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*Miloš Tomandl  
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## CONTENTS

### *Editorial Note*

### *Studies*

**Zuzana Hrdličková, *Dynamics of Female Emancipation: The Case of Tamil Women and Sri Lankan Civil War ...* (5)**

**Mariana Pfliegerová, *Randai: The Folk Theatre of Minangkabau ...* (14)**

**Lenka Smolinská, *Who Says, That We Are Poor? Comments on The Discourse on Poverty ...* (38)**

### *Summaries of Studies*

**Monika Baer, *Feminist Critique in Cultural Anthropology: A Sketch on Post-Socialist Context ...* (43)**

**Lucie Blažková, *Waxhandler Augustin Čížek in Příbram: 1887–1946 ...* (43)**

**Marcin Brocki, *Semiotic Anthropology in Poland ...* (44)**

**Michaela Budiman, *Conversion to Christianity among the Toraja ...* (45)**

**Michaela Budiman, *Toraja Pentecostals and their Funeral ...* (45)**

**Michaela Budiman, *Toraja Funeral Rituals in the Past and Presence ...* (45)**

**Michaela Budiman-Rybková – Radmila Lorencová, *The Toraja Burial Rituals and the Influence of the Social Stratification on their Form ...* (46)**

**David César, *The Selected Transatlantic Slave Trade: The Rise of the Atlantaic Slave Trade Wars in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century ...* (46)**

**Dagnosław, Demski, *Between Ritualisation of the Past and Adaptation: Man in a Situation of Cultural Disorientation ...* (47)**

**Konrad Górny, *Borderland and new Localization ...* (47)**

**Olga Heldenbrug, *Visibility and Invisibility of Gods and Function of Stare in the Book of Japanese Myths Kojiki I ...* (47)**

- Lucie Hronešová, *Ethnographical Specificity of Initial Years of the Czech History of Modern Graffiti ...* (48)
- Petr Janeček, *Prague Local Legends by Popelka Biliánová and their Oral Authenticity ...* (49)
- Jana Jetmarová, *Andean Music in Chronicles of Garcilaso de la Vega and Guaman Poma de Ayala ...* (50)
- Oldřich Kašpar, *Czech Sources of the 15<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries in the Spanish, Portugal and Mexican Resources ...* (50)
- Oldřich Kašpar, *New World as an Exotic Curiosity in the European Opera of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries ...* (50)
- Tomáš Kobes, *The Transformation of the “Gipsy Question” and Regional Development: Genealogical Concept ...* (51)
- Zuzana Korecká, *Huitzilopochtli in the Czech Baroque Society ...* (52)
- Zuzana Krátka, *„We and Them“ from the Ethnic Perspective in the Socio-Professional Society of Crew Members Working on the Cruise Ships ...* (52)
- Maciej Kurcz, *Between the River and the Desert: The Category of a Boundary in the Folk Culture of the North-Sudanese Muslims ...* (53)
- Maciej Kurcz, *How to Survive in an African City? Migrant to the Urbanization Process in Southern Sudan Juba ...* (53)
- Pavol Martuliak, *Tradicional Habits in Villages of Novohradské Podjavorie ...* (54)
- Ladislav Mlynka, *Social Communication as a Demonstration of Status Hierarchy ...* (54)
- Jan Pargač, *First Attempt at the Independence in Kazakhstan: Inteligentsia and National Movement “Alash” at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century ...* (55)
- Jan Pargač, *The Central Asian Residential Community “Mahalla” in Comparison to Central European Local Community ...* (55)
- Michal Petrášek, *Noncoital Sexual Intercourse Among Young People in Secondary Schools in the Pilsen Region ...* (56)
- Jan Pohunek, *Youth Camping Movements as a Subculture ...* (56)
- Jan Pokorný, *Absolute Reference Frame and Culture ...* (56)
- Jaroslav Skupnik, *Generalized Exchange, Unilinearity and Simultaneity of Residential Patterns: What are Motivations for the Human Actions ...* (57)

- Viktor Svobodník, *Vlastenecká Liga (The Patriotic League), Skinheads and Czech (National) Culture ...* (57)
- Leoš Šatava, *Language and its Role in Ethnic Context ...* (58)
- Irena Štěpánová, *Harmony in the Life of Woman: A Journal for the Housewives 1883–1893 and Maturation of an Author ...* (58)
- Irena Štěpánová, *Traditional Rituals in the Background of a Small Town at the Turn of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries ...* (59)
- Miloš Tomandl, *Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Urban and Sub-Urban Environment: The Case of Jihlava Language Island ...* (59)
- Miloš Tomandl, *National Identity in an Ethnomethodological Perspective ...* (59)
- Miloš Tomandl, *On Theoretical Aspects of Creation of Social Identity ...* (60)
- Miloš Tomandl, *Prescriptive Dimension and Socio-Cultural Activities of Local Society ...* (60)
- Marie Tůmová, *Wupatki Pueblo: Continuity and Native Architecture of the American Southwest ...* (60)
- Jiří Vesecký, *Islamofobia in the Czech Republic: Local Specifics and the Press Analysis ...* (61)
- Martin Vostřel, *Social and Cultural Live in Louny between 1880–1914 ...* (62)
- František Vrhel, *Čestmír Loukotka and Exotic Languages: Formosan Languages ...* (62)
- František Vrhel, *Inner Linguistic Form ...* (63)
- František Vrhel, *Proper Names: Several Ethnological Thought ...* (63)
- František Vrhel, *Wittgenstein and Ethnology: James G. Frazer ...* (63)
- Monika Zizlerová, *Living nad Local Customs of Huntsmen of the Brdy Microregion ...* (64)

### *Biographical Notes*



## EDITORIAL NOTE

The collection of studies and summaries of studies includes the texts published in the scientific volume of the Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague *Manuscripta Ethnologica*. Formally, the individual texts are ordered alphabetically according to the names of their authors and titles. Information concerning the occupation and specialization of the individual authors can be found in the final part of the volume entitled “Biographical Notes”.

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## ZUZANA HRDLIČKOVÁ DYNAMICS OF FEMALE EMANCIPATION: THE CASE OF TAMIL WOMEN AND SRI LANKAN CIVIL WAR

### Introduction

Because of a deep interest in Tamil culture and my knowledge of Tamil language, I have carried out several study visits to India and Sri Lanka over the last 10 years. As a cultural anthropologist, I have noticed that there were significant behavioral differences between Tamil women in India and in Sri Lanka. In order to find out why there had been such disparities, I carried out a two year field research project in Sri Lanka (between 2005–2006, and 2007–2008). It revealed that despite differences in social structures (such as Sri Lankan Tamil society being matrilineal and Indian being patrilineal, and smaller variety of Tamil castes in Sri Lanka) the most significant factor making Tamil women in Sri Lanka so different from those in India was the armed conflict that has been raging in Sri Lanka for more than 25 years. In this article I present some of my findings of how the war has changed Sri Lankan Tamil women, their gender stereotype and their social status.

### Gender stereotyping and war

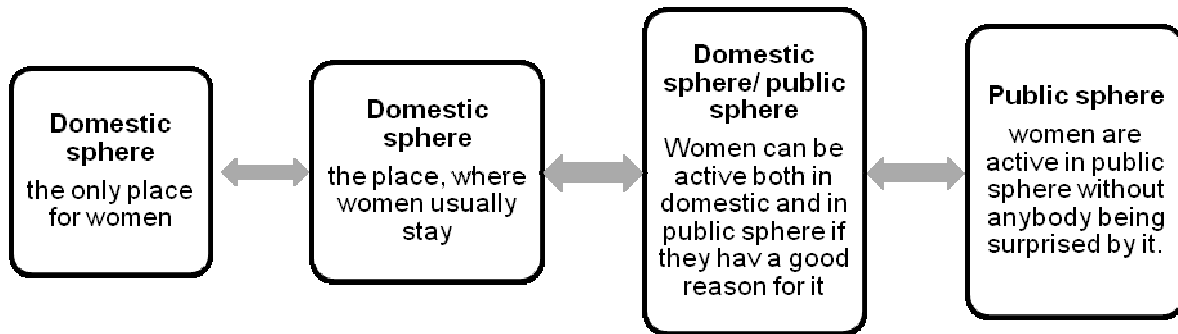
Gender is a concept that defines how people should behave and what their characteristics should be depending on their sex. Content of this category varies from culture to culture, therefore gender is a cultural based concept. Society members structure their thinking about people along gender stereotypes – simplified images of what a masculine man or what a feminine woman should be like, what qualities they should have and how they should behave and mutually interact. In reality, however, many people do not fit entirely in these categories. (Many women have qualities deemed as masculine and many men have qualities defined as feminine). According to Renzetti and Curran<sup>1)</sup>, every society has a sex based gender system that has at least three features: 1) social construction of gender categories based on biological sex, 2) division of work based on sex, and 3) social regulation of sexuality. The gender system is anchored in social institutions, economical, political and educational systems, in religious and in family structures. Sex based gender systems vary across cultures and historical eras and have a deep impact on the lives of men and women.

