

Cultural and Social Diversity in Slovakia III
GLOBAL AND LOCAL IN A CONTEMPORARY CITY

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INTRODUCTION

Slovak cities have experienced significant changes in recent decades, caused mainly by the political, economic, social and cultural transformation of the society after the fall of Communism in 1989. One of the consequences of this transformation was opening the society to the outside world, which has been reflected not only in the economy, but also in socio-cultural aspects. Today it is difficult to find a community in Slovakia that has not been touched by the processes of globalisation. Nevertheless, cities have witnessed the pressures of globalisation more than small localities because they attract global capital, and therefore job opportunities, which in turn fosters migration and tourism, and increases the diversity of life styles, cultural symbols and representations. However, not all cities have the same power to absorb globalisation. Local processes and phenomena develop hand in hand with global ones; therefore, it is important to study the dynamics and specificities of these processes in different localities.

This publication is the third in the “Cultural and social diversity in Slovakia” series, which is devoted to the relationship between cultural and social diversity and sustainability. The basis for this is the *Network of Excellence* project entitled “Sustainable Development in a Diverse World” (acronym SUS.DIV, No CIT3-CT-2005-513438), which falls under Priority 7 “Citizens and Governance in a Knowledge-Based Society” of the European Commission’s 6th Framework Programme. The project was implemented from 2005 to 2011. The SUS.DIV Network of Excellence consists of 31 institutions from twelve European countries. Its main objective is to conduct multidisciplinary comparative research, which should contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between social and cultural diversity and sustainable development in the world. The Slovak research team has focused on the study of the increasing diversity and its consequences in Slovak cities, the readiness and openness of the Slovak society to cope with immigration (following opinion polls, surveys, policies and strategies), and research on the relationship of global and local processes in the urban environment.

The main hypothesis of such a broad approach to the study of diversity and sustainability is the fact that after more than forty years of a totalitarian communist regime, diversity appears to be a new and quite visible phenomenon in the society. During the Socialistic era, the society was confronted with almost no external and only limited internal diversity. Key principles and objectives of socialist development were collective universalism and the creation of an egalitarian and homogeneous society in which pluralism, heterogeneity, cultural, ethnic, religious or social diversity was considered a threat to socialist progress. Postsocialist development after 1989 brought a rapid change in all spheres of life: diversification of the economic structure and ownership; growing socio-economic stratification and polarisation; alternative education, culture and art; diverse modes of communication and technologies; a wide choice of goods and services resulting in pluralism of life styles and consumerism; a demographic restructuralisation with a steadily growing number of foreigners, immigrants and tourists from all over the world; and a changing

ethnic and religious composition of the population. Is the Slovak society prepared for the increase in diversity and how sustainable is this diversity? This is the main question addressed in three publications dedicated to this topic. The first publication looked at the theoretical and methodological challenges of this issue with special attention paid to its application in the Slovak society. The second publication focused on the research of migrants and their integration in Slovakia. The objective of this third publication is to study the contemporary Slovak city and the relationship between local and global processes that develop in the urban environment.

This publication presents ethnographies of eleven selected Slovak cities. The editors and authors are honoured that the prologue has been written by the Swedish social anthropologist, Ulf Hannerz, who presented it at an international workshop devoted to the problems of the global and the local processes in postsocialist cities, which was held in Bratislava in November 2009.

The introductory paper (Alexandra Bitušiková – Daniel Luther) brings an overview of theoretical approaches to the study of globalisation from an anthropological perspective and also opens the question of methodology. Studying globalisation requires the use of multiple methods and diverse resources, often in multiple places. The topic itself provokes a lot of critical opinions from many social and cultural anthropologists, but no one these days doubts the importance of its research.

The prologue and the introductory study are followed by twelve case studies – ethnographies from different Slovak cities. Although it is rather difficult to talk about the typology of Slovak cities due to their diversity in indicators and attitudes towards them, the editors have identified and selected cities that differentiate in their size, historical development, place in the regional, national and global hierarchy, role and specialisation. The topics of particular studies differ, though they analyse similar or identical signs of globalisation. The research and interpretation of results required a number of discussions. Both editors and authors are aware of the weaknesses of ethnographies of globalisation, but their aim has been to encourage further research in this area of anthropology in Slovakia.

The walk through Slovak cities starts in the capital of Slovakia, Bratislava, with a paper by Daniel Luther, which studies urban development in Bratislava from the perspective of developers, citizens and local authorities. The growth of global megaprojects is most visible and most problematic in Bratislava because it is accompanied by a number of opposing opinions from civil organisations and professional associations. The analysis deals with the production and changes of urban spaces.

Monika Vrzgulová has been studying the city of Trenčín for many years. In her contribution, she follows the influence of local policies on creating a new image and brand of the city, which aspires to become the 2013 European Cultural Capital. Alexandra Bitušiková's paper demonstrates the changes in central public spaces and their functions in the city of Banská Bystrica as well as the (re)production of urban festivals and rituals supported by the municipality in order to revive the local identity and to attract tourists and investors. Katarína Košťalová's analysis of the impact of globalisation on institutionalised

rituals in the city of Zvolen is based on the comparison with the pre-1989 period, during which almost all formal festivities had a political character.

The next set of contributions is devoted to cities of specific characteristics and roles: Poprad, as a gate to the High Tatras and a candidate of the Olympic Games (Zdena Krišková), Liptovský Mikuláš and its Tatralandia as a tourist paradise in the Liptov region (Slavomíra Očenášová-Štrbová), Banská Štiavnica as a city on the UNESCO World Heritage List (Jolana Darulová), Piešťany as the most famous Slovak spa (Ladislav Lenovský), and the industrial city of Žiar nad Hronom – the flagship of socialist propaganda (Kamila Beňová). These papers study particular cities from the perspective of their specific place and status within Slovakia and diverse local interpretations of globalisation.

The last three studies concern the broader context of globalisation (global capital, tourism and leisure time) and their consequences on urban Slovak communities. Roman Hofreiter looks at a global automotive company that has a plant in the “traditional” and rather nationalistic region of Central Slovakia, in a suburb of the city of Žilina, its impact on the development of nearby communities and the region, and the residents’ relations and perception of the company. Katarína Tesárová studies tourism in Bratislava and focuses on the production and construction of tourist attractions and their place in creating the image of the city. Ivan Chorvát analyses data from sociological surveys on the changes in leisure activities of the inhabitants in Slovakia in the context of globalisation, with the main focus on Bratislava and Košice.

The case studies in the English version of this publication are extended summaries of full Slovak papers (with limited footnotes and references). We believe that the publication will inspire more anthropological research on global and local processes in Slovakia and other countries.

Alexandra Bitušíková

THE WORLD AND THE CITY SINCE THE IRON CURTAIN: CHANGING HABITATS OF MEANING¹

Ulf Hannerz

Abstract

With a point of departure in a conception of cities as “habitats of meaning”, the article develops an anthropological perspective toward cultural characteristics of postsocialist cities in Eastern and Central Europe. The point is made that different categories of inhabitants (for example of different generations) and visitors may have their own experiences and interests in the city, and that media of many kinds now play an important part in organizing urban understandings.

Biographical note

The day when the first version of this article was presented, in Bratislava in a workshop on urban life especially in postsocialist cities, was November 9, 2009. The significance of the date could not be ignored – it was exactly twenty years since the Wall began to crumble between the two Berlins, perhaps the most dramatic of the many symbolic events of that autumn. I happened to be in Germany that evening, although not in Berlin, and I remember it well: the sense of exhilaration, and also the uncertainty of what this would all mean in the long run. But briefly I want to return even further back, to my first visit to Berlin, which was also my first glimpse of what was on the other side of the Iron Curtain, for a few days in the early 1970s. I had decided to take time off during the dull days between Christmas and New Year’s Eve, get on the train from Stockholm to Berlin, and explore another city. I had also asked the Swedish Railways travel agency to find me a hotel room in Berlin which, rather to my surprise, it booked in East Berlin. So I got off the train at the Friedrichstrasse station, made my way first to the rather sombre little hotel, and then ventured into the streets.

With the snow falling, and just after the holiday, it sometimes appeared that there were only me and the occasional patrolling constable of the *Volkspolizei* there. It seemed like a rather unappealing amalgam of state socialism, remnants of inward-turning Lutheranism, and a northerly winter climate. During the next few days I walked along Unter den Linden and the Karl-Marx-Allee, pondered the exhibits at the Museum of the Anti-Fascist Resistance, and had one or two dinners at restaurants with cuisines half-heartedly celebrating fraternal links with other socialist countries. Somewhat innocently, perhaps, after I had found where my hotel was, I had assumed that I could spend nights in East Berlin and make day trips to the West, but that turned out not to be so easy even

¹ The first version of this article was presented at “the Sustainable Diversity in a Glocalizing World: Global vs. Local in Postsocialist Cities of Central and Eastern Europe”, a joint workshop of the SUS/DIV Network of Excellence, in Bratislava, November 9, 2009. My warm thanks to Dr. Alexandra Bitusikova for inviting me to this workshop, and for her thoughtful hospitality and excellent organization. I am also grateful for comments by participants in the workshop.

for a foreign visitor. So after a few days, I transferred to the bright lights of West Berlin. Since then, of course, I have been back to Berlin a number of times. And recently, I have really found some of the transformed eastern neighbourhoods of the city about the liveliest and most interesting it has to show.

Since then, too, but mostly after 1989, I have had occasional opportunities to see a little more of the cities which were once on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain – but only briefly and superficially, so if I can claim to have been an anthropologist in them at all, it would be in the nature of a “parachute anthropology”, which is certainly a bit of a contradiction in terms. What I have to say about them here is more in the nature of modest suggestions, based on some organized curiosity, rather than much solid knowledge of the facts. But at least identifying my vantage point as that of an anthropologist might suggest what are likely to be my preoccupations and sensibilities. I am concerned not least with culture, which I will take here to be a matter of meanings and meaningful forms. I am also concerned with diversity, and not least with the social organization of diversity. And I find it fitting to return to a borrowing I have already made once from the Polish-British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (1992: 190 – 191), who suggested, in the early 1990s, that a notion of agency might be fruitfully combined, not with system, but with a flexible sense of habitat. My adaptation of that idea was to sketch a conception of a “habitat of meaning”. Habitats, I noted at the time, can expand and contract, they are not necessarily particularly autonomous or clearly bounded, and they can be identified with either individuals or collectivities. As habitats of meaning, they are not necessarily understood in the same way by all the people who inhabit them as physical spaces, and cultural processes may indeed draw on the varied ways in which different interpretations and practices intersect (Hannerz 1996: 22 – 23).

I am interested, then, in cities as local habitats of meaning, always open to wider environments, and in our times often notably so to the world, and to what we now call globalization. But looking at the cities of Central and Eastern Europe a little more specifically, and going a bit further back in time beyond the most recent past, it is striking how they have often had to engage with dramatic changes in the political, social, and cultural environment. A reference to “postsocialist cities” already suggests one before-and-after contrast. Taking in the twentieth century as a whole, these cities have seen empires fall around them. Borders have moved, and sometimes populations. Centrally or peripherally, many of them were affected by the Holocaust. To a degree, these changes are reflected in the fact that over these hundred years, a number of these cities have had two or three different names – and so have many of the streets in them. Urban landscapes may have accumulated traces of these shifts, although there have also been varied attempts in different periods to preserve, or to obliterate, or to restore particular pasts. The Karl-Marx-Allee I wandered down in early 1970s East Berlin has perhaps slightly surprisingly remained that, and its architecture still stands as a grand example of the urban vision of mid-century state socialism. It did not last very long, on the other hand, in its previous incarnation as Stalinallee. In Budapest, the statues and monuments distributed around the city in the post-World War II period have later been assembled into a Communist theme park on its outskirts, perhaps mostly drawing foreign tourists, while the dark side

of imposed totalitarianisms is exhibited at the House of Terror in the centre of the city, on a boulevard that has been through its name changes. All that belongs in local habitats of meaning.

Globalization and the Second World

To a degree, certainly to the participants but also to those who followed what happened in late 1989 through the media, these occurrences also stood out as local events, in Berlin, Prague, Bucharest and numerous other places. Yet at the same time, we may now realize that another view of the world followed with them, a stronger sense of a single world. We are often enough reminded that the phenomena of global interconnectedness have been present a great deal longer, in very varied shapes, yet the term “globalization” has mostly been in circulation in the post-Cold War period. The phenomena it refers to may not all be so directly linked to that cluster of political upheavals, but the sense of a possibility of unfettered interaction and communication across all borders surely had a great deal to do with it.

So let us remind ourselves of a somewhat older figure of speech. Especially in the Cold War period, for some decades, it was a widely shared notion that there was not only one world, but three: the First World, the Second World and the Third World. Even the concept of a Fourth World, of scattered aboriginal populations, took hold, and is still around. We do not hear so much of these entities any more. Instead of the Third World, there is now more of a “Global South”. But then there are also new configurations of economic and political power emerging which do not fit with old categories.

The postsocialist cities, in any case, were once cities of the Second World. And so, for a period, one might argue, they were involved in a specific Second World globalization. That shaped certain mobilities, certain flows of meaning, certain transnational connections, certain local manifestations. And what has coincided with the turn to the post-Cold War single-world globalization has been a range of forms of Second World deglobalization, a cutting off of the center-periphery links of that world and that period, and also, as I understand it, a certain loosening of the more lateral ties between its peripheries. Occasionally the question passes through my mind whether in our explorations of current and emergent relationships between the global and the local, we do not risk losing sight of the traces of that deglobalization. Perhaps past and present globalizations are in fact often intertwined.

I will come back to that hunch now and then in what follows. From here on I will concentrate on what seem to me to be among the more promising sites for studying the interactions of the global and the local in such habitats of meaning as I understand the postsocialist cities of Central and Eastern Europe to be. In a way I am returning to a point of view I first developed in an essay likewise around twenty years ago, also originally a lecture, about the cultural role of world cities (Hannerz 1996: 127-139). Starting out from a classic paper on “The Cultural Role of Cities” by Robert Redfield and Milton Singer (1954), I referred to their world historical contrast between orthogenetic and the heterogenetic cities. Some of the early urban centres of the world had been of the orthogenetic type, basically cult places engaged in refining the beliefs and practices of the peasantry of the

surrounding countryside. But then the heterogenetic cities, rather more crossroads places, drawing together diverse populations in interaction while dominated by managers and entrepreneurs, had become more prevalent. In my own essay, focusing on the world cities of what we could see as the liberal capitalist democratic First World, places like New York, London and Paris, I proposed that four categories of people had a particular part in turning them into nodal points of late twentieth century world culture: the transnational business and financial elite, the expressive specialists of the arts and fashion, the mostly low-income migrants from the Third World, largely concentrating in service occupations, and the tourists. The four categories need not together constitute any numerical majority of the entire populations of these cities, but through their particular external linkages they together did much to establish the position of their cities on the world scene. They were, of course, all more or less migrants, more or less mobile; the tourists individually only there briefly, but collectively like the others a stable presence. I noted, too, that in the local urban configuration, the members of these categories did not just exist side by side, but also shaped each other's environments, catering to each other's needs and desires, providing each other's opportunities. And then, apart from these four categories, I noted in addition the role of the media in turning these localities into world cities.

Now I do not doubt that in the cities of Central and Eastern Europe all the four categories I have just enumerated are present, and play their part in ordering their global connections. But in a more general way, I want to identify in a somewhat similar way what I would think might be people, phenomena and matters worthy of some special attention in the cities of this region.

The built environment

So to get to one concrete example, down to earth, even more than that, let me draw on a distinguished French anthropological colleague, Marc Augé, and his underground observations and reflections on the Paris Metro – momentarily, that is to say, we are back in one of these preeminent world cities. The book *In the Metro* (2002) is actually a long essay, where the personal is made to mix with the professional and the collective.² Augé ponders how the map of subway lines and stations can also map biographies, as stations and the street-level neighbourhoods above them stand for periods in a life. But when strangers mix in trains and on platforms, they have no insight into each other's Metro worlds. And while station names – Austerlitz, Solférino, Bir-Hakeim – may make their appeals to a common memory, generations relate differently to the suggested history through their personal experiences. Momentarily, Augé plays with the idea of what a *real* full-scale ethnological study of the subway system would have to include. As he moves freely between his glimpses of concrete and largely anonymous social traffic, his reflections on its opacity, and his own associations to people, places and social theory, however, the subway journey turns out to be much more his personal passage through a life and through the world.

² I discuss Augé's book also as an example of "anthropology at home" in my book *Anthropology's World* (Hannerz 2010: 98).

A first thing to note here may be how the urban landscape, although in this case subterranean, offers elements of a habitat of meaning. To begin with, although one should not make too much of it, I sense the traces of a certain contradiction here. Austerlitz, Solférino, Bir-Hakeim? These Metro station sites with their names of famous battlefields celebrate the public memory of France, not Paris; the nation rather than the city. And between the logic of the nation and the logic of the city there is often a certain tension. The nation, a bounded and fairly inward-turning entity, might in itself go better with a city rather of Redfield's and Singer's orthogenetic type, inclined toward homogeneity and cultural involution. Yet the cities actually flowering in more recent times have been more of the heterogenetic type, centres of open ramifying networks, attracting strangers, transgressing boundaries. Insofar as at least the early twentieth century was in Europe an age of nationalism, nations may rather often have tended to try and impose their own patterns on the cities, reminding of their glory and prescribing their identity, at times even to the point of engaging in cultural and ethnic cleansing campaigns against those elements which appear quite readily in the heterogenetic city.

Along such lines, it would seem clear that a close reading of the built environment, underground but probably mostly above ground, can offer intriguing insights into changes, and perceptions of changes, in city life. We can see these names of cities and city streets, appearing, vanishing and then reappearing, as features in the public face of particular globalizations and deglobalizations. We may also ask how local people understand particular changes in the cityscape, particular losses, and particular transformations.

Much of the time, I suppose, we are inclined to see the globalization of the urban landscape as primarily a matter of homogenization, an imposition of global uniformity particularly through the arrival of the multinational chains of outlets for consumer goods and services: MacDonald's, Starbucks, Benetton, C&A, and the IKEA store at the outskirts of the city. Although they seem mostly to succeed again and again in getting their flow of willing customers, we are inclined to bemoan them in the terms of a cosmopolitan urban aesthetic which values locally rooted diversity. At times their arrival may stand out as a particular affront to local identity. To take another example from somewhere outside our region, there was in a major street in central Jerusalem once a café which had an enduring reputation as a place where heroes of the Jewish resistance had met in the period of the British mandate in Palestine, before the establishment of the state of Israel. When that café closed, to be followed by a branch of a transnational fast-food chain, it was certainly widely seen as something more than a natural succession of types of food and drink places.

But then if we believe that homogenization is all there is to globalization, we had better look again. Walk a few blocks away from the busiest area of downtown shopping, and it seems you will often come to neighbourhoods where more local, smaller-scale retail businesses may be doing reasonably well, and where perhaps a certain new diversity is provided by the presence of immigrant entrepreneurs, with their grocery stores, restaurants and take-outs, and other services.

Think, too, of the possibilities of an urban milieu rather more of this kind as a learning environment. And let us find materials to think with elsewhere in the world again. Robert Park (1952: 47), founding father of the Chicago school of urban sociology, suggested in

one classic formulation that the city could be seen as “a mosaic of little worlds which touch but do not interpenetrate.” The mosaic metaphor is a recurrent one in portrayals of diversity, urban or global, but it may often be misleading. One scholar who has recently given some thought to this is the well-known urban ethnographer Elijah Anderson (2004), who has in large part devoted his attention to black street life in American cities. In an essay titled “The Cosmopolitan Canopy”, he draws on his observations particularly in the Reading Terminal Market, in his home town Philadelphia. The market is in what used to be an enormous train shed, centrally located, devoted largely to shops, restaurants and kiosks offering a wide range of goods and services. The business people here, whether entrepreneurs or employees, are of diverse backgrounds, to a degree reflected in the nature of their merchandise. The visitors are African-American, Asian-American, and varieties of white.

As Anderson’s metaphor of the “cosmopolitan canopy” suggests, the Reading Terminal Market provides a kind of protective (but also, it would seem, attractive) cover for interactions, a cover under which people can relax and feel mostly safe and secure. Even as they are among strangers, in large part different from themselves, they can have a good although reasonably discreet look at these, overhear bits of conversation, even initiate a fleeting moment of good-humoured exchange. There may be teenagers just hanging out, retired people, business executives coming in for lunch, homeless people seeking shelter, food, and the unhindered use of public toilets, as well as unobtrusive security guards. No doubt you see a Chinese woman in the pizzeria and an Italian family trying sushi. This market seems indeed to be an institution of the heterogenetic kind of city.

Under the cosmopolitan canopies, Anderson argues, people-watching engages people in doing their own “folk ethnography”. They can learn about “how people are” and “how things work”, making sense of their city. As Anderson (2004: 29) concludes, when people are repeatedly exposed to the unfamiliar under such circumstances, they “have the opportunity to stretch themselves mentally, emotionally, and socially.” The point is, he suggests, that these settings allow people to get along in a civil manner, without the sentiments of fear and distrust prevalent in many U.S. urban settings, particularly focusing on the racial divide. To a degree, indeed, they allow those “little worlds” of which Park wrote to interpenetrate.

The perspectives of generations

But with Elijah Anderson’s view of the Reading Terminal Market and its varied informal experiences, we have surely moved some distance away from the observation of the public face of the city as defined by national memories and monuments. Perhaps much of the time the native travelling on the Paris Metro really does not give much thought to the historical associations of those station names. On the other hand, as Marc Augé points out, they may connect to personal experiences, and generations may relate to them differently.

I think it may be worthwhile to consider the significance of generations and their perspectives as one topic in the study of Europe’s postsocialist cities. When it comes to looking at cities as habitats of meaning, I think it is often a good idea to devote some special attention to young people. Much of their daily life is yet uncommitted, they have time to be

out there, in action, observing and observable, in public spaces. I am reminded of an early, well-known essay named "Soft city" (1974) by the British writer Jonathan Raban, who argues that cities, unlike villages and small towns, are plastic by nature. You can decide who you are, and the city will assume a suitable fixed form around you. If you decide what the city is, your own identity will be revealed. The city seems to become a ludic space. It may be that Raban's soft city as a forever pliable habitat for identity games is mostly a territory for the reasonably comfortable, those with the personal power to impose their will on their most immediate social and material surroundings, or to make the selections from them they will find attractive: a job, a place to live, a circle of friends, pastimes, other accessories. To a degree that may well be so. Yet I think the city also tends to be softer for the young, with more of their projects ahead of them, less settled in their ways and in their networks, more prepared to improvise, perhaps take risks. As I saw them, from a distance, the events of Eastern and Central Europe twenty years ago were in no small part youth events. Now young people are perhaps also to a particular degree the globalizers, a group with a particular interest in ensuring that their habitat should offer all the ingredients of what they consider the good life that they understand cities elsewhere to offer.

But then when I suggest that an attention to generations may yield interesting materials in studying changing postsocialist cities, I do not only have young people in mind. Among the present inhabitants of these cities, I would expect that there are age groups whose habitats of meaning have been quite differently constituted over time. There are indeed some, no longer so many, whose memories go back to the presocialist cities, of the period between the world wars, and World War II itself. A much larger age category is made up of the people whose lives and experiences were shaped, over several decades, by living in that Second World, in the countries and cities of state socialism. Some of their commitments, made freely or under very specific constraints, as they navigated in much of their adult lives, could now seem out of time and place, to themselves and to others. Their before-and-after understandings of post-1989 changes would seem to me likely to be particularly rich. Then, of course, you have the people who were young twenty years ago, who perhaps experienced the very events of change particularly directly and vividly, and who have mostly organized their adult existences under the postsocialist conditions of openness to the world. And finally, you have those later cohorts whose view of the Second World may already be getting hazy, and not based on direct personal experience. The postsocialist cities may be constructed as somewhat different habitats of meaning by all these age groups; and perhaps interactions between generations are also affected to a degree by these differences.

Tourists, returnees, refugees

In that earlier interpretation of leading world cities which I mentioned before, I also pointed to tourists as a key group in making these cities what they are – not only visiting spectators, short-term observers, then, but cultural agents in themselves. No doubt they deserve some attention as we consider the globalization of Central and Eastern European cities as well. I would suspect that in many places they were quite few before 1989, and rather suddenly noticeable in large numbers after that. So what have they done to change

the living environment of the locals? For one thing, I would suppose that tourists, insofar as they travel to experience something different, want to have what is particular demonstrated to them. At times, that could involve placing selected memorabilia of the Second World on show, as in the park of Communist statues and the House of Terror in Budapest, or the old Stasi headquarters turned into a museum in Leipzig. Yet at least as often, these visitors may seek out a yet earlier European urbanism, from past centuries. In part, then, the recovery of urban pasts, not least in the built environment, is in their interest, stimulated by their kind of globalization. And yet at the same time, I suspect that the spread of those more homogenizing, present-day global cultural forms is also to a degree occurring under their patronage, as tourists occasionally find it comforting to be able to retreat to the same chain stores, and the same fast food.

In the cities of this region, however, I would be curious not only about tourists, but about the influence of certain other mobile people as well. Those young people who leave their fresh mark on the urban landscape may sometimes, I suspect, be returnee travellers who have already seized such opportunity as may be available to them to cross borders, look around, and maybe work or study elsewhere. I would be curious, too, about the influence of other returnees, the people who went into exile from the Second World and came back when it was gone. Just following the news, I hear again and again about those who have come to some prominence in national politics, in one country or other. In the cities, have they also come to serve as cultural brokers between the global and the local?

And then again, in the earlier essay of mine on the cultural role of world cities, I pointed to the part of immigrant populations from that Third World, the Global South, whose labour has done much to keep not least service economies running, and who also contribute significantly to the sense of cultural diversity in great-city life. In places like London, Paris and New York, obviously, the migration between continents has gone on for a rather long time, at least half a century or so by now, and to a great extent the migrants from early on were labour migrants, who did find their way into the business side of urban life. There is now clearly some long-distance, intercontinental mobility into the postsocialist cities as well – I learn, for example, of the Vietnamese who come to seek a livelihood in the urban centres of Central Europe. But as I understand it, the newcomers are often likely to be political or economic refugees, often undocumented, paperless, without much in the way of stable local networks. So what place can they find in the city, what is their local habitat of meaning, how are they mapped in the habitats of meaning of other people in the city?

Second-hand experiences: cities in the media

Finally, in my world city essay, I emphasized the part of media. I would like to point to that again. City dwellers certainly have their own personal and direct experiences of the local milieu around them, some very rich, others perhaps less so. Yet then they also tend to become to a degree dependent on second-hand experiences, and the more or less authoritative interpretations offered by others, and not least the media – for quite some time already, the newspapers, the popular magazines, radio and television. Now, however, the media scene is also changing to include whatever is on the Internet: websites, blogs.

As parts of the habitats of meaning, all these channels likewise tell city people about what their cities are or may become, what they are or should be, how they are like or unlike cities elsewhere. And they tell tourists about how the cities in question fit into the world, where one should go, what one should see. Indeed, the media are mediators, intermediaries. As at present they change so quickly, however, some effort is surely necessary to keep track both of what they say and of how they are actually received by their audiences.

All in all, the cities of contemporary Central and Eastern Europe obviously offer a great many challenges to scholars. As an anthropologist, I see not least the opportunities for urban ethnographers, in the streets and markets and on the subways, among the young and the not-so-young, among tourists, refugees and returnees, in the newsrooms. At the same time I see the need for methodological pluralism, and the opportunities for methodological innovation and creativity. All the possible ways of gathering data and gaining insight are not necessarily there as a finite set, described in one methods handbook or other. As habitats of meaning change, the researchers might keep rethinking their ways of approaching them, the combined tool kits which could best help to adapt to them.

Moreover, they may think about how they can team up among themselves, to make the best use of their respective perspectives and capabilities. In these past couple of decades, while I have only been a casual, off-and-on observer, I have noticed the stream of scholars, largely from what used to be that First World, who probably for a long time found field studies in the Second World either unattractive or impossible, but who now make their way for research purposes into the societies of postsocialism. I have myself, too, enjoyed and benefited from my new contacts with colleagues who were either in the Second World, or in exile from it. But I sense that as people come together, in the same fields although often with different agendas, knowledge bases and career assumptions, there is some risk of tensions and misunderstandings between expatriates and locals. I would hope that we will now find many scholarly meeting points – conferences, publications – which can play a constructive part in getting us away from such moments of irritation, and moving instead toward identifying in our various points of view both convergences and complementarities.

A SLOVAK CITY IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Alexandra Bitušiková – Daniel Luther

The democratisation of the Slovak society and introduction of a market economy following the year 1989 have led to radical changes: it was during this period that an open economic environment was formed, and the conjunction of global technologies, commercial goods, and new cultural paradigms emerged. This has had an effect on the everyday life of citizens. Multinational corporations and their management settled down in cities and suburban zones, tourism developed and transnational migration increased, all of which are features of globalisation. In the study that follows, we aim to explore numerous anthropological interpretations of globalisation in urban settings with the main focus on qualitative parameters in relation to the global and local forces in the Slovak environment. We understand globalisation as a process which is significant for the analysis of the relationship between deepening cultural diversity and the sustainable development of the post-socialist city.

The era of globalisation

It is often said these days that mankind is experiencing a new era, the global age. When did it begin? The beginnings of the process of globalisation cannot be easily traced and have been attributed to various stages of human evolution – beginning with the Roman Empire and ending with the fall of the Soviet Union. This, however, is irrelevant and does not require too detailed an analysis. It's much more important to examine the historical causalities which actually explain the essence of this issue.

The trend of globalisation is usually linked to the development of the industrial society. As Thomas H. Eriksen notes, "if by the word modernity we refer to everything that capitalism, modern state and individualism mean to human existence, modernity has been hegemonic in the world at least since the First World War" (Eriksen 2008: 356). It is an abstract construct which explains the essence of modern society (in contrast to the traditional society), and in this respect, it represents the sum of institutions connected to the historical era of industrialisation. The paradigm of modernisation combines the processes of economic, social, and cultural development, which should lead to a similar standard of organisation and production as well as to the values which have been attained by developed industrial societies - especially Western societies (Kearney 2008: 326). According to Eriksen, despite having different forms, globalised modernity bears common features everywhere in respect to institutions as well as cultural representations (such as state, citizenship, work, capital or money), (Eriksen 2008: 357).

Modernisation, as a form of innovation, contrasts with tradition. According to Juraj Podoba, it predominantly aims to foster development and innovation and is "a collection of interventions into an existing system with the aim of attaining contemporary qualitative

parameters” (Podoba 2001: 65). Jan Keller also understands modernisation as a conscious process of change in a society, and therefore in this respect, it is close to the essence of globalisation. In his opinion, the first theories of modernisation were instigated by President Harry Truman’s public speech in 1949 on “containing Communism” and they theoretically aimed to provide support for US interests in countries of the Third World (Keller 2007: 18-19). According to Keller’s concept, development aid carried out by countries of the Western as well as the Eastern block in the 1950s and 1960s represents the first phase of globalisation. The second phase of globalisation (carried out in the 1980s and especially 1990s) is different from the first phase due to the fact that multinational corporations played a dominant role in the process (Keller 2007: 18-19). Consequently, one can naturally conclude that worldwide globalisation only dates back to the fall of the Soviet Union and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which represented the isolation of countries of the Communist bloc. Prior to this collapse, it was simply impossible for multinational corporations to penetrate this part of the world.

Zygmund Bauman points out the concept of universalism, which preceded the term globalisation. “The concept of universalism, much like the terms civilization, development, convergence, consensus and many other key terms of the early and classical era of modern thought, expressed hope, intention, and determination to install order and, in addition to what the abovementioned terms stood for, it also represented an *universal* order – thus establishing an order of universal and global proportions” (Bauman 2000: 59). The concept was based on good intentions to change the world, make it better and enforce these humanistic ideals among the entire human kind.

Economic activities of developed nations have led to the establishment of multinational corporations and created multinational capital. The improvement in communication technologies and transportation has enabled the world to connect into a single network of flowing capital, ideas, cultural patterns, goods and people. Various multinational organisations have been established to attempt to solve global environmental, political, social as well as cultural problems (for example global warming, the energy crisis, the growing inequality between states and regions, human rights, poverty, hunger, illnesses, etc.). Therefore, in some respects, globalisation bares some features of universalism, the introduction and enforcement of a universal ideological, economic, and value system as well as social order. Nevertheless, globalisation in the hands of multinational corporations was not deliberate or a result of an organised initiative, but rather an unplanned and unexpected outcome of processes which began evolving during the last couple of decades. As Zygmund Bauman writes, the essence of globalisation is in its unclear, intangible, and self-propelled character of events around the world. According to him, things have simply “gotten out of hand” and globalisation is not what we wish or want to do, but it is more about what happens to us (Bauman 2000: 59). In addition to positive trends in economic and technical development, negative social outcomes have also been attributed to globalisation. These were, in global terms, described by Francis Fukuyama as the great disruption (Fukuyama 2005).

Globalisation evokes conflicting reactions. Pessimists point out inadequate areas of investment in countries of the Third World, which leads to the economic destruction of

the countryside, the break-up of rural communities, labour migration, deepening social gaps, uncontrolled urbanisation, growth of urban poverty, environmental deterioration, to the homogenisation of some cultures, and gradually also to increasing state debt and mass emigration. In developed countries, the initially positive free flow of capital and goods has, as a boomerang, turned into an uncontrollable flow of people and cheap goods. According to Bauman, as a result of a spontaneous and unstoppable diffusion of free trade principles and, most of all, as a consequence of the free movement of capital and finance, the economy has been slipping out of public control (Bauman 2000: 65). To summarise, the economic and social consequences of global modernisation undermine the ability of the social state, a symbol of a country's level of development, and consequently threaten its democratic and political system (Keller 2007: 128).

More optimistic visions of globalisation predominantly focus on the new possibilities which globalisation brings, and they emphasise that it is exactly these global processes which lead to the growth of diversity. This diversity provides new economic opportunities, regenerates and enforces local economies, cultures and identities as well as creates new cultural paradigms and identities.

Globalisation stands for an intensifying interconnection around the world, a world depicted as one of movement, flows, mobility, contacts and continuous cultural interaction and exchange. Borders are becoming porous and enable more and more intensive contact between people and cultures. Mass consumption is becoming the primary mediator and agent for establishing contacts between people and cultures from different corners of the planet (Inda – Rosaldo 2008: 5). Due to the fact that many cultural phenomena are not limited to a specific locality (meaning that they are everywhere), they can be considered global. However, global symbols and global information are at the same time local because they are viewed and interpreted locally. A global culture is never manifested in an entirely pure form, but only presents itself in interaction with others. Just as a culture is created, developed and lived locally, a global culture also exists only thanks to other cultures (Lewellen 2002: 54).

Anthropology of globalisation

Since the second half of the 1980s, globalisation has become an important and frequent theme in social and cultural anthropology. This theme has been the focus of a great number of publications, studies as well as scientific journals such as *Identities* (since 1994) and *Public Culture* (since 1988), which deal with the topic of globalisation predominantly from the perspective of anthropology and related disciplines. Since the beginning, anthropology has observed changes in cultures, cultural phenomena and elements which have been caused by the contact and communication of various societies and their subgroups. This interaction has existed since the beginning of humankind but has gradually intensified. Bronisław Malinowski, followed by many other anthropologists, expressed the fear of change or extinction of various cultural phenomena as a result of colonialism, missionaries, trade, and technological changes, to mention just a few (Eriksen 1998: 278). Despite the fact that cultures and societies have always projected an influence

on each other, during the last few decades the mutual interconnection of the planet on economic, political, social and cultural grounds has significantly accelerated.

Within globalisation studies, anthropology distinguishes among economic, political and cultural globalisation. In the end, however, the social and cultural results of global processes are the main interests of anthropology. The product of globalisation and its various forms, functions, and interpretations in different environments are the key focus of globalisation research. In relation to cultural globalisation, academic literature most commonly presents three conflicting concepts, which identify the processes of:

- Cultural polarisation: globalisation provokes the clash of different cultures, civilisations, ideologies, and religions (for example Huntington 2001);
- Cultural homogenisation: globalisation contributes to the unification of cultures in various countries all around the world. In this respect we mostly come across the thesis of Western dominance or, in other words, American dominance, which is also known as Westernisation, Americanisation, McDonaldisation or Coca-Colonisation – terms used to express the homogenisation of cultures via the influence of multinational corporations (for example Holton 2000). It needs to be pointed out, however, that the dominance of American or Western culture is by far not the only one. Large Asian countries (especially China or India in the South-East Asia region) can also be considered as globalising or threatening the cultures of smaller countries. Critics of the theory of cultural homogenisation argue that it is often global localisation rather than cultural homogenisation which is taking place. Many markets and their products appear to be global, but at the end of the day, their content and form are local. If global corporations want to be successful, they need to adjust their marketing, content, and form to local markets;
- Cultural hybridisation (creolisation): represents a mixture of different cultural elements, intercultural exchange and the incorporation of foreign cultural phenomena into local cultural practices. According to Ulf Hannerz, creolisation is caused by a combination of different cultures, by the influence of two or more historical contexts often in relation to center – periphery. He argues that the periphery can, in time, become the centre and the centre can turn into periphery, and that in the future many creolised – mixed cultures can have more influence than those cultures which are locally anchored (Hannerz 1992: 264, 267).

Not even Arjun Appadurai understands globalisation as cultural homogenisation. Based on many examples from anthropological studies, he argues that globalisation does not lead to homogenisation (or to Americanisation) because different cultures and groups approach globalisation in very different ways. Therefore, there is still space within the discipline of anthropology for comparative studies in different localities, eras or languages (Appadurai 2008: 17).

