike izkušnje posameznikov različnih starosti in generacij v času.

Za konec pa še tole: z uvodom v tematski sklop si tokrat dovoljujem tudi zelo kratek uvod v 32. številko revije *Dve domovini / Two homelands*. Čeprav z zamudo, a ne prepozno, obveščamo spoštovano bralstvo, da smo z letom 2010 ponovno zavrteli »kolo sreče« in premešali uredniške vloge (glej Kolofon te številke). Ne glede na to ostaja usmeritev revije enaka, a vsakič tudi s kakšnim tematskim sklopom več.

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