Gender categories within societies change over time due to various factors. The ideal man in Europe today is very different from the one of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when it was for example quite common for men to cry in public. Change of a certain gender stereotype can have its roots in the society's technological advancement, economic transformation, political revolution, religious conversion, engagement with foreign cultures and other causes. However, one of the most significant factors that has a huge impact on shifting gender categories is war. Armed conflict causes all the happenings mentioned above, it causes total chaos of societal norms and accelerates several fold modification of gender stereotypes.

Especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have wars due to technological advancement and bigger effectiveness of weapons, started impacting much more on the lives of civilian populations than in previous centuries.<sup>2)</sup> Wars disrupt everyday lives of people-warzone populations are affected by death, displacement, and violence. However, men, women and children are affected by war in different ways. Men are those who usually fight, (even though the last 50 years have seen an increasing number of women taking part in hostilities as combatants) and die in massive numbers. Children are traumatized by witnessing violence whilst their education and health suffer significantly. Women on the other hand are mostly responsible for the survival of their families – children and elderly and they often take on duties normally perceived as male tasks. They are also subjected to sexual violence, which in various cultures has different meanings and has also different social ramifications for women, such as loss of social status, ostracization, etc.<sup>3)</sup>

During war, old social norms cease to be valid, war changes everything. The anarchy of war usually results into an amalgamation of duties that had been before war attributed to one or the other gender. We therefore often see the masculinization of women (taking on breadwinning roles, fighting in guerrilla units, etc.) and the feminization of men (who usually for security reasons can't move around freely and take on female tasks). The nature of change of gender categories depends on the character of the war – what are the parties to the conflict fighting for, how long has the conflict been going on, and how much it changes the men/women ratio in the affected society. The aim of this article is to see how warfare and long term hostilities change the category of femininity. I characterize the war inflicted changes of female gender stereotype in two ways:

1) On the scale of female agency from domestic sphere only to their absolutely free movement in the public sphere. War can cause a shift. For example in a culture, where before the war, women were staying at home, war can make them enter the public sphere (to work in factories for example) as it happened in Europe during world wars. The shift can also, depending on the ideology of parties to the conflict, be in the opposite direction: in a culture where it was normal for women to be active in public sphere, the war can force them back into the domestic sphere, as in Iraq after the invasion of allied forces and the rise of militant islamist groups and the power of tribal authorities.



As the above diagram demonstrates, war can therefore contribute to female emancipation, if we define emancipation as women’s agency in the public. However, war can also make them retreat to the domestic sphere and loose their right to be present in public sphere.<sup>4)</sup>

2) The shift of gender stereotype can be also characterized by the political agenda of combating parties. The aim of some fighting entities is preservation of values that were prevalent in pre-war society, and they are hoping that after war everything will be as before. The parties to the conflict which have an innovative ideology, i.e. they are fighting for a new society with different values, often hope that at the end of the war, there will be a new man and a new woman with whatever qualities they attribute to them. Some parties to the conflict fight for reinstatement of ancient traditions, which they often link with religion and they promote such gender stereotypes they deem to belong to the ancient tradition.

### The case of Tamil women in Sri Lanka

I have observed dynamics of gender stereotype transformation in Tamil society in Sri Lanka. During my two-year field research, I have carried out many interviews with Tamil men and women. They all said that war has had serious impact on their society, and that especially women have changed significantly.

#### Tamil Women before the war

The gender stereotyping of Tamil culture in Sri Lanka is based on a mixture of old Dravidian beliefs<sup>5)</sup> and Laws of Manu, a 2000 year old dharmasastra text.<sup>6)</sup> The gender system of the pre-war Tamil civilian society in Sri Lanka can be characterized by a binary opposition of chaste woman versus unchaste man.<sup>7)</sup>

A Tamil woman thus has to poses a crucial quality of paramount importance –*karpu*<sup>8)</sup>, most commonly translated as chastity. It is an omnipresent manipulative concept<sup>9)</sup> that urges Tamil women to apply a self-controlling mode of behavior in their daily lives. For unmarried women, chastity means they have to remain virgins and thus gender segregation is carefully practiced in Tamil society. Also married women have to remain chaste – as wives, they are supposed to have only one man – their husband, so they too have to follow rules of gender segregation and not mix with unrelated men.

This way of conceptualizing Tamil women’s chastity has in the pre-war years had further implications regarding female behavior, sphere of agency and other areas as shown in the table below:

	Prewar definition of <i>karpu</i>
Agency	Domestic sphere

Interactivity	Gender segregation
Limitations	Limited independent mobility in the public (allowed if accompanied by relatives, not able to ride a bicycle)
Auspicious state	A housewife with male element, (she is married)

Tamil women were to dress conservatively, their shoulders, body and legs were covered by the typical dress sari – a 6 meter long piece of fabric tied around the woman’s body and a blouse around her chest. Their waist long hair had to be tied in a braid, however, it did not need to be covered by scarf. Interestingly, from a European point of view, it may be paradox, that the part of body which could be seen was the woman’s waist. Tamil women in the pre-war years were prevented from being too active in the public sphere. Even though some women did work in jobs labeled as typically female, such as teaching and nursing, most of them were housewives and their husbands were the breadwinners. The chastity bound code of conduct also meant that women were not supposed to do things that were “not for them” – such as climbing trees, drinking alcohol, smoking, interacting with unrelated men or coming home after sunset. Women had a limited ability to act in public and were unable to solve issues by interacting outside their homes. A lot of them did not know how to pay bills, which bus to take to the town and how to communicate with government officers. Their mobility in the public was also limited by the fact that they were not allowed to ride bicycles, as many feared they would lose their virginity and this too was considered to be inappropriate for married women. Tamil women were supposed to be rather passive, leaving the decision making to their male relatives, be it they fathers, brothers, husbands or sons.

If a woman did not strictly obey rules of chaste behavior and did things that were “not for women”, society (mainly older women) would construct numerous stories and gossip around her sexuality, implicitly labeling her as the “unchaste one”, which could put her whole future life in jeopardy. Woman’s chastity was an absolutely crucial quality during the search for a life partner.

Tamil society dwells on caste structure, which puts a big emphasis on endogamy – i.e. members of one caste can marry only members of the same caste. Tamil marriages therefore are usually arranged by parents or marriage brokers. When looking for a future spouse, the parents looked for specific criteria, besides matching astrological horoscopes and same caste membership, the bride’s reputation had to be clean (in other words neighbors had to claim she had behaved in chaste way), and her family had to provide dowry, usually a house for the couple and big amounts of cash for the bridegroom’s family. If the girl’s reputation was not good, no matter how big her dowry was, she was not eligible for marriage. Even if a woman lost her *karpu* against her will, such as through rape, she would never be able to get married, she would be viewed as “damaged goods” and if she was married, it would be likely that her husband would abandon her.

A married Tamil woman had to treat her husband as a god, she had to bear patiently all his vices and she had to remain self-controlled in order to be labeled as the chaste one. My informant Sharmila from Jaffna confirmed this and added a popular Tamil saying: *n* “*Kallaṅālum kaṅavan, pullaṅālum purūṣan*” – “*May he be (as hard) as a rock, or (as soft) as grass, he always is a husband*“. A married woman was responsible for preserving her family’s good reputation. Whatever bad happened, she was responsible for the misfortune. Therefore, she guarded herself and her daughters to behave in a chaste way. Women were watchdogs of other women’s chastity. This way of conceptualizing has, however, allowed



domestic and gender based violence to be widespread and viewed as a private family matter in Tamil society in Sri Lanka.

Divorce was perceived as something socially unacceptable, and yet again a woman’s fault. Divorced women lacked their male element and the society would direct verbal violence against them. Their status resembled the one of widows who were being considered bad luck because they lacked a male element. They were not being invited to any happy events such as celebrations of coming of age, birthday parties and weddings. In addition, widows could not under any circumstances remarry and they had to practice extreme asceticism in terms of diet and clothing; i.e. they ate vegetarian meals and they dressed in very plain clothes.