Globalisation brings about new theoretical and methodological challenges. The local has been the main object of anthropology and it has, to a great extent, always been defined and limited by the ability to cover and analyse a certain territory (space) and its community within a specific timeline via techniques of participant observation and interviewing. Even today anthropologists mostly focus on the study of groups, communities and cultures which are anchored in a certain time and space. On the other hand, theoreticians of globalisation

focus on deterritorialised groups, transnational communities, diasporas or phenomena which are spread throughout many countries (Lewellen 2002: 30). Time and space are the two key categories which do matter in the study of global processes.

According to David Harvey, globalisation involves shrinking space and shortening time (Harvey 1989). Due to modern communication technologies and transportation, distances have become shorter, the significance of borders has decreased and the pace of life has grown faster. Global media has significantly contributed to the compression of territory and time. New concepts of space and new metaphors of mobility, also referred to as deterritorialisation, migration, tourism, nomadology, etc., make us think about the dynamics of these processes which have been influenced by globalisation (Escobar 2001: 141). Arjun Appadurai also points out the necessity of studying the cultural dynamics of deterritorialisation, which deals with transnational corporations and financial markets as well as ethnic and religious groups, political groupings, etc., which spill across the borders of territory and identity. He defines five types of spaces which are the basis for cultural flows:

- *Ethnoscap*es stand for a space formed by people; these people create the current variable world via tourism, migration, commuting for work or by trade.
- *Technoscap*es stand for global technologies which shape the flow of cultural values. These are unevenly distributed around the world as well as interpreted in a different way (local adaptations, interpretations, symbolisation, etc.).
- *Financescap*es present the flow of global financial capital, which is increasingly independent of particular territories (supranational capital, national stock exchanges, currency markets, financial and commodity speculations, etc.).
- *Ideoscap*es create idea-oriented standpoints and testimonies (political, academic, managerial, commercial). There may include different idea-based images and representations of globalisation determined by local circumstances, modes of information in societies, the level of social awareness, attitudes towards global culture, etc.
- *Mediascap*es encompass the production of mass media. They promote global culture, create its media image, and present it both positively as well as negatively (Appadurai 2008: 33-36).

Deterritorialisation, which is one of the key terms used in globalisation studies, can have various meanings. Today, many migrants live in a transnational space (they are citizens of two or more countries and they maintain contacts with their home country). The term deterritorialisation is also being used in respect to hyperspaces (Kearney 1995) or non-places (AUGÉ 1999) such as airports, franchise restaurants, shopping centres, amusement parks, wax-figure museums, etc., which show monotonous universal characteristics (Kearney 1995: 553).

For anthropologists, theoretical concepts of globalisation pose cardinal questions concerning the limitations and meaning of a place and a community. According to Thomas H. Eriksen, community and continuity in the context of transnational interconnection cannot be considered the starting point for research. In current studies, change (travel, migration, etc.) are no longer seen as a theoretical and methodological problem, but rather as a natural characteristic of current life. It is not the society that should be researched

but movements within the society. Today, most communities are difficult to identify and localise as spatial entities. Nevertheless, we have to accept their existence because social relations, based on a *Gemeinschaft* type of social relations or, in other words, based on trust, obligation, and shared interpretations, still exist even if in different forms (Eriksen 2003a: 13-14). In this respect, Roland Robertson argues that globalisation does indeed evoke the reconstruction of home, community, and locality. We must not, however, view locality in opposition to globalisation but, according to Robertson, we should consider locality as one of many aspects which are influenced by globalisation (Robertson 1995: 30). Ted C. Lewellen considers the fact that globalisation creates a more and more localised world as its main paradox (Lewellen 2002: 190).

Therefore, the anthropology of globalisation re-evaluates categories such as locality, community, home, identity, borders, migration, and mobility. The research on those phenomena and processes which cross national boundaries highlights the interchangeable character of the above mentioned categories in the global world. The most common topics found in anthropological studies on globalisation are the following:

- locality, home, and space (locality and translocality, a new meaning of locality and home as a dimension of social life and a set of emotions which have a loose connection to a specific space – such as the concept of dual or multiple homes; transformation of a locality and its space through the process of globalisation; the study of global “non-places” such as restaurant chains like McDonald’s, airports, amusement parks, shopping chains and centres as well as the way they are perceived locally; markets; tourist sites – change of a locality due to tourism, etc.);
- migration, migrants, transmigrants (means and reasons for migration; migrants’ involvement in the production of meanings – this term is used to explain migrants’ involvement in creating a space; (trans)migration of work; mobility of transnational professionals; cosmopolitanism, etc.);
- tourism (the influence of tourism on a locality and its culture; business travel; global chains of hotels which are identical all around the world, etc.);
- media and communication technologies (influence of the media and the film industry on localities and their cultures; the internet as a global phenomena; international correspondents, etc.);
- food (global products such as Coca-Cola and many others; restaurant chains such as McDonald’s, KFC, Burger King, Starbucks, steak-houses and their reception and interpretation in a specific local setting; food and their global expansion – such as pizza, sushi, and hamburgers; new nutrition movements, e.g. fast food and slow food; movements for local cuisine and local products instead of global; health and healthy lifestyles; hunger);
- the influence of globalisation on culture and global events (Olympic Games, World Cup, etc.) and their influence on a locality; the influence of global processes on local cultures (the resistance and revitalization of local cultures or their passive acceptance of new elements); movements for the preservation of endangered cultures of small groups, UNESCO and its influence on preserving diversity; cultural heritage; the ownership of culture and culture as a right; dressing-up and fashion – the role of and space for folk costumes today, etc.;

- human rights, values, and morality in a global context (for example citizenship, ethics, role of women in society, corruption, trust, etc.);
- multinational corporations (companies, corporations, non-profit organisations, etc.);
- borders and their meaning in a global world;
- identity (this topic stretches through all of the above-mentioned areas).

Global and local

The study of globalisation processes has led anthropologists to re-evaluate the antagonistic relationship “global versus local” and replace it with “global and local”. Many (if not all) current localities and their inhabitants are, more or less, influenced by numerous globalisation processes and phenomena. This, however, does not mean that these cultures have been absorbed by global culture. On the contrary, it is these localities and their inhabitants who absorb and transform global culture (Lewellen 2002: 53). And it is exactly this meeting of the global and the local, often labelled as glocalisation, which represents a key focus of anthropological research. The term glocalisation clearly combines both globalisation and localisation into one word, and thus it highlights the fact that the local is an integral part of globalisation and not its contradiction. These two concepts – the global and the local – are so pervasive and interconnected that it is often difficult to differentiate between them since one infiltrates the other. However, analyses allow one to make a distinction between the two components of this single process: globalisation (the expansion, diffusion, and universality of cultural phenomena, models, and relations), and localisation (the selective absorption, decoding, reinterpretation, and particularisation of globally dispersed phenomena, models, and relations), (Roudometof 2003: 45).

Local communities seek protection or counterweight against globalisation via their local cultural paradigms. This process usually results in a stronger affiliation with the local culture rather than with the global, unified culture. Regardless, the clashes of global and local result in a variable range of cultural phenomena.

Globalisation and the city

Despite the fact that globalisation influences both urban as well as rural localities and connects the centre with the periphery, cities are, nevertheless, the engine of globalisation. The study of the current characteristics of urban settlements increasingly uses terms such as global city and globalising city in order to highlight the different stages of interconnectivity between cities within global networks and hierarchies. Global cities, or what is sometimes referred to as world cities, are important metropolitan centres of national and multinational political and economic power, trade, finance and banking, world media, knowledge-based societies and economies, international show business, cosmopolitan culture and entertainment. Globalisation predominantly occurs in cities. New York, London, Tokyo, Paris or Hong Kong are considered the main global cities of today.

A study by the G.B. Government Office for London (1996) presents four categories, which characterise a global city:

- finance and business services (finance and banking, legal commercial services, accounting, advertising and public relations, services in the field of design including architecture and fashion);

- power and control (seat of the national government, international organisations such as the OECD, World Bank or the EU, as well as biggest multinational corporations);
- creative and cultural industry (theatre, opera, ballet, concerts, museums, galleries, international print and electronic media);
- tourism (business and leisure tourism, hotels, restaurants of all categories, entertainment, developed communications).

Global cities and global urban hierarchies are given much more attention in research than other cities. However, this research is criticised for its inconsistency, especially due to the fact that it is often based on a comparison of only a few selected indicators (most commonly the presence of business services, multinational corporations, and airline connections). They do not analyse the relationships between individual indicators and urban hierarchy (Kim 2008: 128). The growing criticism of this trend is caused by neglecting or even ignoring research focusing on non-global and more common smaller cities, which lack the importance of global cities. Nevertheless, these cities are also influenced by the processes of globalisation even if their position within the global network of cities is only marginal. These cities are often referred to as globalising cities, and their importance lies in the link in the relationship between global and local or the relationship between globalisation and localisation that they create. Research in these cities shifts from macro indicators to a micro level and focuses on the everyday life and practices in the city streets, in residential and immigrant neighbourhoods, and in public spaces, with an emphasis on the global in a local setting and on details revealing the dynamics of the relationship between global and local (Kim 2008: 132 – 133). This is where urban ethnology/anthropology comes into play because it resembles microanalysis, whose methods enable it to grasp the context and relations of everyday life in a city.

Ulf Hannerz limits the scope of sources of globalisation to the following terms: commerce – migrants – tourists. In the urban context, agents of transnationalism are predominantly made up of the managerial elite, the lower foreign working class, various creative professionals (artists, chefs, designers, etc.) and tourists (Hannerz 1996), as well as foreign students, teachers, university professors and other international practitioners.

There is a wide range of opinions on the issue of the globalisation of cities (Eckart – Hassenpflug 2004; Friedman 1986; Hannerz 1996; Marcuse – Van Kempen 2000; Sassen 1991 and others). This variety of approaches presents a sufficient scale of possibilities on how to analyse cities. There is, however, one difference which puts limits on the universal relevance of these concepts. Cities have neither the same circumstances nor the same abilities to absorb global phenomena and ideas equally due to the difference in their economic and social structure and the fact that they have developed in different historical and social contexts. For example, if we want to understand the processes of changes in post-socialist cities, which are influenced by global processes, we cannot ignore their historical development because it determines how and to what extent these cities are capable of and prepared to take part in global competition.

Slovak cities and globalisation

In what way has globalisation influenced Slovakia? General definitions of globalisation emphasise that globalisation represents a process which, on a world-wide scale,

interconnects people, cultures, cities, institutions, and ideas through new technologies, means of communication, mass mobility, and migration. Slovakia represents a small link within these global networks, and it has opened up to them only very recently. After 1989, the country experienced an accelerated modernisation – a return to the above mentioned modernity, which had fueled the development of Slovak cities from approximately the third quarter of the 19th century and fully affected the society mainly during the 1930s – 1940s (Lipták 2004, Hallon 2004). Modernisation in the second half of the 20th century, also known as the industrialisation and collectivisation of Slovakia, significantly changed the Slovak society from a rural to an urban one and brought about substantial economic development. However, this progress was not attained on the basis of democratic principles, which is one of the key features of modern societies.

According to Martin Hampl, cities located in our geographic space have undergone double transition over the course of the past two decades. He characterises this change as a return to pre-socialistic development and the beginning of membership in the structures of the European Union and other European and global networks (Hampl et al. 1996).

Using the example of Prague, Luděk Sýkora divided the social, economic, and physical changes of the city structure into two phases: the local and the global. In the local transition phase (like in other Central and Eastern European cities), he considers the transformation to a market economy, establishment of a democratic political regime, and becoming a part of the world-wide economic network as the most important changes which have taken place. Changes which have occurred during the global transition phase (just like in other cities around the world) were caused by economic globalisation and its effects on local political, economic, social as well as cultural reconstruction. He considers the most visible changes to be the commercialization of mainly selected, central urban locations, the gentrification of stagnating or abandoned locations and buildings, and the residential and commercial suburbanisation on open or peripheral urban locations (Sýkora 2001).

According to Pavol Machonin, the modernisation of the post-socialist era did not only entail reconstructing the political and economic system, but also entailed accepting the renewed ideology which put an emphasis on humanism and freedom, an open society, resurrecting cultural contacts with developed nations, and increasing the inflow of a wide variety of goods, spiritual influences and role models. Machonin argues that we belong to a group of semi-modern and semi-rich countries. Under these circumstances, a “careless and partial modernisation based on the North-American model bound to the processes of globalisation” would end up having harsh consequences on most of the society (Machonin 2002: 419). Activities aimed at obtaining substantial foreign investment, which have been a part of the transformation since 1989, show that our country is globalising rather than is being globalised.

Based on the works of P. Marcus and R. van Kempen (2000), Peter Gajdoš formulated a modified view on globalisation with respect to Slovak circumstances: “Globalisation is a process integrating societies all around the planet, which provides a new common denominator for today’s national, regional, and local systems. The engine of contemporary integration is the process of globalising economic activities...” One of the most substantial social consequences of globalisation is the deepening inequality in social and economic

development, which results from localities', cities', and states' different strengths and abilities to take an active role in the process of globalisation (Gajdoš 2009: 304, 305). Based on these formulations, globalization necessitates active participation. It is questionable, however, how Slovak cities view and react to the effects of globalisation, whether they are capable of absorbing global or multinational corporations, what their attitude is towards universal cultural forms which are present in shops, the media and on stage, in what way cities make use of globalisation's economic benefits and contact with developers, in what way they are trying to eliminate the negative consequences of the global culture (such as obliterating cultural uniqueness), what the natural local reactions are to the increase in immigration and tourism, in what way local political representatives have prepared themselves for both expected and unexpected processes associated with globalisation, etc. The issues of globalisation and its interpretation in local conditions lead to many new research questions.

The revitalisation of urban centres has been an important component of the post-socialist era. Based on numerous studies from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and other countries, Zdeněk Uherek asserts that the processes which have taken place after the year 1989 have contributed to diversification and representativeness. This diversification incorporated the unified symbols of globalisation through internationally-known brand-named businesses, like McDonald's or Irish Pub, "all high quality products, which is so distinct from the local culture of sales". In addition to this, local businesses have been renamed and reconstructed in a global style. The increasing significance of urban centres alone, however, cannot be considered a typical feature of globalisation. Within our cities there is also the opposite tendency, which functionally decentralises and fragments the urban space. These establishments, such as business and shopping centres like Baumax, Tesco, IKEA, Carrefour, and others, are located both in city centres as well as on the peripheries and have become multifunctional and socially sought-after localities. He agrees with Nick Oatley on the fact that "when periphery becomes the focal point of interest and cultural life, it may remain a geographical periphery, but from the perspective of a human being and his everydayness it transforms into a focal point" (Uherek 2002: 437 – 439).

In Bratislava, complexes such as Aupark, Polus, Avion Shopping Park, and, most recently, Eurovea, are examples of such commercial suburbanisation combining several functions: shopping, services, culture, and social functions. Numerous other shopping centres and supermarkets of all kinds have surfaced on the edge of the city limits. Lubomír Falt'an indicated the change in the functions of these city gates as well as the subsequent transformation of the function and the overall movement of the city centre. Instead of the usual gravitation towards the centre, citizens are also now moving from the centre to suburbs, which are more easily accessible from outside the city. The city centre has lost its dominant position in respect to shopping. It has, however, strengthened its representative, administrative and service functions (restaurants, coffee shops, pubs). The influence of globalisation can also be observed on the gentrification process of the centre, where the renovation of buildings and apartments has been accompanied by a reduction in the number of residents and the replacement of the original residents by wealthier ones (Falt'an 2009: 335, 344).

Immigration and tourism are independent research topics, which, if we want to present the city in all its complexity and diversity, cannot be omitted. This is, however, usually the case, especially due to the fact that the low numbers of immigrants do not represent a serious issue for Slovak cities. Slovaks currently live in an era when immigrants are barely visible, and the immigrants consider it important to culturally assimilate if they want to lead a full-valued life within the society. Thus, the diffusion of cultural influences via migration remains low. The importance of tourism in forming Slovak cities, however, is much more significant. This phenomenon can also be studied as a local community issue, where areas such as the production of local traditional identities and symbols expressed in locally made products, art, festivals, architecture, gastronomy, etc. are being influenced and controlled by commercial forces and state as well as local politics.

According to Peter Gajdoš, there is no standard model of urban globalisation because the process has many different forms, and the effects on the cities' physical space and social structures are significant. He adds that "despite the fact that all cities are gradually being pulled into the process of globalisation, there are significant differences in their capabilities of influencing these processes" (Gajdoš 2009: 324). This process basically represents a conflict of interests between the inhabitants' interests (civil actions), local politics (and politicians), and business groups (both domestic and foreign). Here, the conflict or interplay of "the global" and "the local" is demonstrated to different extents.

The methodology of studying globalisation

According to Ulf Hannerz, anthropology is undergoing a critical test of its tools and methods for studying the problems of the transnational and global world (Hannerz 1996, as cited in Lewellen 2002: 55). Many anthropologists are sceptical about the study of globalisation, and believe that this trend will soon come to an end. Others consider globalisation as a first-rate challenge and call for the radical re-evaluation of the central theoretical constructs in anthropology as well as in other social sciences. During the 20th century, anthropology has repeatedly addressed global or transnational issues (such as the theory of diffusion, cultural contact, acculturation, social change or modernism), and despite having used different theoretical approaches, they all arrived at the same understanding that the world is not a mosaic of closed entities which are isolated from each other (Hannerz 2000: 236).

Thomas H. Eriksen voices various strong and sometimes even provocative opinions on the influence of globalisation on both the theory as well as the methodology of contemporary anthropological:

- The concepts of traditions and modernity are becoming purely analytical categories – nowadays it is almost impossible to talk about traditional and modern societies on an empirical level;
- The concept of culture and society has become even more complicated due to the fact that communication technology, capital, politics, migration, and trade are freely crossing all borders (i.e. no state or local community has clearly defined boundaries, and their cultures are neither closed nor internally unified);

- Considering how demanding, or even impossible, it is to define boundaries and grasp the entire issue of globalisation, the study of specific groups or cultural phenomena (such as the Olympic Games, tourism or migration) is becoming more and more relevant. This is due to the fact that we can observe and analyse them in isolation from other phenomena;
- Classic field research is becoming insufficient due to the fact that its method of data collection and analysis would require us to understand social and cultural life on the entire planet. Therefore, field research and participant observation need to be supplemented by other methods and sources, such as statistics, mass media, local documents, etc. (Eriksen 1998: 290).

A similar opinion on the current methodology of anthropology is advocated by Ted C. Lewellen. According to him, collecting data in the field has always been more or less a matter of improvisation, the art of the possible. In the 1980s critical theories opened up the issues of the objectivity of anthropological field research and its methods. According to Lewellen, the most important contribution of postmodernism to the theory and methodology of anthropology is the “redefinition” of target groups in anthropological research. Cultures, communities, and “the local” are not to be found in a clearly defined space but are dispersed all around the world, often in a different form. The analysis of these kinds of structures using classic face-to-face field research seems to be insufficient. The subject of study in the anthropology of globalisation is not cultures and communities, it is translocalities, border zones, migration, diaspora, tourists, refugees, cyber-space, the influence of television and the media, international processes in science and education or commercial art. Whereas in the past, most emphasis was put on the study of different and marginalised groups, globalisation studies shift this emphasis to the elite (businessmen, mobile professionals, tourists, scientists, journalists, etc.), who take the most advantage of the opportunities and possibilities created by globalisation (Lewellen 2002: 57).

Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson also view the methods of traditional field research critically. According to them, participant observation is and will remain an important anthropological tool. Nevertheless, it is only one of many alternative methods, and thus it is only one part of the entire process of research (Gupta – Ferguson 1997). Today, it is multi-sited field work which is becoming more of a necessity (for example the research of migrants in their home as well as hosting country, or the research of transmigrants). It demands time and money, and therefore it is often a team endeavour. This type of research, however, raises the question whether it is possible to holistically grasp a research problem in its entirety. Lewellen adds that, as a part of field research, the greatest added value of long-term participant research was and is that it allows the researcher to completely understand the issue under study. Attaining data using this methodology, however, is a long-term process which demands a large financial backing. This is because the researcher needs to take into consideration that many answers to his questions are biased, and respondents unconsciously lie or give answers which they believe the researcher wants to hear (Lewellen 2002: 58 – 59). Actually, in many countries professional respondents, who are willing to cooperate with anthropologists for profit, have emerged. Gupta and Ferguson call for the necessity to supplement and combine the method of participant observation

with monitoring the media, analysing government and local strategic documents, observing government and other elites, and following the traces of multinational corporations and development agencies. They maintain that instead of adopting a royal path to the holistic understanding of a different society, ethnography is beginning to be known as a flexible and opportunistic strategy for diversifying our understanding of various localities and people; it also focuses on a variety of knowledge from different social and political locations. This approach, however, is still not entirely accepted by institutionalised anthropology, which favours field research, slightly “invigorated” or supplemented by other sources. Instead of assuming that real anthropological truth can only be unveiled by field research and only this approach will save this discipline from merging with others, it would be much more appropriate to re-evaluate what the field of contemporary anthropology actually is (Gupta – Ferguson 1997: 37 - n 38).

Ulf Hannerz deals with the methodology of anthropological research in globalisation in several of his works (Hannerz 1992, 1996, 2000, 2003). Even though he considers the terrain as the symbolic centre of anthropology (Hannerz 2003: 19) and observation as an important method of collecting data (and interviews to a lesser extent), he is an advocate of combining different methodological tools. Today we no longer understand a the field as one locality, where the researcher spends months conducting participant observation and interviews. The contemporary field is defined by a network of localities. Multi-sited and multi-local fieldwork are terms which were introduced and began to be used in the 1980s by George E. Marcus (1986, 1995), and which have become a necessity when studying multinational and globalisation processes. This kind of research could begin in one locality where one starts studying a specific topic, but eventually it will shift into a different locality and country (for example if we study an immigrant community or a global cultural phenomenon). This is not, however, a comparative research conducted in two or more localities, which has always been common anthropology. The key to conducting multi-sited research is to think in terms of networks and connections (Hannerz 2003: 27).

Ulf Hannerz is aware of the problems and challenges associated with researching multinationalism and globalisation (for example having a research subject which is not based on a defined and enclosed locality; how in-depth research should be; anthropologists’ cultural competences – not all of them are prepared to become research cosmopolitans, but all of them can make use of multinational collegial and professional networks and intensify cooperation on such research), (Hannerz 2000: 246-250). At the same time he points out what kind of resources are available to each anthropologist in his/her research: reading local newspapers and materials (mostly online), using the telephone, Skype, social networks (authors’ note), googling and browsing various websites, exchanging information via email, following local and global events via video (Hannerz 2003: 35), and also other resources such as DVDs, YouTube, etc. (authors’ note). Hannerz’s observations could be summarised in the following way: today, anthropology has more possibilities to be “in the field” than prior to the era of modern communication technologies. This is despite the fact that it remains difficult to overcome the concept (or stereotype?) of conducting field research without direct face-to-face contact with informants.

In today's globalised world, anthropologists need to progress and reflect changes which are happening all around us. To paraphrase Ted C. Lewellen, the wide variety of methods, techniques of data collection, and data analysis should adapt to the topic and aim of the specific research, and not vice versa (Lewellen 2002: 60).

All the above mentioned issues presented by globalisation anthropologists represent a challenge for Slovak ethnology / anthropology. They re-evaluate the traditional views on and understanding of our discipline (it is not important whether we refer to it as ethnology, social or culture anthropology) and compel us to start thinking in different, wider contexts. Whether we admit it or not, despite adhering to the traditional methodology used in our discipline, we are now living in a globalised and globally interlinked world. Today, even the most remote location in Slovakia is connected to different localities, countries, and cultures via various network channels. This is a fact which we cannot continue to ignore.

CITIZENS, DEVELOPERS AND A GLOBALISING CITY

Daniel Luther

Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic, has long been favoured by foreign investors, businessmen, migrants of all kind, and tourists. It is the seat of central political, economic, administrative, financial, and other important institutions, which serve all these social groups. Bratislava as the largest Slovak city was the first to attract commercial chains and branches of world-wide companies, both large and later also smaller foreign investors. Branches of different multinational corporations (in production, trade, property development, communication, banking, insurance, etc.) have been established in the city. Foreign employees who come to Bratislava expect a socially diversified environment and, along with it, the anonymity typical for large cities where foreigners are not the centre of attention and where they can expect a lively city life enabling them to establish social contacts more easily (Bitušíková-Luther 2009). In this respect, Bratislava is not Vienna or Prague. Nevertheless, Bratislava probably fulfils the above mentioned expectations to a greater extent than any other Slovak town. For tourists, the capital city represents an image of the entire country and is usually the point of first contact or a mandatory destination, especially when it comes to smaller countries. Based on the number of visitors, Bratislava is the most visited location in Slovakia. Although we could go on listing different attributes of Bratislava which attract investment and people, it is not necessary. Since the first decade of Slovakia's independence, Bratislava has been different from other Slovak towns thanks to its dynamic growth, economic prosperity, and faster and shorter post-communist transformation. Consequently, the free flow of finance, goods, services, technology, communication, culture and people, all accompanying signs of the process of globalisation, are demonstrated much more intensively and are much more expressive in this city than elsewhere.

Bratislava became involved in global networks voluntarily, by actively trying to attract foreign investments. Nevertheless, it can still be considered more a globalising city than a global one, yet it supports the processes of globalisation with its own urban policy and the business activities of local companies. It is questionable, however, how the city's inhabitants view these practices, what influence they have on the design of their city, and how they perceive multinational corporations and other 'global products'. Its residents are confronted with the reality of financial and political power, which are clearly interlinked, and have an influence not only on the city's image, identity and space, but also on local social relations. According to various public statements, it may seem that 'real estate developers' – an abstract group of people or companies with a strong financial and political backing – are the central actors of this discourse. The media are to be blamed for the group and stereotypical way we perceive real estate developers: *real estate developers are at attention, real estate developers are sceptical, real estate developers are fighting for market space, ...* as media tabloids inform. The article *Property developers have supposedly*

stolen a pheasant breeding farm in Jarovce (a protected provincial locality in the district of Jarovce) depicted this professional group in an even worse light.

The topic of this study demands diversified sources of information. I focused on analysing real developer projects and used the methods of direct observation and informal discussions in order to find out respondents' subjective attitudes towards these projects (such as completed buildings, planned construction, economic activities, reaction of civil associations, activities of conservationists, etc.). Published materials (articles, interviews, and the news) were another important source for my analysis.

Who are real estate developers

Development corporations are independent business entities operating in the construction and real estate industry. Based on this definition, real estate companies are similar and, at the same time, are each others' competition. They have diverse aims and different scopes of activity. The essence of their business is the complete realisation of the construction plan, ranging from buying a piece of land to selling or renting the finalised buildings or spaces and, in the case of larger construction projects (office and living complexes, logistic or shopping centres) the ultimate goal is to sell the functioning object to a major investor. Identifying and buying the site, arranging the building permit, carrying out the construction, and passing the building inspection process are all activities during which property developers come into contact with the political establishment controlling the local self-governing institutions (city municipality, offices of self-governing regions). It cannot come as a surprise that citizens view these relations with a certain feeling of unease:

“Bratislava conservationists accuse the Bratislava town leadership of recently having, for the sixth time already, used city money to promote projects by private real estate developers at the MIPIM real estate fair in Cannes...Representatives of this initiative protest against the mayor of Bratislava, Andrej Ďurkovský, and the municipality director, Anna Pavlovičová, for engaging themselves in a PR campaign for selected private property developers, which is paid for with the municipality's money, and against promoting their private activities especially in the case of unacceptable projects such as River Park... Bratislava has presented itself at the real estate fair for the sixth time already. Several years ago, the mayor travelled to the fair via a private jet owned by the J&T real estate development corporation.”¹

It is in the property developers' interest to finish an approved and running project ('at all costs' and despite all complications), put the property into service, sell it and gain a profit. This often leads to solutions which citizens refuse to accept (cutting trees, building additional floors, building additional constructions or making other changes in the project). Nevertheless, reservations have also been made against granting licenses and approvals for some projects, which, according to citizens, inadequately change the face of a locality or the city as such (for example construction in the Vydrice district). And it is at this point that the municipality's or town district's involvement comes under the heaviest criticism. *Real estate developers are allowed to do anything because they can buy anyone*, some

¹ Gindl, E.: Die Wutbürger...Rozzúrení občania. Sme, 29. 1. 2011.

people say. But the local authorities (and not only the ones in Bratislava) usually defend themselves by holding the ‘property developer or investor’ responsible.

The public’s attitude towards property developers has been significantly influenced by the most agile investment and development corporations (J&T Global, HB Reavis Group), which focus on building mega-projects: shopping and social complexes such as Polus City Centre (first property completed in 2000) and the Aupark Shopping Centre (2001), both of which were later extended by a vast complex of offices (the Millennium Tower I and II skyscrapers at Polus; and an Aupark skyscraper). Within a short lapse of time, the global company Inter IKEA Centre Group introduced an even larger project – the Avion Shopping Park (2002).

In recent years, property developers have built other mega-projects in the city: the business and administrative complex Apollo Business Centre (HB Reavis Group, 2005), the Eurovea multifunctional complex with a dominant business, residential, and administrative function (Ballymore, 2010), and the River Park hotel and apartment complex (J&T Real Estate, backed by Henbury Development, 2010) with shopping, banking, restaurant, and leisure services. The goal of these projects was to attract domestic as well as foreign investors and show Bratislava’s potential for profit.

In 2006, two big transactions took place which represented a breakthrough in real estate operations in the territory of the city. The company TriGranit Corporation sold Polus City Centre to the Austrian Immofinanz Immobilien Anlagen AG company for more than 200 million Euros. And when the Dutch company Unibail-Rodamco bought a 50% share of the Aupark shopping centre, the entry of foreign and multinational investors into this business sector became irreversible. At this time, the weekly magazine *Trend*, specializing in economics and finance, noticed:

“...the Slovak real estate market has definitely entered the global map of real estate. Apart from foreign investors, the number of developers from different European and overseas countries operating in all segments of the real-estate business has also increased. In addition to money, foreign players should also bring something else: more transparent rules of engagement and a higher level of transparency.”²

At this point it is not important to find out whether this is the trend. The public opinion, however, holds a rather different opinion. This can be confirmed by numerous public protests published in the media or on the Internet.

Skyscraper in a protected urban zone

An example of this is the controversy surrounding the recently launched construction of a building on Šancová Street (2005). Before finalising the project, the construction company, Istroreal, requested permission to increase the previously approved number of floors from 8 to 34. This increase would put the building into the category of skyscrapers. The construction company failed to take into consideration that its new building would be neighbouring the YMCA building, a national historic site, or other surrounding low-rise buildings, and the fact that the area of construction was a part of a protected historical

² Sedlák, M.: Najväčší developeri na Slovensku: Globálni investori berú trh vážne. *E-TREND*, 19. 5. 2006.

zone. It seems that the construction company had the ‘city’s’ silent approval because it started offering apartments for sale (via a partner real estate company) located on those very floors which had not yet been officially approved for construction. The image of having a skyscraper in the neighbourhood and unfair tactics of the real estate investor triggered a wave of opposition among the locals. During a discussion³ about the idea of organising a protest petition, some citizens believed that the town leadership was employing misleading practices:

“Also it needs to be added that based on the perspective of current urban planning, constructing such a building will only result in the collapse of traffic on the already jammed Šancová Street! Of course, any professionally and financially qualified constructor has the right to build an apartment skyscraper. However, not at any place that they point their finger to... Does the city want the conservationists to solve the problem?! This is dirty business!”

“I live on Šancová Street; the conservationists say that they are fighting in the name of the Old town (the centre) and the Bratislava Castle neighbourhood. I think, however, that this is a little bit hypocritical, I don’t know... They say that they are under unbearable pressure from the ministries due to investors (just hearing the word makes me sick)...”

Critical attitudes towards the investor were coupled with citizens’ feelings of powerlessness in respect to secret connections between ‘real estate developers, the city, and politics’:

“Unfortunately, this is typical of Slovakia because it is always the stronger financial groups which win over the ordinary people. I do not believe that a petition could stop the construction of that ‘monstrosity’. As always, someone will make a profit from this and no petition will change their mind. Simply, in no time we can expect them to demolish the Bratislava Castle and build a supermarket or a multiplex cinema on that very spot”.

“As a native of Bratislava I am becoming more and more disgusted and I might just move out of the city and leave it all here to the newcomers. Remember how after 1989 we used to say that the Bolsheviks destroyed everything? Today, buildings are being demolished as much as they were during Communism (Poštová Street, Dunajská Street, the neighbourhood surrounding the Hviezda movie theatre) and they are building monstrous glass buildings. Damn it.”

The petition was signed by several famous people, and eventually, the city council did not give approval for building the skyscraper. The Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic suggested decreasing the level of protection in the area of construction and, supposedly, allowed two floors to be added to the original project. This controversy helped to uncover unfair practices which the citizens had been accusing the developers of, and it also pointed out relevant social differences:

“The decision of the Minister of Culture is being presented as the victory of ‘the civil movement’ and the petition, which was supported by numerous publicly-known figures. This only proves the fact that if ‘regular’ people would have lived and legitimately protested against such a project, they would not stand a chance – but when some ‘weather girl’, a football player or a minister signs such a protest petition, all of a sudden there is a chance! For God’s sake, so do any of these principles and laws work

³ Zdroj: <http://www.obnova.sk/modules.php?file=viewtopic&name=Forums&t=315>, online: 28. 10. 2010.

or are we just living in a clientelistic brothel where anyone can get whatever they want and need by lobbying?!”

Similar critical attitudes appeared in relation to undeclared and quickly erected high-rise buildings, which, according to some citizens, changed the ‘face of the town’. In contrast to this opinion stands a very interesting comment made by an anonymous citizen who participated in this public discussion:

“...they mind the fact that the building has 34 floors. The only negative consequence of this I see is that the buildings will be projecting a somewhat larger shadow. I don’t think we can really talk of changing the town’s skyline because that was already disturbed a long time ago. Then, let’s not construct anything and move to the suburbs.”

Skyscrapers in the town

“Bratislava and skyscrapers? How do these two go together?”, this is only one of many comments referring to the construction taking place on Šancová Street. At the time, however, building a skyscraper in Bratislava was no rarity. Three buildings higher than a hundred meters had already been built in Bratislava and none of them took into consideration the way they would affect low-rise buildings in the neighbourhood: the Slovak Television Headquarters (built in 1975 and located in the Mlynská Valley far away from the city centre), the Glória apartment building (built in 2005 in the suburb of Ružinov) and the Slovak National Bank (2002) located closer to Šancová Street, which is the most interesting case. Its height (111 metres) has been criticized only sporadically. Its dominant design was defended by one of its architects, M. Kusý, in the following way:

“As the authors of this project, we will be happy, of course, if citizens of Bratislava as well as the rest of the Slovaks identify with the building of the Slovak National Bank. It is, after all, National...”⁴

By the time the building had been constructed, however, projects of much higher buildings were prepared: five buildings which were over 100 meters high and twelve buildings which reached over 80 meters. To compare, the tower of St. Martin’s Cathedral used to be the tallest construction in the city (85 metres) and the Manderlák building, which was inspired by American skyscrapers, rose up to 45 metres. Among ongoing projects there are an additional twelve buildings which rise above 100 metres, and seven of these are located in the close vicinity of the Old town. Four of them are supposed to be more than 150 metres high, which puts them into the category of skyscrapers. The media usually admire skyscrapers all around the world, but when it comes to Bratislava they never fail to add a negative opinion:

“Skyscrapers are a symbol of our Western civilization. They fulfil a basic goal – they aggregate the highest possible amount of people in one place in order for them to carry out their jobs in the most effective way possible and without unnecessary transfers. For a human being, however, this environment is not natural and it stresses people out.”⁵

Citizens, however, express little concern about the quality of the working environment in a skyscraper. They are concerned about the images of their city and its traditional iconographic structure. Such images are displayed in many restaurants and constitute a

⁴ Source: <http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=885918>, online: 28.10.2010.

⁵ Pacherová, S.: Mrakodrapy rastú. Vyššie, dravšie. Pravda, 17. 3. 2007.

part of the local identity. All postcards of the city from the 18th century and later provide a view of the town from behind the Danube River and depict the dominant castle, tower of St. Martin's Cathedral, special features of the built-up embankment area, and the Small Carpathian mountains in the background and beneath them a town with a relatively vertical skyline. Since the second half of the 20th century the city has undergone numerous changes. The traditional panorama was disrupted or completed by the Slavín Memorial dedicated to Soviet soldiers. The image of the Danube embankment was changed by the construction of the New Bridge, which led to the destruction of an entire neighbourhood below the castle. The view of the town was also changed by the high-rise Kyev hotel, located close to the town centre, as well as the 'modern' image of the Slovak National Gallery building.

The city's traditional panorama has simply changed and citizens have only partially identified themselves with this transformation. The construction of skyscrapers and their location have, however, been controversial from the very beginning. This state of affairs, as it has been argued, is a result of the chaos which erupted after the position of the main city architect was cancelled. The head architect was supposed to monitor construction activities in the city (individual real estate projects are authorised by the construction authorities of the responsible city council). Štefan Šlachta who became the head architect of Bratislava after the position had been successfully restored made the following statement:

"I have identified three key zones suitable for new skyscrapers: in Petržalka close to Chorvátske rameno, in the area of Lamačská brána, and on the left bank of the Danube in the area of Apollo Bridge. This is where they will least obstruct the view of the castle and other historical and dominant buildings."⁶

The activities of property developers have not been disrupted by the current economic crisis. They might have reduced their goals, such as postponing the launch of new building construction. The process of construction as such, however, has not been stopped.

Civil activists warn of the architectural uniformity of glass-aluminium buildings, which are by no means unique. Their identifying features are easily interchangeable with objects in other cities, they bare no local features, and disturb local urban design. Thus, local characteristics of urban spaces are gradually vanishing.

Urban space and local memory

According to Lawrence, 'places' represent a certain cultural concept and are a result of human influence and ownership. How and why individuals and groups attribute sentiment and emotional meanings to a certain place and how a certain place evokes emotions in people is all a part of our consciousness and identity (Lawrence 2008: 360). Any change which interferes with 'an acquired space' disturbs the process of identifying oneself with a geographically defined place (local identity). The citizens of Bratislava perceive the developers' construction activities as either desired or undesired interferences in a specific space. During this process, locals predominantly judge the project's visual and proportional desirability and aesthetics, as well as the way the future building blends in with the historical buildings in the neighbourhood, fulfils the functions desired by local residents, and retains the fixed atmosphere (spirit) of the specific locality.

⁶ Pacherová, S.: Mrakodrapy rastú. Vyššie, dravšie. Pravda, 17. 3. 2007

The names of new construction projects have also been widely criticized due to the fact that they do not relate to established local names and copy foreign patterns (Lakeside, River Park, Vienna Gate, Omnipolis, Emporia Towers, Twin City, Megamax, etc.). However, there are a few projects that have adopted the historical names directly connected to the construction sites (Aupark, Apollo, Centrá, Klingerka, Slovany) or have at least based their names on terms and names used in the location (Westend Square, Petržalka City, Lamačský port). There are, however, a few new names which are acceptable (Tri veže, Lipový park, 3nity/Trinity). But the name of the large Avion shopping centre located on the fringes of the town tends to confuse some citizens of Bratislava due to the fact that it was named after an apartment building located close to the town centre.

Memory is locally anchored. It is formed beginning in childhood by getting acquainted with and adopting the space of one's house, yard, street, quarter, etc., where one establishes social and emotional bonds. Margaret C. Rodman points out this connection to collective consciousness: "places represent a unique and special reality for each citizen, one whose meaning is being shared by other people and places" (Rodman 2008: 208). The identity of places is also created by their 'genius loci' rooted in the places' history.

The Danube embankment located in the Old Town is a good example of how collective memory is connected to specific places. Property developers have placed three individual projects in this part of the city. Local reactions have been mixed. Some people have welcomed them and others have disapproved of the projects. Nevertheless, it is important to distinguish between the different ideological backgrounds of each project. F. Bianchini and H. Schwengel have identified two ways of revitalizing cities: 'Americanisation' and 'Europeanization'. The first refers to a trend to transform abandoned and deteriorating spaces located on riversides, close to lakes or the seashore into attractive new districts with amusement parks, markets, restaurants, etc. In European cities more emphasis is being put on cultural policies aimed at developing the local culture as a key prerequisite for developing the local economy (Bianchini – Schwengel 1991). It is projects like these that emphasize the town's specific attributes and its particularities, promote cultural creativity, and invigorate the town's positive image, which makes locals feel that the town belongs to them and that they belong to the town (Bitušiková 2007: 223-224). Which trend has been adopted by the architects of the Bratislava embankment?

The projects designed for the neighbourhood beneath the Bratislava Castle first spurred a wave of public discontent. The majority of the buildings in this locality were destroyed during the 1960s and 1970s, yet this locality's history is closely linked to life in the city. The picturesque Rybné Square, the small streets of the Vydrice and Zuckermann quarters, as well as the destiny of the Jewish quarter and the local synagogue have been embedded into the citizens' memory. The memories are still alive not only due to the local media but also thanks to activities aimed at preserving the area. Local memory, which is connected to this space, opposes the construction projects planned in this location. Projects which were competing in a public tender held in 2008 depicted neither the admirable lively quarter located on the riverside nor a culturally determined space, and were definitely not rooted in any local particularities:

"They want to build a mega complex on a historically valuable piece of land located under the castle. A complex that would resemble the monolithic buildings which were

erected during the time of socialism. We cannot let anyone take away our right to feel good and at home in our Bratislava or take away our right to proudly stroll through even this part of the old town and not be ashamed to show foreign tourists around! After all, we cannot forget the historical value of this area... How is it possible that our experts do not feel the 'genius loci'? The atmosphere of old Bratislava is being constantly violated and today we can only experience it looking at old photographs."⁷

In 2010, an investment company presented a new project which only partially respected the historical space by copying the street structure and using stone as a construction material. A reaction to the civil initiative 'Let us restore the neighbourhood beneath the Bratislava Castle' appeared on the internet: "The website TrendReality.sk published an article describing the new architectural design of Vydrica. This is absolutely unacceptable!"

The building of the Eurovea complex on the Danube embankment further down south, presented the real estate development company with quite different issues. The complex was built on abandoned parts of the local harbour with only several buildings that used to serve as storage houses. This non-space did not have its own 'genius loci'. Nevertheless, the neglected storage building built in the functionalist style had its own architectural value. In an interview, the executive director of the real estate development company declared that "the historical building of Storage House no. 7, which is a true architectural miracle, will be restored and become one of the key elements of the new Eurovea town quarter."⁸ Eventually, the property will be transformed into a cultural centre – the Auditorium. By preserving this object, the real estate investors have won the public's sympathies.

The reconstruction of this very storage building was completed first (2008) and two years later the first part of Eurovea was completed. The project's advertising campaign presented Eurovea as a new city centre which would connect the Old town with the Danube. The complex includes a new promenade on the river embankment, a central square in front of the new Slovak National Theatre as well as other public spaces. It also houses a luxurious hotel, apartments, restaurants, coffee shops, and other services. In the first three days of the opening, 200,000 people visited Eurovea: "We are delighted by the interest of both the citizens of Bratislava as well as other visitors and we believe that the Eurovea Gallery will be the element which will motivate people to return back to the city centre", the business director of the real estate company Ballymore expressed (Economic News 2010). In the first year of its existence, the visit rate per day was 30,000 people. It is obvious that people have accepted this new urban space. The first public event organized at Eurovea was the KIA Fan Fest Bratislava, which made the new Eurovea central square a focal point for football fans to follow the World Cup. In addition, other events held at Eurovea's premises have had the touch of a 'global culture', such as the Christmas market dominated by a glass reindeer.

The Eurovea project is a combination of both an American and a European concept of urban revitalisation. A modern complex had been built on an abandoned part of the Danube embankment, it managed to incorporate an original building located in the area, and has also taken into consideration the cultural and social needs of the city (for instance

⁷ Vagač, M.: Obnovme Podhradie! Online: www.bapodhradie.sk, 4. 12. 2010.

⁸ Handzo, J.: Sklad číslo 7 bude ikonou štvrte Eurovea. Bratislavské noviny, 18. 10. 2007.

placing the M. R. Štefánik Monument, closely associated with the city's history, on its premises).

The public opinion on real estate developers

Changes happening in urban spaces have been the focus of numerous controversial public debates. The public judges new buildings that violate the dominant architectural character of the urban space. Civil protests against real estate developers' activities criticise the disruption of the 'traditional features' of the city, but at the same time, they refrain from providing their own perspective on the city's development. In 2008, a broad discussion was provoked by an article 'The Beauty on the Danube is being sold out to real estate developers'. It exposed the widespread attitude of the town's citizens on secret connections with the town municipality: "I am slightly dumfounded by the fact that you wrote 'is being sold out' when in fact SHE, the former Beauty on the Danube, is being sold out, for a comic sum to real estate developers by our town representatives based on the recommendation of our own mayor."⁹ The core of the article focused on the links between politicians and 'the power of money', and the unlawful activities associated with this power:

"The real estate business is a gold mine and it is worth taking the risk. Especially when it comes to acquiring building permits or demolishing some 'uncomfortable building' in a hip part of the town (the Kabla building). Sometimes it seems as if the town municipality had no say. I understand that the real estate developers' lobby is powerful and has budgets worth billions. It should, however, always be the town municipality which has the last say. This would prevent public outrage, lamentation over destroyed history, or simply prevent the construction of the nonsense which is growing within the heart of the town."¹⁰

The term 'nonsense' clearly describes the high-rise buildings scattered all around town. It is interesting to hear diverse opinions as a part of the debate on respecting history or preferring the city's modernisation:

"If you don't like high-rise buildings, you can move to Stupava, Rusovce, Marianka, Čierna voda, simply anywhere to the countryside. There you have nice houses with single-pitch roofs, the Jednota store, a pub, church, and peace. But this is a city so you have to respect everything that makes it a city."¹¹

Skyscrapers and shopping malls backed, created, and built by real estate developers are visible traces of globalisation spilling over into cities. In this respect, Bratislava is an example of the citizens' critical attitude towards this development. Local history and 'genius loci' remain important in citizens' perception. However, for some they represents a barrier, and for others only pointless junk which needs to be replaced by a new *Zeitgeist*.

⁹ Source: <http://blog.sme.sk/diskusie/1184581/1/Krasavica-na-Dunaji-sa-predava-za-peniaze-developerom.html>, online: 12. 1. 2011.

¹⁰ Piváček, M., 22.1.2008, <http://pivacek.blog.sme.sk/c/135057/Krasavica-na-Dunaji-sa-predava-za-peniaze-developerom.html>, online 12. 10. 2010.

¹¹ Zdroj: <http://blog.sme.sk/diskusie/1184581/1/Krasavica-na-Dunaji-sa-predava-za-peniaze-developerom.html>, online: 12. 1. 2011.

IMAGE OF THE CITY IN LOCAL STRATEGIES

Monika Vrzigulová

For three decades now, we have witnessed new qualitative processes in Slovak cities that are connected to the transformation of the society after 1989. These processes can be considered an accelerated modernisation or a return to the modernity of the interwar period (1920's – 1930's), which preceded the socialist industrialisation and collectivisation after the year 1948 (Lipták 2004, Hallon 2004). Other authors state that after the fall of communism, our cities underwent a so-called double transition (Hampl a kol. 1996), which means that on one hand they returned to a pre-socialist era state, and on the other hand they became a part of global networks and structures (European and world-wide). They also speak of two stages of changes to the social, economic and physical structure of the city – local and global. The local transition stage primarily means introducing democratic plurality to the political system, transforming to a market economy and opening up the economy to world markets. Global changes, mostly caused by economic globalisation, affect the local political, social, economic and cultural processes of reconstruction (Sýkora 2001).

The city of Trenčín has been my focus of research since 1988. I have been monitoring the above mentioned processes of double transition on selected issues that have appeared in the daily life of particular groups among the city's inhabitants. I have also concentrated on the processes of construction and re-construction of the city's memory and on the reactions and processes that are connected to the strategies and goals of representatives, organisations and offices of the municipal authority in the creation of the city's 21st century image (Vrzigulová 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009).

In this current research, I follow up on my previous findings, which focused on what ideas and goals the municipal authority of the city of Trenčín had when it entered the process of creating the "city's identity and image" for its inhabitants, visitors, tourists and investors coming to the city. I was inspired by the work of Z. Kusá (2005: 10-30), based on the concept of creating collective identities from an interactionist perspective, which was developed by the American sociologist C. Coach (1989). Coach differentiates between a common categorical identity and a collective identity. According to him, the common categorical identity means that a certain number of people have an identical feature, and according to this feature they can be assigned into the same category. However, the common categorical identity alone does not create a relation of solidarity, which according to Coach is essential to say a group of people has a collective identity.

According to this concept, the inhabitants of Trenčín carry a common categorical identity, bound by the community they live in. Their daily mutual interaction sets the ground for creating a relationship of solidarity. The well targeted work of the local authority in organising events is, without a doubt, supposed to make this process more dynamic and, most importantly, maintain it. It is precisely this process of creating solidarity, or in

other words the collective identity of the inhabitants of Trenčín, that was the main focus in my research.

According to Coach, three basic conditions must be fulfilled in order for people who formally belong to a certain category to start realising the relation of solidarity – a collective bond. He considers these conditions to be fundamental for the creation of a solidarity bond and a collective identity:

- Construction of a solidarity past – working with history which should not be interpreted in a way that could hinder cooperation.
- Plans for a common future. People assigned to the same category should feel that they will also live alongside each other in the future. They should feel a sense of responsibility for their common future. At the same time they should have a plan for this future and view it as the outcome of their joint efforts.
- People identifying themselves as part of one collective identity (collectivity) (Kusá 2005: 10-30).

Every one of the above mentioned dimensions of bonds of solidarity can change in intensity and range. However, not all of the dimensions mentioned must be present for the existence of a collective identity. Usually a group of people with firm bonds of solidarity has a common history which it experienced in the same deeply emotional way. This group also projects a common future, and its members consider themselves to be people with a common collective identity. It is important to realise that maintaining the concept of their own history, equal relations, co-operation on designing their common future and other demonstrations of solidarity is a never-ending process. That is why maintaining a collective identity, just like with any other social institution, requires a lot of work on permanently renewing the identity (Kusá 2005: 16-19).

It is actually the process of creating and maintaining the identity and image of the city of Trenčín through the activities of the local authority and its interactions with the city's inhabitants that became my core research. I carried out my research between the years 2008 – 2010. I studied written documents: minutes from city council and municipal parliament meetings, local press, websites of the city and of other organisations that represent it. In the field, I worked with the methods of participative observation. I carried out repeated interviews (structured and semi-structured) with employees of the municipal authority in Trenčín (department of marketing), and with employees of city organisations (for example, the non-profit organisation Cultural–Information Centre in Trenčín), as well as with managers of cultural events in the two shopping centers in Trenčín (ZOC MAX Trenčín, OC Laugaricio).

I found the basic information about the vision, goals and strategies of the municipal authority in the Economic and Social Development Plan of the city of Trenčín for the years 2004-2006 and 2007 -2015 (further referred to as PHSR). The document clearly formulates a step-by-step strategy for the city in the process of creating a positive image of the city. The strategic aim of the city of Trenčín in the area of marketing communication towards inhabitants and visitors was defined as follows:

“Creating segments, which are the foundation for applying differentiated marketing. This means creating internally homogenous groups which seem to be as different

from each other as possible from the outside. We can use the same marketing tools to address these groups, especially those which are crucial to the city's development. For effective marketing results, we advise the following segmentation:

Internal segments – segments which refer to Trenčín that: “it is our city”.

External segments – segments for which Trenčín can become: a “favourite” or even “their city”.

The plans, targets and strategies that are connected to marketing the city and that are mainly connected to creating its image in the minds of the inhabitants and visitors, as outlined in the above mentioned document, which formed the foundation from which I decided to look at selected events that lead to the creation and confirmation of the city's image and the individual elements it is made up of.

As stated in the PHSR, the municipal authority aims to realise cultural, social and sport activities in the city without any direct interference from the municipal administration as the public authority. They should be organised and realised by various organisations for the inhabitants of Trenčín on the basis of supply and demand. This is why a city-sponsored grant program supporting culture and sport, and preserving the cultural heritage was set up. The program finances key cultural activities in Trenčín.

The Trenčín Foundation has been working on similar projects and with similar goals as the city's grant scheme for ten years now. It creates the opportunity and conditions for corporate and private donations through various funds, special calls for grants and its own community projects. Today, both smaller and big companies operating directly within the Trenčín city limits and also in its surroundings make up its sponsors. For them donorship is a part of their corporate culture, and they care about the environment they run their businesses in. Through the partnership with the foundation, they are making a good name for themselves not only in the city itself, but also in Slovakia as a whole.

Trenčín – historical city

The city of Trenčín is a so-called historical city¹ and stresses this in its presentations. The Trenčín castle, located above the historical centre of the city, is presented as the number one symbol in this regard. On the scale of historical sites of the city, the City tower – Lower gate (a part of the city's fortification) follows the Trenčín castle; then comes the Roman inscriptions on the castle rock, followed by the oldest street in the city (Matúšova) with the executioner's house, the Parish church, the Piaristic church and monastery, the synagogue and other architectural sites as well as other plaques and monuments.

Between the years 2005 – 2010 representatives of the Trenčín Municipal Authority decided to take the following steps to help create and highlight the identity of the city:

- Creating the marketing department at City Hall as well as reorganising the work in the offices, in the attempt to create a sense of openness, represent a modern approach towards the city's residents (e.g. creating the Client centre – a place of first contact with the municipal office, the new philosophy in administrating the city's website, the creation of new communication symbols – a new logo and visuals of the city, a better

¹ Trenčín is one of the oldest towns in Slovakia. Its historical center was proclaimed a Municipal historical heritage in the 1980's, and it thus fulfills the criteria of a historical town (<http://www.slovakiasite.com/sk/historicke-mesta.php>) <http://www.obce-mesta.sk/web/zdruzenie.php>.

means of promoting events in the city, a more flexible and creative approach of the municipal authority to cooperation with other parties).

- Tender for the design of the city's new logo: The aim of the tender was to replace the city's coat-of-arms with a new, modern logo which would represent today's Trenčín. The new logo had to be based on the colours of the city's coat-of-arms symbols: blue, yellow, white, and red. These colours could have been used independently or could have been combined in order for the logo to be three-dimensional (or plastic). It also had present the image of Trenčín as an open city, that is as the developing centre of the Považie region, as a city which builds on traditions and healthy local-patriotism, and at the same time is opened to the reforms and the dynamic changes that the future holds.

A city behind the walls

In 2006 the marketing department at the Trenčín City Hall organised an international conference – *A city behind the walls*. Trenčín thus became a part of a group of historical European cities that have well-preserved fortification systems from the Middle ages. With the conference, the city followed in the footsteps of another conference on the fortified cities of Europe called *Fortification as a corset – an obstruction or encouragement*, which took place in the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch in 2005. At the conference, representatives of Trenčín were the only Slovaks among the 18 participating European cities. *A City behind the walls* conference was aimed at directing attention more towards the “inside” - to the identity of historical cities in today's Europe. Participants at the conference tried to identify the basic pillars of the identity of historical European cities and the elements that help create the image of these cities. Case studies of the participating European cities² served as a platform for the subsequent discussion and exchange of experience. The case study of Trenčín, called *Trenčín - Open City*,³ presented the positives and negatives, or better said the strong and weak points, that were key determinants in the process of creating the city's image, as the city administration viewed them. The historical continuity of the city as the region's centre was definitely viewed as a positive feature. The age structure of the inhabitants of Trenčín was also perceived as a strong point for the city. The lack of non-institutionalised conceptual urban planning was seen as a weak point. This is obvious even though currently there are strategic changes planned for the centre of the city, the banks of the river running through the city and the adjacent streets. The construction changes were accelerated by the reconstruction of the railway passing directly through the city, which will dramatically and significantly change the face of the historical city. The city lacks a multi-disciplinary platform which would help the decision-makers in their responsible decision making and planning. The city of Trenčín didn't organize the conference *The City behind walls* only as a one-time event, but as a series of events which should attract

² Among the participants were representatives of the following towns: 'sHertogenbosch (Holland), Chester (England), Plasencia (Spain), Vilnius (Lithuania), Leuven (Belgium), Cork (Ireland), Slavonski Brod (Croatia), Langres (France), Riga (Latvia), Nicosia (Cyprus), Kuldīga (Latvia) and Trenčín (Slovakia). Case studies are available on <http://www.behindwalls.sk/sk/ucastnici/>.

³ Prepared by the head of the marketing department at the Trenčín Municipal Office - R. Kaščáková – for the whole document go to: <http://behindwalls.sk/contributiontrecin/>- downloaded on: 22.11. 2010

the attention of the public – pupils and students of local schools, municipal organisations, non-governmental organisations as well as people from the business sector.

The whole year of *A city behind the walls* in Trenčín was full of concerts, lectures, a summer festival, exhibitions and a literary competition. The city published a new tourist guide and a CD with original baroque music from the Trenčín archives. All events were the outcome of the municipal authority's cooperation with other parties – the Trenčín museum, local civic associations, non-governmental organisations, artists, associations and individuals. The activities had a common goal: to trigger discussion about the cultural heritage hidden in the city, inform people in Trenčín about the values they inherited from their ancestors and educate them about their own city. While creating a positive image of the city for its own residents, the process was also directed outside of the city, or even outside the country.

Revitalisation of the central square

Stressing the historical elements that create the identity of the city of Trenčín is logically connected to the protection of historical sites within the city limits. Despite this, Trenčín is one of the cities – regional centres of Slovakia – which has not had their historical centre reconstructed yet. In the case of Trenčín, this refers to the Mierové square, which was pronounced a municipal historical reservation in 1987 after extensive architectural and construction exploration. To this day (autumn of 2010), however, no revitalisation has taken place on the square despite the fact that the process which was supposed to launch the whole revitalisation started in autumn of 2004. At the end of 2008, based on designs and studies from seven studios from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, an expert committee chose the winning project from the RWA studio from Brno. The winning project was also the public's favourite, as they had the opportunity to express their opinion about this issue in a survey. Out of the three thousand people that participated in the survey, 1300 voted for the chosen project. The reconstruction did not start before the communal elections in November 2010, and it still remains uncertain when it will start.

The Project *Trenčín – a candidate for the European Capital of Culture 2013*

Since 2004, the municipal authority has been systematically working on creating and improving on programmes and events in the city. The marketing department at the Municipal office decided to make use of this experience and take it to a higher level. In 2006, in cooperation with the advertising agency Publicis Knut ltd., they prepared a project which got Trenčín listed among the candidates for the European Capital of Culture 2013 title (EHMK 2006). The project used a motto which was meant to draw the reader into the environment of the city and its surroundings, by presenting it in its basic definitions: stone – water – glass.

The stone (the rock) and the castle are presented as the basic symbols of Trenčín –signifying strength and love.⁴ The motif of the road is used again in connection with the

⁴ A Roman inscription celebrating the victory of Roman legions over the Marcomanni and Quadi as a symbol of strength and the legend about Omar, who drilled a well into the castle rock in order to release his love Fatima from imprisonment– as a symbol of love.

trade and migration routes which lead under the castle between the stone and the river Váh since ancient times and had a significant impact on the face of the city and the country. Trenčín chose a road, or rather the meaning and value of a road, as the leitmotif of the whole project. The slogan of the program, *Via Maxima*, is explained as a Latin reference to the direct link Trenčín has to the Roman legion settlement on the territory of today's city, as well as a symbolic reference, stating that the questions about the meaning and value of every road are eternal.

The authors of the project *Trenčín – candidate for the European Capital of Culture 2013* declared their ambition to give people a common vision and engage them in cooperation. This cooperation was mainly targeted at the youth and minorities. It was accompanied by an information campaign directed at the inhabitants of the city, who were expected to actively participate in the events. The whole document presents a guide for searching for a balance between local and European (global) topics. The presentation of the local topics, the most dominant ones in the project, takes on a historical perspective, extending from the ancient times to the present and searches for any links and logical connections to Europe that there might be.

In November of 2007 the Slovak Ministry of Culture officially confirmed that 9 Slovak cities showed an interest in competing for the title of European Capital of Culture 2013. The following cities met the deadline to send in their candidate profiles: Banská Bystrica, Bratislava, Dolný Kubín, Košice, Martin, Nitra, Prešov, Trenčín and Trnava. Despite the fact that Trenčín did not get into the second round, in which Košice eventually won, the participation in the competition itself and preparation of the project undoubtedly had an impact that speeded the process of cooperation between the Trenčín municipal authority, civic associations, businesses and individual residents in creating the city's image.

The Trenčín Cultural-Information Centre has played a key role in this long process. Its main mission is to provide information free of charge about the city and the region, about cultural, social and sport events, present the various offers of tourism services directly in the tourist agency, as well as via its website. The centre also operates the City tower (Lower gate) in the city's centre. The Cultural – Information Centre following the guidelines of the project with which Trenčín competed for the title of European Capital of Culture 2013.

Summary

The city of Trenčín case study monitored the goals, strategies and concrete steps made by the local authority in the process of creating, confirming and presenting the identity and image of the city to its inhabitants and visitors. During the course of the research I took an interest in the concrete steps the local authority took and how they presented and justified them in the city as well as outside it. This was a process of co-creating the collective identity with the inhabitants of the city. Identifying oneself to the environment one lives in is the first condition to promoting the image to the outside world. All the events that I studied and analysed were organised or initiated by the local authority in the years 2005 – 2010. They formed the basic pillars of the whole, or current, collective identity of the citizens of Trenčín in relation to their city. At the same time, they also reflect the image the

city of Trenčín has or would like to have. The research proved that Trenčín is a city that is undergoing globalisation and a double transition. On one hand, the municipal authority is trying to continue in the cultural – social atmosphere of the interwar Trenčín in all its diverse forms, highlighting its pluralism and civic participation. On the other hand, it is striving to make the city a part of the global (European) structures and networks.

The processes, focused on specific local features as well as on global trends, creates a number of problems and ambivalent effects which have to be solved or preserved in a balanced state, which is not easy. Trenčín has been experiencing such a contradiction for a number of years now due to the modernization of the railway track leading directly through the city. The railway with modern technical parameters means better accessibility for Trenčín along with all the associated advantages. On the other hand, due to the reconstruction, the city is giving up the summer swimming pool - an important area of the city in the collective memory of its inhabitants. The high-speed railway will be going right under the number one symbol of the city – the city rock and castle.

As mentioned before, the main and basic feature of the identity and image of Trenčín is its natural perception as the centre of the Považie region, confirmed throughout the centuries, and at the same time, as one of the oldest cities in the country. Another finding of this study shows that the local Trenčín authority selectively works with the city's common history in accordance with the “guidelines” for creating a so-called “common past”, which is a part of the collective identity of the city's inhabitants. There is no room for controversy or a history that would divide people (for example from the era of the Slovak state in 1939-1945 or the socialist era of the city). A part of the identity and image of the city which is just as important is its natural heritage, where we can find significant room for improvement in the area of its presentation and usage. The fact that history plays an important part in the collective identity of Trenčín's inhabitants is also confirmed by a survey realized by the marketing department of the Trenčín Municipal authority, or actually by the Cultural – Information centre.

How do local elements and globalisation currently affect the creation of the city's identity? First of all, we can say that in Trenčín there is a hybrid character of such processes. Just as Ulf Hannerz says (Hannerz 1992), in Trenčín there are various types of cultural elements from different historical contexts present in the city at the same time. Processes evolving from the city's position as a regional centre on the one hand and on the other hand as being a city on the outskirts (in the pan-Slovak, or pan-European context) also confirm the hybrid character of the city.

The local elements of the city's identity are based on its history and relate to similar ones within the network of European cities, while the global elements have undergone a certain modification in order to be understandable and acceptable for the city's inhabitants. This is what modernisation looks like at the local authority in terms of European trends of globalisation. The local authority offers locals an open and information friendly approach, calls for intensive participation in public issues, motivates people to take part in civic matters through various offers, surveys, and public inquiries and by its open approach to cooperation on the daily workings of the city. The period monitored (2005-2010) was in a way a preparation phase for Trenčín, which began forming fundamentals and climaxing

with the potential for its active presentation within the European community – such as the locality, which offers a specific and historically rich space. During this time, local services and communications were inspired by European cities with similar demographic, historical and natural parameters. However, those processes focused on specific local characteristics and global trends also present many problems and ambivalent phenomena.

PUBLIC SPACES IN THE MARKETING OF A CITY

Alexandra Bitušiková

Studying the processes of globalisation and localism in one's home town is a challenge for any social anthropologist. On the one hand, there is a good knowledge and understanding of the local environment; on the other hand, there is a fear of misinterpreting the data collected. Despite these (dis)advantages, I will try to follow the impact of global and local processes (as indicated in the introductory study) on the development and transformations of the public urban spaces and their socio-cultural and economic use in Banská Bystrica's central zones in the first decade of the third millennium.

The objective and methods of this paper were not developed easily. The topic itself discourages many anthropologists because of its complexity, multidisciplinary and the necessity to use multiple methods, not only the traditional methods of anthropology. In order to understand the local and global processes in my hometown, I've relied on my long-term interest in the development of Banská Bystrica, active participation in civic movements and initiatives, reading various local publications and documents on the strategic development of the city, interviews with local actors, everyday participant observation, and also my long-term experience living in various European cities to enable me to look at my city from a distance and with a critical eye.

Cities in the contemporary world are increasingly becoming similar. Post-socialist cities have joined the process of globalisation at a fast pace. The liberalisation of the economic market has opened the door to numerous global actors – transnational financial groups, international real estate agencies, domestic and foreign developers, advertising agencies, and retail and hotel chains, which have brought and symbolised so much of the desired Western way of life. The most visible changes in the cities of post-socialist Europe influenced by globalisation can be observed in the physical and socio-cultural structure: in the revitalisation and commercialisation of central urban zones and the visualisation of cultural symbols. According to Mariusz Czepczynski, post socialist cities remind us of a capitalist accumulation of cultural signs and symbols where each cultural meaning becomes a commercial artefact (Czepczynski 2008: 153). It is mainly the task of local municipalities and their close collaboration with professional and civic associations to determine the extent to which they succumb to globalisation and at the same time preserve specific local features of the urban physical space along with their *genius loci*. However, local authorities are often under pressure by investors and developers as well as of the civil society, often at the expense of professional debate.

Marketing and branding the city as a consequence of globalisation

Globalisation is the process that started the competitiveness of cities for their position in the national and global urban hierarchy. In their attempt to keep economic growth and to attract foreign investors and tourists, cities have started to work on their image and sell

themselves as a commodity. Each city wants to differentiate from other cities not only as a physical space, but also as a symbolic one. The objective is to present itself as a unique place attractive for living, working and visiting, as a dynamic centre of commerce, education and tourism, and as a city with a soul and identity. I understand the identity of a city as an image created by symbolic representations of collective memory and power relations, which had an impact on the shape of the urban cultural space.

One of the consequences of globalisation is urban immigration. This leads to increased demographic diversity, and consequently, to the growth of potential conflicts that need to be solved by creating opportunities for integration and inclusion. Many cities present new visions and strategies for their development focused on (re)producing their central public spaces, revitalising their local symbolism, and building new urban centres for commerce, entertainment and communication with the main aim to build and strengthen local identity, and to bring new foreign investments and tourists.

Franco Bianchini and Hermann Schwengel (1991, as cited in Stevenson 2003) suggest two main strategies for developing and revitalising cities, their cultures and identities as a means of urban marketing: Americanisation and Europeanization. Americanisation refers to the transformation of abandoned, deteriorating urban neighbourhoods situated mainly on waterfronts into spectacular, sought-after quarters and a broad spectrum of entertainment possibilities (e.g. Boston, New York, London, Dublin, or even Bratislava; please see the study by Daniel Luther in this publication). Europeanisation focuses on urban planning based on local cultural policy. Although it builds on similar discourses and often manipulates the space, its main objective is to develop the local culture and support local creativity and art as the primary strategy to revive the local economies (Stevenson 2003: 104).

The process of revitalising European cities is a top-down process promoted by local, regional, national and European policies. It is mainly the European Union and the Council of Europe that support urban development through initiatives such as the European Capital of Culture. A number of cities that have gained this title have been positively transformed as a consequence of this competition (e.g. Glasgow, the European Capital of Culture in 1990 (Stevenson 2003)).

The process of transforming and marketing the city of Banská Bystrica

Banská Bystrica, with 80,000 inhabitants, is the sixth largest city in Slovakia (a medium-sized city in the national urban hierarchy). During some periods in its history, it was an important, almost global, city (especially in the 15th and 16th centuries when it was the leading city in the world in the copper mining industry). Historians consider the local Thurzo-Fugger Mining Society (1495) as the first modern international enterprise in the world, which even supplied copper for the construction of Christopher Columbus' ships. After the end of the golden age of the copper mining industry, the glory of the city gradually declined, but the inhabitants of the city have kept a high level of patriotism and local pride to this day. This is often expressed in their saying: "Alive in Bystrica, after dying in heaven".

Contemporary Banská Bystrica may lie on the periphery of global urban networks; still, it is influenced by numerous global processes. It is exactly cities like Banská Bystrica that can be seen as a transition space for globalisation and the focus for following the relationship between the global and the local (Short 2004: 45 – 46). While the research in global cities focuses on the impact of large global companies and their practices on urban development, the study of smaller, globalising cities focuses on a micro level, for instance on the transformation of public spaces, impact of immigrant communities and tourists on the city, everyday habits of local citizens and the way they absorb and transform the global in their local environment.

Contemporary Banská Bystrica can be considered a globalising city that has recently been attracting a growing number of foreign investors, developers, migrants and tourists. The level of globalisation of a city and its place in global networks is usually measured following two methods: one method monitors the connections of the city with other world cities (mostly via airline connections), and the second method studies the economic functions of the city in global networks (Moore 2004: 215-216). Based on these indicators, the city of Banská Bystrica does not show a high level of globalization. It does not have regular air connections with big cities, despite the fact that there is an international airport not far away. It is not the headquarters of any large multinational companies, but the number of small private foreign-owned or co-owned companies reached almost three hundred in the first decade of the 21st century (Programme of Economic and Social Development 2007). A large number of global retail chains (e.g. Tesco, Billa, Kaufland, Lidl, Nay, Baumax, McDonald's, Benetton, Marks and Spencer, etc.) can be found in the city.

According to the Development Strategy of the City of Banská Bystrica (2007 – 2013), the main vision for the future development of the city is to become the third ranking metropolitan centre in Slovakia, which will be a centre of tourism, education, culture, public administration and business, a city that will be clean, green, safe and healthy, a city with style, and a city worth visiting, staying in and returning to.

The uniqueness of the city lies in its specific position in the surrounding natural environment as well as in its numerous historical monuments in the central urban zone, which was formed during the German urban colonisation in the 13th century. Many guidebooks describe the main square in Banská Bystrica as the most beautiful one in Slovakia. Indeed, the square is the most important public space and is considered to be the heart of the city by both its residents and users.

Every central square is or should be a space open to all segments of the population, which enables and strengthens the communication of locals and visitors. It has a lot of functions that may change over a period of time. For instance, in the past, Banská Bystrica's central square was a place of regular markets, a promenade for showing social status, and a space for public parades, festivities and demonstrations. During the communist period, all expressions of free public performance were censored and suppressed, and the square lost most of its social functions. It became a traffic zone without any traits of the urban social life.

Since November 1989, the city has experienced a rapid and radical transformation of its public spaces. The physical and symbolic face of the city began to change in the first

days after the fall of communism. All symbols of communism were removed, and most street names were changed (Bitušíková 2009). These first cosmetic changes were followed by changes in the ownership of many buildings in the central urban zone. Most of them were given back to the original owners in the process of restitution; others were bought by private companies.

The first calls for the revitalisation of the central architectural zone were published in January 1990. After a long public and professional debate, the complete reconstruction and revitalisation of the main square took place in 1994. The square has become a pedestrian zone with dozens of places to relax, sit, read, eat, drink or observe. The restoration of the square provoked strong emotions in the local inhabitants, which welcomed the change with enormous enthusiasm. Indeed, the aim of the reconstruction was not only to revitalise the urban heritage, but also to reinforce local identity and pride.

These changes, however, cannot be seen only as a consequence of globalisation. The key impulse was given by the post-1989 transition of society towards democratisation and market economy, privatisation, decentralisation of public administration and pluralism in political and ideological spheres (Musil 2002: 299). Opening the market and the whole society to external influences enabled the massive inflow of global technologies, commodities, services, symbols, ideas, and people from all over the world. We may generalise that in post-socialistic cities of Central Europe, the transformation of the society and its economy went hand in hand with globalisation.

Global and local paradoxes of public spaces in the city

The original plan for the reconstruction of the pedestrian zone aimed at respecting “the features of this space formed by the centuries and the present needs” (Kupec – Šovčík – Kelemen – Baláž 1990: 7). A number of local symbols were supposed to support the symbolic re-creation of the space (e.g. the mosaic coat-of-arms in front of the city hall or the column with the names of all mayors since 1255). However, privatisation has caused a radical change in the appearance, function and names of many objects. Most buildings were transformed into banks, restaurants, cafés and shops – both luxurious and cheap ones (the latter called Chinese shops locally). In the first few years after the restoration, the authorities controlled the quality and aesthetic look of shop signs and ads. However, with the growing diversity the control has loosened, and the “stylish” signs of private restaurants or retailers are often lost in a flow of cheap street posters or of global symbols of multinational companies. The composition of shops and services on the main square radically changed after the opening of the “Európa Shopping Centrum”, a shopping mall called Europe (Európa) in the local language (2006). Its position close to the city centre has resulted in the move of most retailers from the centre to the shopping mall. Today there are mostly restaurants, cafés and bars on the main square (please see Darulová 2010 for more information).

Restaurants, cafés and bars situated in the historic zone offer their services in outdoor gardens and summer terraces (often heated) that bear “sponsored”, (mainly) global, symbols such as Coca-Cola, Nestlé, Pilsner Urquell, Orange and others.

The main square and its streets host more than eighty restaurants, cafés, bars and similar services at present (2011). A majority of them carry names in foreign languages (mostly English, Italian and French) and offer foreign cuisine. Pizzerias, Asian restaurants, bistros, steak houses, kebab houses, pubs, clubs and cafés proudly manifesting the globalisation of the city prevail over the local offer. Only two out of all restaurants build their image on local cuisine (the Slovenská and Starobystrická restaurants), and two restaurants carry the original names of the buildings where they seat (Červený rak and Beniczky restaurant). One establishment is named after the family of the Jewish businessmen that had a department store in the building before World War II (Coffee-Beer-Wine Bar U Kemov). It is quite obvious that the global wins over the local on naming establishments.