From the lines above, we can summarize that the sex based gender system of Tamil Society in Sri Lanka can be characterized by the binary opposition of chaste woman versus unchaste man, and it has restricted female mobility and agency to domestic sphere and has encouraged her to be rather passive and submissive, leaving the decision making and active role to a man.

<b>Woman</b>	<b>Man</b>
Chaste	Unchaste
Domestic sphere	Public sphere
Passivity (submissive)	Activity (decision making)

However, this social construct faces a lot of challenges in recent times because of the 25 year-long war.

Sri Lankan war

The civil war in Sri Lanka started in 1983. It has been going on (with brief interruptions) until today. The main adversaries have been the Sri Lankan Army and the militant movement of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who have been fighting for an independent state in the North and East of Sri Lanka, the so called Tamil Eelam (*Tamilīlam*). India as a superpower in the region made peace-building efforts that resulted in the presence of an Indian Peace Keeping Force between 1987 and 1990. However the Indians were overwhelmed by the guerilla tactics of the militants, who killed many Indian soldiers, causing a total fiasco of their peace keeping mission. After the Indians left, the war between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government continued until Norwegian mediators negotiated a ceasefire agreement signed in 2002.<sup>10)</sup> However, war broke out again in 2006 and the Sri Lankan government officially abrogated the ceasefire in January 2008. The rebel movement has controlled various parts of the North and East. During 2007 the Tigers have been pushed out of the East and at the time of writing of this article they were officially only controlling a small jungle area in the North of the island called the Vanni.<sup>11)</sup>

More than a quarter of a century of war has brought not only many casualties and displacement but also a lot of sexual violence against Tamil women, making them *karpalippu* – those whose chastity has been destroyed. We do not have an exact number but it seems that thousands of women have been raped and subsequently abandoned by their families and/or husbands. Also, it is estimated that so far 70.000<sup>12)</sup> people have died because of the war – the majority of them men.

Subsequently there are huge numbers of widows both on the Tamil side and on the side of Sri Lankan security forces (Sinhalese and Muslim). It is possible that this is the first time that

local Sri Lankan communities are facing such high numbers of very young widows<sup>13)</sup> (due to much bigger killing potential of modern weapons). The society is still applying the same old mechanisms in dealing with widows and raped women by marginalizing them. However, their numbers are so massive it poses a big social challenge. A lot of widows have to raise their children and thus leave their domestic space and go out and work, while facing many social constraints. And many women join the militant movement of the LTTE because their options are very limited.

As a consequence of the armed conflict, there has been a long term presence of international humanitarian organizations that operate according to western or international standards that, in a way, pose a challenge to some traditional concepts mainly with regard to women's roles, their employment and independence. War thus has had an immense impact on the traditional concepts of Tamil (also Sinhala and Muslim) society.

### Changes in gender stereotyping

According to my informants, Tamil society in Sri Lanka has changed significantly during the past 25 years. Due to war new phenomena related to women have emerged: Tamil Tigresses, female peace activists, and higher numbers of employed females.

Many Tamil women have joined the movement of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), showing to the Tamil society that a woman does not necessarily have to be submissive and passive and that in fact, women have much more abilities than the society had ever allowed them to think.<sup>14)</sup> Women have also mobilized themselves as peace activists, thus again entering the public sphere, however, in the beginning positioning themselves around the safe concept of motherhood.<sup>15)</sup> Only recently have the Tamil women in Sri Lanka started peace campaigns as citizens with equal rights and not around their identity as mothers. A huge number of women were forced to seek employment due to death of the traditional breadwinners.<sup>16)</sup> At first it was only the widows and orphans working, but later since the late 1990's it has become more and more common for women to earn living. The current generation of women in their twenties and thirties is thus expected to contribute to the family financially as well as to carry out all or most of the house work.

War and the emergence of new types of women (armed women, working women and female activists) have resulted in social implications in different areas of people's lives. One of the areas of change is the one of marital habits. Parents are worried about the safety of their children, they are mainly worried that the children could be recruited by militant groups. For this reason they marry their daughters off at a young age, sometimes 12 or 13. However, this practice leads to teenage pregnancies and as young brides often do not have a dowry, also to their ill treatment by the husband's family. There has also been an increase of "love marriages" especially among poor, displaced populations, whose living conditions prevent the traditional gender segregation. Also among the Tamil community living in the capital Colombo, the number of love marriages is increasing. However, the urban Tamil populations in the East practice arranged marriages more and more, because of scarcity of men and influence of conservative Tamils coming from the north. Also arranged marriages have changed a bit. Parents are still responsible for finding the future spouse for their son or daughter, however, nowadays the young people can meet the spouse candidate and talk to him or her and decide whether they would marry him, or her. However, the main feature of the marriages – the dowry payment, still continues. The sums demanded by the bridegroom's

family are higher than ever before, as men are ever rarer – many of them are dead, and many have fled the country. Therefore, even the bride herself has to contribute to the dowry.

The tradition still remains very powerful in certain aspects. I was assuming that bigger economical independence of women would result into higher divorce rates. However, divorce is still a very stigmatizing event, so couples who do not get along, simply choose to live separately. I (also )assumed that the huge number of widows would make society accept widow remarriage, however that did not happen. The concept that a woman should have only one man remains.

Also the concept of chastity is still of ultimate importance to Tamil society in Sri Lanka. Therefore, Tamil people view working women with a huge suspicion that they must have some illicit love affairs with their colleagues at work, society is still getting used to the fact that there is no gender segregation at work place. On the other hand society realizes that working females improve the living standards of families.

An interesting indicator of change of gender stereotypical norms has been bicycle riding. In pre-war years, Tamil women were not allowed to ride bicycles. However, during the increase of violence in 1970s in Jaffna, public transport became very scarce and therefore women who were employed as teachers, nurses and clerks had to start riding bicycles to work. Tamil women in other parts of the country started riding bicycles much later, after waves of Jaffna refugees came to their regions. So women started riding bicycles in Batticaloa and Trincomalee in the east only at the beginning of 1990s and in Puttalam on the western coast since mid 1990s. Hand in hand with this innovation came also a new way of dressing – Tamil women in Sri Lanka wear salwar quamiz (i.e. long dress with long trousers) much more often than they used to. The traditional very elegant wear sari was not apt for bicycle riding. After 2003 women have started driving motorbikes in big numbers. An important shift in terms of transportation and gender segregation happened after the tsunami (2004), when local gender mixed teams employed by international humanitarian aid agencies were given only one motorbike to go into the field, so women became passengers of their male colleagues, a thing unthinkable before.

Thanks to the presence of international organizations that promote gender equality and equal acces to human rights, the issue of widespread gender based violence within Tamil society has been highlighted. Gender based violence is so widespread in society that it is deemed to be normal, some estimates talk about 80 % of families – cases of wife battering, incest and rape are very common. The international organizations in accordance with the Millennium development goals are now trying to show to society that gender based violence is not normal and it is not “cool”. International as well as national organizations are now aiming to promote female empowerment, so that women have equal access to justice, and means of survival.<sup>17)</sup> These aims have led to numerous women groups taking the lead in welfare centers (camps for internally displaced people). Thanks to these efforts, women are now also entering fields of work that were previously men-only, (such as masonry for example).

## **Conclusion**

As I have demonstrated in the lines above, the concept of female chastity is still very important in Tamil society in Sri Lanka. The 25 years of war however, have caused a shift in its definition.

	Prewar definition of <i>karpu</i>	Today definition of <i>karpu</i>
Agency	Domestic sphere	Domestic sphere and public sphere
Interactivity	Gender segregation	Interaction in public sphere with opposite sex
Limitations	Limited independent mobility in the public (allowed if accompanied by relatives, not able to ride a bicycle)	Limited independent mobility in public only late in evening hours (bicycle and motorbike riding has become very usual)
Auspicious state	A housewife with male element, i.e married	A working woman with male element, i.e. married

Before the war, Tamil women in Sri Lanka were much more bound to the domestic sphere and their interaction in the public sphere with unrelated males was very limited. Even though they could do jobs that were considered as feminine such as nursing, teaching and clerk work, other jobs were off women’s limits. Women were not allowed to do things that were not appropriate for women, such as riding bicycles, taking independent decisions. An ideal woman was the one who was married and subjected to her husband’s authority with her main task to be a housewife.