However, even a global symbol can become a local symbol in a concrete environment and time. The paradoxical relationship between the local and the global is reflected in two specific examples. For a university student from the Slovak countryside, the main symbols of the city were “the central square, the Virgin Mary Baroque Column, the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising, the Art Nouveau fountain and the French baguetterie (Copaline Baguette) with its aromatic goods. He described the city in the centre of Slovakia as “*a place of divine baguettes*”. On the contrary, a local symbol such as the reconstructed main square can become a global symbol for locals, as one local inhabitant demonstrated: “*I am proud of our city. When I sit in a garden café on the square, I feel as if I were in Paris or Venice*”.

Reflecting global symbols in local situations and spaces can be documented by numerous, often “curious”, combinations (for instance a traditional-style wooden hut in the central market place with local sheep cheese products that carries a large “Coca-Cola – Sheep Cheese” sign or a wooden stand in the shape of a giant traditional carved cup (*črpák*) at the entrance to TESCO.)

The globalisation of Banská Bystrica is best reflected in a statement by an American tour-guide that had visited the city many times before and after 1989:

“I am sure that Banská Bystrica inhabitants are proud of their square now, but I am not very excited. It is nice that there are no cars there, but the space around the fountain looks like a subway stop. And why do shop-keepers hang clothes outside on the streets? It looks like the cheapest part of New York. I loved your old medieval square, it certainly needed reconstruction and some details now are lovely, but I am not sure I will ever bring tourists there – it looks like being at home, in the US”.

Banská Bystrica tries to present and market itself as a centre of tourism. However, local symbols that could help support the uniqueness of the city are hardly visible in the central zone. The Group of Independent Members of the Local Parliament (Banskobystrická alternatíva - BBA) organised a public debate on symbols of the city on the 25th of June, 2009. Participants identified a number of local symbols and narratives that can be explored and exploited more, and in the end they concluded that in order to improve the quality of life in the city and to attract more visitors, it is crucial to promote the knowledge and awareness of local culture and history, creativity, civil participation in governance and the involvement of young people, criteria that are mentioned in the strategies for planning sustainability in cities all over the world.

Urban rituals, festivals and events in the streets of the city

Organising and revitalising urban festivals and rituals is one of the main practices to turn the city from a Sleeping Beauty into a dynamic tourist attraction. Global cities increase their value by participating in competitions for hosting mega-events such as the Olympic Games or World Championships; smaller cities focus on the production and re-production of urban rituals and festivals, often alluding to the city's more glorious past. This trend can be observed all over the world (see Stevenson 2003, Roche 2000, Hubbert 2010, De la Pradelle 1996 and others). These kinds of events open a space for strengthening the local identity and serve as a tool for marketing and branding the city.

Banská Bystrica's central square is the only public space that provides an appropriate area for organising larger scale socio-cultural events. The main organiser of the most important and regular events is the local municipality together with a number of private and non-governmental institutions. Two regular events with a broader transregional and transnational impact are the anniversaries of the Slovak National Uprising, and the City Days coinciding with the Radvan Faire and Handicrafts Market.

The anniversaries of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica, which was the centre of the biggest anti-Fascist uprising in Central Europe during World War II, have been organised since the end of the war. During the socialist period, the Communists took over the "ownership" of the event. As a result, in the eyes of the public this important historic event came to be seen as a "Communist plot" and as a politicised commemoration with obligatory participation. The rehabilitation of the event could only happen after 1989 when all nations which participated in the uprising could openly participate for the first time (representatives of more than 20 nations and groups including the British, the French, Americans, Russians, Germans, Romanians, Bulgarians, Poles, Hungarians, Jews and others). The first spontaneous celebration of the event happened in August 1994 during the 50th anniversary of the uprising, which was connected with the opening of the newly restored central square (carrying the name of the Slovak National Uprising). The annual celebration of the uprising has increasingly become an event of an international importance with the participation of politicians and guests from all participating countries. Thanks to the organisers (the city and the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising), the historic event has regained its honour and importance; the city has strengthened its positive image on the world historical map, and its inhabitants have revived their pride in this important event. The annual celebration of the uprising and its seat, the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising, has also become a significant tourist attraction (the museum is one of the ten most visited tourist attractions in Slovakia according to the weekly *Trend*).

The second important festival – the City Days – is a younger event organised in September, and linked to the historically famous Radvan Faire, which has been organised every year since 1665 and which has also been nominated to be on the national UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage (2011). Throughout its history it gained fame throughout the whole Hungarian empire, and even managed to keep it during the first Czechoslovak Republic (1918-39) and during the socialist period (Darulová 1995). Currently, the Radvan Faire and its Handicraft Market is part of the City Days. It is organised during the weekend close to the Day of the Blessed Virgin Mary holiday (around 8 – 10 September). The City

Days were first organised as the city's main festival in 1995 on the occasion of the 740th anniversary of Banská Bystrica and the 500th anniversary of the Thurzo-Fugger Mining Society. Since then, the tradition of a parade and outdoor performances related to the mining history have developed. The Radvan Faire and handicraft market attempt to transform the historical heritage of the faire with the presentation of products by today's best skilled craftsmen. The event is built on local historical traditions and symbols, but it also actively attempts to engage participants and craftsmen from other countries, particularly from its 18 twin cities from all over the world.

The City Days in 2007 probably attracted the most attention as they were part of the city's campaign for the 2013 European Capital of Cultural. The composition and names of programmes covered a broad range of events based on local history and symbols (e.g. BaBy Villa, City of Values, the live production of a famous painting "The Banská Bystrica Market" by Dominik Skuteczky, or an attempt for a Guinness record to bring the highest number of wooden spoons – a symbol of the Radvan Faire). The key theme of the festival differs every year, but it is always related to the Golden Age of the mining past (for instance "Columbus and Banská Bystrica copper" in 2009, and "Ján Thurzo in Venice" in 2010).

The food market is an important part of the festival, offering traditional Slovak specialities (the most famous Slovak dish, *halušky s bryndzou* (potato dumplings with sheep cheese), grilled sausages and other meat products, goulash, homemade soups and Slovak pastas, or young wine called *burčiak*).

The Handicraft Market is carefully prepared and monitored by local authorities and only gives space to craftsmen that produce artefacts (such as Slovak musical instruments, wooden utensils, embroidery, lace, products made of straw, etc.) made from traditional materials and by traditional techniques, and local food products typical of the Radvan Faire (gingerbread and sheep cheese products).

The City Days have become the most popular urban festival. Other smaller festivities and rituals (for instance the local carnival – *fašiangy*, erecting a maypole, the Christmas market and festival, and the New Year's Eve celebration), often co-organised by various local and regional folklore ensembles, also address both the local population, with the aim of reviving their identity, and of attracting visitors and tourists.

Apart from festivals based on local and regional traditions, alternative festivities are increasingly organised in the city, claiming their commitment to diversity and multiculturalism. Their main organisers and participants are usually non-profit civil organisations and interest groups. Examples of such events include: Dixieland festival, Festival of Puppet Theatres, Accent – a festival to support marginalised groups, refugees, minorities, etc. One-time activities of global reach can also be observed ("Global Work Party" or "Frozen", events organised through Facebook).

Conclusion

The worldwide urban development influenced by globalisation has had an impact on post-socialist cities and their marketing strategies. In order to succeed in global competition, they have to promote and strengthen their own particularities while opening themselves up to an external influx of new people, goods and ideas.

The marketing of European cities that is aimed first of all at tourists, investors and educated and creative knowledge workers usually builds on celebrations of the past. As Craig Young and Sylvia Kaczmarek show with the example of Polish and other Central and Eastern European cities, a majority of these cities have reinvented their Golden Age of history (either from the Middle Ages or inter-war period). Their socialist past is neglected or presented only in the form of resistance to it (Young - Kaczmarek 2008: 54 – 56).

These trends can also be observed in Banská Bystrica, which is forming its new identity on the mining history of the 15th-16th century and the Second World War uprising. Globalisation creates new challenges that require opening the city to the outside world. The dynamics of post-1989 changes connected with the democratisation of the society and the global processes evokes new issues: how to reinterpret the history, what to remember and what to forget, what is important and for whom (Czepczynski 2008: 184).

Banská Bystrica has gone through a rapid transformation in recent years. The physical image of the city has changed enormously, but the city's historic memory and identity lags behind this physical change. Local authorities have tried to revitalise local identity and historical memory, and also to attract the outside world to the city. It is too early to say whether they have succeeded. Two decades of transition from a socialist city to a capitalist and postmodern one are not enough. To find a balance between global and local processes and to build and present the city as a dynamic regional centre that can be attractive and successful in broader transnational and global networks requires not only the reconstruction of physical spaces, but also requires a mental transformation and the suppression of the local conservatism and patriotism that may sometimes get in the way of further development.

PARTICIPATION OF MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS IN ORGANISING RITUALS

Katarína Košťalová

The festive life of people living in a city is an interesting topic for research and for documenting the relationship between globalisation and localisation. In this report I will observe it through rituals. Despite the fact that rituals are relatively fixed, we cannot view them as a numb system, but rather as an evolving system that depends on the historical stage of social and political development. Rituals, just as any other expressions of culture, absorb new values and symbols which changes their original character, form and function. New rituals are created and the ones which no longer correspond to the current cultural values or political ideology can become extinct. The municipal office in the city of Zvolen¹, as the public administration body, is the main object of interest in the research. The aim of this report is to record and analyse rituals conducted by this institution and point out the processes of changes and penetration of globalisation which influence the form, content and means of performing these rituals. Obviously, on the global scale in today's world, the flow of products, thoughts and ideas is more intense, and various forms of capital flow smoothly across borders. Regarding the phenomenon of globalisation of our cultural space, it is important to consider it in terms of the historical context; during the more than forty years of being a part of the communist bloc, the political and cultural elements that spread the ideas of communism and collective universalism penetrated this space. Although this study concentrates on the present day, it is important to view the process of change in a broader context. This is why we also point out the era of socialism and underline rituals that, under the influence of democratic tendencies, are no longer practiced today.

Theoretical background

Society exists through its institutions. As soon as they stop working, society changes, sometimes in a very radical way. Numerous anthropologists, such as Edmund R. Leach, Bruce Kapferer, Clifford Geertz, agree on the fact that a ritual is an indirect means of expressing complicated statements about a society with a strong ideological charge (Eriksen 2008: 267), and in the current society where a consumer lifestyle is on the rise, rituals use both global and local capital. Rituals are important bearers of ideological, economic, cultural, symbolic and social capital and of values and norms of family and society. Subjectivity and the emotional experience connected with them play an important role in rituals. Some rituals are codified by laws and regulations, which make them generally obligatory. We can assume that rituals organised by municipal institutions are subject to some rules, and apart from the performance of the actual ritual, they develop and support the relationship between the city and its inhabitants.

¹ Today Zvolen has a population of more than 43 000 inhabitants.

From the methodological point of view, the author of this study draws on the concepts of Victor W. Turner. She concentrates on “rites of passage”, which include rituals connected with births, weddings and deaths, as well as with gaining membership in a club and “calendar rituals” (Turner 2004). The author relies on Turner’s and Goffman’s ideas of the omnipresent theatre in rituals in studying daily and festive life (Goffman 1999).

Rituals and urban spaces (place, situation and time)

Anthropologic definitions place rituals in ritual institutions, sacred and magical places, where a larger amount of people can be present. In the city of Zvolen, rituals are performed mainly on squares, at the Zvolen castle, in the Evangelical and the Roman-Catholic church, in the mortuary at the city’s cemetery, etc. These places can be considered as the municipal heritage of the people of Zvolen in its historical and cultural context. The functional utilization of these urban spaces, public places and buildings is determined by their history, their “magical” atmosphere, the reverence of the places, their architecture and their atmosphere as such.

In the course of the city’s evolution, the character of urban spaces where rituals are performed as well as their function and decoration have significantly changed. Some of the institutions which conduct rituals, as well as the places for the rituals themselves, have disappeared or were closed down, some have lost their original function, for example the Jewish synagogue is currently used for commercial purposes, and new ones have emerged.

During the reign of the communist regime, religious festivities were intentionally and systematically suppressed by the government. Religious rituals were performed in secret and were hidden away in churches, which were supposed to be “only” historical and architectural sites of the city without any actual life and/or ritual performances in them. After the year 1989, new churches and spiritual places, such as the Park of the Noble Souls², etc., were added to the existing ritual sites. Various decorative features, colours, light decorations or music are now a part of the municipal rituals. New symbolic elements include trees in front of shops singing in English, Santa Claus with a sleigh pulled by reindeers, and non-traditional materials and ways of decorating. The content of rituals is currently not that important; more emphasis is put on their form. Shopping centres built in the city actively work on marketing and advertising Christmas, Easter and the beginning of the school year. Shop windows decorated with commercial offers for St. Valentine’s Day or Halloween help the existence of these holidays penetrate into primarily young people’s minds. The opening of urban spaces also symbolically opens the possibility for changes in the form and content of rituals and ceremonies that municipal institutions participate in.

Commissions for Civil Affairs

The state atheist propaganda enforced restrictions to limit the influence of religion on the daily and festive life of people through the introduction of numerous laws. Performing

² The Park of the Noble Souls is a unique reverent place dedicated to all Slovak citizens who saved Jewish lives during WWII.

rituals in churches was not welcomed. If they were performed, it was done in secret because the people performing them would be persecuted.

Civil ceremonies in Slovakia started to be organised at the beginning to the 1950's. Since the year 1950, in line with the new family law, the compulsory and only valid marriage was the one performed at the local authorities'. This meant a change in this legal act from being a mere administrative procedure to a ceremony that would accompany the change in one's status. Commissions for Civil Affairs (Zbory pre občianske záležitosti - ZPOZ) were created in every city in order to assist in this and other matters. The Commissions for Civil Affairs were involved in:

- civil ceremonies (births, weddings, funerals);
- civic festivities (welcoming 1st grade elementary school students to school, taking the oath of the *Little Stars*^{3*}, taking the oath of the *Young Pioneers*^{4~}, awarding blood donors, etc.).

Political rituals or universalism of cultural elements

Following the Soviet role model through various institutions and organisations, the Communists introduced a number of ceremonies which supported the ruling ideology and which implanted communist ideals into people since early in their childhood. The oath of the *Little Stars*^{5*}, the oath of the *Young Pioneers*^{6~} and the reception of the certificate of the Socialist Youth Organisation^{7∞} belonged among the rituals of the so called “rites of passage” which secured a person a membership in a “political club”. The Young Pioneers organisation was the main organisation for children and the youth all across Czechoslovakia. By performing a ritual, children became Little Stars; from this they went on to become Young Pioneers, and from Young Pioneers they turned into Members of the Socialist Youth Organisation.

The ceremony of the two rituals (the oath of the *Little stars*, the oath of the *Young Pioneers*) had many common features. The way they were performed, the symbols used and the texts and music in them confirm the theses of V. W. Turner and E. Goffman on the “theatrical presentation of the world”, as they looked like a theatre performance that used a stage setting, costumes and a pre-set scenario, and their performance was rehearsed a few days in advance. The severity and importance of the rituals were enforced by the place the ritual was performed as well as by the date of the event.

By taking the ceremonial oath, the children gained the status of a Little star or of a Young Pioneer and had the right and obligation to wear symbols of this status (i.e. the uniform,

^{3*} Little stars, or little Octobrists – is a term that comes from the era of communism and refers to children in a youth organization for children between the ages of 7 and 9.

^{4~} Yong Pioneers – was a mass youth organization at the time of communism for 10 – 15 year-old children.

^{5*} Little stars, or little Octobrists – is a term that comes from the era of communism and refers to children in a youth organization for children between the ages of 7 and 9.

^{6~} Yong Pioneers – was a mass youth organization at the time of communism for 10 – 15 year-old children.

^{7∞} Certificate of the Socialist Youth Organisation – the certificate was given to members of the Socialist Youth organisation which admitted young people between the ages of 15 – 35.

a red scarf, etc.). Those were universal rituals and symbols known in other countries of the communist bloc too. Both of the rituals were performed in the presence of the greater community, including the family (parents, siblings, grandparents). It was a “big festive event” that children did not see any political meaning in, but rather viewed it as a game. Adults perceived it as a political show.

Apart from the above mentioned vows, eighth- or ninth-grade students would take a vow of loyalty to the ideals of their socialist homeland at the Zvolen castle. These rituals were supposed to act as a substitute for religious rituals, and replaced the sacral space with a secular one.

Performing the above mentioned rituals is a reflection of a historical era with universal cultural elements and symbols which were identical not only in Zvolen, but also in other cities in Czechoslovakia.

Membership in a social group can be so important for a person that it actually influences his or her life in almost all spheres and is also reflected in the ceremonies the person accepts. Even if a person wants to break with the tradition of the society, he or she can do so only in a limited number of ways. People must rely on the rituals, conventions and processes in use even if they are not fond of them (Eriksen 2008: 72). If someone had publicly refused to participate in a public ceremony, he or she would have been sanctioned and in the future could have been rejected by society.

From the universal to the diversified

Every society is limited by its system of economic, social, symbolic and cultural relations, which are connected to state and political institutions that change with time. With the change of the political regime and the establishment of religious freedom, many changes took place in Slovakia. This is also reflected in the spread of new cultural forms and rituals.

In general, globalisation, which has also come to our cultural space, is considered to be a universal truth at the present and represents a series of evolving processes, relations and institutions which are no longer limited by borders of national states (Harrington 2006: 387). Having said this, it is obvious that globalisation tendencies have also come to our cities, and intervened with our way of life and work, and with the way we spend our daily and festive moments.

After the year 1989, the Commissions for Civil Affairs had to reevaluate their operations as well. In Zvolen, the Commission for Civil Affairs is a part of City Hall and organises and carries out a number of civil rituals, such as a Baby Welcoming ceremony for the city’s youngest inhabitants, civil weddings, wedding anniversaries, meetings with blood donors, handing over school report cards, etc.⁸.

The motto of the city of Zvolen is “*Zvolen – the place chosen for life*”. To choose a place for life means to identify with the locality, city, and society and be aware of its positives and negatives. One can also build a positive relationship to his or her city through

⁸ The Commission for Civil Affairs (ZPOZ) in Zvolen has not performed a funeral for a few years now. Religious funerals are done by the parish in the city and civil funerals are realised by commercial services.

rituals. Numerous civic rituals in Zvolen traditionally take place on the premises of the Zvolen castle.⁹ Apart from the civic ceremonies that take place here, representatives of the city also award blood donors, announce the city's best sportsmen and sportswomen and receive honourable guests here. The Zvolen castle is one of the dominants of the city and one of the local symbols used on commemorative documents of the city, posters, postcards and various souvenirs.

The city and the individual

“Baby Welcoming” is one of the first rituals experienced as residents of the city.¹⁰ The ceremony is performed at the Zvolen castle, which makes the atmosphere accompanying the ritual even more festive and emotional. Almost every child of approximately six months of age with permanent residency in Zvolen, regardless of the place of his or her birth, is invited to the event. Parents, as well as other family members (grandparents, godparents, etc.) attend this event. Every child receives a wooden toy and a ceremonial letter, which uses local and global features in its graphical layout, from the city

Today in the Slovak Republic, the official way marriages are performed is for the two people to say their “I do’s” either at the city/town hall, or to say them a registered church. The city of Zvolen Commission for Civil Affairs (ZPOZ) organises civil weddings at the Zvolen castle, in the ceremonial hall on the square or outside of official premises, for example outdoors in the countryside. The historical setting and romantic atmosphere of the castle draw young people from other Slovak cities and villages as well to choose to have their wedding at the Zvolen castle. The ritual is performed in accordance with a pre-set scenario which, after consultations, can be modified. Some people's requests are influenced by modernisation and foreign cultural influences, for example numerous bridesmaids who sprinkle flower petals around the bride, or including American *love songs* in the ceremony.

Apart from wedding ceremonies, the city also offers a ceremony called “accepting the married couple”. This ceremony is held for newlyweds who were married abroad, for example, and would also like to organise a wedding ceremony for their close ones in Slovakia. The city of Zvolen also holds “wedding anniversaries” which are organised on the occasion of 50th and 60th wedding anniversaries.

The city and the urban society

After the year 1989, the ideologically directed political holidays faded out of the municipal calendar (ex. the grandiose May 1st celebration, which was toned down, and the celebration of VOSR – the Great October Socialist Revolution, which took on the symbols and form from the Soviet Union.) The municipal office started to organise a Christmas market as well as an Easter market, which are supposed to bring the atmosphere of the approaching holidays to the city. Both of the markets serve as cultural and social,

⁹ The Zvolen castle is the seat of the Slovak National Gallery (SNG).

¹⁰ Baby Welcomings have been done since the 1950's when it was supposed to have replaced the religious ritual of Christening.

commercial, emotional and charitable events¹¹. Inhabitants of the city can buy various commercial products (produced domestically and abroad, mainly in China and India). Products which are symbolically connected to the given holidays, as well as the traditional local products, are mainly produced domestically or in Poland. These mainly include wooden dishes, ginger bread cookies, wicker products, etc. Food stands are also part of the markets. They offer sausages, “cigánska”^{12*}, gyros, “medovina”^{13~}, mulled wine, punch, etc.

During Christmas, Christmas carols from various countries and in various languages can be heard on the city square or in shops. Christmas concerts take place at the Zvolen castle. As a part of the Christmas market, Santa Claus, with an angel and a devil, comes to the city square. Just like Dedo Mráz^{14∞}, Santa Claus gives out candy as well. In the year 2009, it was arranged for Mikuláš (the Slovak version of Santa Claus) to arrive on the square on the same day the “Christmas Coca-Cola truck” with Santa Claus came to Zvolen. Children could meet and take pictures with both Mikuláš and the Coca-Cola Santa Claus on the same occasion. The municipal office also organises a New Year’s Eve party on the square. A *karaoke show*, the mayor’s speech, midnight fireworks, concerts of various music bands and a disco are a part of this event.

Most of the calendar rituals organised by the city take place outdoors, making them accessible to a wide range of residents. Rituals are often used as marketing tools for businesses, which point to the fact that Christmas, St. Valentine’s Day, the new school year, etc. are coming.

Summary

When dealing with the issues of globalisation and localisation, we notice an inter-infiltration of various types of capital through very porous borders. It is difficult to warn point out these infiltrations and the fusion of local and global elements in connection with rituals. This is mainly because it is not easy to define the relationship between the traditional local and global cultural forms, as they use new and changing features, which are often influenced by trends supported by the consumer lifestyle, commercial activities, the media, etc.

Some features of globalisation already have a stable place in the local culture, some appear and then are forgotten, some slightly complete the local element, others are dominant and make the local element become a part of their act.

The fact that politically motivated rituals have retreated is connected to the change in our society. Our cultural space and the era in which the given rituals were performed did not fall under the influence of globalisation processes. Instead, they reflected the political and cultural life in the Communist bloc countries and represented universal cultural elements of the given era.

¹¹ A collection of toys for children from socially deprived families and for orphanages is also a part of the Christmas market.

^{12*} “cigánska” – is a Slovak meat specialty

^{13~} “medovina”~ – is a special honey brandy

^{14∞} Dedo Mráz – is a communist version of Santa Claus

The municipal office carries out civic rituals (Baby Welcomings, weddings, etc.) mostly on the historical premises of the Zvolen castle. Features of globalisation used in these rituals are mostly noticeable in the spheres where we can demonstrate current fashion trends or one's own personal taste, and this also depends on the financial capacity of the people present in the ritual. Representatives of municipal institutions organise events for the general public, such as Christmas and Easter markets, meeting Santa Claus, and New Year's Eve celebrations on the city's square. However, in general we can say that rituals are starting to lose their creativity, which is being replaced by omnipresent consumer products. We can purchase various local and global symbolic products which enforce the performance of the ritual. The consumer lifestyle suppresses the actual content of the rituals and puts more emphasis on their form.

Based on research done by the Zvolen Municipal office in the years 2005 – 2008, the city was perceived as a well functioning and green city. One of its weaknesses was the passive enforcement of a specific image of the city. In fact, this refers to the city's loss of identity. When analysing rituals organised by the municipal office, we can state that in the calendar of municipal ceremonies, there are no larger events which would demonstrate and support the interactive relationship of the city with the urban society. We lack a ritual that would support the identification process of the people of Zvolen with Zvolen. That is why the municipal office decided to include the Zvolen City Days event among the activities it organises, with the aim of strengthening the relationship of citizens to the city. In the future, it will be interesting to study whether these local activities are realised, what their outcome is and to what extent they include features of globalisation and the creolization of cultures.

TOURISM AS AN IMPULSE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY

Zdena Krišková

Monitoring the development processes in today's cities is not an easy challenge for urban ethnology, given the number of limiting factors that determine the direction life takes in these societies. Nevertheless, the aim of this study is to report on this issue using the example of the city of Poprad, a former provincial city which originally had a dominant rural–agricultural, crafts and trade character. Today, however, Poprad has transformed itself into a modern city with a developed infrastructure and strong foundations. The number of inhabitants in Poprad¹ places the city among the ten biggest cities in the country. Today, Poprad is an important economic, political and cultural centre with unique nature and precious historical sites and is also a destination with a significantly high rate of tourism (Bohuš 1998: 353).

The process of development in the city we have chosen has two basic levels of understanding in both its local and global context. First, it attempts to preserve its own identity from the current influences of globalisation. However, it inevitably needs to accept the process of globalisation, mainly for its economic aspect, as the city is positioned at the foot of the High Tatras. In the past, Poprad was dependent on the development of tourism and today this is even more true. Given the high level of temporary migration of the population, due to tourism, both of the above mentioned elements in the development process are very important in the Tatra region. On one hand, Poprad is becoming a predominantly cosmopolitan town. On the other hand, the efforts not only to preserve, but also present the town's "own" character, is noticeable and enforces the importance of the cultural-identification elements of the local society towards the outer world.

In the case of Poprad, long-term direct participatory monitoring and direct participation are the basic components of the chosen methodological approach. However, on a qualitative level, the facts described must be perceived in correlation with historical sources or in comparison with testimonies of contemporaries.

Historical aspects

Poprad – a city full of contradictions and agreements...

Every morning, the view of the Tatras from our apartment window on the 8th floor soothes my soul. Our small, big, High Tatras. People from the lowlands cannot understand how we can live in a barren country like this, in a country where winter lasts for almost 10 months of the year. And they haven't seen the Tatras on those dark winter mornings when their dark, sombre silhouette accompanies the sound of the alarm clock. With the gradual approach of dawn, as we drink our morning coffee, the silhouette turns purple–red, and hesitantly develops into a yellowish glow shining on our road to work. Before we take our seat at the desk, the Tatras, in their shiny radiant white outfit, are ready to make our

¹ As of September 30th 2010, the city of Poprad records a population of 52 377 inhabitants.

day more pleasant. From a window on the other side of that same apartment, you can see the proudly standing Kráľova hoľa on the horizon, being respectable competition for the Tatras. This view from the balcony, from which you can also use to catch a tan in your swimming suit and at the same time look at the powdered topped mountain peaks, can not be traded for all the treasures of the world.

Just as in any other context, the city of Poprad is also a regional crossroad; it is a legitimate part of the upper Spis region, one of the economic, cultural and historical centres of Slovakia. As a result of their history, the Spis region and the city of Poprad itself are a good example of cultural interconnection and how the numerous ethnicities which have passed through the territory have mutually influenced one another and enriched the culture with their specific lifestyle. Poprad and the greater region lie on the boundary between Spiš and Liptov to the west; it creates the historical border between the Great Hungarian Empire and Poland to the north and to the south-east it is the upper Hron region and its village of Vernár that adjoins the region.

As far as the settling of the region is concerned, there is sufficient support from around the Poprad basin to prove the Slav inhabitation of Poprad and on how Slavs occupied this area in the pre-Great Moravian era of the 8th century (Novotný – Novotná – Kovalčík 1991: 48). Ethnic Germans came to the region in the 13th and beginning of the 14th century, which significantly influenced the culture and lifestyle of the region. Its influence was mainly noticeable in the rapid development of crafts and trade. However, one of their most visible contributions was their own thoroughly elaborated legal system they developed (Kovačevićová 1995: 401 – 402).

The development of this territory was also influenced by a Polish loan with a 360-year payback period, which started in the year 1412, and which also determined the Slovak-Polish inter-ethnic influences. Due to the loan, Poprad and other cities of the Spis region were transferred under the governance of Polish kings as collateral until the loan was paid back.

Economic aspects

A five-city complex as the predecessor of today's Poprad

Poprad in its current state can be considered to be a relatively young city. The current Poprad was formed only after the year 1945 as the surrounding cities of Spišská Sobota, Veľká (1946), Stráža pod Tatrami (1960) and Matejovce (1974) were gradually annexed to Poprad. However, these cities have a long and rich history of their own, a history that dates back to the 12th – 13th century (Kollárová-Švorcová 1998: 355).

From the originally independent five Spiš cities, Spišská Sobota was the most important centre for economic activity. Not only did it become a centre for crafts but also for business, mainly thanks to their regularly held weekly markets. However, it gained its importance even before it was granted the right to a market in 1380. Various guilds had their seat there. This predetermined Spišská Sobota to be an economic as well as cultural and historical centre.

The downfall of Spišská Sobota was caused mainly by the downfall of craft production in the 19th century. After World War II, when Poprad secured its centralised position, there was no interest in returning Spišská Sobota back to its long-forgotten golden era fame.

However, after the year 1989, revitalizing this part of the city became a priority for Poprad. And this was one of the steps that lead to strengthening the local cultural and ethnical identity. This was a long and difficult process, not only in terms of the architectural reconstruction of the historically protected centre, but also because of the efforts to bring back a social life to this part of the town, which at the end of the 20th century was on the outskirts and was noticeably neglected and decayed. Today, however, Spišská Sobota is considered to be the pride of Poprad. Its reconstructed historical centre, with its many cultural sites and a peaceful atmosphere has become a sought out tourist attraction. Spišská Sobota is an example of a natural inner need to preserve and more importantly present the local identity. In the case of Spišská Sobota, this need was doubled by the development of tourism. However, the processes of globalisation push the life of the city towards new priorities. Locally, it preserves its dominant culturally-identifying value; however, it remains in a “conserved” and to a certain extent, dead form. Life in the city is concentrated in naturally formed centres which fulfil the development tendencies of globalisation.

Over the last few years the other municipal parts have followed the example of Spišská Sobota and have gradually gone through the process of change. They strive to revitalize not only their centres but also their cultural life. However, the old Poprad is strongly holding on to being the dominant centre of social life.

The development of Poprad’s economy is also based on a number of firm pillars from the past. At the end of the 17th century a stationer from Vrástislava, Jakub Zieser, founded a paper-mill here. Until the mid 19th century this paper-mill was the only prosperous manufacturer of the 5 towns at the foot of the Tatras. In 1845 August Scholtz founded a workshop in Matejovce for making horse combs. With the gradual improvement of the production, the workshop was transformed into a modern factory (Žifčák 1998: 123). The factory served as the foundation for building Tatramat, a producer of electric boilers, stoves and enamel ware. The factory became famous after it launched production of automatic washing machines based on a French licence in the year 1970. In the last couple of years, the company has gone through significant changes in its development as well as in its ownership relations. Since 1992 when the Whirlpool company took over, it quickly developed mainly due to the incoming foreign capital. As the production of this foreign firm expanded, new working, social as well as cultural elements were adopted by the locals. For example, employees took part in occasional company parties, which have become a natural part of their lifestyle. Due to the industry’s development on a multinational level, the question of cultural diversity gradually began to grow in unprecedented dimensions.

The Poprad “Vagónka” (a carriage company) is an important industrial company, which at the same time limits the way of life in the city. “Vagónka” was created from the first locksmith workshop and a steam engine repair shop from the year 1904. It was founded by Dávid Haláth and situated almost in the centre of city of Poprad. Since the year 1922, as the Košice-Bohumín railway was established, Vagónka extended its operation to repairing and producing railway carriages (Sulaček 1998: 244).

For more than a century now, the industry in Poprad has been employing people not only from the city, but also from the wider region at the foot of the High Tatras, which is also one of the aspects of mixing local cultures with socio-cultural determinants of the city's life.

Transportation, services and tourism

If we analyse the issue of the global and the local with regards to the cultural diversity in the city, in the case of Poprad, tourism, in all its connections and relations, is a priority.

Tourism goes hand in hand with transportation. Looking at the development of Poprad as a city, we notice the important role the economic and cultural relations with the High Tatras play. This applies to both the historical Poprad as well as for its current individual municipal parts. Given the fact that Poprad did not own property in the High Tatras, it did not have its own road connection to this mountain range until the end of the 18th century. Poprad became a transport "gate" to the High Tatras only after Starý Smokovec was founded. Since 1793 Starý Smokovec was increasingly sought out for its cold water therapy by locals and also by a substantial number of foreign guests. This called for making the Tatras, or more precisely the then Smokovec, more accessible (Bohuš 1998: 421).

Since the beginning of the 20th century, the main railway connection between the city of Poprad and "its" mountains has been the Tatranská elektrická železnica (TEŽ, the Tatra Electric Railway). In the year 1906 the Poprad Joint Stock Company decided to build this railway after long discussions and controversies. Just like with the operation of the funicular railway in the High Tatras, TEŽ also underwent significant reconstructions in the first years of the 21st century. Foreign capital has played a significant role in these business activities. The creation of the Košice – Bohumín route (1871) had the most significant input on the process of the city's tourism's growth and development. Today, Poprad is connected with the whole of Europe via railway transport.

Currently air transport, as one of the most noticeable aspects of globalisation processes, also contributes to the process of migration. Making Poprad and the Tatras accessible by regularly scheduled flights has been planned since the year 1922, as a part of the so called "spa airlines". The airport was finally constructed in the post-war years, and since 1961 it has been opened to foreign tourist airlines as well. With the upcoming World Ski Championships in 1970, the Poprad airport underwent massive reconstruction and modernisation at the end of the 1960's. At the beginning of the 21st century, they were also able to launch the first airline connecting Poprad with London. This was, however, interrupted by the emerging economic crisis. Despite the fact that Poprad currently does not have a regular scheduled flights, it holds charter flights to Kyjev and Moscow, which are mainly designed to operate during the winter season. For the summer season charter flights to Bulgaria, Turkey or Egypt are planned.

In the context of air travel, Poprad, as a city at the foot of the Tatras, is also becoming a centre of important political and social activities. An example of this is the visit by Pope John Paul II (1995), the visit by the British Queen Elizabeth II (2008) or the meeting of 28 delegations of NATO states in the High Tatras (2010).

One of the most important steps in developing tourism and services was the creation of a facility called Huszov park, or Huszpark for short. This was made possible thanks to the owner of a brewery, Mr. Dávid Husz (1813 – 89). Huszov park was supposed to operate all year round and serve as a pleasant destination for relaxing and socializing for the locals as well as for visitors of the city. Dávid Husz expanded his property around the prosperous brewery and built a hotel there with home cooked food, where he focused on visitors of the “tourist class”. He also opened a café with a dance floor here, a spa house with water therapy, as well as playgrounds and sport venues in the middle of a park which was meant mainly for the local inhabitants of Poprad (Bohuš 1998: 430). After the death of the Husz couple, the park gradually lost its popularity. Today, a reminiscence of the park is the Poprad museum, which was also established thanks to the efforts of Dávid Husz, and is situated on the former park grounds.

Gréb’s park (also called *Grébpark* by the locals), located in Spišská Sobota, or Krompecherov park in Veľká, were parks of a very similar concept. They lasted until winter sports came to the High Tatras and until the Tatra facilities changed to a year round operation.

The real revitalisation of the original tradition came after the changes in the year 1989, with the inflow of foreign capital investment. Thanks to it, a large spa and sport complex Aqua City was built on the location of the original “Grébpark”. Its size and the variety of services it offers make it one of a kind in Slovakia. The aquapark’s size and high-quality amenities are definitely due to the proximity of the High Tatras, which is the most important factor in determining the development of tourism in the area. Aqua City offers spa and sport venues as well as accommodation facilities and restaurants. Moreover, in the context of globalisation, it is becoming a centre of cultural life as well. The venue is a place where the modern, mostly events for the masses, such as the beauty pageant – Miss Slovakia, a laser show or the summer pop music festival “Okey leto” / “Okey summer” are organised. These events have a multi-regional or even multi-national character and have been received very positively by locals, especially by the young generation.

Regarding the issue of local and global, especially in an environment where foreign tourism is quite developed, we have to note that the affordability of services often becomes an issue for locals. Taking advantage of the new elements in the region and adjusting to the new way of life has become unaffordable for most of the local inhabitants (eg. Aqua City, the Tatras funicular railways).

In the context of cultural diversity, holding the World Ski Championships in 1970 was an important element of international importance in developing tourism. The Championships was the first impulse for Slovakia’s and Poprad’s candidacy for the winter Olympic games. On January 24th 1994, the Slovak delegation officially submitted the application of Poprad – Tatry to organize the Winter Olympic Games in 2002. Despite the fact that the candidacy was not successful, in 1999 Poprad organized the IV Winter European Youth Olympic Days (EYOD) in the High Tatras. The city itself actively contributed to the organization.

The topic of the Olympic Games divided the inhabitants of Poprad into two groups. The main reason the one group opposed them was not the argument of preserving the local from the threat of the global influences, but their argument was rather based on

the environmental aspect of the Games, which contrasted with the economic argument supporting the games.