However, war caused following shift of gender stereotypes:

		<b>Woman</b>	<b>Man</b>
Tamil gender stereotypes before war	Essential quality	<i>karpu</i> (chastity, self control, limited interaction with men)	Decision maker
	Sphere of agency	Domestic sphere	Public sphere
Tamil gender stereotypes in the first decade of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century	Essential quality	<i>karpu</i>	Limited decision making power
	Sphere of agency	Domestic <u>sphere</u> and <u>public sphere</u>	Public sphere and <u>domestic sphere</u>

We see that the war which has been going on for more than 25 years has caused a major shift in the area of Sri Lankan Tamil woman’s agency from mainly domestic sphere to public sphere. Nowadays, even a chaste woman can freely communicate and function in the public. However, her behavior is still being closely watched.

On the other hand, we can see that men have been disempowered by the war. The tight security situation has limited men’s mobility and forced them out of their traditional domain of breadwinners in the public sphere. I conclude that despite all the horrors the Sri Lankan war has brought to people, it has in fact empowered Tamil women and their position in Tamil Sri Lankan society. Sri Lankan civil war has thus in a certain way contributed to the Tamil women’s emancipation. (For more detailed analysis, see my PhD dissertation, which will be available in 2009 at Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague).

## Notes

- 1) C. Renzetti – D. J. Curran, *Ženy, muži a společnost* [Women, Men and Society]. Praha: 2003, s. 20–26.
- 2) C. Cockburn, *The Continuum of Violence: A Gender Perspective on War and Peace*, W. Giles – J. Hyndman (eds.), *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones*. California: 2004, pp. 24–44.
- 3) Women and War. ICRC. 2008, <<http://www.icrc.org>>
- 4) J. Goldstein, *War and Gender*. Cambridge: 2001, pp. 380–402.
- 5) D. Marková – B. Knotková-Čapková – D. Pospíšilová, Hinduismus [Hinduism], B. Knotková-Čapková a kol. (ed.), *Základy asijských náboženství: Judaismus, islám, hinduismus, džinismus, buddhismus, sikhismus, pársismus. 1. díl*. [Basics about Asian Religions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Parsism. Part 1]. Praha: 2004, s. 111–150.
- 6) F. M. Muller (ed.), *The Laws of Manu*. The Sacred Books of the East. Vol. XXV. Delhi: 1964.
- 7) Though some would disagree with this (among them the LTTE cadres) because unmarried men should also be dedicated to *karpu*, the Tamil civilian culture truly concentrates much more, or even only on the chastity of women.
- 8) *karpu* (< *kal-* “to learn”), lit. “learning; knowledge; “chastity” (has to be learned?). Key term in Tam.culture. Traditionally, the most valued and admired feminine virtue, combination of fidelity, chastity, modesty, bashfulness, sense of shame. K. Zvelebil, *Lexicon of Tamil Literature*. Köln: 1995, pp. 336–337.
- 9) P. Schalk, Women Fighters of the Liberation Tigers in Tamil Īlam. The Martial Feminism od Aṭṭēl Pālacinkam, *South Asia Research* 14/2,1994, pp. 163–183.
- 10) J. Filipický a kol, *Dějiny Bangladéše, Bhútánu, Maledív, Nepálu, Pákistánu a Šrí Lanky* [History of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka]. Praha: 2003, pp. 308–348.
- 11) Though names of countries and regions usually do not have definite article (France, Germany), or in case a state formation is part of the country’s name, there is definite article (the Czech Republic), the Vanni region is used by all, including English native speakers with definite article – the Vanni.
- 12) Multiple sources such as BBC, UNHCR and ICRC estimate this figure. According to Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, p. 8, the number of civilians who have lost their lives in the conflict was estimated at 67.000 at the beginning of 2007.
- 13) The number of widows in the East was unofficially estimated by social workers at 40.000 in 2008.
- 14) A. Adele (i.e. A. Balasingham), *Women Fighters of Liberation Tigers*. Jaffna: 1993, pp. 1–25; A. Stack-O’Connor, Lions, Tigers, and Freedom Birds: How and Why the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam Employs Women, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Toronto: 2007, pp. 43–63.
- 15) K. Samuel, Activism, Motherhood, and the State in Sri Lanka’s Ethnic Conflict, W. Giles – M. de Alwis – E. Klein – N. Silva (eds.), *Feminists under Fire: Exchanges across War Zones. Between the Lines*, Toronto: 2003, pp. 167–179.
- 16) S. Thiruchandran, The Other Victims of Terror: Households in Chaos, W. Giles – M. de Alwis – E. Klein – N. Silva (Co-eds.), *Feminists under Fire: Exchanges across War Zones. Between the Lines*. Toronto: 2003, pp. 131–140.
- 17) S. Jayaweera – H. Wijemanne – L. Wanasundera – K. M. Vitarana, *Gender Dimensions of the Millennium Development Goals in Sri Lanka*. Colombo: 2007.



**MARIANA PFLEGEROVÁ**

## **RANDAI: THE FOLK THEATRE OF MINANGKABAU**

### **Introduction**

In this article I would like to present some primary ethnographic material on one not very well known form of Indonesian folk theatre – the randai. The material was collected during my fieldwork among the Minangkabau people of West Sumatra in the years 2001 and 2002. My thanks for being able to conduct this fascinating research go to the Indonesian government which granted me a Darmasiswa Scholarship that enabled me study at the Indonesian State Academy of Arts (STSI) in Padangpanjang, and to the Sasakawa Foundation whose generous grant made it possible for me to travel throughout the vast province of West Sumatra in order to witness and document a great number of performances of the randai folk theatre in cities, towns and villages, including some easily accessible, as well as some of the most remote ones, to which neither electricity nor asphalt roads have made their way as of this day.

Randai is a kind of folk theatre which has been performed in its present form throughout a large area of Sumatra since about the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a highly refined dance-drama form comparable to better documented Southeast Asian theatre genres such as the Malay ‘mak yong’, Thai ‘likay’, Javanese ‘ludruk’ or ‘ketoprak’, or the Philippine ‘komedya’. Randai theatre consists of a blend of martial arts, dance, folk song, instrumental music and acting. Its probably most characteristic trait is a circle formation of dancers which demarcates the performance stage and serves as a means of moving the performance forward from scene to scene.

According to local tradition the theatre indeed started as a form of circular dance performed by young boys in the surau<sup>1)</sup> with the main purpose to exercise the different steps of silek – the traditional Minangkabau martial art. To make the practice more exciting, the guru<sup>2)</sup> began to accompany the dance with music – the tones of saluang – a long bamboo flute with a deep melancholic and at times mystical tone<sup>3)</sup>, and eventually also with sung poetry – stories from Minang oral tradition sung by the guru or the leader of the troupe to the accompaniment of the flute. Contemporary Sumatran researchers suggest that the introduction into randai of acted dialogue happened in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century either under the influence of the Malay theatre of the aristocrats komedi bangsawan, or of European theatre brought to the area by Dutch colonizers via sandiwara or toneel – an originally Javanese version of Dutch drama which first addressed hot social issues and later reached for Malay scripts from the bangsawan tradition.<sup>4)</sup>

Randai scripts are based on widely known folk stories or kaba<sup>5)</sup>, the majority of which originate most likely in the same period during which randai itself started to be performed in its present form, that is the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6)</sup> However, there are also stories with a probably much older date of origin, as well as stories based on contemporary events and realities, in which people travel by cars and planes, study at Indonesian-state-established schools and refer to governmental programs of the Suharto period. The spectrum of stories available is thus quite large, and as I had a chance to observe, the selection of a script depends on the general preferences of the troupe, especially its leader, the context of the performance (whether it takes place on the occasion of a wedding, the return home of some

significant perantau<sup>7)</sup>, a performance for fellow Minangkabau living in the rantau<sup>8)</sup> outside of West Sumatra, a school performance, a provincial festival etc.), as well as the wishes of the sponsors and the character of the expected audiences. Very often though, a single troupe only performs one story from which they also derive their name.

It is important to note that traditionally the scripts did not exist in written form, and the dialogues were created gradually during the process of rehearsing by means of improvisation, which the actors could base on their knowledge of the story from oral tradition<sup>9)</sup>, and on the knowledge of a wide repertoire of wise sayings, proverbs and celebratory speeches, which belonged to the basic fund of traditional knowledge mastered by every adult Minang man. Improvisation still takes place during performances nowadays, inspired by immediate interaction with the audience and the peculiar conditions of each specific performance. The performance as a whole, as well as particular scenes, can be extended if the audience seems interested and enthusiastic, or cut short in case of lack of reaction from the viewers, decreasing attention or a sudden rain. Depending on the momentary composition of the audience, different parts and aspects of the performance can be more or less elaborated by the actors, so that no two performances are ever identical.

Generally said however, for the most part the scripts, being old or contemporary, address situations in which an important *adaik*<sup>10)</sup> norm is broken by an individual, which typically results in a series of individual and social tragedies. Their resolution and a return to a peaceful community life can only be achieved by means of re-establishment of the rule of *adaik* based on a proper grasp of its moral messages. From the above description it can be easily deduced that the theatre plays an important educational or enculturating role, which seems only logical if we remember its historical origins in the *surau* where it was undoubtedly connected with the boys initiation.

In the matrilineal Minangkabau society the traditional dwellings – the ‘big houses’ or *rumah gadang*, as well all arable land are in possession of women, and as such are the center of their various daily activities. In the past, boys – naturally born into these houses, were supposed to leave them as soon as they ceased to be physically dependent on their mothers’ intensive physical care that is at the age of about seven or eight, as the house was considered to be the rightful domain of their sisters. According to Minangkabau *adaik* specialists, this was to prevent potential undesired sexual interaction between siblings of the opposite sexes. From that moment on, it was the male dominated institution of the *surau* which was mainly responsible for the boys' preparation for adulthood, the entrance to which (at least in the last two historically and ethnographically better documented centuries) has been *merantau* – their departure from the village in search of higher education (whether secular or religious), work experience (mainly in the field of trade), and a respectable source of living outside of the village that, having made them attractive to the girls' families back home, would enable them to come back and start looking for a bride.

I consider the *randai* scripts a most fascinating ethnographic source, as they were created with the aim of preparing the young men in the *surau* for *merantau*, which has been, and indeed still is, understood as a form of initiation during which one is to prove one's right to become a respectable member of a Minang community. While women as mothers are automatically entitled to a highly respected position in the society<sup>11)</sup>, the men first have to prove useful to the community by providing it with access to additional resources (mainly of cash) located outside of the village. Besides that, the experience of *merantau* is to prove their ability to survive among untrustworthy strangers, compete with them, and become successful traders or

professionals, while – no less importantly – successfully defending and maintaining their identity as Minangkabau, not forgetting about their native community, but on the contrary turning into its responsible members and generous patrons.

The scripts thus describe, literally, the actual process of becoming a Minangkabau man, which doesn't take place automatically by birth, but is a conscious, often painful process that happens in face of a scary otherness with which one is confronted in the rantau. By means of addressing its various key elements in a fascinating poetic and dramatic form, the plays give us a most precious insight into the core of Minangkabau identity.

In the post-war period, having been replaced by a national education system of the modern Indonesian state, the surau has gradually lost its traditional function, and has been used solely as an Islamic prayer house. Nevertheless, randai has never ceased to be performed, even though its function, as well as its audiences have changed considerably.

Thanks to its role as a traditional educational medium, randai didn't fail to attract the attention of the Suharto government in the 1980s. It was targeted as a useful medium for popularizing government programs, and many new scripts were written containing messages promoting various governmental policies. Their success depended on the skills of the writers and their knowledge of Minang cultural traditions: Some of them were laughed at, while others have managed to survive the fall of Suharto. In the Suharto period randai started to be taught in schools in West Sumatra, and provincial festivals and competitions were organized by the provincial government. For this purpose as well, new scripts were written to deal with topics designated by the government (e. g. family planning, hygienic training etc). This new tradition has been continued till present with new scripts such as one aimed at elementary school pupils, whose performance I was able to watch at the Academy of Arts in Padangpanjang where it's author is a professor, which was a funny criticism of the recent popular overdevotion to play station games to the expense of school attendance.<sup>12)</sup> It told the story of a naughty boy who spent money given to him by his mother in order to buy school books on video games, and showed how he could be reformed.<sup>13)</sup>

On the other hand, randai has continued to be performed in villages to mark events of major importance for the villagers such as weddings, elections of new penghulu<sup>14)</sup>, or on the occasion of the return of the perantau when it has often been connected with fund-raising for the community with the aim of building a new mosque, a school, or reconstructing a road. In this context the randai performances have gained the role of a community ritual which provides a special occasion for turning the attention of the community towards the unchanging and unquestionable sources of Minangkabau identity as they are 're-presented' and 're-lived' in the plays, so that the viewers can rely them to the everyday realities of a modernizing society opening to the wider world in which they live, and use them as a model for interpretation of their own specific life situations. As relied to me by numerous informants, now as in the past, the different scenes in the plays provide the people with clues on how to act as a Minangkabau in various situations of everyday life.

It is important to note that contrary to the original situation when randai was associated with the male sphere of the surau and considered a male form of entertainment, village performances have been lately attracting an increasingly female audience composed from a large part of older women. This can be accounted for by the fact that in the post-war period circulatory migration to areas within West Sumatra has been increasingly replaced by the practice of permanent migration (merantau cino) to big cities throughout Sumatra, the



Indonesian capital Jakarta, other major commercial centres on the neighbouring island of Java, other parts of the archipelago or even beyond, resulting in a massive outpour of young boys and adult men from the Minangkabau countryside. The women left behind were thus made fully responsible for the running of all everyday community affairs, and for bringing up the young generation, a process that in many cases resulted in transforming the community into a practical matriarchy. On the other hand, the Minangkabau migrants in big Indonesian cities have been increasingly faced with a multicultural environment and its characteristic inter-ethnic competition, which has inspired them to a new search for sources of their cultural identity back in their homeland in the Sumatran countryside. This is why the women's role of safe-keepers of the Minangkabau cultural traditions who secure their transfer to the succeeding generations has been given much greater importance by both the village women themselves, and the male migrants – typically the two groups most significantly represented among present day randai audiences.

We can say that thanks to its above described character, randai perfectly responds to the new demand for representation of the sought-for cultural roots of a modernizing society, which is why its popularity has been lately increasing, and why it can be observed to fulfill an important role in the current process of cultural revitalisation.

This development seems to have been initiated in the Suharto period as a result of the government's ideology of 'unity in diversity', which was in fact aimed at limiting the incredible ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of the Indonesian society to its artistic expression in architecture, music and dance, while replacing the ideological background of these art forms by the ideology of Indonesian nationalism. The various art forms have definitely gained great importance as ethnic identity markers especially in the eyes of different ethnic members living together in big Indonesian cities – among them the Minangkabau migrants. Considering this, the great popularity of randai in the post-Suharto period of ethnic revitalisation, accompanied by initial claims for, and eventual introduction of provincial autonomy, comes as little surprise.

A complex analysis of the role of randai within the Minangkabau culture past and present, as well as the description of the various elements of the cultural tradition, which are represented in the scripts, requires a much wider space than that of an article, and in fact will be the subject of my dissertation. The following passage was written with the more modest motivation to enable the reader to gain a concrete idea of randai as a complex and fascinating art form rooted in and mirroring an old cultural tradition, which is deeply aware of its uniqueness.

### **A randai performance at the end of Ramadan**

First comes the month of the great fast – Ramadan, which is definitely a great test of both physical and moral strength and perseverance for every individual. The Minangkabau people take the fast much more seriously than for example the Javanese, so one will find every single food-shop and restaurant closed from sunrise to sunset and people struggling to survive the exhausting tropical day near the equator without a bite of food, and what's worse without a drop of water. Despite their perseverance in explaining me how healthy for the human body such fasting actually is, I didn't fail to notice the unusually high number of my student colleagues who fell ill in this period, the symptoms often suggesting heat stroke, dehydration, overall physical exhaustion, as well as bad digestion after the late night feasts during which

many tried to stuff their stomachs with huge portions of food of many kinds in a desperate effort to prepare themselves for another long day of starvation.

But Ramadan is not only an exhausting period of physical deprivation, it is also an exciting holiday season. During this period every night following the first evening prayer or Maghrib for which the majority of people from the community assemble in the mosque at sunset (which doesn't necessarily happen through the rest of the year), the fast is broken, and the market, where the number of stalls offering hot meals, gorengan (fried snacks), drinks and sweets of all kinds, among them dates from Mecca – the symbols of the Ramadan period, has doubled or tripled, explodes in that magical atmosphere of boundless joy which is associated with all great holidays. The streets are at once flooded by people of both genders and all ages and keep buzzing until relatively late at night. Every coming day the fast becomes more strenuous and the nights more filled with excitement until finally the greatest of Islamic holidays – the Lebaran<sup>15)</sup> arrives on the first of the month of Sjawal, and with it come the long-expected merry celebrations of the physical and moral renewal achieved in Ramadan.