Inter-ethnic contexts

In the historical introduction, we outlined the close ties of Poprad with the Polish culture. Those have been characteristic for the Poprad region for centuries and still are to this day. At the beginning of the 21st century the issue of the global and local in the context narrowed down to these two neighbouring cultures became a subject of interest for both countries. One of the first examples of contemporary research in the area of globalisation trends, with the focus on cultural as well as economic diversity, is the Slovak-Polish cross border project of cooperation between the cities of Poprad and Zakopané. The project's goal was to enable the exchange of cultural and economic activities, as well as research of the Slovak-Polish border area: The Tatra Euroregion. The following monograph was published as the final outcome of the project: *Tatry a podtatranská oblasť [The Tatras and the Tatra Region]*, (Skupień 2000).

Socio-cultural aspects

The globalisation tendencies of the country's municipal societies are logically balanced by their natural strive to present their own culture, its particularities and features which set it apart from other societies. However, by trying to preserve elements of the traditional folk culture, a city, in comparison to local rural societies, finds itself in a conflicting situation. We can partially demonstrate this with the following example.

In the first years after the so-called Velvet revolution in 1989, we needed to come to terms with essential economic and political changes that the revolution brought to our society. At the same time, we needed to deal with the noticeable development of tourism and with an unprecedented influx of foreign tourists to the country from various parts of the world, where they might not have even heard of our country before. Due to the high priority that tourism was given in the region at the foot of the High Tatras, one of the primary efforts of the Poprad municipal authority was to present its home culture by reviving some of the culture's traditional features. The first of such efforts was the realisation of the *Carnival in the city* event, which was carried out in the form of a traditional masked carnival parade. In order for the revitalisation of these traditions to be as authentic as possible, characteristically dominant masks (*slameňak*-a figure made of hay and *bruchač*-a figure of a fat man), as well as traditional cuisine (bacon, sausage, eggs and *pankuški* (*rolls*)) were a part of the parade. Members of the Poprad folk ensemble, Vagonár, took part in this activity as well.

The parade was carried out in accordance with a pre-planned scenario. It started in front of the municipal office and continued through the city. It made stops at prearranged shops where they gave the participants in the carnival parade various goods – at the butcher's: a sausage, in the dairy shop: eggs and at the bakery they: rolls (typical Slovak sweet rolls with jam similar to doughnuts). At the end of the square the parade ended with a short musical performance. The people in the parade danced to the music and also called

bystanders to join in. After that, they gave out the goods they received earlier on to them. The parade ended with a traditional ceremony of a symbolic burial of the double bass.

However, the carnival parade in the city evoked various reactions from the city's inhabitants. On one hand, they viewed the "revival of culture" in the city as positive, however only for being fun. They perceived it as a new element. The other type of reactions to the event showed discontent with the presented elements, which were never even a part of the city in the past. The people felt this was a foreign, artificially generated phenomenon that did not represent the traditions of this urban space, as masks symbolizing economic prosperity (masks of the hay man – "slameňak", or the fat man – "bruchač") were not characteristic for an urban area. It was rather masks reflecting various crafts and guilds that were characteristic for cities.

In the following year, in an effort to correct this mistake and be closer to the urban character of this traditional event, the masks in the Poprad parade focused on the historical tradition of crafts. However, since there was no active connection to traditional crafts, such as making apprentices into journeymen, the presented tradition had no meaning to them and therefore the feedback of the locals was quite weak.

Approximately 10 years later, the situation was different. After the year 1989, people at first were not ready for hasty democratic changes. This caused their initial uncertain attitude to the sudden opening to the world, which is an inevitable part of the globalisation processes in all areas of life and culture. In the last few years, we have noticed a strong reception, maybe even too strong, of succumbing to the external influences in the area of material as well as spiritual culture (the Americanization of the culture, the dominance of foreign products in shops...)

Urban areas which are developing in a very quick and flexible manner, for example ones like Poprad, have reacted much quicker to trends that bring many new elements into the culture and lifestyle. In those cases, public space has been transformed from being a progressively more enclosed platform with a local orientation to opening up to the global.

An example of such a process is the celebration of Christmas in the city. After the year 1990, Poprad started to organise events for the public during the whole Christmas cycle. The original intention of the city was to reflect the whole range of traditions, mainly in the spirit of the traditional Christmas. This included the symbolic lighting of the advent light on the city's bell tower once a week, organising the traditional sweeping of corners on St. Lucia's day (directly in some shops), or organising Christmas markets, which is the most popular pre-Christmas activity. Their primary focus was on traditional Christmas products that would come from the Christmas slaughter. (This was despite issues from the sanitarian office which threatened the event. This also demonstrates that reviving original traditions is inevitably conditioned by current circumstances). However, the urban environment gradually grew to prefer tower concerts with classical music to traditional culture.

As was the case with the above mentioned carnivals, the public asked for the local which would, in the cultural-identification aspect, match the urban character of the space. Market attractions, such as fire stunt performances, or street acrobatics, which were characteristic for the urban space, gradually supplemented the folk and rural traditions. The way these

traditions are presented also changes year to year. Innovations and new features are added to the traditions, thus giving them a new face. For example, performances of historical dances, historical fencing, drummers or musicians playing on a traditional wooden music boxes have become a part of the markets. In terms of motif, it is more a market atmosphere that is brought to the city, which is not, however, exclusively a Christmas atmosphere. Despite this, the local inhabitants have accepted this form in a much more positive manner.

New Year's Eve discos are highly commercial activities which today have become an event that every larger city in the country must hold. Liberation from the local and the focus on receiving the global, which could possibly lead to the much-discussed Americanization of culture, is undoubtedly connected to the direct participants of culture, who are members of the new generation and whose lives are conditioned by the globalised world.

When looking at the issue of the local in a specific city, this does not necessarily mean we are exclusively concentrating on the positioning, preservation and interpretation of folk traditions. Organising the "Cultural Summer", an event which is nowadays a natural part of the cultural life in our cities, is an example of this. Initially the municipal authority strived to present local artists from the city or the surrounding region. However, these attempts at local patriotism had to partially make room for the commercial in order to cover the operational or organisational costs. Supply and demand play a decisive role in these tendencies, which brings us back to "the market" as the defining economic element of life in a society.

When monitoring the interest or participation of the city's inhabitants on its cultural happenings, whichever type of culture it may be, the layout of the city alone is a limiting factor. The city of Poprad, while big in terms of its significance, does not have a large centre as far as area is concerned. At first glance this should not be a determining factor; however, the area of the centre alone affects the participation of the city's inhabitants on the local social life. It so often happens that participants at an event are passer-byers who did not intentionally plan to participate in the event. The city's social events take place mostly on the premises of one square. However, the large shopping centres or sport centres (Max, Aréna, and primarily the Aqua City centre) actively contribute to organising events and entertainment.

Summary

The process of globalisation in all areas of life and economy is an irreversible evolutionary process. This is true for the whole society as well as for the city of Poprad. Due to its geographical and climatic position close to the High Tatras, and given its historical evolution connected to the development of trade, crafts and later industrial production, Poprad is one of the cities with the most noticeable inter-ethnic contacts in Slovakia.

This fact is reflected in the nature of the people of Poprad, in their noticeable tolerance to elements of other ethnicities. This feature is visible, for example, in the area of fashion, as there are foreigners present among the local population at almost all times.

On the other hand, we have to note that tolerance in the life of a local society is not the same as accepting, taking in or even adopting new elements. In this regard, the local population can be characterized by cautiousness, mistrust and to a certain extent,

reservation, which in the historical context of its social and cultural development is a natural feature of people from mountainous areas.

The inhabitants of Poprad are opened to new elements, and as long as they stay in the role of a passive consumer, they are a thankful and honest audience. However, when switching over to role of actively participating in, receiving or adopting new elements, we cannot say they are as forthcoming.

During the last few decades, there has been an influx of international influence on the local cuisine. We can assume that in a city with a considerable amount of various ethnicities, we would find restaurants and snack bars with foreign cuisines (including the global McDonald's.). This trend has not caught on in Poprad. Restaurants that offer foreign cuisine are a novelty or at the most a supplement in the city rather than a dominant phenomenon.

However, due to the incoming foreign capital in the area of banking, industry or business, life today is irreversibly being shifted over to mega-centres of retail chains. They are supporting their businesses with commercial activities which seem appealing mostly to the rising generation (Max, Hypernova, Lidl, Billa, Tesco, Kaufland, and Asko).

The cultures of individual societies retain the local by passing it down from one generation to the next. However, due to the natural evolutionary shift, or loss of original functions, new elements are inevitably naturalised. Today, diversity is the logical outcome of globalisation processes in all areas in the life of a society.

TATRALANDIA HOLIDAY RESORT IN THE LIPTOV REGION

Slavomíra Očenášová-Štrbová

Due to the geographical location and wild nature, the Liptov Region has not been destined to become the industrial centre of Slovakia. It does, however, have all the necessary attributes to become an important tourist region and, in a broader context, also a significant centre of international tourism in Central Europe.

This study about Tatralandia, the largest all-year-round aquapark in Central Europe, describes the environment and setting of the park, its history, philosophy explaining its establishment, its links to early history, and how one can spend their time visiting it. The aim of this research is to analyse traditional and authentic elements (in respect to accommodation, cuisine, and services) and describe which foreign elements are present and have an influence on the park's image.

In collecting materials for my research, I have used the method of direct observation, which I employed during several multiple-day visits to Tatralandia during the summer and autumn seasons. In addition to that, I have conducted interviews with representatives of Tatralandia as well as with visitors and previous visitors to the complex. I also used the company's commercial materials, the internet, and basic available documents about the city.

An overview of the Liptov Region

Thanks to the High and Low Tatras, Chočské Mountains and the Big Fatra Mountains, the unique Liptov Region offers picturesque and contrasting scenery with mountain tops, green meadows, and the Liptovská Mara water reservoir.

The region is covered with the historical footprints of Celts, who populated the area of Havránok, as well as of the medieval Templar Knights. The region offers sacral paintings and monuments; renaissance, baroque, and classic manor houses in Liptovský Ján; and the wooden church in Svätý Kríž – one of the largest of its kind in Europe. To this day, original architecture has been preserved in both the historical folk architecture reservation in Vlkolínec, which is listed as a UNESCO Cultural Heritage Site, as well as in the Museum of the Liptov Village in Pribylina.

Apart from that, other cultural destinations and a number of museums located between the cities of Ružomberok and the village of Vyšná Boca present the following regional traditions of Liptov: masons and shepherds, Pribylina rafts men, coppersmiths from the village of Malužiná, Mikuláš tanners, as well as the traditional Liptov *bryndza* cheese and Ľupčian *gelety* (a traditional Slovak wooden case used for making *bryndza* cheese), and they also tell the story of historical folk characters such as Pacho, the Highwayman from Hybe, or they depict the last moments of the life of the Slovak folk hero Jánošík.

Localisation

“A city located among mountains”, “a city of culture and social clubs”, “a leather-working city”, and “a town of Olympic medallists” (the only town in Slovakia which has been granted this official title) are all attributes connected to the largest town of the Liptov Region, Liptovský Mikuláš. It lies in the Northern part of Slovakia, in the centre of the Liptovská Basin, and at the foot of the Low and West Tatra Mountains.

The object under study, the Tatralandia Holiday Resort, is situated next to the North shore of the Liptovská Mara water reservoir. In order to reach this localion, one has to pass a suburb of Liptovský Mikuláš called Ondrašová and continue in the direction of Liptovský Trnovec.

Tourism in the Liptov region in the mid-20th century

Because the locals of Liptov considered the region's natural beauties interesting, they decided to turn them into tourist attractions. In the 1920s, for example, they opened up caves in the Demänovská Valley, and at the end of the 1940's, as a consequence of the developing sport industry, they built a cable car to the Chopok Peak. Due to the healing qualities of the local natural springs, there are a number of spa centres operating in Liptovský Ján and Korytnica. Thus, the region's tourist industry has had a long and rich history and has become an omnipresent part of the locals' lives as well as their livelihood.

During the socialist era, the Jasná Nízke Tatry and Skipark Ružomberok ski resorts were built, a thermal bathing complex opened in Liptovský Ján, and throughout the entire region, a number of hotels were constructed (predominantly union-owned and run facilities). During this era, priority was given to the construction of establishments which would predominantly target Czechoslovak tourists and visitors from other socialist states. The locals of Liptov provided services for these visitors but, in terms of organisation, local tourist resorts were run by and were the responsibility of central state tourist institutions. These organised visits for tourists especially from the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), the People's Republic of Hungary, and the People's Republic of Poland. There were trains filled with visitors going to the Tatra Mountains, most of whom were from the Czech part of the country.

Because Czechoslovak citizens had limited options for spending their holidays at the seaside or “abroad” in Western European countries, it was common to spend the holidays in the Tatra Mountains. This was somewhat of an ideal holiday and the concept was also endorsed by the socialist propaganda.

Tourism in Liptov after the year 1989

The year 1989 brought about changes in the organisational structure of the tourist industry as well as new competition introduced by the open market economy. Thus, the Liptov locals started thinking about the best way to attract tourists and ensure their livelihoods.

Since the year 1989, and following many economic and proprietary changes (privatisation and restitution), all tourist centres and their facilities have become privately owned, not only by Slovaks but also by citizens of foreign countries. Standard market

terms were established: tourists will come if they are invited and given a special deal - something different, better, more attractive and of good quality. In 1989, Slovakia was not yet ready for a market economy. Its first ten years of transformation were difficult: many hotels were closed, a number of them were also destroyed, and ski lifts in ski centres stopped operating. People focused on other existential and personal problems. Disputes over property, land, access rights, roads and engineering networks were common. This was an era when prices were quickly rising, people were losing jobs and the tourist industry was not the most important issue to deal with.

According to statistics, between the years 2002 – 2008 there was an increase in the number of tourists visiting the Liptov Region. The numbers were growing especially due to the influx of tourists from Russia, the Ukraine, and Poland. This inflow was also affected by a favourable exchange rate. Businessmen clarified relations with one another, tourist centres were established, and their standard of equipment and services was beginning to reach the quality of Italian, Austrian, German or Croatian tourist centres. The first water parks were built, thermal spas were completed, and ski centres were equipped with modern infrastructure. In 2008, the economic crisis resulted in a 20 – 40% decline in the number of tourists and in profit made from tourism. If the locals of Liptov seriously wanted to succeed on the European market, they had to learn to communicate and cooperate.

The idea of establishing Tatralandia

“There have been thermal springs [in Liptov] as far back as we can account for – the Celts enjoyed the warm springs in Bešeňová and they must have been visited by their friends who also wanted to enjoy the warm water. Thus, a thousand-year-old tradition gave somewhat of a basis for what we are building here today.”¹

The idea of building the Tatralandia Aquapark developed gradually and over a long period of time. The water complex started operating on July 5, 2003 on fourteen hectares of land.

The key motivation for establishing Tatralandia was one of the project’s authors’ previous experience with aquaparks abroad. The idea needed to be adjusted to the highland character of the environment it was going to be located in. This is also why the park was given the name Tatralandia, which implies that visitors can enjoy the view of the Low and West Tatra Mountains when visiting the park, and that it is located between these mountains and the Liptovská Mara water reservoir – in the land of the Tatra Mountains *Tatralandia*. The park’s name as well as the names of attractions within the park were deliberately and carefully chosen in order for foreign visitors to easily understand and remember them. “We absolutely did not want to suppress the Slovak character of the park, but we decided to employ the principle of globalisation.”²

The impetus to build the water entertainment centre was motivated by three key historical events: the presence of ancient Celtic settlements, the traditions of the Liptov Region, and the fact that millions of years ago, the territory had been covered with sea water. All three of these concepts are embedded in the leitmotiv of the entire Tatralandia Tourist Resort. The most attractive one of them is the historical presence of Celts, which

¹ From an interview with Ing. Ján Gemzický.

² Based on an interview with the Director of Marketing at Tatralandia, Miroslav Parobek.

has influenced the park's architecture, names of buffets and restaurants, and the names of various water attractions in the spa world.

Historical facts: the Celts – Havránok

The history of the Havránok locality of the Liptov Region started being uncovered by archaeologists in the 1960s, when the construction of the Liptovská Mara began. Historical buildings were reconstructed, and in the year 1991, Hradisko Havránok (the castle area) was recognised as a national cultural heritage site. The process of settling Havránok began as early as in the 4th century BC; later it merged with the Celtic tribes and traces of Slavs have also been discovered in the area. Hradisko Havránok was an inspiration for Tatralandia especially in terms of architecture (the character of its fortification, housing units and spaces for crafts and religious rituals, all constructed from materials such as wood, rock, cane and bark) and elements of Havránok's craftwork (pottery) were also an inspiration for Tatralandia.

Tatralandia and the business of tourism

Despite having to compete with other aquaparks in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, Tatralandia gradually managed to find its place on the tourist map. It eventually became the largest all-year-round aquapark in the region. Because the park attracts a high numbers of tourists, representatives of Tatralandia had to address the issue of housing in order to accommodate the increasing tourist demand. Those in charge of the park's architectural design tried to take into consideration and incorporate typical local architectural features of the Liptov Region. The idea behind the project was to build a cottage settlement which would resemble Celtic settlements, and all its components would be made of natural material. This is how the suites and bungalows were gradually built, and today they are divided into different settlements in the Holiday Village. Currently, there are 155 apartments and bungalows in the park, which contain 700 beds.

The Liptov Village was one of the first neighbourhoods to be built in Tatralandia. Its architects were inspired by the open-air museum in Liptovská Pribylina, which is comprised of original preserved buildings collected from different villages in the Liptov Region. The museum houses traditional rural objects, such as a wooden chapel, bell tower and a well, apiaries, and a hay wagon. The park's Craftsmen Courtyard is composed of wooden houses – each one dedicated to re-enacting contemporary crafts typical of the Liptov Region. Visitors get the chance to see tools used by potters, coopers, shingle-splitters, trough makers, black smiths, shoemakers, essential oil makers, bakers or basketry makers. Nearby lies the Farmyard – a ranch that operates as an interactive zoo. In the past, hunting and fishing was an important means of making a living. Since the Hunters' Village is located close to the forest, the interior of its cottages is designed in a forester style and presents the art of hunting via trophies and mounted parts of animals. The Fisherman's Village is located right next to a stream, and it attracts the visitors' attention from afar by the unique rooftops of its houses, which are covered in straw. The Wine Village is inspired by the Modra Region – a well known Slovak winery region. Its houses are painted in colourful motives typical of Modra.

The park's clients perceive these diverse bungalows as a presentation of Slovak culture and history, and they appreciate the fact that apart from entertainment, they are also being educated in the lesser-known episodes of Slovak history.

The park, however, is also composed of elements which are foreign to the Liptov Region, and their incorporation into the setting has been the product of globalisation. These are places such as the Scout Camp and the Indian Village. Due to their unique character, they attract attention and are usually inhabited by families with older school-children who enjoy diverse sport activities and the exotic character of these villages.

In addition, the Central Park neighbourhood has no connection to the history and tradition of this region, but it has attracted the attention of interest-neutral visitors. The Park is located in the central zone of the residential area and offers the greatest variety of sporting possibilities, such as: tennis, volleyball and street-ball courts, table tennis, and Russian bowling. In addition to these attractions, Tatralandia also houses the Children's Corner, designed for families with small children who can enjoy different playgrounds, sandboxes, and swings. It is this Corner that has become most popular among the Park's clients, who are usually families with children.

Bringing Slovak traditions back to life

Tatralandia organises various special events on anniversaries or holidays in order to diversify the visitors' stay and remind them of or introduce them to traditional Slovak customs. For example, during the May 1st celebrations, Tatralandia regularly invites different folklore groups, which stage a procession and erecting the traditional maypole. Visitors are given colourful ribbons which they can use to decorate the maypole, and dancers teach them different dance choreographies, and thus the visitors become a part of the ceremony. They are also offered the traditional Slovak spirit *slivovica* (plum brandy) and the whole celebration is filmed and photographed.

Visitors are especially interested in the recreation of Easter holiday ceremonies. The folklore groups that they invite have a very active approach to the festivities – such as knocking on the doors of visitors' houses to invite girls to the celebration, who they then symbolically whip according to tradition. Tourists are also introduced to traditional Easter-related crafts such as painting eggs and knitting baskets.

The presence of global and local symbols

Representatives of Tatralandia are aware of pressures by multinational corporations who want to introduce and push their products. Many of these products have been accepted and, in some places, their advertisement disrupts the atmosphere. Nevertheless, Tatralandia itself sets the rules and conditions for presenting advertisements on its premises.

Preserving the traditional. The concept of recreating Celtic settlements in the Liptov Valley is presented all throughout the entire complex of Tatralandia. This concept is especially evident when it comes to the Park's restaurants (names and style of the interior design), where traditional materials have been used and folk interior architecture has been set into a modern environment (Buffet at the Druid's, The Havránok Chalet, At the Celt's, At Robinson's, At the Hunter's, Slovak Chalet and Grill).

Gastronomy and restaurant services. The main aim of Tatralandia's restaurant services is to satisfy their clients' requests and at the same time, to incorporate and remind visitors of Slovak and regional culinary specialities. Every one of its catering establishments is required to provide an offer of meals which corresponds with the character and name of the respective restaurant or buffet. The variety of meals offered is wide and is predominantly based on Slovak cuisine specialities. All of these catering establishments offer menus in foreign languages, predominantly in Polish, and English, as well as in German and Russian. In addition to written descriptions, photographs of each meal are also included in the menu.

Aquapark. The local Tatralandia water, which is full of minerals, is considered to have beneficial effects on people's motor and respiratory systems and is good for both mental as well as physical relaxation (11 swimming pools, 29 slides and additional multislot slides, many slides for children, water-shoots and underwater massage streams, and many other attractions).

In the Aquapark's main building, visitors can enjoy the Tatra-Therm-Vital spa world and Wellness Paradise, which is called In the Footsteps of the Celts. This is composed of 16 steam, water and massage baths, spas, and procedures, with each location having a unique name, such as: sacrificial sanctuary, storm of gods, star bath, lake of the ancestors, Celtic sauna, ice jump, summer rain, steam boiler, salt sauna, Tatra ice, Viva Aqua, iced bucket, and gold mine tunnel.

The Western City, Šiklův mlýn. Following the success of Tatralandia's Aquapark, new investors came up with many new ideas and offers. Due to the extensive popularity of the Western Town, called Šiklův mlýn, located in the Czech city of Zvole nad Pernštejnem, a Czech entrepreneur decided to introduce a similar idea in Slovakia. The Western Town Šiklův Mlýn is an exact replica of a small American town from the end of the 19th century. This model is based around a dominant saloon located on the square, and has an Indian village, a Mexican quarter with the Gravedigger's bar, the Mexico Hall restaurant, a coffee shop, church, and an amphitheatre housing a Western show performed for 3 000 visitors. In general, this attraction sticks out as an alien element. Nevertheless, it attracts many visitors, and those who have been interviewed were excited and have enjoyed the experience, including different Wild Wild West programs. Visitors took part in cowboy skits and demonstrations, learned different Indian and country dances, were shown a variety of historical costumes, went for a ride on the small train called The Union Pacific or a night ride on the Horror Pacific train, or tried out archery, gold-panning, riding an electric bull and tomahawk throwing.

Tarsania. Tatralandia also houses the "longest hurdle climbing trail in Central Europe" with three different levels of difficulty. Tatralandia leases this attraction from another subject which owns it.

Additional services. The complex also houses a Congress Centre in its Holiday Village, which has the capacity of 400 seats and offers all necessary technical equipment for those interested in various trainings, seminars or company events. The premises of Tatralandia also serves as a place for organising summer and winter company games, events, trainings, and team-building activities. Guests coming to Tatralandia for these purposes use all the

sport facilities and attractions, as well as take part in different activities organised within the walls of the Western City, such as concerts, performances, fire shows, etc. As an addition to these services, Tatralandia operates an Aqua Skibus from Tatralandia to the nearby ski centre in Jasná, Nízke Tatry.

Publicity, problems, and strategies

According to managers working for Tatralandia, active marketing is the essence of this project's success. In the beginning, their marketing focused primarily on Poland and Slovakia. Today, Tatralandia's marketing activities focus on three markets: Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Poland. These markets are dominant and make up over 90% of all guests and visitors. Others come from Hungary, Western Europe, Bulgaria, and Russia.

Joint efforts of various subjects involved in local tourism have led to the creation of a common platform that helps to coordinate and promote the activities of all key players in Liptov tourism on the European market. In developing its marketing strategies, Tatralandia cooperates with the regional tourist association, Klaster Liptov (judging from its mission and vision, this organisation presents itself as a Destination Management Organisation – DMO). Tatralandia also cooperates with the municipal governments of the following cities: Liptovský Mikuláš, Ružomberok, and Liptovský Hrádok, as well as with other tourist centres which are the founding members of the association: Jasná Nízke Tatry, Thermalpark Bešeňová, Skipark Ružomberok, and Aquapark Tatralandia.

Tatralandia actively cooperates with other ski centres – The Park of Dreams Donovaly, or the ones in Štrbské Pleso, Zuberec, and Kubínska Hoľa. The company also considers it important to have contact and be on good terms with accommodation providers, hotels, and guest-houses in the Liptov and Orava Regions.

Despite the state's declarations of support for the development of tourism, Tatralandia representatives have not yet felt very few effects of it. They do realize that a coordinated effort of all those involved in the industry is necessary because efforts by individual subjects simply cannot compete with the competition from other, more tourist-advanced countries.³

During the course of developing and building the Tatralandia complex, its leadership has consistently had to face a legal vacuum. This status quo needs to change in order for the state to provide clear guidelines and support for the developing tourist industry in Slovakia. This vacuum creates a constant obstacle for Tatralandia, which is the only aqua-entertainment park in the country. Other problems are related to infrastructure, for example. Tatralandia annually opens its gates to some 600 000 visitors, who naturally need to use roads to get there. These were not, however, built to accommodate such a large amount of users. Many visitors make use of the offer "Straight from skis to the pool". If they are accommodated in the Holiday Village, they can go and ski in Jasná na Chopku and then return to the Tatralandia complex in the evening.

The goal of Tatralandia's representatives is to make their guests happy and to nurture a loyal clientele. Tatralandia's Department of Services collects feedback from guests and visitors and consequently evaluates the information received. Based on results of the

³ In: Press release June 17, 2010, Director of Marketing Miroslav Parobek.

questionnaires, development strategies, investment intentions and the development of services in the Holiday Village are determined. In the future, it is their intention to build a wellness hotel, a congress centre, a night bar and a discothèque.

It seems that a common and coordinated presentation aimed at addressing tourists is a very important component of the tourist development strategy for the future of the Liptov Region.

Global and local aspects in gastronomy

The aim of every restaurant operator in Liptov is to have a profitable business because they are not subsidised to the least extent. It is a rule that if an entrepreneur opens, for example, a Slovak Chalet in the rural parts of Liptov or city suburbs, he/she will not get away with only serving local food and drinks. If this restaurant does not serve Coca-Cola, steaks or whisky, the business will most probably not survive due to the pressure of globalisation, which has penetrated the region and its cities along with tourism. It is also due to this reason that other restaurants not offering Slovak cuisine have surfaced in Liptov, such as Chinese restaurants, pizzerias, etc. Nevertheless, the same rule applies to all these establishments – the businessmen are trying their best to meet the tourists' needs, and thus apart from traditional cuisine, they also need to offer what they know their guests are interested in.

Global and local aspects in leisure time

There are several folk groups of different quality operating in the city of Liptovský Mikuláš which focus on presenting traditional Slovak culture on stage. Based on people's comments, these groups have managed to catch the attention of tourists who regularly record, film, and photograph their performances. These groups, however, have not been as successful in attracting people to come to Slovakia with the aim of learning to dance these folklore dances. People prefer to look for "the modern" even when they are abroad. And because the inhabitants of Liptov want to be modern, they also need to offer salsa, pilates, and other non-traditional styles of entertainment sought by tourists.

Global and local aspects in sport

Historic chroniclers of Liptovský Mikuláš have been keeping records of tourists', skiers', climbers', and speleologists' activities ever since the second half of the 19th century. "Hockey, football, youth and workers' movements are half a century younger. A new impulse for the development of tourism and sport was given by the exploration of the Demänovská Freedom Cave in the year 1921 and, later, the establishment of the Jasná Centre. The city of Liptovský Mikuláš became famous thanks to its hockey players, skiers, rocket-designers, but especially thanks to water slalom racers, who have made it to the very top of the discipline's ranking."⁴ In addition to other traditionally popular sports such as: swimming, volleyball, table tennis, cycling, ice-skating, and cross-country skiing, a new means of non-traditional sport options have been introduced: fitness, aerobics, tennis,

⁴ Liptovský Mikuláš and its Vicinity. Published by the City of Liptovský Mikuláš in the Štúdio Harmony Publishing House, 2008, p. 60.

squash, bowling, BMX racing, rafting, zorbing, paragliding, hydrospeeding, archery, horse-back riding, badminton, kart racing, skateboarding, extreme surfing, cliff-climbing, paintball, airsoft, freeride skiing, and snowtubing.

Conclusion

From the point of view of our research, we have analysed Tatralandia as a micro world, as a small city within a city, and as an open system which tries to provide the best product and services to guests. At the same time, however, we understand it as a closed system with its strict rules and professional objectives. Tatralandia's ideology, architectural design, gastronomy and attractions recreating history are dominated by local phenomena. The elements of globalisation which have been utilised have gained the interest of tourists due to their uniqueness. As research has shown, predominantly tourists who have not visited these attractions before disliked these modern elements (more specifically disliked the Western Town). These respondents have also had critical remarks about introducing some sport activities (freeride skiing, airsoft) and about the non-traditional cuisine offered at the theme restaurants. We can only provide several observations based on numerous interviews conducted with those involved in the tourist business: knowledge makes people more tolerant; it is better to experience something once than to read about it a hundred times; the client is the businessman's master; and satisfying someone does not mean only providing them with a fake feeling of accommodation. Questionnaires completed by visitors of Tatralandia, however, document that clients expressed "above standard" level of satisfaction with their stay and they are willing to return.

FROM LOCALISM TO WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE

Jolana Darulová

According to L. Sýkora's definition, patterns of change in socialist cities unfold in two phases – local and global¹. This study focuses on selected socio-cultural phenomena and how these phenomena change as a result of local and global transitions. I illustrate these processes with the example of Banská Štiavnica. I have attempted to analyse the social and cultural changes on the local community as a reaction to external impulses, and I have also focused on reflections triggered by these changes – ranging from attempts to carry out a controlled change (on an industrial level) to reflections by individuals. This study also analyzes the city's cultural and social diversity from other perspectives, such as from the point of view of the current status, the significance of the mining tradition, the city becoming a part of the UNESCO heritage list, and the extent features of globalisation have influenced the city's current image.

The first phase is characterised by the transformation to a market economy, the introduction of a democratic political regime, as well as the opening of the market to world-wide economic influences. The second phase focuses on changes caused by economic globalisation and the effect it has had on local cultural and social (re)construction.

The first transition phase witnessed a comeback to the pre-socialist era, which had a profound effect on the following sectors of the city's local environment:

- Proprietary sector (restitutions),
- Residency regulations (due to space and social stratification),
- The central zone - the historical centre (in order to resurrect its original function),
- In the cultural and social activities sector (first to de-ideologise and then develop the sector based on democratic plurality - diversity).

The first phase was launched based on changes brought by the 1989 revolution. Developments that took place in Slovak cities at this time are linked to propriety changes – restitutions. Due to the process of restitutions, direct descendants of expropriated and nationalised family businesses were allowed to make claims to and demand the return of companies, shops, residential buildings, and other real estate. Only a small fraction of those who reclaimed their family property, however, attempted to continue in their family's inter-war business activities. Most of those who had recuperated property in Banská Štiavnica have sold or rented out these businesses and real estate. Tenants change quite often, and they frequently change their activities, services as well as the quality and selection of goods they sell. In the beginning of this phase, there was a clear tendency for the original owners as well as the city to resurrect some family businesses in order to bring back businesses and

¹ Sýkora, L. 2001. Post-communist city. In XII Konwersatorium Wiedzy o Mieście. Miato postsocjalistyczne – organizacja przestrzeni miejskiej i je przemiany. Łódź: Katedra geografii Miast i Turizmu Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, s. 41-45. Quoted from Alexandra Bitušiková – Daniel Luther: Slovenské mesto v etape globalizácie: antropologická identifikácia problematiky, v úvode knihy [Slovak city in an era of globalisation: an anthropological identification of the issue, Introduction].

services from the pre-socialist era. These attempts were, however, hampered by numerous circumstances: old age of the new owners who lived and worked in the family businesses prior to their expropriation, children of the new owners – a generation, which no longer had experience running the family business and which often had very different professional background and skills, frequently unfinished probate processes, which affected a large number of heirs (shareholders of the family business), overall bad state of the restituted buildings and businesses, and lastly the tragic fates of many original property or business owners.

Today, most shops and other businesses in Banská Štiavnica have no connection to businesses of the inter-war era. Many places and family businesses are, however, present in the collective memory of older citizens of Banská Štiavnica, and they continue to use the original names of business owners. During a tour of the city, one will hardly notice any signs of restitutions. The excitement of having the possibility to re-launch a business on their restituted property was soon replaced by poor business experience and, during the last years of the economic crisis, by the bankruptcy of many businesses. On the main street, for example, one can see buildings with unoccupied and non-functioning commercial premises (for example baking stoves), unoccupied houses, lease offers, etc.

In order to return the original function of local townhouses or in order to reconstruct and modernise restituted property, it was necessary to relocate segments of the population living in the city's central zones, in other words, to evict the inhabitants of the lower social class (often of Roma dissent) from apartments and courtyards of centrally located townhouses. In the case of Banská Štiavnica, most townhouses have been reconstructed and most properties have been transformed from residential to multi-functional buildings. This happened, however, at the expense of the evicted tenants.

It became clear that during this phase many Slovak cities wanted to bring back the original purpose to their city centres – the market, business, and socio-cultural life. First and foremost they had to redirect public transportation, predominantly public bus lines and eliminate public transportation stops, which were located on main city squares during socialism. If possible, traffic in general was redirected from the city centre. Pedestrian zones were established as public spaces designed for relaxing (parks, benches, fountains) and people were given the chance to meet again (restaurants, canteens). Gradually, numerous modern boutiques, clothes stores, restaurants, cafeterias, and pubs were opened and fruit, vegetable, and flower markets were also resurrected.

The Holy Trinity Square (Námestie sv. Trojice) represents the heart of Banská Štiavnica. It is, however, impossible to build a pedestrian zone in this area because the city centre's structural design does not allow for traffic to be redirected. The city simply does not have any alternative routes because there are no adequate parallel streets which could serve as a substitute for the original transportation routes. Thus, traffic within the urban area is an issue. The extent of this problem is most visible on the Holy Trinity Square, which currently appears to be a parking lot, and on the A. Kmeť Street, which is the main road through the city centre and, at the same time, one of the busiest streets in the city.² In order to relieve the central zone of the city, parking lots have been built at the city entrances.

² <http://www.asb.sk/analyzy/rozvoj-regionov/banska-stiavnica-bohata-minulost-neista-buducnost-4180.html>.

During the 1980s as well as several years following the 1989 revolution, visitors were stunned by the neglected state of a majority of the city's townhouses. Currently, the situation has significantly improved. Many houses have been reconstructed (often a very demanding and long process, sometimes associated with special conservation work) and are being used today for various purposes. For example, the house called At the Strange Lady's (U divnej pani) houses a cafeteria on the ground floor, the first floor is rented out, and the top floor is occupied by the owner.

Numerous houses located in the centre do not dispose of any gardens; they only have small courtyards due to the fact that they are located on steep slopes. Nevertheless, the parts adjacent to the houses have been reconstructed and are used as summer terraces. The interiors of the houses situated on the "trotuár"³, which serve a combination of different functions – business, social, and residential – have been restored predominantly in the inter-war era style; they have small wooden window-case platforms and their interior (furniture and indoor accessories) are stylishly decorated in a combination of "natural materials and objects".

Even today, however, houses with reconstructed facades and interiors located on the main road, the A. Kmet' Street, alternate with houses which have not been inhabited for years, some of which are almost in ruins.

The following changes were typical for the second phase of the city's transition:

- Opening up to foreigners (foreign capital, business chains, and social, shopping and entertainment centres),
- Penetration of global cultural patterns (global symbols, mass culture, dominance of commercial over creativity, etc).

Both phases of the transition were also accompanied by deindustrialisation, which is characteristic of today's post-modern era. Numerous factories have minimised their production and, in some cases, have closed some of their factory branches. The situation in Banská Štiavnica, which was first economically dependent on mining and later also on the textile, tobacco, and forestry industry, was very similar. Deindustrialisation deeply affected the city's social life. The stagnation of the mining industry following the Velvet Revolution affected not only the city itself, but also the entire region. According to the then mayor of Banská Štiavnica, Mr. M. Lichner, it was a catastrophe when the city lost 3900 jobs in the year 1990. The sudden high unemployment rate was partially eliminated by redirecting some of the work force to the construction industry, which was the closest industrial field to that of mining. In 1995, the gradual liquidation of the city's tobacco industry had begun, and as a result of this approximately 400 employees lost their jobs (SME Daily, 1. August 1995). In 2005, there were 3670 citizens of Banská Štiavnica who were dependent on state subsidies, which represents 34% of the 10 814 residents of the city.⁴

Thus, the city's transformation has taken place on the background of two incongruent characteristics. On one hand, it is a city with a rich history based on a tradition of mining, with unique architecture and located in a beautiful environment. On the other hand, it has long been suffering from a bad economic situation and its residents have been suffering

³ "Trotuár" is how the locals call the elevated sidewalk copying one side of the A. Kmet' Street.

⁴ Data from 31 December, 2005 released by the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic.

from wide-spread poverty. Therefore, the city's material and socio-cultural environment could be characterised as unbalanced.