Chickens are slaughtered, boxes with a rich assortment of cookies that had been prepared during the previous month are unsealed, people (especially children) dress in new clothes which they had bought for the occasion, many make donations to the mosque or divide some rice among their poorer neighbours, families get together over great feasts consisting of the greatest variety of meals each family can afford considering its economic circumstances, and people visit each other or at least exchange postcards asking their fellows forgiveness for all wrongs they might have had committed against them in the past year: "Maaf lahir dan bathin".

Lebaran, like the Czech Christmas, or the American Thanksgiving Day, is a time of family reunions, especially precious to the many Minang families whose members have migrated far from home in search of work or education, whether to other areas of West Sumatra, other provinces, or even as far as the industrialised cities on the neighbouring island of Java. The long-awaited annual return of the migrants – perantau, is the peak event of the year, and naturally has always been connected with a lot of story-telling. In his book, *Memories of Childhood in Minangkabau*, the famous Minang writer Muhammad Rajab describes young boys willing to do anything to lure the perantau into the surau (the male community and prayer house), and make them speak about their rantau adventures and experiences while the boys would massage their bodies tired after the long journey home, and listen, holding their breath, as they would try to picture themselves in those faraway places where they themselves would eventually go in search of worldly knowledge and wealth. It was the environment of the surau which gave birth to randai, and thus it is no surprise that many of the plays retell the many adventures, dangers, and trials which await one in the rantau, and give precious advice about the ways to get around them successfully, and survive until one's great comeback as a respected Minang man.

It is commonly expected of a successful perantau returning home that he sponsor a community feast to demonstrate both his wealth and his respect for the community. By doing so, one also makes public his aspiration to a prominent status within the community. Therefore, the arrival of a randai group commissioned either by an individual perantau or a group of them, such as the first one that I had a chance to witness, is no rare appearance in the Lebaran period, even though randai performances are by no means limited to this part of the year or the environment of the market.

The first signal announcing the arrival of a randai troupe is a cheerful, dynamic and exciting sound of a gong ensemble which may be accompanied by horns, flutes and drums. Its task is to lure people's attention away from the many culinary pleasures with which the market always abounds, and alert it to the performance that is about to take place in the open space among market houses which the musicians have occupied with their instruments, and possibly a row of plastic chairs prepared for the most prominent members of the audience such as the mayor, the sponsor(s) and the most respected local *adaik* leaders (matriclan heads and experts on customary law).

Slowly, curious onlookers start to assemble in scattered flocks around the performance space, which may but need not necessarily be marked with a thin rope or a knee-high bamboo fence, chatting animatedly in anticipation of a night-long social event. Among the earliest arrivals are the young boys, aged 5 to 12, dressed in Western-style clothes and wearing thongs, who squat or sit down on the floor in a rough circle around the musicians. They are followed by the women of the community who arrive in small cheerful bands: The younger ones, especially single girls, dressed casually in jeans and T-shirts, sometimes with Muslim scarves covering their hair, the older women wearing colourful sarongs (long pieces of batik cloth wrapped around the waist and held in place with a textile belt) and loose *kebayas* (loose, waist-long, long-sleeved blouses), their heads wrapped in large white cloth shaped like a kind of turban. Some of the women, especially those carrying babies or toddlers, may sit down on the floor behind the young boys, or on plastic chairs surrounding the stage area – if such have been provided. Eventually, the men arrive, most of the young ones in Western-style trousers and shirts, the grandfathers in sarongs, some of both wearing the characteristic *peci* (black Muslim hats). The majority of them gradually crowds behind and among the women and children, only the most important members of the community are provided seats nearby the musicians. As soon as a reasonable amount of audience is present, and the prominent guests have arrived and been seated, the performance begins.

The merry music stops and the informal atmosphere changes at once to a formal one. An even number of dancers, arranged in a double file, enter the performance space with an initial dance consisting of a set of slow, fluent steps of the Minang martial art called *silek*. The dancers keep a slightly lowered body position – a sort of half-squatting-posture with the main support of the body always resting on the back leg. Their arms accompany the movements of the legs with a constant flow of sophisticated poses, the resulting form being an aesthetically attractive symbolic simulation of attack and defence in a *silek* combat. The dancers are barefoot and wear special long wide trousers with an extremely long crotch that may reach almost to the floor – these trousers are called the *galembong*. The traditional colour is black with gold embroidery at the hems, but today, the colours are often more variable, most frequently red, blue, green, pink, orange, or violet. Besides the trousers, the performers wear loose long-sleeved collar-less shirts of the same shiny colours, again with golden embroidery. If the costume is not the traditional black, the colour of the shirt doesn't always match the colour of the trousers thus intensifying the merry colourful impression of the whole. There are two more indispensable accessories: a long stretch of batik cloth wrapped around the waist and either a traditional batik head cover – *destar*, which may be folded at the top of the head in various different manners, or a shiny-coloured pointed semicircular head-dress characteristic of the impersonators of the most noble male characters.

The double-file of men stops their dance to stand up with hands clasped at the chest and heads slightly inclined to perform a ritual opening in which a member of the troupe greets the audience and asks their forgiveness for any mistakes that might happen during the

performance since the performers are not yet grown men. This takes place in the form of a song.

At the back of the procession the female performers have by now formed a row, all dressed up in the most splendid traditional ceremonial gown consisting of a red, gold-embroidered sarong (floor-length wrapped skirt), a knee-long blouse of the same colour worn over the skirt, a matching densely embroidered shoulder sash – salendang, and a spectacular head-dress: a suntuang or tall, highly elaborate golden tower-shaped semi-circular structure decorated with a great number of small pieces of tinsel, tassels, mirrors, bells and ornaments for actresses impersonating young unmarried girls, or alternately a tangkuluak tanduak, traditional Minang hat of heavily gold-and-black-embroidered sash folded into a horn-shape, for those who are to portray married women. The girls carry a ceremonial golden parasol over their heads and a cerano, or golden case containing betel leaves, the traditional offering to honoured guests.

After the formal greeting, the dancers perform a tepuak: here they make use of their special-shaped trousers when they either stand with their legs apart, or rise one of their legs so that they can rhythmically beat the crouch and scream out ‘hep-ta, hep-ta’ providing a musical final to the opening song. The beating of the crouch is followed by a couple steps which proceed another series of beats until gradually the two columns of dancers transform into a circle around which a tight circle of audience immediately and naturally forms, the children crowding in as close as they are allowed. When the tepuak stops, the dancers sit down on the ground keeping the circle formation while the female procession approaches the most respected members of the audience to perform the ceremonial offering of betel. After that, the women sit down on chairs or on a carpet next to the musicians, while the head of the troupe steps to the centre of the circle of performers, and announces the name of the troupe and the story to be performed, which are often the same.

Tonight the story of Umbuik Mudo (The Young Bamboo Sprout) with Puti Galang Banyak (The Girl with Many Bracelets) will be performed.<sup>16)</sup> The dancers rise again to provide a dance accompaniment to the opening song, chanted by two singers sitting among the musicians who are now silent. The song sets the background for the beginning of the story. Each verse is accompanied by a passage of silek steps performed in counter-clockwise direction followed by a few steps in clockwise direction, and/or a couple of steps towards the centre of the circle, or a sequence for which the dancers form pairs and simulate combating couples. Each finished verse is followed by a tepuak sequence, which functions as a kind of refrain. After the tepuak, the dancers often walk a few steps until the singer begins the next verse. Each following verse of the same song is accompanied by the identical set of silek movements ending in another tepuak sequence. At the end of the song, the dancers move to the centre of the circle and intensively clap their hands. Eventually, one or more of them stay in the centre, whereas the rest return to the original circle formation and squat or sit down on the ground. At the same time, any female performers, previously seated among and around the musicians and the singers, step in the centre to join the male actors already awaiting them.

Now the first act of the play can begin. The previous song has brought us to the backyard of Umbuik’s house where the young boy is being addressed by his ageing mother. The dialogue is performed in the middle of the circle of seated dancers. The actors speak alternately using a microphone that they have to pass between themselves all the time. No props are used, and to a Western viewer, the actors’ performance resembles an affectionate recitation of poems rather than the kind of realistic acting one might expect from a dramatic performance. Indeed,

the regularly rising and falling tone of voice and the simple phrasing underlined by the movement of an outstretched hand away from and back towards the chest and in alternate directions, which makes the impression of the protagonist addressing the audience with a sermon, may sound quite monotone. The movement of the hands is accompanied by a corresponding movement of the head to the sides which creates an almost marionette-like impression.

The Minang used by the actors is a literary and poetic version of the language, at times metered and rhymed, more wordy and with sentences much more complex than those one can hear in everyday-life situations. This makes it relatively difficult to understand not only for a foreigner, but even for some of the younger audiences who would rather skip these exchanges impatient to watch the informal and utterly humorous fighting scenes. Furthermore, the speeches are embellished with traditional Minang proverbs full of metaphors in which situations from human life are compared to different natural processes following the Minang philosophy of 'alam takembang jadi guru'.<sup>17)</sup> One soon notices there to be a set of frequently used phrases, idioms, expressions and proverbs such as the standard formulas in the following exchange: "Mother of Umbuik Mudo: Oh, my dear one and only son Umbuik, medicine for my tiredness and fever, please come closer, I have something to tell you. Umbuik Mudo: Dear Mother, hearing you calling me makes the blood tremble in my chest and my bones feel weak. What happened that you call me? What is it that you wish to tell me? Please explain it to me so that it makes me happy in my heart and calm in my mind."

Following this formal opening exchange, the mother proceeds to express her worries that she may die before she can pass her advice on her son, and lead him into the proper adult life of a Minang man. Umbuik admits that most of all he likes smoking, chewing betel, running around and playing ball games or kites – he is trying to make the best of his life. His mother tries to explain that the time has come for him to start a more balanced and responsible life, but he is not patient enough to really think about what she means. He is respectful toward her, yet he can't wait to return to his plays. Seeing this, the mother runs out of her patience and goes on to speak directly to the point, which is something a Minang normally always tries to avoid, since such manner is considered highly impolite and tactless. But the mother is now angry about her son's vain. She orders him to stay and discuss what he plans to do for a living because it's really about the time for him to stop playing and start building a serious existence. She gives him several suggestions, but to each Umbuik quickly finds an excuse. This is followed by laughter and loud comments from the adult male part of the audience. Especially some of the prominent guests seated next to each other on chairs get into a longer exchange, and some other scattered members of the male audience join them screaming out their ironic remarks in response.

Finally, the only agreeable option for Umbuik is going to a surau (a religious school centred at a prayer house) to study the Qur'an. He agrees with his mother that he will set off on his journey to the surau on the same day.

Here the dialogue ends, and we see the galombang dancers get up from their seated position and perform a loud and energetic tepuak in the circle, eventually directing their steps towards the actors at the centre. As they meet, the male actor impersonating Umbuik mingles with the galombang members and executes the same movements joining the circle on its further move outwards.

While he does this, the actress who has played Umbuik's mother leaves the circle and sits down next to the musicians and singers who start a song which will form a bridge between this and the next acted scene. They use the melody of a familiar folk song, in this case the Sijobang. A happy tune has been selected since the development of the story is optimistic: a new adventure is about to begin. As the singers start to sing, the dancers begin to perform their sequence of silek steps in the circle. Again, after a clockwise movement following the leader come a few steps in counter-clockwise direction, or a bit towards the centre, and the end of each verse is marked by a lively tepuak sequence.

Umbuik goes on his way, he goes to study at Ranah Kampuang Auah, at the surau of Panjang Janguik<sup>18)</sup> bringing all his travel gear. After walking for a long time he has arrived there. He has started to study the Qur'an. After a year, after two years, he can read the Qur'an. His heart is getting brighter, and his thinking is getting clearer. He can translate the Qur'an well, and read it beautifully. Now, Umbuik is longing to travel again. He wants to study with another teacher. Improve his knowledge, abilities, and experience.

There are two singers who take turns singing the verses so that the second singer joins the first one in the last one or two lines of the first verse and then continues to the second verse while the first singer slowly fades out. For the subsequent verse they reverse their roles, and so on until the end of the song. Thanks to this technique each singer can make use of a break and possibly improvise new lyrics for the following verse. This improvisation does not always happen, but it is possible, which enables the singers to change the interpretation of the story on the spot in response to the immediate context, as sometimes the song provides not only a summary of the past events and an introduction to the upcoming ones, but also an evaluation of what has just been said. In other cases, the group feels it necessary to shorten the story skipping some events, or contrary to it, elaborate more on a certain part of the story, and for this purpose the lyrics have to be changed. The galombang dancers sometimes join in singing the last two or four lines of a verse, thus adding in variation and volume to the sound. This is exactly what happens in our particular case.

The song has ended and the galombang dancers are now moving back towards the centre of the circle with silek steps. This time, after the common clapping of hands in a tight circle in the centre, two of them stay to perform the dialogue, while the others return to their place once again forming a circular line separating the space of the performance from the audiences. There they sit down to relax while the second scene is performed by the two actors impersonating Umbuik Mudo and his religious teacher Panjang Janguik. A more knowledgeable ear will recognise that the actors are now using different levels of speech available in the Minang language as appropriate to the characters they are impersonating: Umbuik addresses his teacher in the so called ascending speech (*kato mendaki*) used to speak to someone of higher status than oneself, while the teacher responds in descending speech (*kato menurun*), normally used by a person of higher status toward a person of lower status. Furthermore, when the teacher makes an educating speech, he switches into *kato malereang* which is a kind of elaborate, metaphorical speech, characteristic of ritual occasions.

Umbuik thanks his teacher for everything he has taught him, and asks for permission to leave because he wants to continue his studies in a different surau with a different teacher: "If we sail far, we can see many things, if we live long, we can experience many things ... The reason I want to go rantau, is that my heart is not quiet any more. I have studied too close to my village."

The teacher agrees, but suggests he's given a lot of religious teaching to his pupil, yet is still indebted to him with regard to silek training. He invites Umbuik for another silek lesson before he leaves: "To protect our body and our honour is our duty as Muslims. We don't look for the enemy, but if he comes, we don't run away. That's why a good Minangkabau ulama also has good silek skills. But not many people know that. Just like our proverb: the tiger hides his claw ..."

What follows is a combat scene watched with passion and widely commented upon by both the young and the older man, and then the scene ends.

The gurindam which follows narrates further developments in Umbuik's studies and finally transfers us to a time when Umbuik decides to go back home because he "...feels something is calling him there...." The next scene is one of reunion with his mother and sister back home. Not long after his arrival Umbuik receives an invitation from his old teacher to come for a party in the teacher's niece's – Puti Galang Banyak's – house. Which means that a mamak or maternal uncle is reviewing the pool of young men with good reputation in search of a suitable groom for his niece as he is obliged to according to the Minangkabau custom.

There are three actors in this scene. We are about to watch a conversation among Umbuik, his mother and his sister. Umbuik is getting ready to leave, while his sister Rambun Ameh (Beloved Golden Child) expresses her worries that Umbuik might fall in love with the irresistible Puti Galang Banyak and get into trouble because the two are not of equal rank – Umbuik's family is very poor. Another merry gurindam sijobang leads us to the core scene of the first part of the drama where Umbuik is about to meet Galang Banyak during a competition in Qur'an recitation taking place in the house of her uncle. Indeed, Umbuik's sister's prediction is fulfilled: Galang Banyak throws Umbuik out of balance, and the scene ends with her ridiculing him in front of everybody.

The scene contains a staged recitation of the Qur'an which gives a chance to those among the actors who are especially good at it to show off their skill, which is immediately evaluated by the different members of the audience, especially some of the prominent guests and older men. This is one of the mainly men-oriented parts of the play, and some women from the audience might even walk away for a while to get a drink, something to eat, to chat with their neighbours, or to take care of their small kids.

Only the men taking part in this act have stayed in the centre at the end of the galombang. The actress playing Galang Banyak steps inside the circle at a point when the audience seems to have enjoyed the Qu'ran recitation for a long enough period of time, all the comments have been voiced, and it is about the time to return to the story of Umbuik. This moment has been long awaited by many: Finally, for the first time, the young beauty dressed in that most splendid of Minang ceremonial costumes – shiny red and glistening with all its gold decorations, especially the amazing massive tall crown embellishing her head, enters the ring, immediately attracting the attention of the audience. One can hear comments about her appearance spreading through the crowd, and spot men young and old gazing at her with an often quite obvious lust.

It might be interesting to note here that in the past, all the female parts used to be played by men who just slightly rearranged their attire to resemble female clothes, perhaps throwing a salendang (a female sash) over their head or putting sun-glasses on, as it was considered highly inappropriate for a woman, let alone a young unmarried girl to walk out of her house

at night-time, all the more to act in a play and freely expose herself to men's gazes at the market. Nowadays, things have changed: The young girls in splendid costumes are the pride of each randai troupe, and men acting in female parts are laughed at and universally considered as parody or funny acts by the audiences!