Since its establishment, the so called "Silver Banská Štiavnica" has focused on mining and processing raw materials, especially silver (this is where the attribute is derived from). Apart from other things, the significance of Banská Štiavnica was also demonstrated by the size of its population, which passed 20 000 in the year 1777 and, at some point, was the third largest city in the Hungarian Empire.⁵

In terms of the city's typology, Banská Štiavnica could be classified as a historical city with a significant ratio of its population employed in the mining industry (a blue-collar city). The city used to be described as a city of mines, schools, and historical heritage. Until today, the splendid city architecture of the Banská Štiavnica houses with their workshops and shops as well as school and mining offices buildings show how much the city profited from its mining industry. Towards the end of the 19th century, the ore mining industry in Banská Štiavnica was reduced and the city's focus shifted from mining to education. Owing to the extraordinary significance of the Mining and Forestry Academy, which was surrounded by a botanical garden, the city's "golden years" were extended. During the years of its existence (between the years 1762 - 1918), the Academy became the centre of mining and technical science development in Europe. The grandiose Banská Štiavnica architecture was preserved during this era and was not disrupted by new construction. As a result of the halt in the city's mining activities, which happened in the 19th century, and eventually the end of its mining activities in the 20th century, Banská Štiavnica became poor. According to available documents, it suffered a devastating economic bankruptcy.

This state of affairs continued well after World War Two. Despite the socialist regime's positive attitude towards miners, who were viewed as important representatives of the blue-collar class, it decided to support industrial development in the near-by city of Žiar nad Hronom, which also, later on, took over the district city status from Banská Štiavnica. Gradually, Žiar nad Hronom became the real centre of the region.

Economic stagnation, a lack of institutions on a national and district level, as well as the city's geographical location (in a valley far away from the main transportation roads) have all had a negative effect on the social and age structure as well as on the city's appearance. This is due to the fact that historical buildings were gradually devastated and, along with that, life disappeared from the city centre. This was also a result of the fact that the mining academy had been moved from the Slovak territory (1918). Thus, citizens could only nostalgically remind themselves of the city's rich traditions associated with the student life.

There were frequent negative comments about the city in the 1980s, when "Štiavnica – the former Silver City – looked like ruins, as a ghost town. Štiavnica was spending its resources until it became poor" (Kuhn 2010).

Mining traditions, which are currently being developed institutionally, significantly support the development of local cultural heritage. Putting an end to actual mining has led

⁵ In the year 2001, the city had 10 874 inhabitants whose average age was 35.8.

to the gradual extinction of a socio-professional group of miners. Nevertheless, it has not managed to put an end to socio-cultural activities connected to the profession.

Until the year 1993, when all mining in the Banská Štiavnica area stopped, miners themselves and the Banská Štiavnica mining companies were in charge of organising almost all social and cultural activities connected to the tradition of mining. Since 1992, the Banská Štiavnica and Hodruša – Hámre Mining Society has been trying to maintain the continuity of mining traditions in the region.

The Days of Miners is one of the most significant traditional mining festivals, which takes place every year in September (September 9th is the official Day of Miners). The festival's tradition began on July 5th and 6th, 1934 with a procession that made its way through the mining academy, accompanied by religious services and followed by a mining ball. These festivities gradually took on a national character and united all miners from around Slovakia. Following World War Two, in line with the socialist ideology, this festival became a celebration of the mining profession. After the year 1989, it has gradually become more and more of an event unique for Banská Štiavnica. Currently, new elements have been incorporated into the program of the Days of Miners, for example the so called Banská Štiavnica market (since 1991), Brewery Day (since 1994), etc. These accompanying activities are an indication of the attempts to turn this traditional mining festival into a celebration of the city as such. Thus, in comparison to the festival's original purpose of celebrating the Days of Miners, its modern version is not meant to unite miners, but rather to present the importance of mining for the city of Banská Štiavnica, and by incorporating activities unrelated to mining, it also attempts to attract the largest number of participants as possible. Renaming the festival from the Days of Miners to Salamander Days also represents a significant change. During the past couple of years, the Salamander Days have been combined with the launch of the European Cultural Heritage Days in Slovakia.

In December 1993, Banská Štiavnica was awarded the most prestigious international acknowledgement by having its city centre, along with technical heritage located in its vicinity, listed on the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage List. Banská Štiavnica is also a part of the national protected area of Štiavnické Hills, and is thus subject to second-degree protection. The city is covered with a lot of interesting greenery: in the protected complex of the botanical garden, in the local arboretum, in the Mining Museum located in the nature close to the Klinger water basin or on the Calvary. Nevertheless, the city as such has a large number of protected as well as culturally and historically significant locations; the urban area comprises approximately 270 national cultural heritage sites. In addition, the technical heritage which can be found in this area is of great, and often even world-wide, importance.

Developing tourism and protecting the environment and national heritage at the same time might seem contradictory. On one hand, the city is opening up to tourists and is doing its utmost to attract new investment, and on the other hand, it needs to maintain the heritage of its unique history as well as the character of the nature surrounding the city, which both make Banská Štiavnica a tourist rarity. Key Slovak cultural institutions have lent their support to the development of tourism in the locality. For example, the Slovak Mining Museum has an outdoor exhibit in Banská Štiavnica. The city's economic

life was significantly revived following its UNESCO listing. Banská Štiavnica became a sought-after city not only by Slovaks but equally by foreign tourists. Some of them even became new investors or owners of local real estate. Real estate in Banská Štiavnica also attracted the attention of citizens from other Slovak towns, whom the locals refer to as “cottagers”.

What are the intentions of multinational corporations, groups, or individuals investing in Banská Štiavnica and how are they realising them? Are they in line with the city’s development strategy and will they be of any benefit to the locals, or not?

There are no major business chains located in Banská Štiavnica, with the exception of the Billa and CBA grocery stores. CBA has been adequately located outside the historical city centre. Billa was built in a residential area located near the city centre.

During the past couple of years, self-service restaurants located in the city centre have closed down. These were places that would offer the customer cheap homemade meals. In the past, these restaurants used to be very popular and heavily visited. Nowadays, however, after the townhouses interiors have been renovated, these restaurants were transformed into higher price range establishments, which mostly focus on attracting foreign clients and offer international cuisine. As a consequence, they have lost regular local customers, and during the tourist off-season their visit rate is rather low. Fast food restaurants could also be considered as an example of globalisation. One such restaurant is called “Paul’s” and offers chips, kebab, hamburgers and the like. Due to the fact that it is located in a renovated townhouse located on a road leading to one of the city’s residential areas and the bus station, it is often visited by students and other less-demanding customers.

Elements of global culture have also influenced many other areas of local city life: names of guest-houses, restaurants, access to international cuisine (especially Italian and Chinese), unification of fashion due to chains of global brand-named clothing stores, as well as shops offering cheap clothes and shoes (Asian stores).

In comparison to the past, the city’s cultural life has significantly improved. This qualitative and quantitative improvement in the city’s cultural activities can be mainly attributed to the City Cultural Centre. Culturally active locals, especially members of various civil societies, are capable of initiating and realising many progressive ideas and getting other inhabitants of Banská Štiavnica involved.

Following the year 1989, different associations were gradually established in Banská Štiavnica. A chronological overview of their activities enables us to demonstrate which sectors were considered a priority and how their preference played out in the context of the citizens’ identity/identities. The oldest associations were established in order to protect and develop the cultural heritage and the mining tradition as well as to emphasize the city’s stature as the local historical centre. These were associations such as The Banská Štiavnica ‘91 Association – a civil association dedicated to saving cultural heritage. This is a civil association, which dates back to the year 1997 and resulted from a merger of the Banská Štiavnica ‘91 Foundation and the Gradus civil association. The Banská Štiavnica Embellishment Society, is an informal association uniting Banská Štiavnica citizens and sympathisers who have decided not to wait around for the municipality to take care of the city and are actively participating in keeping the city clean and beautifying it. Beautifying

the Dolná Ružová Street was the Society's pilot project – its members managed to plant roses in front of almost every one of the Street's houses. Thanks to the citizens' initiative, the Street is now "in shape". The society's activities have also had a positive effect on the population dynamics in the city. Its activities helped to stop people from moving out of the city centre and managed to attract new inhabitants. The Association of Banská Štiavnica and Hodruša Miners is trying to rebuild, maintain, and further develop the years-long mining traditions by organising meetings for its members as well as for the general public with the aim of popularising the Banská Štiavnica Region in Slovakia as well as abroad.

The youngest of these associations is the Štokovec Civil Society, which brings together artists, theorists, architects, and friends of Banská Štiavnica and which is devoted to turning the city into the region's cultural centre. The Štokovec Civil Association – A Space for Culture, was established in the spring of 2008 with the aim of intensifying and professionalising various cultural activities, ranging from exhibitions of visual art, to organising workshops, presentations, readings or screenings.

The above-listed activities as well as the actual associations are all indirect consequences of globalisation. This is due to the fact that they show how citizen participation affects the city's appearance and that all these activities are a result of their efforts to protect local traditions and particularities, and, at the same time, to popularise them and attract new visitors.⁶

In Banská Štiavnica, much like in most medium-size cities in Slovakia, the high tourist season traditionally takes place during summer. During the summer months, all major social and cultural events take place and especially the large-scale ones which aim to address a variety of audiences and visitors. Most of these activities take place in public venues owned by the municipality: the Holy Trinity Square, on the premises of various cultural and professional institutions, at the Old Castle, and even events taking place in the Banská Štiavnica holiday area located close to the Počúvadlianske Lake have attracted substantial attention. These events are of very diverse genres, and besides commercial activities and those aiming to attract masses of visitors, one can also find first-class jazz performances or presentations of alternative culture.

The year 1989 also brought about a change in the way cultural activities are funded. Apart from institutional support by the city and the self-governing region, private companies and individuals have lent their financial support to these activities – another display of public support for the city.

To conclude, it seems that in the process of the city's transformation, it has acquired a new face and identity, largely influenced by its lean towards cultural diversity:

- The city of Banská Štiavnica currently follows its history and especially its mining and educational traditions. There are institutions and activities which focus on documenting and presenting technical relics and organising mining events. In addition, religious and minority activities that were suppressed during the socialist era have been given increased attention.

⁶ The Community Centre Šobov-Šukar Dživipen-Good Life has a rather different focus and helps to reintegrate socially threatened citizens into the society.

- The listing of the city and its surroundings into the UNESCO World Heritage List was a new impulse in the city's development. Banská Štiavnica managed to transform itself from a stagnating and economically underdeveloped city into one of prime importance. This transformation had an effect on the city's actual appearance as well as on its inhabitants (various associations and societies) and the tourism industry.
- Many activities aim to transform this city, much beloved by artist, into a centre of local cultural life. Thus, a city which used to be linked to a distinct local patriotism, traditionalism, and isolationism is slowly becoming modern and is opening up to creativity.
- The city's entire image is undergoing gradual change. Today most houses, which had been deteriorating for decades, have been reconstructed and serve a new purpose. Many of them have been turned into guest houses, pubs, restaurants, cafeterias, and pizzerias.

GLOBALISATION AND DIVERSIFICATION IN THE SPA TOWN

Ladislav Lenovský

Spa localities, although not all of them are cities, are urban units. The way they were formed and developed is influenced by local parameters as well as by the wider (global) reach of development. In the broader historical context, many things have changed in the evolution of spa cities in Slovakia, especially since the end of the 18th / beginning of the 19th century until today. In a narrower context, the present is a dynamic time for spa cities. Is it just an impression created by local studies, urban anthropology and culturology (disciplines of the modern era) or are spa cities these days really undergoing big changes?

Methodology

Research on the post-socialist era should be more focused on the present than on the past. However, given the individual contexts of globalisation and diversification in a spa city, it is not always possible to follow this rule. Some phenomena are not connected to ideology at all, and their origin goes farther back in the past; others on the contrary, are an indirect outcome of the ideology. Piešťany is an ideal space for research as it is a spa, and at the same time, an urban space as well. All the information used in this study was acquired in research realised between the years 2005 – 2010, predominantly in the Balneological museum in Piešťany and in the archive of the Slovak Health Spa Piešťany, Inc., from interviews with tourist service providers in the city and spa guests, and from observations.

The spa city – globalisation – tourism

When Marc Augé reports on the anonymity of the current urban space, he thinks mainly about the big city conglomerates and the network of multi-national corporations and facilities (Augé 1999). Individual subjects are levelled out and are impersonal but globalised. However, it is a paradox that if they become the subject of interest as a global cultural institution, we can find elements which, according to Frank J. Lechner and John Boli, create world culture (Lechner – Boli 2005). The spa business is a system like this. International airports with functionally typified airport halls and hotel chains with identical rooms in different parts of the world are perceived by people as one subject, regardless of where they are situated. The space of a spa town is a similar example. It tells all the people who are there that they are in a spa town; it defines how they should behave in correspondence to their social role, status and place in the social structure or network. “Locals” are supposed to provide tourism services, and “foreigners” are supposed to make use of these services.

Globalisation and the multi-national owner. The fact that the economic aspect of globalisation is a priority is undisputable. It is strongly represented by the existence of

multi-national corporations. In Piešťany, the company Slovak Health Spa Piešťany, Inc., (thereinafter SLK) is the number one provider of spa tourism and tourism business in the area. Since the year 2002, it has been owned by the largest Hungarian hotel chain, the Danubius Hotels Group (which owns 67% of its shares). SLK is a part of a holding, which means there is no guarantee that the interests of the Piešťany Spa are the same as the interests of the holding. Employees of the spa have been sensitive to this and point to the fact that there has been a directed outflow of guests to other spas owned by the current owner. Increasing the prices at the Piešťany Spa and bringing it up to world-wide standards also brings its negative effects and a decline in the number of clients at the spa.

Globalisation and transport. “Globalisation in the tourism business is an outcome of the development of transport and telecommunication technologies, of the creation of new markets and of more experience that tourists at the end of the 20th century had” (Gúčik – Šípková 2004: 5). Aside from the healing springs, transport links is the second most important feature of a spa city. Spas which laid on an important route or close to one were historically the most developed ones. Connecting spa towns directly to railway networks at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century was an outcome of the effort to decrease travelling time, and increase the number of guests to the spa and their comfort. In the second half of the 20th century, with the development of the automobile industry and the construction of highways, the city of Piešťany recorded a further increase in the number of visitors. The city of Piešťany lies 80 km away from the capital city, and moreover, right by a highway. The most recently introduced means of travelling to the spa is by air travel. It dates back to the 1930’s. Trends in transport have brought a “reduction” in distances, an expansion to new markets, an intensification of existing cultural contacts and the creation of new ones. The current infrastructure in Slovakia is a part of the global transport system and connects spa cities with the whole world. (The only thing that remains is the time used to measure distances.)

Globalisation and products of the tourism business. In the past twenty years, alongside the healing and rehabilitation services offered, relaxation and preventative – *wellness* packs have become more popular. Their aim is not to heal but prevent people from falling ill. These packs have become very trendy in the spa industry worldwide. Concentrating more the working age population and on children promises a bigger turnover and profit. The financial credit worthiness of ill clients in their pensioner years, and therefore also their spending abilities in the spa, is lower than that of healthy and economically active patients. Therefore the “traditional” spa society and its needs has significantly changed. The reason why *wellness* was established is the change in the health care policy of the state, which decreased the number of health vouchers for health insurance companies and therefore spas had to seek out other ways to make use of their capacities. The post-socialist (and global) development in Slovakia thus contributed to the revitalization of *wellness*. Slovakia cannot compete with western countries in terms of the services, comfort or sophistication of its spas. However, its balneology and the properties of its water and peloids are of top quality. (An ill client will surely forgive the local staff their broken German if his or her health improves significantly and he or she will return.)

Globalisation and political development. The law on Czechoslovak spas and springs no. 43/1955 defined spas as facilities of preventative and healing care. The fact that the spas focused on countries of the Eastern bloc was logical due to the political and economic orientation of the state. However, clients from capitalist countries, mainly from Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany were always present in Piešťany. The way the situation developed in the Middle East brought new friendly relationships with countries which tended toward the socialist ideology. As a result foreigners from Syria, Algeria, South Yemen, Libya, Egypt (until the year 1982) and Iraq began to visit the spa in the 1970's. In the era of socialism the spa environment took on new features and specific elements (the black market currency exchange and selling of “tuzex” products¹ were added to the ever present prostitution and gambling). Changes after the year 1989 gradually lead to the weakening of relationships with countries of the former Eastern bloc and to strengthening of the “pre-socialist” contacts with countries of Western Europe. Due to the developing tourism industry in the geo-political space, new travel agencies were set up and started operating alongside the then only Piešťany travel agency that specialised in the Middle East, called Al-Sawan (AL-ABSI 2008). More clients started to come here from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Globalisation and image of the spa town

Spa properties are very characteristic and typical features of the spa environment. They create the “genius loci” of the city. They are made up of historical, historicizing and modern buildings along with the landscape that they are set in. These properties provide balneo-therapeutic services, accommodation, gastronomy, social, cultural, sport and recreational services, money exchange, business and communal services (Orieška 1998).

The way a spa looks is predetermined by the mineral and thermal springs and by transport accessibility to the spa (Husovská-Takátsová 2001). The central feature of a spa is usually a promenade, the centres for the individual springs. The colonnade and pavilions were created above the springs (Syrový 1987); later the social and cultural centre *Kursalón* (*Spa salon*), squares or other centres were formed by architecturally modifying the springs. Furthermore, small architectural structures, music pavilions or amphitheatres were also set up this way. The trend of creating spa parks has been very common. Since the 18th century, but mainly in the 19th century, their creation was connected to the development of permanent spa properties in the vicinity of the spa. The appearance of the landscape thus changes. “The preserved cultural-historical structures of the spa are a part of the cultural heritage... They are proof of the development that took place in the spa industry and are a means of expressing this development through landscape, urban, architectural and art quality and structure...” (Husovská-Takátsová 2001:12).

Small decorative ponds with thermal water, the colonnade bridge and the statue of the *Crutch-breaker* (placed at the entrance to the bridge) are dominant symbols of the city and the spa. The cultural landscape is also determined by the golf course, the *Lido* swimming area (today it is only an island) and the Eva thermal swimming pool. After a

¹ Tuzex was a special shop where foreign products that could not be bought in the country at the time were sold for special financial vouchers – “bony”

hydrogeological survey was conducted in the 1960's, new capacities were built and a new era of a mass urban development came to the city of Piešťany. In 1965 the construction of the modern complex of the Bealneo-centre and other facilities which represent the current spa industry started to be realised.

It is interesting that there are no elements of folk architecture included in the architecture of the spa facilities, as is the case in other facilities. In the second half of the 20th century, the ideology of socialist realism replaced all features conveyed agriculture or crafts with the new industrial and modern ones.

After the year 1989, along with the liberalisation of the market, privatisation and restitution of property, a new competitive space was created in the area of the spa business in the city. Innovation clashed with efforts to preserve traditional values and the face of the spa. In some cases, they solved the conflict by reviving folk (or local) culture. However, the multicultural look of the interior and the spa products reflect global trends. The spa creates its "own look" by copying global themes (such as traditional, national, Indian or American cuisine). There are also new, polyfunctional buildings and private guest houses built in Piešťany. One of the reasons behind these new constructions is the fact that investment in real estate in a tourist area is profitable. Another reason is the urge of the rich to legalise their capital. The architecture, urbanism and cultural landscape of Piešťany constantly introduce the newest European and world trends and significantly represent the globalising and diversification processes.

Globalisation and socio-professional stratification

The global and local elements of the spa environment are also visible in the socio-professional stratification of the city. Specific positions (spa employee, spa doctor, balneological staff) and urban positions (waiters, cooks, hotel staff, taxi drivers, prostitutes) were created.

In their work, spa employees followed the example of German and Austrian spas. In the course of the 20th century, positions were transformed into numerous specialized activities. Currently, there are more than 300 employees whose workload is directly linked to the spa industry, working at Spa Piešťany. Out of this number, 225 employees are women (SLK 2006). During the socialist era, this type of employment was perceived as lucrative, because spa employees would receive various gifts from their clients. From foreign clients, they especially valued foreign currency and "tuzex" products (clothing, cosmetic products, and electronics).

The highest authority in a spa is the spa doctor. Due to the socialist ideology, the social structure and hierarchy was changed and (manifested) equality was introduced in the spa as well. Spa doctors (and the rest of the intelligentsia) officially lost their natural status of being a part of the local elite. The whole social structure changed from a "feudal - capitalist - exploiting" one, to a "civic - socialist structure, which is differentiated only by profession; otherwise it is homogeneous and lives for the same goals." However, hierarchy partially prevailed in the collective memory of the local society as it was a significant part of the society's cultural heritage and identity and a practical tool for realising balneology. It was often the talk of the town to discuss local important (or rich) personalities, what they owned, which mansions belonged to which of their descendants and whether they

deserved the property. Today, not all spa doctors are employees of the spa. Some of them have their private practices and clinics. They are a visible part of the local elite and are the reason why many patients have been visiting the same spa house for decades now. Client satisfaction and his or her return to the same spa house depends on the professional and humane qualities of the spa doctor.

In the year 1989 Spa Piešťany employed 1963 employees. Other suppliers providing analogical and secondary services complete the socio-professional stratification of the spa industry in the city. Today, the population of Piešťany is approximately 30 thousand. 1261 people work at the Slovak Health Spa Piešťany, Inc. (SLK Piešťany, a.s.), out of which 778 are from Piešťany.

One of the basic needs or services for clients is transportation. In the mid 20th century *coach drivers* were replaced by taxi drivers. There are approximately 10 taxi services in Piešťany. They transport clients from airports in Vienna, Bratislava, Piešťany and Košice, or drive clients for shopping trips to Trnava, Nitra and Bratislava or for trips to the High Tatras. In the era of socialism the social status of a taxi driver was relatively low. Society often (and for a good reason) connected them with criminal activities (fraud, robbery, prostitution, and *black market money exchange*). After the year 1990 (in some cases) the distribution of drugs was added to the list. Taxi drivers still don't have a high (moral) status in the eyes of society to this day, which does not necessarily reflect the reality. Working at night and the fact that they cannot choose their clients, makes them come into contact with the underworld.

An important source of income for a great part of the population of Piešťany is providing accommodation in guest houses. Despite the fact that hotel capacities have increased, private guest houses are still preferred by some of the spa clientele to this day. This is mainly for their prices, the character of the accommodation and the additional services they provide. During the socialist era, many tourists from Eastern bloc and Yugoslavia countries would stay in this kind of accommodation. Since the 1970's, clients from Arab countries, and after the year 1990 also from Germany, started to seek out this type of accommodation.

Due to the fact real estate in Piešťany can be rented out, its price went up to the maximum. The way these guest houses are equipped might be considered another example of globalisation or diversification. The furnishings is determined by the culture of the clientele.

Globalisation and cultural stratification of the clientele

Wars, ideology and economic crises have always left a mark on the spa business in the form of the number of visitors to the spa, the financial credit-worthiness of the clients, and the origin, ethnic or religious identity of the spa clientele. The fact that at the beginning of the 20th century Piešťany started with sophisticated, mass promotion and began focusing on the wealthy bourgeoisie, it turned Piešťany into a luxurious international spa centre². Internationally-known people from the area of music, visual arts and literature are important guests of the spa to this day. Due to the changed strategy of spa cities which

² The guestbook at the clinic of the spa doctor Schmidt contains also signatures of clients from the USA, England, Holland, Italy, Hungary, Romania, Turkey, Greece, India and Zanziba (Urbánek 2003).

was caused by the influence of the socialist ideology, the clientele of the spa changed as well (it was mainly composed of local manual workers, a smaller portion of the clientele was formed by people in freelance professions.) The highest number of visitors came to Piešťany in the 1980's after opening the new Balnea complex. During the cold war era, it was mostly clients from the Eastern bloc, but also from the Western and Third world countries, who went there. In the 1990's, the creation of the Slovak Republic, and the ideological, political and economic changes in Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East and Russia caused uncertainty and a slight stagnation of the spa. The spa was stabilised again in 2001 when the current owner of the spa took it over.

In the year 2000, it was the first time in the history of the spa that foreign guests outnumbered the domestic ones. The locals most often divide them into the following categories: *Jewish, Arab, Overseas and European*. The ethnic differentiation in the official statistics has the following categories: Germans, Austrians, Poles, Russians, Israelis – Jewish, Arab, etc. The differentiation based on religion creates the following categories of guests: Jewish and Muslim, in some cases also Orthodox Catholic. Based on their social status, clients are either *rich* (usually a part of the elite), *middle class* (the biggest number of guests) or *poor* (mainly local pensioners). Differentiation based on just one of these parameters does not reflect the real stratification of the clientele. For example, a part of the Russian clientele is Orthodox Catholic. Apart from the different way of celebrating holidays, they cannot be told apart by any other features. However, many Russians are atheists and the biggest group of Russians in the spa is Russian Jews. The majority of the Jewish clientele at the spa is from Israel, and many of them are originally Russian immigrants. Jews from other countries make it difficult to determine the nationality and denomination of the spa clientele. In addition, Arabs are not only Muslims, which is mostly the case of Arabs from Syria and Lebanon, where many Christians live as well. However at Piešťany Spa, 100% of the Arab clientele is Muslim. Moreover, it is interesting that Arab Muslims from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are “different” from Arab Muslims from Lebanon, Syria, the USA or Europe. Likewise, Austrians are not Germans, despite the fact that for the local people of Piešťany they are nearly identical in terms of language, culture and religion and they can hardly tell them apart. However, they do differentiate the German clientele based on their solvency (*the poorer are the Eastern Germans, the wealthier are the Western ones.*). Czech and Polish clients differ in the spa environment by their language. Because both of these languages are understandable to the local inhabitants, they consider them as “their own” people. Hungarian clients, on the other hand, are instantly set apart and are put into the group of the “far away foreigners” because their language is different from the local one (although for almost a thousand years they were de jure local inhabitants of the country, just as the Czechs were until very recently). Stratification of the spa city clientele is dynamic, situational and relative. It is determined by global influences (*when and where the clients come from*) and it is diversified by the local interpretation (glocalised).

Globalisation, cultural events and institutions

Cultural events are organised in the spa city more often than elsewhere, as they are an inseparable part of the spa offer. The clientele expects a programme which has to include

certain types of events and must reach a certain level of quality. Arena, an open pavilion from the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, was a place where concerts and dance festivities were organised. It was replaced by the Music pavilion (*Mušľa – Shell*) in 1967, which operates to this day. *Kursalón* is a hall with excellent acoustics decorated in stucco and paintings. It holds chamber performances of classical music and opera, and has been in operation since the year 1894 to this day. During the interwar period a new tradition of music and ethnographic parades with folk costumes was introduced. In addition, shooting, golf, tennis and fencing competitions were organised, playing chess and bridge became a tradition and car races and aviation days were founded during this time. Almost all of these activities have survived to this day, or were gradually reinstated after the year 1989. Moreover, new events were organised and new sports (squash, bowling, canoeing, rowing, sailing, water skiing) were brought to the city. Until very recently, tennis was the sport of *real inhabitants of Piešťany*. However, golf is becoming such a sport in Piešťany right now (as well as in the whole Slovak society).

Brass-band, folk and orchestra concerts are the most visited events in Piešťany. You can listen to interpretations of folk music, operettas, evergreens and famous melodies from musicals and movies. It is mainly the European and overseas clientele that comes to these concerts. Asian and Arab guests are quite the exception at these events. The “most modern music” performed in the spa is from the 1980’s (Abba, Baccara, Blondie, Boney M, Smokie etc.); evergreens and popular Slovak songs (hit singles from the 1960’s and 1970’s) are common there as well. Apart from internationally known music hits, foreign guests always welcome popular or folk songs from their own countries. That is why these always have to be a part of the repertoire in all the music ensembles which perform at the spa. Live music performed by an ensemble comprised of a keyboard, guitar and solo singer is the current trend at the spa. Concerts and other performances take place mainly at weekends during the spa season. The opening of the spa season is a typical and at the same time the biggest event at the spa. Apart from this event, there are numerous other events that regularly take place.

Summary

The spa tourist industry called for the joining of the spa village of Teplice and the agricultural village of Piešťany into one international spa town. The communist ideology did not stop the city and spa from developing. On the contrary, they took advantage of all the markets which were divided by the cold war for its development. The fact that Piešťany absorbs world-wide trends and also participates in creating them is an important finding. Global standards and features must be balanced out by the local ones. The globalisation and diversification of the spa town follow in the footsteps of the continuous development of the city, which reaches deeper into history, and at the same time has an original identity and contains aspects of the modern socio-cultural process. The answer to the question of what the perspective relationship between the global and local in Piešťany is: What would be the point of travelling if all places in the world looked the same?

A SHORT STORY OF A (NOT SO) NICE CITY

Kamila Beňová

The city of Žiar nad Hronom¹ is one of the most interesting examples of a city's metamorphosis from a rural provincial market city to an industrial city of far-reaching regional influence. My study focuses on the circumstances and processes of this metamorphosis, what effect it has had on the city's inhabitants, as well as how this change shaped the city itself into what it is today. I also discuss how these processes have been reflected in the current *people – city* relationship (or rather how they have influenced the local identity and the city's identity "face"). The study also attempts to capture the role of an important industrial factory operating in the city and the way it influenced and still influences these relationships and processes. It does so by observing the historical context, contemporary processes of globalization and trends or the city's (non)acceptance of cultural and social diversity.

From a methodological point of view, I chose the "city as a *focus*" approach (Hannerz 1980) due to the fact that the subject of this study is the city itself – as defined by urban anthropology (Eames – Goode 1977) or urban ethnology (de la Pradelle 1996). At the same time, I study the city "from below" by focusing on local memory mechanisms, social and family relations, the formation of identities, and stereotypes, and how these phenomena influence the city. The city is perceived first and foremost as an *integrated and open social system* (Salner 1990: 7), which is only the reflection or product of human activity (relationships, bonds, institutions) and in line with the basic premise: city = people. I draw on the theoretical approach *city-as-context*, which is based on the complex and holistic understanding of the phenomena under study set in a broader context. Thus, the city is analyzed not only in the regional but also in the national and historical context as well as in comparison to other Slovak cities. The goal of this approach is to understand the city's very "essence" or, in other words, to grasp its characteristic features by employing a variety of approaches and consequently to try understand and explain its current state and the situation the city has found itself in twenty years after the fall of the socialist regime.

¹ On January 1, 2010 Žiar nad Hronom had 19,306 inhabitants, out of which 9,269 were male and 10,037 female. It remains the capital of the Žiar nad Hronom district. Today, it belongs to the Banská Bystrica self-governing region. In terms of the city's ethnic diversity, following World War II the city was depleted of its Jewish and Hungarian citizens. The more sizable Roma population remained in the city and due to available work opportunities, the Roma have stayed in the city until today and have managed to reach a relatively high level of integration with the majority population. Following the year 1989, like in other Slovak cities, migrants from Asian countries (Vietnam) have gradually started moving in. Today, they represent a closed community residing in the city which is predominantly involved in the textile business, and their relations with the majority population could be characterised as trouble-free. In general, the city as it is today could be characterised as ethnically as well as culturally homogeneous. This homogeneity is also expressed in its relatively low religious diversity – the city has always been Catholic and today there are two Roman-Catholic churches.

I base my study on qualitative research and use the methods of direct, indirect and non-participant observation in combination with non-standardised interviews (Bitušiková 2003: 19), which were carried out between February and October 2010. In line with the post-modern school of anthropology, I do not consider this study as an *objective and neutral report* (Soukup 2005: 595) about the city. This is due to the fact that I was born in the city and have remained a resident until today. Writing this type of a study was never my intention. On the contrary, it was my ambition to put together a study outside of *the context of power* (ibid) expressed by the researcher vs. object of research relationship and to integrate the so-called *new poetic* (ibid) approach, which combines anthropological theory with a literary approach. I believe that in this case my twenty-six-year-long personal experience and in-depth knowledge of the subject of research is an appropriate starting point for employing the selected theoretical and methodological approaches.

The city's design: identity, memory, and symbols

It is relatively difficult to discuss identity and urban memory in relation to Žiar nad Hronom. On one hand, local identity is an expression of the citizens' consensus and reflects their relationship to a certain place. On the other hand, this term actually describes the attitude towards citizens of a specific place, their relationship to this place and the extent to which they can identify with it. Identity is closely related to the term *memory* (we can refer to the relationship between identity and memory as a complementary relationship). Thus, the identity of a place is the result of a consensus, a social contract, between individual actors (in this case these actors would be the citizens of the city). This also applies to local urban memory, which could be defined as *a type of collective memory built on the experiences and memories of individuals sharing an urban space, which reflects the city's memory*. At the same time, however, *a society has as many collective memories as the number of subgroups it has* It is the *continuity of this memory that contributes to forming and sustaining local identity* (Bitušiková 2009: 311). The counterpart to collective memory (or autobiographic memory) is historical memory, which is constructed indirectly (ibid.: 312). Both "types" of memory always play a part in forming the identity of a place. Such identity, however, can only be developed if the collective and historical memory are preserved and passed on in time and space. Transferring information from generation to generation is often not only a natural and a subconscious process, but also a political and conscious practice based on the political structures which control the city). It is thanks to these theoretical approaches that we are able to observe the long-term "problems" of Žiar nad Hronom.

Over the past decades, two groundbreaking events have taken place which have had a profound influence on the local identity as well as memory. The very creation of the industrial city of Žiar nad Hronom, which was established on the territory of Svätý Kríž nad Hronom, could be considered as one of these major events. All processes taking place in the city, its design, identity expressed in its architecture, public spaces, services, and the overall image of the city mirror the ideological concept of transformation into a socialistic industrial city. This change has had a groundbreaking influence on the city. The city's original identity was not important for the socialist ideology. It also deliberately

discouraged the development of local history. Thus, it was as if the city was to start building its existence from “scratch”.² The collective memory of the city’s original citizens slowly vanished with the growth of this radically changing city. From today’s perspective we can conclude that this intention was successful. A small insignificant city was transformed into the industrial centre of the central Pohronie region. In addition, its appointment as the district city made Žiar nad Hronom the district’s administrative centre. The city attracted more and more people who started moving there predominantly because of employment opportunities and started building their families. These people had no relations in Svätý Križ nad Hronom, had no social or other ties and, in general, were unaware of the local history.

The regime’s primary goal was to build a new industrial city and, along with that, create its own new history connected to the regime and the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) Factory. Thus, local historical memory was systematically erased by the state power and replaced by new “memories”. The newly-built parts of the city were given names which complimented the governing ideology (for example V. I. Lenin Square, Czechoslovak Army Street) and the older one were renamed in order not to remind people of the local pre-communist history. New city symbols were built and installed with the same intention. The aluminium factory itself could probably be labelled as the greatest symbol of the city, which on a symbolical level, represented not only the regime but the entire Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, especially its prosperity and development.

The second groundbreaking event in the life of the city was the fall of the socialist regime in 1989. It could be said that due to this event, the city lost “the ground under its feet”. The guidelines which had determined the city’s design in the 1950s were radically disrupted. The process of *de-communisation*³ (Young – Kaczmareková, 2008), which took place in all cities during the transformation and adaptation to the new political system, had taken on a unique form in Žiar nad Hronom. Therefore, similarly as in the 1950s, local inhabitants have yet again found themselves in a city with no history (or rather without an acceptable history, due to the fact that the vision of being a prosperous industrial socialist city became outdated in the new political and cultural climate) which, in comparison with other cities, had put Žiar nad Hronom into an unfortunate situation. Following the year 1989, the city had no characteristics to build its identity on and could not fully identify with any of the newly-dominant trends.

Problems with identity

The socialist regime had no interest in constructing local memory. Inhabitants of Žiar nad Hronom who had moved here earlier were newcomers from other regions, and thus their local identity had been connected to other places. Only a minimum number of families are truly connected to the local history. This fact, I assume, had an effect on new generations

² An example of this is the fact that the new main city square had been built far away from the original city centre, which was, as it traditionally is, located around the church. Thus, the city was designed in an entirely different manner from other Slovak cities. Even today, visitors have problems finding their way around the city.

³ Especially meaning getting rid of community symbols and renaming public spaces (Bitušiková 2009: 314).

of citizens despite the fact that they were born in the city. The citizens' local identity has not been clarified or consolidated until today. The phenomenon of local patriotism⁴ is either very rare or very different from local patriotism which can be observed in other cities, for example in Banská Bystrica (Bitušíková 1999).

On one hand, today's Žiar nad Hronom appears to be a developing city from the outside. On the other hand, it is actually stagnating (for example in terms of citizen participation, and the development of the non-governmental sector, which predominantly affects the city's cultural life, which has not been able to satisfy the citizens' needs adequately). The barely developed non-profit sector is one of the reasons for the restricted social life in the city. Creating a greater scope of cultural activities would significantly enrich the city's social life.⁵ This state of affairs has had a substantial influence on the city's future due to the fact that under these circumstances new initiatives (events, factories) are created only very rarely and are difficult to sustain. Citizens, and especially those in their teens, have felt for a long time that the city is "stagnating", "backward", "*nothing ever happens*", and "*there is no place to go*", and thus they go to surrounding cities to meet their needs. An important fact in this respect is also that the city does not offer adequate career opportunities for young people.⁶ It offers almost no high profile career opportunities for women and especially for those with higher education.

The most problematic element in the local community⁷ seems to be a lack of local identity. The community is the necessary basis for any further development of the city, because only the community can show the direction, start and sustain any progressive trends. "*A substantial feature of a society, when it engages itself in different activities, is group association and the feeling of fellowship. If this feeling is weakened, the group ceases to work as one.*" (Mezeiová 2009: 144). It is this very absence of a local community (which cannot be created without a common and shared identification among the city's inhabitants) which could be the cause of the above-mentioned stagnation of the city as a

⁴ This problem has appeared in the city's Economic and Social Development Program twice in a chapter identifying the city's weaknesses such as: "*insufficient local patriotism expressed by inhabitants*" and "*absence of people's local patriotism towards the city*" (ESDP, s. 55, 58).

⁵ When an event in the city is organized, usually by the city, attendance by the residents of the town is minimal. This is especially true when it comes to minority-genre events. Citizens have accepted a certain *status quo* and do not take part at events held in Žiar nad Hronom. On one hand, there are groups of citizens who do not attend these events because they are genuinely not interested in them. On the other hand, there are those who are accustomed to fulfilling these social needs in other cities around the region (Zvolen, Banská Bystrica, Kremnica, Banská Štiavnica, and Prievidza). This trend is directly connected to the overall development of the city – inadequate environment (and venues) for organising events in the city.

⁶ Many male members of the older generation who have worked in the factory have, until today, identified themselves with the position and status of a metallurgist, which received a lot of social prestige during the time of socialism. Following the year 1989, however, the perception of this occupation and its prestige had changed; the status of a metallurgist vanished and blue collar workers in general were pushed to the very bottom of the Slovak social ladder. Undoubtedly, this phenomenon has had an influence on the ambitions of predominantly young men to seek employment in the industrial park.

⁷ Community is defined as a society of people who work together as a group and have an adequate degree of mutual trust and fellowship (Mezeiová 2009: 144).

whole and on “its inside”.⁸ In this respect it is important to emphasize that currently only the city’s third generation is being born and raised. It is likely that the local identity of this generation already born in Žiar nad Hronom will be reinforced and will lead to the city’s growth and stabilisation. This process, however, needs to get continuous and substantial support from the city municipality.

Globalised Žiar nad Hronom (?)

Apart from many other things, globalisation is “*a long-term process of changes to the organization of a society, and the processes of globalisation influence political, economic, social, and cultural changes not only on a global level, but also on all the other lower levels including the local, thus also in cities*” (Gajdoš 2009: 304). It could be said that globalisation, expressed for example by contacts with foreigners, new technology and cultural exchange, surfaced in Žiar nad Hronom much sooner than it had in other Slovak cities. The SNP factory, a highly specialised centre and the only one of its kind in the entire Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, gave its employees the opportunity to maintain foreign contacts outside of the socialist block. The factory’s employees were allowed to travel and also many foreigners visited the factory headquarters. Thanks to the factory, its employees were exposed to and in contact with other cultures, which was not common during the socialist era. Foreigners also moved to the city in order to work for the factory; today we would refer to these people as work migrants. Thus, certain characteristics attributed to the trend of globalisation can be observed here from as early as the 1950s. It is likely that during that era, many individual as well as family experiences were influenced by these international contacts. Research, however, has not confirmed any specific effects of this on the city itself.

It could be anticipated that following the year 1989 with the inflow of foreign investment during the 1990s and later, it would incorporate the city into the processes of globalisation. This would project further influence on it, transform it and maybe start up more progress in the city. The brown industrial park is currently a place of world-wide business partnerships. Bilateral exchanges are no rarity, and thanks to their work many young people as well as members of the older generation often travel to non-European countries.⁹ Exposing the factory’s employees to foreign environments is thus happening. Nevertheless, we cannot conclude that this exposure would have a substantial influence on the city, its design and facilities. This status quo, however, could ultimately change by the fact that the industrial park (despite it having gone through groundbreaking changes: privatisation, the separation of Czechoslovakia, and other changes connected to ownership) as well as the city found

⁸ External stagnation need not be visible. Currently, the city’s buildings are being modernised, the square has been reconstructed, and there is another reconstruction project under way. During the most recent years, the city has been awarded numerous projects and has been successfully utilising the financial support of the EU.

⁹ The term “business trip” stands for classic short-term business trips and can also mean long-term stays, or it could possibly stand for transfers from a company to its sister company, etc. For example, in 2008 the possibility of a long-term job placement in Qatar for the Slovaco company employees (or rather the Norwegian Hydro) was publicised. After having successfully passed the interviews, several company employees accepted this offer and currently live in Qatar (with their families) and are building what is going to be one of the biggest aluminium factories in the world.

themselves in a uniquely positive situation during the 1990's in respect to foreign investors and thanks to the actual existence of the industrial park. Nevertheless, there has not been any substantial change in the relationship between the industrial park and inhabitants of the city – factory employees. The industrial park has been in operation since the 1950s.

Thus, it has become evident that there are minimal overlaps in the “plant-city” relationship. Events organized by different companies in Žiar nad Hronom are only accessible for plant employees or their families and are usually organized on the plant's premises, the industrial park, and thus are outside of the city and out of reach. The economic influence of the industrial park on our city, however, is immense. The above-mentioned job opportunities, salaries, purchasing power, lower unemployment and consequently a better quality of life are all factors connected to the existence of the industrial park. For example, the Norwegian company, Slovalco, used to finance the city's sport activities, built numerous children playgrounds and continues to support cultural and sport activities taking place in the city through its foundation. The Mexican company, Nemak, built (primarily for its employees) a high-standard hospital delivery room, which can also be used by other inhabitants of the city for an extra fee. This sort of influence, however, could be defined as indirect because it is a result of the financial relations between the city and the plant. In general, it seems that foreign investors, or rather the management of these companies, have not made any effort to integrate their own cultural customs (such as business practices) nor are they trying to have a direct impact on the city. They prefer the strategy of adapting to “local” conditions.

Another cause and, and at the same time, effect of the current status quo in the city (no substantial influence or changes can be observed) is, for example, the approach to long-term housing for higher-ranking employees working for companies operating in the industrial park as well as for foreigners visiting these companies. These newcomers are usually accommodated outside of the city (in Kremnica, Banská Bystrica or smaller cities in the area).¹⁰ In this respect, the city is not being exposed to *cultural and social diversity* and processes closely associated with it – in terms of diversity of social groups and categories (ethnicity, age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, origin, and education) and the diversity of cultural differences expressed in multicultural and intercultural processes (Bitušiková 2007: 19). Thus, the city is not confronted with the needs of such inhabitants nor is it further developing in this respect. This puts it into a difficult situation: on one hand it does not dispose of adequate conditions for potential “diversity carriers”. On the other hand, it is not creating these circumstances because the “demand” for such changes does not seem to be urgent. Apart from other factors, it is precisely this approach that causes the city to stagnate and allows us to characterise it as closed and unprepared for diversity - an integral part of the process of globalisation. According to Gajdoš, “*the processes of globalisation influence all localities, and all cities, even though most of them*

¹⁰ Today, only one hotel, Hotel Luna, is operating in the city, and it most probably does not reach the standard which is sought by foreign employees and visitors who come to the city. Most importantly, however, the city as such has nothing to offer to these visitors especially when it comes to restaurants or other basic services. The city has several other bed-and-breakfast type accommodation options. According to available information, however, these are being rented out to foreign or other short-term blue collar employees.

are only receivers of these influences". The influence of globalisation, as he argues, is always different depending on whether the city is located in a developed and central part of the country or is located on the periphery. He considers big cities located in developed countries as those localities which are undergoing the most dynamic change (Gajdoš 2009: 305). Thus, it is clear that a small city such as Žiar nad Hronom is going to be one of those passive cities which only partially receives these processes of globalisation. Therefore, in comparison with other surrounding cities, our city has been lagging behind in terms of accepting "progressive trends". It is interesting, however, that in its ESDP, the city labelled *the influence of globalisation* as one of its weaknesses when it comes to doing business (PHSR: 59).

Even today, the city does not have a natural city centre, its *terra sana maxima* – usually a square or a city centre – which would serve as the centre of the city's social life. Thus, Žiar nad Hronom is also atypical due to the fact that it does not have a city centre where social life could develop. Most likely, the reason for this is that the city is insufficiently equipped with services which would enable such development. This is a natural consequence of the former regime's urban planning, which considered the city centre to be a place for state institutions, a primary place to present and demonstrate communist power, and thus a space directly connected to work rather than a space for entertainment, relaxation or a meeting point for citizens. The city has never overcome this barrier partly due to the fact that, until today, the city centre is being used as a residential area. The city has a problem adapting to the current requirements of a square, which should serve as the most important public space, meaning "*a physical place, which is socially accessible without any special social selection, usually managed by one of the public administration offices*" (Faltán 2010: 37). And it is precisely through important public spaces that citizens identify with their city, which contributes to the formation of local identity (Bitušiková 1999: 18). The square in Žiar nad Hronom fulfils this condition only minimally.

In terms of architectural design, the Matica Slovenská Square bears the signs of social realism – the City Hall and Regional Office building dominates, supported by the building of the former Factory Club ROH and other buildings designed in the typical socialist style. The statue of Štefan Moyses, with which the city demonstrates its connection to local history, is located in front of the Cultural Centre. It is surrounded on both sides by the so called Flag Alley¹¹. Despite the fact that the Flag Alley is the city's declaration of being a part of "the globalised world", it is an act initiated by the regional self-governing office, and thus this declaration remains only a formality. Therefore, from a symbolic perspective, the Matica Slovenská Square is an interesting place which represents the contrasting big picture of essential and characteristic features. All these features have been forming the city until today.

¹¹ From the city chronicle: "Since October 4 (2006) flags of foreign companies operating in our city have been erected on the MS Square. The flags represent the countries of Norway and Great Britain (symbolizing the Slovalco company), Mexico (the Rautenbach and Nematik companies), Sweden (Sapa profiles) and Spain (Fagor Ederlan). One can also find flags of the Slovak Republic, the EU, and the city. These companies operate on the premises of the Slovak National Uprising Factory, which is also known as the brown industrial park. Thus, the MS Square has gained a permanent decoration." (City Chronicle..., 2006).

Several inconclusive observations to conclude with

As a consequence of the socialist era, we can observe *“the decrease of the social, cultural, and environmental consciousness, which has led to the gradual inner isolation and passivity of the majority of the city’s inhabitants. This has also influenced their inappropriate behaviour in a country, which was everyone’s and no one’s”* (Darulová 2007: 64). One can conclude that this state of affairs has managed to survive until today. In relation to aesthetic attributes, which are popular today, the city does not live up to the description of “a pretty city”. In general, it is considered ugly not only by its own inhabitants but also by Slovaks from other parts of the country. And it is precisely this phenomenon of “ugliness” that the city is constantly being confronted with.

In comparison to “pretty” historical cities with a rich tradition, Žiar nad Hronom has only a minimal chance to become a tourist destination. As a consequence, the citizens do not come into contact with culture and social diversity, which would be brought to other cities mainly by tourism. The premise that global processes taking place in the industrial park have a significant influence on the city and its development has turned out to be flawed. On the other hand, the lack of traditionalism in the city could create favourable conditions for a faster spillover of new, modern, and “global” elements and their incorporation into the local context. Currently, however, no visible traces of this trend can be observed. Many inhabitants study or work in other cities or abroad and they keep on returning to Žiar nad Hronom. The result of this is that citizens have experienced a different standard of how a city can function, and when back in Žiar nad Hronom they feel the urban characteristics (which have been described above) typical for modern Slovak cities are simply absent. Based on the observed aspects it seems that the “extent of globalisation” on the city’s inhabitants currently dominates over “the extent of globalisation” on the city itself. At this point, it is difficult to estimate what the consequences of this disproportionate development will be on the city itself.

Research has shown antagonistic consequences of the “city-industrial park” relationship. On one hand, this relationship is strong and inseparable, and the city is dependent on the park and is used to identifying with it (expressed by the metaphor *“Žiar = aluminium”*).¹² On the other hand, these are two separate worlds with their own separate existence and processes, which rarely meet. Thus, the city both is and is not a part of the processes of globalisation associated with the industrial park.

The goal of this study was primarily to observe the city and processes which are taking place within its city limits. Research has identified three interconnected areas which are responsible for the city’s stagnation (based on currently accepted standards of evaluating progressive development): 1) unclear identity of the city; 2) non-existence of a stable local community (or, in other words, citizens do not have a fully formed local identity); 3) currently a seeming unreadiness for accepting social and cultural diversity as a part of

¹² Most citizens believe that without the presence of the industrial park, the city would definitely deteriorate. As a result, since 1989 citizens have feared the bankruptcy or recession of the industrial park. This would lead to their loss of employment – the source of finance for most families in Žiar nad Hronom and those living in its surroundings.

the processes of globalisation. Considering the circumstances of the city's establishment and further development, the results of this research are logical. Since 1989, the city has been balancing on an imaginary frontier, does not have a clear path or trend to follow, and thus, in comparison to other cities in the region, it is in a much worse position. Based on its character (as well as the lifestyle of its inhabitants) it is currently in a transition stage between a village and a city despite the fact that its external characteristics would rather suggest that it is developing into an industrial city. Žiar nad Hronom is still not a city where you would find "*busy streets, a metamorphosis, movement, and tempo*" (Chorvát 1999: 60), features typical for a city; instead, it carries the characteristics of a village: "*stability, peace, permanency, and rigidity*" (ibid.). These characteristics are a symptomatic leftover from the so-called *incomplete social urbanisation* (Gajdoš – Pašiak 1995), which, in a socio-cultural respect, is responsible for transferring the rural mentality onto new citizens of the city (who predominantly move to the city from a rural environment).

It must be emphasised, however, that the city was only founded 60 years ago and today only the third generation of Žiar nad Hronom natives is growing up. The year 1989 was a breakthrough year for the city due to the fact that it had to adapt itself to a completely new situation. Socialism instilled it with specific characteristics, which the city will most probably never completely get rid of. It has got typical socialist buildings, architectural design, and overall layout (one of its typical characteristics became apparent after 1989 by, for example, the absence of separated upper-class city districts). With a certain sense of irony, we could say that the regime managed to create an *ideal communist city* (Chorvát 1999: 65). This, however, later became one of the city's weaknesses. Nevertheless, the city could build upon its uniqueness (and this is despite the fact that currently the Slovak society continues to feel antipathy towards the socialist era as a whole, that many activities connected to the past regime have been politicised, and that symbols of this era are being erased). If the potential of such cities, including Žiar nad Hronom, are identified in time, they could become somewhat of a living museum, a reminiscence of an era without which the city never would have been established. Such a concept would, however, demand a complex attitude towards cultural heritage, which would not only be based on history (as a way of getting to know the history of one's locality) but predominantly on immaterial values (social, philosophical, ideological, ethical, aesthetic, religious, and other so-called aspects of immaterial cultural heritage), which, in this respect, represent an important component of the citizens' local identity. It is precisely cultural heritage which "*creates space for activating citizen engagement and interest in public affairs, makes the city more attracting for living, recreation, work, and business, strengthens the local identity itself and supports the feeling of home*" (Darulová 2007: 66). This, however, demands not only the support of responsible state authorities and the city municipality with a systematic and specifically designed concept for urban development, but mostly it needs the active and creative involvement of the local community, which is necessary for the city's future development. Today, despite difficulties which it needs to face, the city has favourable conditions for taking an active part in positive globalisation processes leading to its growth and the development of the surrounding environment. All of this is directly tied to global economic developments, which influence companies located in the industrial

park, because if they prosper, so will the city. It is precisely in this respect that Žiar nad Hronom is primarily dependant on the processes of globalisation. It is only under such favourable conditions that we can ask a seemingly daring question: Žiar nad Hronom, a part of the Slovak cultural heritage? Why not?

A PLAYING FIELD NEXT TO A FACTORY: HOW MODERN BECAME LOCAL AND MAINTAINED GLOBAL

Roman Hofreiter

This study focuses on issues associated with the arrival of foreign investors in Slovakia. I have not focused my research on analyzing the life of foreign employees and their ability to acclimate to the Slovak life-style, society, and culture. My primary focus is on how the presence of foreign industrial organisations has influenced the life of the inhabitants residing in the areas of their operation. I have analysed how the global influences the local, and above all, how and when this influence expresses itself locally.

I have predominantly focused on the activities of the individuals and groups located in the foreign company's area of operation and which have been motivated by the company's presence or its activities. During my research, I focused on situations when local actors have demonstrated their opposition to activities initiated by a foreign company as well as on the process of involving the foreign company into creating the local context.¹

I conducted my research – document analysis, observation, and interviews - in the city of Žilina and in the industrial neighbourhoods in Teplička nad Váhom and Nededza between the years 2009 and 2010. I have also conducted in-depth interviews with Slovak employees of a manufacturing company, with the mayors of the localities involved (Nededza and Teplička nad Váhom), as well as with local authorities (representatives of urban organisations, sport clubs, fire-fighters, hunting associations and the Church).

The overview of my findings is divided into two parts. In the first one, I characterise the institutional framework of the Korean organisational culture known as *chaebol* (Biggart 1988). This culture demands that Korean investors bring a greater number of Korean workers than other companies usually do to the new country. Chaebols are also set in a different institutional framework, which is a combination of formal company rules and informal rules rooted in the company's culture. Nevertheless, despite the arrival of foreign workers, their influence on the locality remains small. The foreign investors' activities predominantly focus on the operation of their company, and thus the interaction between foreign workers and local inhabitants is mostly formal and business-related.

In the second part of this study I present a case study of the village of Nededza dealing with the approval of a new territorial plan and the creation of a new housing project. The study also analyses the planned relocation of a football stadium and a playing field to a newly-constructed part of the city, but as one of the main opponents of this transfer stated in an interview "*in the end we managed to win the fight over the stadium*". I use this case study to document when and how the local can be expressed and what the local

¹ Examples of this would be publicity materials and commemorative publications which feature the foreign company as a part of the city and the region. The city of Žilina as well as other localities in its vicinity likes to present itself by emphasising the fact that it is their city or village which has been chosen by the big foreign manufacturer. Therefore, foreign manufacturers are becoming a recognisable symbol of the region, city, or neighbourhood. It is something that distinguishes this specific region or place from others, and makes it unique and interesting, and that these localities use in order to create their own local context.

consciousness could be connected to, in our case this will be the football stadium and the playing field.

Foreign investor, organisational culture and local activities

In order to introduce the situation, we need to go beyond solely describing the local context. It is necessary to describe certain overlaps with the nationwide situation and several theoretical connections.

The inflow of foreign investment is accompanied by the arrival of foreign workers. This is a specific type of migration, organisational migration, which characteristically comes in several waves. This means that a large number of people from abroad arrives in a short period of time and their stay is connected to the presence of the organisation (business, industrial) to which they belong, with which they have signed a contract, or are executing a certain task for.

Finally, the number of foreign workers is determined by their employers' socio-cultural embeddedness². By this I do not mean only the company culture, but also the concrete society that this organisation was established in and which has had an influence on and formed the company's business culture. It is this society and its culture that also influences when and which positions the company will hire Slovak employees for and influences the number of employees hired from the country of origin who are to come and work directly in Slovakia. As an example, we can make a simple comparison between two multinational automobile production companies operating in Slovakia which launched the construction of their factories in 2003-2004. The first one of them operates in the vicinity of the city of Trnava and fifty percent of its management personnel comes from Slovakia. The second company, located close to Žilina, occupied all of its managerial positions with personnel from the investor's country of origin. These differences could also be interpreted by the variety in historical and cultural frameworks in which the organisations' key principles were formed. The foreign investor operating in the city of Žilina and other localities in its vicinity (Teplička nad Váhom, Nededza, Gbeľany) comes from the Republic of Korea. Thus, the organisational structure and culture is primarily based on Korean culture and institutions.

Simply said, different forms of economic organisation are not formed in a social and cultural vacuum as sometimes neoclassical economic theories imply, but they are set into historical experience and institutions. Despite the fact that it is not the aim of this study to characterise the organisational culture of foreign investors and its potential alteration after beginning operations in Slovakia, we cannot leave this topic without mentioning it. The organisational culture frames the activities of the foreign workers and represents the Korean culture in the intercultural dialogue.

² The term "embeddedness" comes from the work of Mark Granovetter (1984), in which he emphasises that peoples' economic activity, as well as the activities of companies, is not determined exclusively by economic calculations. Calculations build up on an exclusive preference for profit, but their economic behaviour is anchored or "embedded" in specific social circumstances which also have an influence on economic behaviour.

A short description of the foreign investor's organisational culture

Biggart (1988) and Castels (2000)³ characterise the Korean culture of organising economic activities called *chaebol* as an organisational network of formally independent companies. This is also typical for the Japanese model of *kabushiki mochiai*. The Korean one, however, is much more hierarchical. The basic feature of the Korean organisational system is that there is a limited liability company owned by an individual and his family, which forms the centre of each business network. This limited liability company is supported by banks as well as the government (Castels 2000). The founding family has significant control over naming the managers of the *chaebol* branches. These are usually drawn from the family circle or close friends. The companies which are a part of the entire business network (*chaebol*) are controlled by a central managerial body closely resembling a military organisational hierarchy.

These business networks are predominantly composed of big companies, and small ones only play a marginal role in this system. Most business relations are realised between individual branches of this network. External business relations are not very common (even though, for example, the company operating in Žilina was built by a Japanese company; this company, however, has been the Korean investor's long-term partner).

Work relations within the companies abide by a strict discipline. The key task of employees in most positions within the hierarchy is to fulfil tasks which have been assigned to them. Employees are not expected to express too much initiative or to participate in the company's management. It is due to this fact that it was difficult to introduce unions to these structures operating in Slovakia. In Korea during the 1960s and the 1970s unions were under the government's significant control and practically had no competencies. Following the democratisation of Korean society, which took place in the 1980s, government control of unions ceased to exist, and the growing independence of unions faced significant opposition by managers and owners of the *chaebol*. This led to highly conflicting behavioural disputes between the unions and business owners. Thus, the following opinion expressed by a former employee of the Korean investor does not come as a surprise:

"Well they were not delighted when unions were being formed here; they were quite petrified and they took almost a month to prepare for the first meeting. They demanded various background documents from us, and I know that they had prepared three different versions of the collective agreement. After the meeting, however, when they returned from the negotiations, they were satisfied because the unions immediately agreed with the first proposal and they did not have to negotiate."

Understandably, the Korean investor operating in Slovakia adjusted some features of the company's organisational culture to the institutional and legislative norms of the Slovak Republic. Interviews with administrative personnel can help us create at least a basic image of this change and mutual adaptation. The core of the organisational structure remains unchanged, but the elements which go against legal norms or which have been rejected by

³ We predominantly base our characteristics of the organisation of Korean companies' economic activities on the work of Biggart and Castels, and thus we use their research findings as well as some of their evaluating comments.

company employees have been changed or removed (for example, the publicised physical exercises and slogans enforced in the beginning of the company's operation)⁴.

Another example could be the *family* principle (incidentally, the word *family* is also incorporated in the title of the company's magazine). Being accepted to work for the company also meant becoming a part of the *family*, and thus the Korean employers were also curious about each applicant's family background, whether he/she has a family or children and what his/her spouse's profession is. One of the Slovak respondents stated that it was relatively complicated for him to explain to his superiors that such enquiries are regulated by Slovak law, and that they could be accused of discrimination. He, however, did not interpret his superiors' behaviour as discriminatory but as a measure associated with being accepted into a *family*, which was also made clear to him by his Korean colleagues:

“I do not think that they did it on purpose. They simply saw it as a process of accepting one into the family and thus they wanted to know as much as possible. They even verified my objections to their possible breach of law. They always verify everything⁵ through various sources, and then they stopped [asking these kinds of questions during interviews].”

The family principle, however, remains an important component of the company's organisational structure. An example of this is that when an employee voluntarily resigns or he/she is dismissed due to serious reasons, he/she will never be accepted back into the company – *family*. This practice was confirmed by one of the company's former employees:

“When I was leaving, I knew that I was leaving forever. They were nice and thanked me; they weren't even angry, the whole process was very normal. But if you leave them once, they will never take you back. You've left their family. It's somewhat different than at home.”

During the process of conducting interviews, a sense of mutual adaptation started surfacing. These mutually accepted and respected rules, procedures, and models of behaviour respected by both cultures probably create a unique set of rules specific to this company. An example of this unique set of rules is that administrative employees greet their colleagues in the other's language. These rules and models of behaviour have been formed around the original organisational culture, which has been adjusted to the particularities of the Slovak environment. For example, Slovaks do not mind uniforms and a monthly video message from the director, but they do object to slogans and physical exercises, which, in the end, had to be removed and cancelled. During our interviews, administrative workers reflected on the issue of the “*dual culture of communication*”, which expressed itself in various ways, such as holding separate managerial meetings for Slovaks and Koreans, or

⁴ In the first months of the company's operation and after having employed administrative personnel, Slovak employees objected to the regular physical exercises and the omnipresent motivational slogans. According to an interview with one of our respondents (the company's employee), these regulations led Slovak employees to boycott these exercises or make fun of the activity during actual exercises. In the end, this mandatory activity was abolished, and the large slogans were removed. According to Slovak employees, these components of the Korean investor's company culture bared too much resemblance to their experience from the era of socialist modernisation.

⁵ References to constant verification, triangulation of information, and assigning the same tasks to two or even three different people at the same time have been made by various respondents during the interviews.

in the different style of communication between superiors and their subordinates, which is more authoritative and hierarchical, and thus based on a more traditional relationship than is common among Slovak employees. One respondent expressed the following opinion:

“They are almost like the army, a hierarchical society. My boss was absolutely stressed out when he handed something in and was waiting for the company president’s reaction.”

Foreign and local. Parallel inhabitants of a common space

The organisational structure of Korean companies’ economic activities (*chaebol*) demands a greater number of Korean employees at the company’s foreign location⁶ due to the fact that the investment itself is accompanied by other services – support elements of the organisational network, such as subcontractors.

The activities of the Korean employees and their family members in the company’s place of operation are, however, limited. We do not mean to say that mutual intercultural interaction does not exist, because it does. It is, however, predominantly situated within the company’s organisational structure. The following testimony describes the course of this interaction:

“I can’t really say that we would be really great friends. In the beginning, when we were launching the department, I think this is how both, us and them, felt, but later we got used to each other. The boss would invite us for dinner to his place or we would go for a trip to Poland together. I was sad when he left” (employee).

It is understandable that the relationships of foreign employees in and around Žilina centre on the foreign investor’s organisational network and colleagues. Organisations which we work for provide us with a very important environment for creating formal and informal social connections and relationships. Due to the limited contact with other (outside-of-work) social groups, one aims to interact and connect predominantly based on social relations established within his/her professional environment. The eccentric location of the main housing for foreign employees also has a great impact on the limited interaction between the citizens of Žilina and its surroundings and employees of the foreign investor:

“Well they live there in Krasňany, and some, some of them also live here in the city, in Žilina, but I don’t know how many because they somehow don’t really go out. They’re always at work, which is probably because they are bored here and what would they do at home anyways” (employee).

⁶ This premise is supported by the growing number of incoming persons of Korean citizenship registering for permanent residency in the Slovak Republic between the years 2006 and 2008 (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and Office of Border and Immigration Police, Mol SR).

It was between these years that various Korean production companies were established (the factory in Žilina, which is the subject of our study, and a factory focusing on the production of electrotechnical products located close to Galanta and in Voderady). In 2006 the immigration police registered 503 Korean citizens with permanent residency in Slovakia; in 2007 the number rose to 580, and in 2008 760 citizens of the Republic of Korea registered for permanent residency in Slovakia.

To compare, even based on data covering the overall amount of foreign direct investment – FDI – in the Slovak Republic (Report by the National Bank of the Slovak Republic on the state of foreign direct investment between 2005 – 2010), it shows that in regard to the overall amount of direct foreign investment, the Korean companies and investments bring a higher number of their own employees-citizens to Slovakia than any other foreign direct investor.

The residential area is located outside of the village of Krasňany (10 km from Žilina) and the area is surrounded by a fence. The arrangement of the houses in the neighbourhood resembles the company's hierarchy – the highest-situated houses are inhabited by the highest-ranking managers and below them are the houses of their subordinates. The residential area has its own tennis court and a swimming pool.

Mayors of all the villages in the district have confirmed that in the beginning, when foreign employees were becoming acquainted with the environment, their relations with the locals were rather formal and evolved around official meetings which had to do with the company's activities. The mayor of the village of Nededza described their cohabitation in the following way:

“No, they don't come around here, but if they turned up, we would definitely not throw them out....(laughter)”. A similar comment was made by the mayor of Teplička nad Váhom: “... but they don't come here much; Maybe in the beginning they would come around, but now they don't; they are more interested in Žilina“.

Due to the location of the city of Žilina (approximately a 10-minute-car-ride away), foreign employees' out-of-work activities do not only evolve around their professional relationships, but they are also influenced by the proximity of the big city. Their lifestyle thus resembles the lifestyle of some inhabitants of the surrounding villages, who have moved to them over the past decades from Žilina. They have also created separate residential areas (such as in the new parts of Teplička nad Váhom), they are not significantly involved in local activities, they place their children into schools in Žilina, and they spend both their professional and leisure time in the big city as opposed to the villages where they live. Basically, their behaviour resembles more the ways of foreign employees than inhabitants of these villages.

Why study the playing field?

Until now, informal interaction between foreign employees and local inhabitants of Žilina and the villages in its vicinity has not been too common. This does not mean, however, that there is no interaction taking place. However, when it does, it usually happens due to formal rather than informal reasons (naturally, this can change during the course of the company's operation in Slovakia). Apart from that, however, some of the company's activities have led to protests by the locals and thus have uncovered different versions of the local.

We are working with the assumption that the local meaning and importance of a place, or of objects, is only fully demonstrated under extraordinary circumstances which cause a disruption to the common way of life. When a foreign company's activities start to negatively influence and threaten these places or objects, their local significance also becomes more visible. To paraphrase Arturo Escobar (2001), we could say that local culture sits in places, whereas, these places need not necessarily always represent a clear opposition to the global; they need not be different or exclusively local, specific or unique places. It is rather the situation which forms its local level of significance and the way they are incorporated into the local context. This also applies to initially foreign elements, which, due to this process, gain in prominence. Thus, places earn their local prominence via activities carried out by people in a certain space (Escobar 2001: 148).

The football pitch belonging to the village of Nededza and the local sports club became an important space. The football pitch – playing field – is located between the headquarters of the foreign investor and the subcontractor’s main area of operations, hence between two objects related to the foreign investment. In 2006, after it had finished building the company’s area and launched production, the foreign investor asked the Nededza village representatives to sell its playing field to the company. Initially, the investor promised to build a new playing field instead and to prepare building parcels for construction in another locality. Based on a record in the local chronicle, “numerous citizens have signed a protest petition, by which they have expressed their opposition to closing down the current football pitch and the surrounding area and rebuilding another sport-leisure facility in the locality of Podchríp”. Eventually, the village adopted a new territorial plan and left the playing grounds and football pitch in its original place. One of the village’s citizens commented on the situation in the following way “*the playing field managed to hold on because the people opposed its cancellation*”.

In the process of negotiating the village’s new territorial plan, two interconnecting arguments defending the status quo were formed: the first one was based on the concept of custom – *people have gotten used to the playing field’s location*; and the second, the framework which enforced the first, was based on the previous experience with repurchasing real estate parcels for a foreign investor’s⁷ use – *people have not yet forgotten about how they had to fight in order to attain appropriate repurchasing prices...*

These two arguments interconnected since both put the playing field’s local significance into the forefront. The latter argument emphasised the fact that in case the playing field were sold to the foreign investor, sufficient guarantees by the investor to build a new playing grounds did not exist. Thus, the city would be left without a playing field for some time or possibly forever.

According to the village’s mayor, this was one of the main reasons why he had not sold the playing field to the foreign investor:

“People did not want to sell it because they have got used to the location; they would probably not want to go a few meters further, and at the same time, the investor did not offer a serious enough of a guarantee. We even proposed to the investor to put some money into the bank in an account so that we would see we have the means to build the playing field, but at that point people already started protesting against it. I think

⁷ We consider it important to describe the situation and connections to the problems with repurchasing the land for the purpose of the new foreign investment: In 2004 a foreign investor decided to locate its investment in the vicinity of the city of Žilina. In the contract signed with the Government of the Slovak Republic, the investor set one condition – the Slovak Government was to ensure that all necessary land would be repurchased. The repurchasing process took place between 2004 and 2005. The problem, however, was the proposed repurchasing price of land – 4.50 €/m². This amount was considered by many as too low, and thus they demanded new expert appraisals. Small localities also presented their own expert appraisals and attempted to negotiate with the Slovak Government as well as with the Minister of the Economy. The situation reached a critical point and people started threatening not to sell their parcels, and thus a court decision in 2005 suspended construction on those parcels which had not been repurchased yet. The repurchasing price went up to 11.60 €/ m². Citizens who sold their land for the original price demanded, however, that they be paid the additional amount, which they were promised. The whole process of purchasing the properties continued to take place between 2006 and 2007. By this time the foreign investor had already launched the production of automobiles.

that [the investor] were only testing us, and since neither the state nor we were really pursuing this option, then they let go, and then the economic crisis also had an influence. And peoples' experience with selling land played a great role since now people are more careful; they have learned their lesson and want serious guarantees”.

To the question: what does it mean that you were not really pursuing this option, the mayor replied:

“We didn't really pressure the investor and neither did we apply for the support of different ministries, the playing field will simply stay where it is now. I had the feeling that they [the investor] were more-or-less testing what the situation was and whether we will take their offer and how the state will react. The state, however, did not interfere in the process and we, as I have mentioned before, did not show an interest either.”

The citizens' effort to protect the playing field was made easier by the fact that the investor, not the state, had not made enough of an effort to pursue the process of relocating the area. The investor had not “exercised significant pressure” on the city's representatives to sell that piece of land, and at the same time, the state did not make much effort in this respect either. It is questionable, however, whether an effort to protect the playing field would have been successful if both of these major actors – the foreign investor and the civil service – had made an effort to successfully complete this project. It is important to remember that during the time the investor first attempted to buy out the playing field and replace it with a new facility, opposition by citizens had already begun. They published a protest petition, called an emergency session of the local council, and managed to modify the territorial plan in a way that would allow the playing field to remain in its original location. All of this unveils the importance of the playing field to the inhabitants of Nededza.

Football and the playing field in the context of the village of Nededza

The importance of the playing field as well as of football in the context of Nededza has not only been exclusively determined by the fact that sport activities were historically institutionalised during the course of socialist modernisation. This would indeed be a very biased and unpersuasive explanation. Socialist modernisation, industrialisation, as well as social hierarchy have created a basic social framework which provided space for the playing grounds to develop. The local dimension, however, is important because places become relevant by being set into a local context (there are, however, also other elements that influence their relevance⁸).

The actions by local actors give a specific meaning to a particular place and create the context of a place. After having been created, this specific meaning attributed to a place causes it (in our case it is the city's playing field) to become, metaphorically speaking, an actor capable of motivating the behaviour of other actors, such as activities aimed at preserving its existence. This place ceases to be just “any place”. A place – the playing field – gains meaning because it is a part of the actor's network, which has built up around

⁸ Here we need to point out that the text focuses solely on the case of the football pitch in the village of Nededza, and that is why we are putting an emphasis on the local actors. Many places, issues, as well as situations are created by actors who operate beyond the local context, for example national parks, monuments, cultural heritage sites, and important buildings. There are many actors involved in their protection and maintaining their activities (international organisations, governments, expert groups, NGOs, professional associations, cities, etc.)

it. The place's relevancy can change, decrease, or vanish if this network of original actors supporting this place (or an issue or a situation) changes or weakens. Thus, in the following part of the study, I will shortly describe the local context in Nededza, which has shaped the sports ground's and football pitch's relevance.

According to local citizens as well as local chronicle entries, football represents *the most important and widespread sport activity in the village*. Naturally, this is also determined by an essential component of the game – it being a competition between two teams representing a city, village, district or even a social class or religion (the social and religious context is predominantly characteristic for foreign teams). Its popularity also has to do with the fact that football is a relatively inexpensive activity. In the context of the village of Nededza, it is necessary to point out other dependencies and predominantly the fact that the local football sport club plays an important role in the city's social life⁹.

Apart from organising sport activities in the locality, the sports club also takes part in organising social events. This has been a long-standing tradition in rural Slovakia due to the fact that organising such social events and making a profit from organising them, which was in turn used for the club's activities, enabled the sports clubs to integrate into the official socialist hierarchy. In order for the club to raise funds for its activities, it organised these events regularly, and the sports club thus became an important actor in the field of organising cultural and social events in the locality:

“It wasn't like we would run up and down the football field once a week. We would organise dances, invite theatres from other localities and several times we even rehearsed a piece ourselves, we organised carnival parades or built maypoles and we still organise these kinds of events” (extract from an interview with a local).

The sports club's activities were closely connected to keeping traditions in the locality: it would organise and still organises carnival parades building maypoles every May. Together with the local fire-fighters brigade, the sportsmen annually organise the celebration of St. Florián. Since 2004, they have regularly been organising a ball. The connection and relevance of the sport club's activities to the wider context of the village transformed the club into an important social actor. Based on experience from other localities where football pitches are deserted and forgotten, we can make the assumption that this active sports club is a reflection of an active local community, which has decided to sustain the importance of these places (local playing fields).

Since the beginning, the Nededza playing field has been closely connected to the activities of local inhabitants – activities in the sports club or their work on building the playing field. It started by regularly paying “a lease” for its use. In 1974 the area was extended, a fence was built, and roofs for the coach and players on the bench along with a volleyball court were constructed. Based on an entry in the local chronicle, we know that “all work was carried out by volunteers”. Construction of the playing field was concluded in the year 2000 by building changing rooms and a multifunctional court. In this case, the city was again the main investor, and local citizens as well as members of the sports club helped build these facilities. This fact is often emphasised (by the mayor, representatives

⁹ Currently, the sport club operates as a part of the village and is called the Nededza Sport Club. Sustaining the sport club and its strong connection with the village municipality only underscores the club's local importance.

of the club, as well as by inhabitants), that *it was them who built the playing field*, or that *the village built the playing field by itself*. For local inhabitants, it represents a place which was created as a result of their cooperation and direct investment of time, work, and energy.

The regular use of the playing field also underscores its local importance. It is definitely not an abandoned place or one which would only be used by football players during work-outs or matches. It is connected to many activities organised by the village, the local sports club, or directly by citizens. Apart from football matches and work-out sessions, other activities, such as children's sport days, friendly football matches on the occasion of the village's anniversaries or other sport and cultural activities are being held at the playing grounds.

The playing field, however, also serves additional purposes besides the abovementioned official activities. During the course of several of my stays in the village, I observed the constant presence of people on the pitch. Children were playing football and parents with small children were taking walks around the area. These are seemingly all very trivial events. Nevertheless, it is exactly these trivial, everyday occasions which only underscore the playing field's significance. Children from the village would shout at each other: *Will you come to the playfield? Are we going to play ball for a bit?* During my interview with mothers and their children at the playing field, the following statement was made:

"For us it is like a park. People in cities take their children to parks, and we take them here, where children can run around. We can keep an eye on them. There are also benches available. Only now they are building some sort of a warehouse, so it's sometimes quite noisy around here."

These brief comments point out the fact that the playing field serves several different functions in the village. It is not only connected to sport and sportsmen, but that it also has value for children, their parents, and, at the end of the day, for the entire village.

The different functions of the playing field are seen as very natural and are a result of the citizens' everyday behaviour and have become routine. The local importance of a place becomes most visible when something extraordinary happens, or when they are subjected to change or destined to be ruined. Thus, it was the very proposal by the foreign investor to buy-out the playing field from the village and to incorporate it into its premises which had unveiled the social context and importance of this place, eventually leading to its preservation.

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRUCTION AND PRODUCTION OF CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

Katarína Tesárová

Only a decade ago, representatives of the city of Bratislava began feeling the necessity to develop the city's tourism industry. Statistics on the number of overnight visitors can be traced back only up to the year 2001. The capital city's marketing strategy was only developed in the year 2008. In addition, an ongoing public debate in the city has been critical of the lack of tourist development in Bratislava. Citizens have expressed support for creating a local Destination Management Organisation (DMO), and the Slovak Tourist Guides Association has criticised the city's cultural institutions, for example, for possessing an insufficient number of *phone guides* in museums and galleries or for not making programs of events available on time. At the same time, tourists visiting Bratislava expect a certain standard of services. According to the city's marketing strategy, 80% of respondents consider the information available to visitors of Bratislava to be insufficient. Among the most critical visitors are the French and the British (Marketing Strategy 2008: 34).

A part of the process of transforming a city into an attractive destination is the effort and ability to define the location's significance as well as its atmosphere. The production and construction of cultural attractions in a city is a symbolic process of selecting and negotiating the adequate character of the city. In this ethnographic report, I will try to point out how relative the term "cultural attraction" is and highlight the tools that help us produce and construct one. The study is a result of qualitative research based on the methods of indirect and direct observation. During the course of this research, which was carried out between January and September 2010, I studied secondary sources, conducted informal, semi-structured and later on also structured interviews with actors in the tourist business: representatives of the Bratislava municipality Marketing and Tourism Department, a Bratislava guide working for the Slovak Tourist Guides Association, employees of the Bratislava Culture and Information Centre and representatives of the marketing departments of the Slovak National Theatre and the Slovak National Museum.

Theoretical foundation

As a part of a city's global image, attractions play a significant role; they represent the city and also stereotype them, such as "the Louvre in Paris", "The Metropolitan Museum in New York", or the "Olympic Games in Nagano" (Richards 2001:4).

Cultural tourism is a modern phenomenon, which is, however, distinct from the historical form of cultural tourism connected to the "Grand Tour". Tourists' experiences are increasingly being put into a symbolic and sensual framework of images and perceptions associated with each destination. As Greg Richards points out, attractions are considered to be the core aim of tourist activity. In the context of tourism, the term culture does not

only stand for different cultural artefacts, respectively of a fixed heritage of the past, but it also stands for the everyday life of the local community, pop culture, living heritage, and nostalgia. In the process of reproducing attractions, emphasis is increasingly being put on originality and regional authenticity (Richards 2001). According to Dean MacCannell, tourist attractions are symbols resulting from the modern consciousness, and the sightseeing of cultural monuments represents a modern ritual (Richards 2001:15).

In the context of Cohen's concept of *emergent authenticity*, authenticity can go through a process of gradual evolution. It leads to the production of new meanings and plays an important role in the process of identifying and producing external images – self-presentation. “People appropriate and express the global in their own symbolic cultural constructs, tradition, and identity” (Salazar 2004: 4 in: Wood 1993), and, at the same time, local culture also influences the global.

Defining key terms

In order to characterise and define who the actors in tourism are, anthropology widely employs the following model of relationship “*host – guest*”. Host and guest [are] fluid, contested social roles that people move into, out of, and between as they negotiate extensive overlapping mobilities and social memberships (Molz – Gibson 2007: 7, in Bell, 2009). This study understands the terms “host” and “guest” as categories which are subject to change in different social situations. This includes the manners, practices, and tools which actors in the tourist industry (city institutions, tour guides, cultural institutions, etc.) employ in their behaviour defined by the term *hosting* and their openness to potential visitors.

The term *hospitality* refers to a material and symbolic exchange of products and services between these actors – hosts and guests – in a specific social situation. The basic role of this act of exchange is that it constitutes or certifies an already existing relationship. This exchange is conditioned by choice; for example, the citizens can choose how, if, and in what way they will open up to tourists, whereas the actors in tourism are, to a certain extent, expected to be hospitable (The Sage Handbook of Tourism Studies 2009: 2 – 3).

Constructing a global image of Bratislava

First and foremost, the city's geographical location determines Bratislava's global context. Due to the proximity of Vienna, Budapest, Győr, Prague, and Brno, which are all potential metropolitan centres, as well as due to its traditional multicultural background, Bratislava has the potential to become a sub-continental metropolitan area. It is because of this potential that Bratislava has been ranked higher than cities in some other Eastern European countries (Ljubljana, Zagreb, Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn), (PHSR 2010: 150 – 151).

When presenting the city as a tourist product, it is its geographical location that represents a key asset as does its historical connection to the capital city of Austria – Vienna. Cooperation between these two cities has led to a common concept of their market strategy under the logo “Twin City”. The centre of Bratislava is directly connected to the centre of Vienna by the Twin City Liner, which, during the main tourist season, makes several round trips per day. Since 2010, Bratislava has started operating an information centre in Vienna called the “Gate to Bratislava”, which is located in the Viennese river harbour. Bratislava's

connection to Vienna has also been demonstrated in the field of culture. Since 2005, the city has been publishing a monthly information brochure called the *Twin City Journal*, which contains an overview of cultural and social events taking place in both cities, publishes articles on different aspects of social life, projects, and tourist attractions.

In the global export of tourist attractions, Bratislava is being presented as an integral part of the region. Bratislava is a part of the “Centrope” project, which originated in 2003 and attempts to connect the border regions of Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Austria. The border cities (Vienna, Bratislava, Győr, and Brno) of the Centrope region are supposed to provide an impulse for the development of the economy, the labour market, science and research, transportation and infrastructure, politics and administration, as well as cultural development. The project’s strategy considers culture as the key objective and catalyst of tourism. A part of the project agenda is an attempt to realise cross-border cultural politics, and another one of its goals is to establish the hipster label “Centrope Culture” and to take “measures enforcing a common identity” (The Future Image of Centrope 2015: 41). Via the “Mycentrope” platform, the project attempts to support inter-regional tourism.

It is only to a limited extent that Bratislava is being offered to tourists as a final destination. This is the case only when it comes to the so called “*stag parties*”, which are predominantly popular among British tourists. Global tourist agencies, however, present the city as a “*me too*” product. In the catalogue of the largest German global tourist operator TUI, Bratislava is presented as a part of a tourist package together with Štetín, Gdansk, and Bucharest or Sofia under the headline “The Kaleidoscope of Eastern Europe” (Marketing Strategy 2008: 47 – 48). In addition, Bratislava is presented by branded as a “little city” of historical significance, which is also captured in the tourist logo: “Bratislava – Little Big City”.

Developing an image of the city in the context of globalisation

Actors who directly come into contact with tourists (design specialised sightseeing tours for them) are very important for the process of developing the image of a city. According to a tourist guide, sightseeing offers, such as “*driver – guide*”, are predominantly aimed at touring Bratislava, and localities in Austria as well as the Czech Republic, such as the Schloss Hof Castle in Southern Austria, the antique Carnuntum location (capital city of the Roman Pannonia Province), and the towns of Šoproň, Lednice, and Valtice.

Specially constructed sightseeing tours by BKIS present diversified images of the city through their tours of the main attractions, such as the “Old and New Bratislava”. Tour guides offer the following products: industrial Bratislava, musicians’ life, 20th century architecture, modern architecture, and the Bratislava coronation festival. Tourists, however, also contribute to constructing the city’s image due to the fact that the guide adjusts the sightseeing programs according to the tourists’ physical condition, age, education, length of stay, etc.

Culture as a tool of tourism

According to documents promoting tourism, culture or, to be more precise, city cultural tours, is at the heart of the tourist industry in Bratislava. At the same time, however, we

do not know the number of visitors who take part in these activities because of the lack of records. Nevertheless, based on research carried out in autumn 2008 focusing on the city's marketing strategy, "over 40% of foreign visitors do not spend more than 10 € on culture and another 27 % spend up to 20 €. Expenditures on cultural activities are minimal" (Marketing Strategy 2008: 28). One of the ways that the city tries to motivate foreign tourists to express interest in local culture is by offering its visitors the "Bratislava City Card", which has been incorporated into the all-European offer of city tourist cards. Thanks to the card, tourists are eligible for discounts at many different cultural events.

Based on qualitative research carried out as a part of the marketing strategy, we can observe trends in the demand for different types of cultural events, which differs based on the tourists' country of origin. Visitors from Germany and France prefer the so-called cognitive tourism, and tourists from Great Britain and Italy travel for entertainment, to make use of a long weekend, and for gastronomy but not for cognitive tourism. According to information provided by the Bratislava Municipality, visitors from Austria "*look for tangible cultural heritage because of the countries' common history during the time of the Habsburg Empire as well as due to residuals of the Habsburg coronation tradition connected to Pressburg, as they unmistakably call the city.*"

Due to its capacity, Bratislava (based on the opinion of a tourist guide, it is a city designed for a maximum three-day visit) has began to profile itself as a "*city break*" locality, which predominantly provides the possibility of culturally-cognitive tourism. According to the authors of the city's marketing strategy, defining Bratislava as "a cultural city" does not provide the city with an image which would be unique and different from the image of other cities. Bratislava needs to attract tourists based on its own USP – Unique Selling Proposition. The following mixture is important for the city's tourism: attractions and "compactness (Little Big City) – history, culture, sport, and entertainment close to the tourists' accommodation – all within their reach" (Marketing Strategy 2008: 14).

Festivals as cultural attractions

In the context of tourism, festivals are an effective tool for giving meaning to a particular place as well as an important urban ritual which has the potential to concentrate diversity. They feature as an exemplary strategy in the process of building a city's image. "Having been inspired by the design and dramaturgy of Christmas markets in several European cities (Nuremberg, Brussels, Strasbourg, Stuttgart), the city's representatives renewed a similar tradition in Bratislava." Similarly, the New Year's celebrations which have been organised since 2000 are supposed to "return the city back on the map of cities which have a tradition of celebrating this occasion". "Open Garden Squares Weekend" or the "Summer Shakespeare Festival", which are a part of the Cultural Summer project and are attended by a significant number of foreign tourists, are also adaptations of similar events taking place in other countries. The "Coronation Town" event, which, according to the city's marketing strategy, is the city's unique characteristic, also takes place in Vienna, Prague, and Budapest.

The initiative to introduce festivals to Bratislava are also the result of a demand from "below", a demand by civil groups of inhabitants or by private agencies (for example the

electronic music festival “Wilsonic”, “Irish songsters”, or commercial festivals such as the beer “Junifest” or the “T-com fiesta” festival).

Thanks to some of these festivals, “the local” is gradually being developed by enabling continuity with local history. The commemorative festival “Commemorating the Victims of the Danube”, which has been taking place since the year 1991, emphasises its connection to the locality: “It is a part of history. It stems from our city’s tradition and the close connection of its inhabitants with the Danube River”.

Some festivals represent the city’s connection and identification with the vineyard region: “The Festival of Young Wine“ and “The Frankovka Festival”. Others present folk culture as a national attribute: the “Days of the ÚEUV Masters” is organised as a part of the Bratislava “Cultural Summer”, the “Slovak Christmas in Bratislava” is a part of the city’s Christmas market. The variety of goods which can be purchased at the markets is limited by the Bratislava Municipality in order to maintain the markets’ local character. Preference is given to products made of wood, glass, leather, wicker, cornhusk, beeswax, etc. In terms of gastronomy, stands at the markets are dominated by traditional Slovak food.

The Christmas market located in the multifunctional Eurovea Complex (built by a multinational corporation), however, offers a rather different array of cuisine: “apart from sauerkraut soup, sausages, punch, wine or mead – *medovina*, visitors can taste delicacies such as Christmas oysters with champagne, grilled scampi, sea fish, the famous Spanish jamon and chorizo ham or manchego cheese.”

Festivals which take place during the main tourist season primarily focus on Slovak visitors. The program for the “Cultural Summer” festival is developed to fit all age categories. It is key for the festival to create a program which will speak to all age groups. Nevertheless, the “Cultural Summer” program does not take into consideration the fact that tourists take part in the main as well as associated festival activities. Organisers rely only on the universal language of music. The “Coronation Festival” focuses on the domestic audience despite the fact that in 2005 organisers of the event highlighted the festival’s importance for presenting Bratislava abroad, and the organisers even addressed other former Slovak royal towns to use similar events to present themselves. “In the past, festivals used to be an important event for surrounding countries. Today, the Coronation Festival mostly aims to present the most glorious moments of Bratislava’s history to the city’s children.” For tourists, these festivals recreate the atmosphere of a living town and its everydayness.

In terms of the foreign visitor rate, the New Year’s celebrations are one of the most important events that take place in the city. The transregional character of this event is demonstrated by its motto “Welcome to Partyslava”, which was originally created by foreign visitors of Bratislava. The city’s foreign language websites all use the term “Partyslava” and thus present the city as a place with a rich night and party life. The city also started using this term as its commercial slogan.

Cultural institutions and cultural attractions

Cultural institutions such as the Slovak National Museum, the Slovak National Theatre or the Danubiana Gallery are all established cultural attractions which are a part of the local recreational tourist business.

Today, the role of a museum is no longer limited to its collections or seasonal exhibitions, but the relation to its visitors is becoming much more important. Museums today focus on experience-based events such as activities connected to the “Night of Museums and Galleries” organised as a part of the International Day of Museums and Galleries. As a part of this event, activities such as a ride on a steam train, sampling medieval food, theatre, wine tasting or competitions during the “Researchers’ Night” are organised by different institutions.

In order to attract more foreign visitors, the Slovak National Theatre is trying to provide them with complex services, and thus it has established cooperation with tourist agencies and other organisations such as Hotel Sheraton and the Twin City Liner.

The specialised modern art gallery, Danubiana, is an example of a creative industry product. The city presents the gallery as “one of the youngest European museums of modern art”, or as “the most extraordinary museum of modern art in Central Europe.” The gallery’s name, logo and architecture (its building has the shape of a boat) identifies with the Danube river. The symbol of a boat is supposed to reflect the gallery’s transregional character: “Boats connect distant lands, people, and cultures.”

Constructing the past as the basis for cultural attractions

Constructing the past is a common way of creating cultural attractions. Some cultural attractions represent only relics of memory, which, according to Pierre Nora, are born and maintained by the feeling that no spontaneous memory exists (Nora 1998: 23).

Some cultural attractions which attempt to maintain continuity with the past by having visitors relive the experience have been held repeatedly every year. The program of the “Coronation Festival” imitates the historical coronations of kings and queens which took place in Bratislava between the 16th and 19th century. The act of coronation, knight dubbing ceremonies, as well as other extinct ceremonials are re-enacted during the festival. A procession made up of some 120 actors and extras dress in contemporary costumes passes through the city following the so called coronation trail (brass crowns have been permanently embedded into the cobblestone pavement). As a part of the “Coronation Festival”, other attractions are set up, such as the Bratislava market with period craftsmen, musicians and jugglers, knight tournaments, and re-enacting historical battles. In addition, period cuisine is presented (Hungarian sausages, Pressburg baked rolls, coronation wine, beer from the King’s brewery) as well as the traditional “roasting the coronation ox”. According to the organisers, all meals are based on “centuries-old recipes”.

“The International Festival of Water Sprites” is an event which also tries to create continuity with an extinct tradition of the city: “it is linked to the allegoric processions of the fishermen and water sprites’ guild, which can be found in 18th century records”. The Festival also holds an international competition in cooking Danube-fish soup, which is an attempt by the organisers to create a local rarity by constructing the past through food: “In the Middle Ages, apart from vine-dressers and craftsmen, fishermen formed the third largest community in Bratislava. Thus, there are tens if not hundreds of Danube-fish cooking recipes which can be found in the traditional Bratislava cuisine.”

Reference to the past is also an effective strategy when it comes to commercial initiatives. An example of this is an advertisement for the sight-seeing automobile Pressburger – Oldtimer, which takes tourists around the city's historical centre: "And brings one back to the time of rich history and beauty of the old centre of Bratislava".

Conclusion

In this ethnographic report, I have attempted to point out how relative the term "cultural attractions" is, and that it is through these attractions that the current image of Bratislava as a tourist destination and as an object of tourist experience is being created. Bratislava's marketing strategy presents the city as one complex area. And from the perspective of tourism, it is viewed as a part of a wider region.

By organising festivals, the city aims to create a model strategy for making it more attractive and living-friendly. Based on Richards's reflections on tourism, we can characterise culture not simply as a product, but rather as a process. During this process, cultural institutions are also transformed, much like cultural attractions.

The city's cultural particularities, which represent the "local", are created and transformed by the so called "practices of tourist representation" (for example by the array of goods offered at the Christmas markets, by the themes and programmes of festivals, and by using nostalgia as a means of creating tourist attractions). We cannot define tourism simply as a global phenomenon which initiates change because localities are not only a static recipient.

LEISURE TIME IN SLOVAK CITIES – GLOBAL AND LOCAL PATTERNS

Ivan Chorvát

In this paper¹ we will concentrate on the so-called free time (leisure time) which has the potential to adequately define the intensity and scope of changes in the area of lifestyle of individuals as well as in the area of family life. In today's society, characterized by its technological changes, we have noticed a close relationship between the nature of one's lifestyle and the amount and structure of free time. This relationship is constantly reinforced, objectively in proportion to the amount of free time one has, as well as subjectively in proportion to the significance assigned to the leisure time activity (Duffková – Urban – Dubský 2008).

Despite the fact that in modern society leisure time is considered to be an individualised event (a space where one is freer than anywhere else to use one's own judgement to do as one pleases according to one's interests and preferred values), it is not solely dependent on individual choice, but always to a certain extent dependent on the broader social context. In this report, we will concentrate mainly on the locality where leisure time activities are carried out in Slovakia. We will try to answer the question whether the place one lives influences the type of activities one seeks out during one's leisure time, whether despite the globalisation processes and trends we can still talk about common patterns of spending leisure time in Slovakia, or whether these activities are different and heterogeneous due to the social status of an individual, and gender and age differences, which obviously bring differentiation, but also due to local conditions, mainly the size of the place of residence and the region where a person lives. Given the character and overall topic of this publication, we will concentrate in more detail on the free time activities inhabitants of bigger Slovak cities prefer.

Based on the changes in people's lifestyle after the year 1989, we notice two partially contradictory tendencies in the area of spending leisure time (Špaček – Šafr 2010). The fact that people were given more opportunities for self-realisation in the area of their professions and that they wanted higher incomes, and also due to the changes on the labour market, which was now focused more on performance, it called for spending more time at work. On the other hand, the changes and trends in institutions, infrastructure, globalisation and culture (the influx of products, ideas and lifestyles from the West, the increased cultural production and legitimization of many subcultures) significantly expanded the possibilities for Slovaks to spend their leisure time. New technologies, as a defining feature of globalisation trends, play an important role in this regard. They influence the forms of spending leisure time – it ranges from the internationalisation of television through satellite programmes, to the availability of PCs and laptops as a means of sharing information on the internet, contacting people through electronic mail and social

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networks, playing PC games, living virtual lives, and the constantly improving recording, storage and reproduction technologies and mediums, all the way to developments in the area of transport technologies, services and infrastructure, which make distances shorter and enable a constantly increasing number of people to travel more often to destinations which before seemed far away.

Not a lot of attention is given to the topic of leisure time in contemporary Slovak sociology. The most significant, most complex, and at the same time most up-to-date source of data on the topic of leisure time is data from the research module “Free time and sport”, conducted in October 2008 as a part of the international comparison programme called the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). This sociological research was conducted by the agency FOCUS, s.r.o. on a sample of 1 138 respondents and is representative of the population of the Slovak Republic over the age of 18, by age, gender, education, nationality, size of the place of residence and region (Volný čas a šport 2009 / Free time and sport 2009). I will therefore base my report mainly on the findings of this project.

How do we spend our free time?

Let us start by looking at the structure of Slovak leisure time activities. Based on research, we can state that the most frequent free time activities are: *watching TV, videos and DVDs, listening to music, meeting friends, doing manual and handicraft work, and spending time on the internet and at the computer.*² Does the place of residence affect the most frequent activities performed to make use of leisure time? In order to interpret the results in this part of the report, we will divide places of residence into seven categories according to their size: up to 2 000 inhabitants, 2001 – 5 000 inhabitants, 5 001 – 10 000 inhabitants, 10 001 – 20 000 inhabitants, 20 001 – 50 000 inhabitants, 50 001 – 100 000 inhabitants and 100 001 and more inhabitants.

It is no surprise that watching TV, DVDs and videos is not only the most frequent activity for people in Slovakia, but is also a universal activity regardless of the type of place of residence. The place of residence does not seem to have a significant influence on this activity. Approximately 7 out of 10 respondents in all the types of places of residence, as divided above, watch the mentioned media daily (it starts at 67.7 % in cities with 10 001 – 20 000 inhabitants and goes up to 77.9 % in rural areas which belong in the category 2001 – 5 000 inhabitants). Over 90% of respondents in all types of places of residence admit to watching TV, DVDs and videos daily or a few times per week (in the category 5 001 – 10 000, the number is as high as 98.7 % of respondents). There are no significant differences in the various places of residence in the second most frequent activity: listening to music. In questionnaires where respondents are supposed to give their opinion on all items on a list of activities, music is often marked much more frequently than with any other leisure time activity. These results from the data are misrepresentative of the actual significance listening to music plays in the structure of activities and interests of the respondent. This is because it is not clear whether we are talking about intentionally listening to music while also focusing on it, on a daily basis for example, or whether this is just listening to

² This is the order in which the most frequented activities come in the event we combine the following two choices: “daily” and “a few times per week”.

music in the background, where music only accompanies other more important activities (listening to music while doing manual work, while studying, while doing house chores, while driving, etc.). Interestingly, when asked about listening to music in a different way, this activity does not list among the most frequent leisure time activities.

Social activities are an important part of Slovak's life, at least judging by the frequency of meeting friends during their free time. Half of the respondents (51.7 % of the whole sample – men and women equally) meet their friends daily or a few times per week. Again, the place of residence does not bring about any big differences on this issue. However, meeting daily with friends is more often cited among the younger respondents, aged 18 – 24.

The fourth most frequently listed free time activity is doing manual and handicraft work (working in the garden, working with wood or metals, sewing, etc. were quoted as examples). Given the character of this activity, we expected to find more noticeable differences in the frequency of this activity in the answers by respondents from rural places and respondents from bigger cities. This hypothesis was confirmed; the frequency of doing manual and handicraft work on a daily basis declines with the increasing size of the place of residency (with the exception of larger cities of more than 100 000 inhabitants). The number dropped from almost 30 percent of respondents from rural places of up to 2 000 inhabitants, who admit doing manual work in their free time daily, to 4.3 percent of such respondents who live in cities of 50 001 up to 100 000 inhabitants. It may come as a surprise that in the biggest cities, with a population of more than 100 000, the number of people who spend their free time doing manual activities daily is not the lowest. In the three categories of cities with a population above 20 000, the differences on this issue are not statistically significant. If we combine the categories of respondents who do manual activities in their free time daily and a few times per week (these respondents can be labelled as the ones focused on manual activities in their free time), we notice a more visible line dividing the places of residence with up to 10 000 inhabitants. Approximately half to two-thirds of the respondents have a preference for this activity from places of residence with a population of more than 10 000, where only a fourth to a third of the population devotes their free time to manual and handicraft work. The dividing line at the place of residence of 10 000 inhabitants is also present in the frequency of answers by people who claim they never spend time doing manual and handicraft work.

We can legitimately assume that the biggest increase in the structure of free time activities that took place in the most recent past (especially after the year 2002) is recorded in the time spent on the internet, or better say, at the computer (Zeman 2008). The ISSP Free time and sport research finds this activity on the fifth place, or actually as the third most frequent if we take into consideration only those respondents who answered that they spend their free time on an activity "daily". Every fifth inhabitant of Slovakia (20.1 % of respondents) spend their free time on the internet or at the computer daily. It is no surprise that this activity is very much dependent on age and its representation in the structure of leisure time activities decreases with the increase of age. (In the age category of 18 – 24, more than half of the respondents sits at the computer daily, while in the age category of above 65 yearsn, it is just 2 in 100 respondents). If we look at the distribution of this

activity by the size of places of residence, we find that the internet and computer are a part of the leisure time more often in bigger cities with a population of more than 50 000, where they are a significant free time activity for more than a half of the population. This is in contrast to the third of respondents from smaller cities (from 5 000 to 50 000 inhabitants) who spend most of their free time doing this activity and with the fourth of respondents from rural places (with up to 5 000 inhabitants).

The dividing line between bigger cities on one side and smaller cities and the countryside on the other is also noticeable when looking at the frequency of answers declaring that they never spend their free time on the internet or at the computer. While in bigger towns (of more than 100 000 inhabitants) only one out of four respondents answered this way; in towns with a population between 50 001 and 100 000, one out of three respondents answered this way, and in other places of residence at least a half of the respondents claim that they never sit at the computer in their free time (most such answers are recorded in places of residence of 2 001 to 5 000 inhabitants – 60.4 %).

While spending free time on the internet or at the computer is a phenomenon characteristic for larger cities, in the case of physical activities, such as sport, fitness and taking walks, an imaginary dividing line is drawn between the city and the countryside. We can assume that people living in rural places (of up to 5 000 inhabitants) carry out physical activities more in the form of productive manual activities, which means they work more around the house or in the garden. In addition, this most probably depends on the possibilities the infrastructure of the urban space provides for active exercise. Bigger cities probably offer more possibilities for sport (playing fields, indoor sport facilities, swimming pools, fitness centres). It seems that the biggest exercise enthusiasts are respondents from cities of 50 001 to 100 000 inhabitants, where the number of those who do exercise activities on a daily basis (20 %) significantly outnumbers the number of people in other urban spaces who claim to exercise daily. This starts at 7.3 % of respondents in cities of 20 001 to 50 000 inhabitants, and increases to 11.6 % of respondents in cities with 10 001 to 20 000 inhabitants; in the countryside, it is only one in twenty who admits to spending daily his or her free time doing active exercise).

A more detailed look at cultural activities (going to cultural events such as concerts, theatre performances and exhibitions) tells us that the inhabitants of Slovakia are only occasional active consumers of culture, and a large part of them visits cultural events only “a few times per year or less”, or “never”. The number of “never” answers again divides respondents into two groups. One of them is comprised of people from bigger cities (of more than 50 000 inhabitants), the other group is made up of people who live in cities with a population of less than 50 000 inhabitants or who live in the countryside. One-fifth of respondents from bigger cities (50 001 to 100 000 inhabitants) never goes to cultural events; in cities with more than 100 000 inhabitants this is one-fourth of respondents. With the second group of respondents (made up of people who live in cities with a population of less than 50 000 inhabitants or who live in the countryside) the ratio of people who never go to cultural events is as high as four out of ten. A half of the inhabitants of Slovakia (including respondents from bigger cities) find time for culture only “a few times per year or less often”.

The above mentioned data provided us with basic information about the free time activities of the inhabitants of Slovakia, specified by the size of their place of residence. We found out that some activities are more typical for rural areas and others for urban spaces. With some activities, however, the dividing line was not on the axis of rural/urban, but rather on the axis of bigger city/smaller city and the countryside.

Leisure time activities of residents in Bratislava, Košice and other bigger cities

In the following section of this report we will look at whether it is possible to find significant differences between the ways inhabitants of two big cities, Bratislava and Košice, and cities with a population of 50 001 to 100 000 (which are considered to be bigger cities³ in the Slovak context) spend their free time. Given the fact that the number of respondents in the place of residence from 50 001 to 100 000 inhabitants was only 132, we will evaluate these bigger cities as one unit and not divide them into 9 individual units, as this would not bring statistically significant findings.

89 respondents from Bratislava and 57 respondents from Košice participated in the ISSP Free time and sport research. We looked at statistically significant differences based on an empirical frequencies test, which uses adjusted residuals in a two-dimensional classification of values.

The most frequent free time activity (watching TV, DVDs and videos) brings significant differences between the monitored places of residence. In the case of larger cities of 50 001 to 100 000 inhabitants, the results are almost identical to the results representing the whole Slovakia. However, significant differences appear in the case of the two big cities. We can say that this free time activity is significantly different in the two biggest Slovak cities from how it is practiced in other larger Slovak cities as well as from the pan-Slovak average. In the case of Bratislava watching TV, DVDs and videos in one's free time is less frequent; in the case of Košice, it is much more frequent.

The situation changes when we look at the activity of going to the cinema. A significantly higher number of people in Bratislava (21.3 %) go to the cinema "a few times per month", while in the case of respondents from Košice, this answer is much less frequent (3.5 %) in comparison to the other monitored categories (the pan-Slovak average is 8.6 %). The popularity of the cinema among people from Bratislava (in comparison with the city of Košice and cities with a population between 50 001 - 100 000) is represented also in the lower number of people from the capital city who claim they never go to the cinema. When we analysed the number of visits to cultural events (concerts, theatre performances, exhibitions) earlier in the report, we stated that a fourth of respondents from cities with a population of above 100 000 never goes to cultural events and that this number is actually higher than that of respondents from cities with a population from 50 001 to 100 000. When looking closely at the big cities, again we see a big difference between the answers of people from Bratislava and Košice who claim that they never go to cultural events. While in Bratislava the percentage of such people is 17% (which is slightly lower than in cities with a population from 50 001 to 100 000, where 20.5% of respondents claim they never take part at cultural

³ The following cities (listed in alphabetical order) fall into this category: Banská Bystrica, Martin, Nitra, Poprad, Prešov, Prievidza, Trenčín, Trnava and Žilina.

events), in the case of Košice, the percentage of such people is as high as 36.2%, which actually matches the pan-Slovak average in this category. Based on the data cited, we can state that respondents from Košice significantly differ from those in Bratislava in their interest in culture and behave similarly to inhabitants from smaller places of residence.

The situation is very similar in the case of physical activities (i.e. sport, fitness and taking walks). In the case of the city of Košice, again we see different patterns of behaviour than in Bratislava and in other bigger cities. While 20 % of the inhabitants of bigger cities and 13.6 % of people in Bratislava take time for sport activities (if we combine the following two answers – daily and a few times per week, we come to 45 % of respondents in both categories), only 3.5% of respondents from Košice do sport every day (or 21 % of respondents from Košice do sports a few times per week⁴). It is, therefore, not surprising that every fourth respondent in Košice states that he or she never does sports, while in Bratislava and other cities with a population above 50 000, the percentage of respondents with such an answer is approximately 16 %.

We can therefore state that the inhabitants of Košice prefer to spend their free time doing passive activities. Among the dominant ones is watching various media (television, DVD, video), which goes at the expense of other free time activities. The frequency with which they perform other activities (mainly activities in the area of culture and sport) in their free time is different not only from the free time habits of the people in Bratislava but also of people in other bigger places of residence. In this sense, their behaviour is closer to the free time habits of the rural population in Slovakia. This pattern is not the same in the case of manual work and gardening. The number of inhabitants of Košice who spend their free time doing these activities daily or a few times a week is lower than in the categories of respondents from other places of residence, regardless of whether it is rural or urban places. This again supports the hypothesis that the people of Košice have significantly passive patterns of spending their free time. In this case, the amount of people from Bratislava who work manually or in the garden daily is surprisingly significantly higher not only in comparison to the people in Košice, but also in comparison with the category of cities with a population above 50 000. This could be a sign indicating that Iveta Radičová's (1989) hypothesis of from the 1980's about the "soil-based pattern" of spending free time (a hypothesis saying that a large portion of the Slovak population spends its free time working in the garden, with soil, etc.) in Slovakia is still valid. It is still true that global patterns of behaviour have been influencing people's lifestyle and have been interfering with the urban lifestyle in continuously smaller places of residence. However, it is also true that local circumstances, which can limit the adoption of some of the more universal cultural patterns, even in the case of bigger cities, still play an important role. In the case of the people of Bratislava, the fact that they spend more time working manually and in the garden is most probably also connected to the greater possibilities of ownership or the availability of soil (gardens, cottages, vineyards, etc.).

With these findings, we naturally ask whether it is possible to identify the reasons behind the Košice residents' leisure time behaviour, which seems non-standard in comparison to other people from bigger Slovak cities. If we monitor only the activities used to fill people's

⁴ This is a sum of answers – daily and a few times per week.

free time and not take into account the interconnection of leisure time with other spheres of our daily life, especially with the area of work and employment, we will most probably arrive at a very limited understanding of free time activities and their differentiation according to places of residence. The lower participation in cultural and sport activities might partially be the outcome of the need for higher work performance, or of the existential need to have more than one job due to the lower average salaries in the region, or it can be a result of the emphasis placed on the time spent with family (please see note 7), which leaves less time and space for activities which are more time and financially demanding. However, these are only hypotheses since this area was not directly researched in the ISSP Free time and sport 2008 research. Nevertheless, answers to the hypotheses can be partially unveiled when we analyse the answers to the questions: *In your free time, how often a) are you bored b) do you feel rushed, stressed c) do you catch yourself thinking about work?* Statistically significant differences are noticeable mainly in answers b) and c).

Almost half of the Košice respondents answer that it is very often or quite often that they feel rushed in their free time, while one-third of the respondents from Bratislava and from cities with a population between 50 001 and 100 000 claims to feel this way. On the contrary, 30 % of respondents from cities with a population between 50 001 and 100 000 feel rushed in their free time only rarely or never. With the inhabitants of Bratislava the percentage of people who rarely or never feel rushed in their free time is almost 43 % and only 12.3 % of those asked in Košice feel this way. Inhabitants of Košice also think about their work in their free time more often. The percentage of people from Košice who think about work in their free time rarely or never is lower in comparison to the answers of people from Bratislava and from cities with a population between 50 001 and 100 000.

The prevalence of passive leisure time activities is also visible in the case of people from Košice when analysing their preferred holiday destinations. A holiday by water (sea, lakes, etc.) is a typically passive way to spend a holiday. 70.2% of respondents from Košice prefer this kind of vacation as their first choice, while 55.6% of respondents from Bratislava put this kind of holiday as first on their list, and in the case of respondents from cities with a population between 50 001 and 100 000, 37.6 % of them would react this way. In the category last mentioned, there is a significant percentage of people who claim they do not go on holiday (30 % of them claim so); in the case of respondents from Košice it is 14% and approximately 3 percent of Bratislava respondents claim this).

Local personalities and global patterns

Our analysis of the selected data from the Free time and sport research realised as a part of the International programme ISSP, confirms that the way people spend their free time, the type of leisure activities they prefer and the frequency Slovaks do their most common activities do not depend only on age, gender, education, social status and family status, etc.⁵, but also depends on the size of their place of residence.

The difference on the rural-urban axis is also an important factor in determining the nature of leisure time activities and lifestyle of the Slovak people. In comparison with

⁵ For the differences in leisure activities dependent on more standard socio-demographic indicators (not only by the size of the place of residence), see Chorvát (2010).

previous periods, today in Slovakia we are witnessing a wider range of preferences for leisure and holiday activities, which are gradually becoming an important factor in defining the socio-economic position of people and an important factor affecting their lifestyle. This trend is rising in our country as the Slovak society is becoming a part of the broader international society in the field of economic, politics and culture, and its inhabitants are thus starting to adopt more features of the global lifestyle. However, globalisation, with regards to lifestyle, is not an inevitable phenomenon, and we can even see that with the example of Slovakia, that the national specifics and local contexts which modify the adoption of changes in lifestyle, play a role in this process. In the case of the Slovakia population, manual work and physical activities still remain a relevant component of their free time activities. This also applies to a significant part of the urban society, which is caused by a certain dependence on socio-cultural models of spending free time from the past. The urban nature of the place of residence (in the Slovak context) might also not necessarily mean a higher adherence to individualist and more complex forms of leisure activities, which focus on the cultural and physical development of a person.

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