Thus now when the actress impersonating Puti Galang Banyak enters the stage-space, all the eyes follow her as she walks around the men sitting cross-legged in a circle in the middle and listens to each of them recite, in order to finally approach Umbuik and start teasing him. When asked to repeat his performance, his voice trembles, he makes a mistake and then starts stuttering. Obviously, Galang's presence totally damaged his confidence and broke his concentration. Eventually, he gives up, and Galang starts picking on him. He still tries to resist a bit before she gives him the final blow saying that he hasn't studied enough and now looks silly: 'just like a flower that hasn't come to blossom'. Umbuik is greatly embarrassed and immediately asks the host for a permission to leave. The dancers stand up from their seated positions at once to begin another galombang dance with a tepuak directed to the centre where they mingle with the actors. While the males join the circle dance, the beautiful young actress leaves to sit down on a chair behind the musicians where she will wait until her next part. The dance is accompanied by lyrics sung to a popular sad melody or rantok since it describes how devastated Umbuik feels because Galang brought this incredible shame on him and broke his heart. We are told that Umbuik was so sad and gloomy for a couple days after his return home that his mother finally approached him full of worry.

Next comes a dialogue between the two, during which Umbuik reveals the cause of his suffering – his unquenched passion for Galang, and his mother expresses her disappointment that he has not taken her advice to heart, and is now behaving exactly like a Mudo Parisau – 'Young Dreamer' – repeating one of the typical mistakes that young people do, one which she told him to avoid. She warns her son that he will get into big trouble, but he doesn't want to listen. To the contrary, he sends his mother to Galang's house to ask for her hand in marriage on his behalf. The mother expresses her fear that if she refuses it will bring real shame on their whole family, but Umbuik doesn't care, and in the words and voice of a spoiled child, he sends her on the way, which she isn't able to refuse.

The following gurindam which transfers us to Puti Galang's house is filled with ad-lib service towards Galang and her sisters – supposedly the most beautiful and intelligent girls in the community. It gives us an idea of what the Minang consider beautiful in a girl: "... If we talk about their faces, they looked like the full moon; they were yellow, as yellow as yellow is. Their ears looked like small traps, their lips looked like slices of oranges. They cut their nails like a moon crescent ..."

At the end of the last tapuak, three women enter the stage-area to perform the scene of engagement negotiations. They are Umbuik's mother, Galang and Galang's mother. No men seem to be present at this important event! After a long exchange of polite formal phrases, Umbuik's mother finally announces, in the shape of a metaphor, what really brought her to Galang's house. The conversation then goes on in terms of this metaphor: Umbuik is sick, and Galang should become the medicine. The problem is she doesn't seem interested in doing so at all, and her mother rushes to her side, recommending that Umbuik should better return to his studies because he 'hasn't achieved the real goal yet'. The desperate mother doesn't want to give up until Galang finally puts her down with some very strong words: "... If you came to ask for my hand, you needn't repeat that twice, no need for you to come back. The path you travel is too slippery. You want to lure a precious dove to join a simple sparrow,



clearly they will never make an even match, from afar the taste is bitter, who would like to swallow such a mixture. As for your son Umbuik Mudo, he looks most like a withered fruit, like a peanut boiled in vain on its own. Too proud to work in the fields, yet incapable of doing a business, not enough will for diligent study, his experience so shallow, it will be enough if I say he is really a parasite, unfortunate the tree from which he lives ... Should he seem great it would be only the greatness of his tribe, just like his height – merely a fact of nature, his reason is short, his thoughts are few, his handsome appearance comes only from borrowed clothes, the gold he possesses is not even his own, but inherited from his father. To buy my ankle it's not enough, no reason to speak any longer, the hair is rising at the back of my neck, no rose will ever grow in the company of nettles.”

Naturally, this scene is followed by another sad gurindam, the unbearably long tones bringing about an atmosphere of sorrow and misery. Many people in the audience still lively discuss what has been just said, obviously well entertained by the outspokenness of the female heroine as well as by her beauties, while others, especially the older women, as if hurt by the extraordinary sharpness of the preceding words, and touched by the melancholic melody, sit in silence.

At the end of the song, the leader of the troupe makes an announcement that the performance is over for tonight, it will be continued the next evening when everybody is cordially invited to come and watch the further developments of the story. He wishes good night to everybody and sends them on a safe way home. After that, the dancers assemble in the centre, and clasp their hands to mark the real end of the show, upon which they split, and walk away quite informally in all directions looking for a cigarette to light or a cup of coffee to relieve the pain in their tired bodies. In a few minutes, people have disappeared to their homes, while the troupe members are sipping coffee or tea, eating fried peanuts, and discussing the passed performance pinpointing the most successful parts. It is half past two in the morning. A mere one and half an hour from now, the muezzins will call people for the first morning prayer – Subuh.

The following evening, the performance has been moved inside the building of the town council because of rain. It is taking place in a spacious hall with plain white-grey walls and a floor of white ceramic tiles, in full light from fluorescent lamps placed on the ceiling. For me, the whole magical atmosphere which surrounded the performance on the poorly lit ground outside in the market place last night has thus been completely ruined. I can't hide my disappointment from the perspective of watching a theatre performance inside what most resembles an entry hall in a hospital! But the locals don't seem to lack any of their yesterday's enthusiasm for randai.

The basic organisation of space remains the same with the circular formation of dancers now about to take shape in the middle of the hall, and the audience seated in chairs, on the floor or standing around it on a kind of platform higher than the central space – the way of seating now resembles a small amphitheatre of a kind since the viewers sit around the stage area, but slightly above its level. There are many more chairs than the previous night outside, so a large part of the audience has a chance to sit down. I have a feeling that the majority of tonight's audience are middle-age to older men of high status in the town (various functionaries are present – such as the councilmen, the head of the market administration, the chairmen of several merchant associations, several professors of the Padangpanjang Academy of Arts, the chief of police, the judge, etc.). This is quite different from randai taking place on the occasion of a wedding where the majority of audience tends to be formed

by middle-aged and older women and their young offspring of both genders. The ensemble of musicians has been playing for about thirty minutes waiting for everybody to come and find a place to sit when finally, the dancers start their circle dance with some fresh energetic steps of the silek. It's clear that during the day they managed to recover their bodies already visibly tired at the end of last night's performance, and they can now perform again in full strength.

The opening gurindam reminds viewers that the mother of Umbuik Mudo is returning home after her wedding proposals at the house of Puti Galang have failed, she feels a great shame having stricken her family, and no smaller is her worry about the upcoming reaction of her son. In the following dialogue, the mother speaks to Umbuik, announces the bad news, and advises him to be patient, and avoid any further steps until he gets a sign from Allah that his luck should change. Yet Umbuik feels an urge to act. He says that one should try three times before giving up according to the traditional lore. The mother warns him again against acting hastily, but he insists on sending her back to Galang's house for one more try.

Now the gurindam is very sad, a melancholic song has been selected to make a fitting musical accompaniment to a heart-breaking description of the mother's embarrassing deed. Though stricken by incredible shame, the mother agrees to go back because of her love and compassion for her son. She walks back to the house where she had been so badly insulted. We are watching the part of performance quite expectedly most appreciated by the older women, several of whom can be now seen empathising with the heroine to the degree of shedding tears. A dialogue similar to the one performed last night is going to take place among her, Puti Galang and her mother. It is clear that Galang will not change her mind. Then, another heartbreaking gurindam follows, the dancers move with long smooth steps quite close to the ground a bit like shadows sneaking through a darkened forest... I wonder how I could possibly get this idea in this ridiculously full-lit white-tiled room...? But then I remind myself that the locals don't turn their bedroom lamps off even when they go to sleep so the night is not necessarily dark for them. On the other hand, the drown-out weeping tones of the song now accompanied by the deep sounding bamboo flute of saluang combine in a melody which is indeed quite dark. Finally, the dancers sit down and only two characters, Umbuik and his mother stand up in the middle of the circle.

In this scene, the mother's act does not differ from the usual form of a rather pathetic recitation while Umbuik's expression is a bit more lively when he slaps his fists and shakes his head in anger hearing of Galang's sharp refusal. He decides to take a revenge on the proud Galang, and sends his mother on a dangerous journey to the distant pool of Mata Kuciang (Cat's Eye) to get him a magic reed guarded by a big dragon and a poisonous snake. There seems to be no limit to the mother's sorrow as she says she will rather go and die than see her son get angry at her, upon which she leaves disappearing in the circle of dancers that has picked her up in the centre with the first tones of a song titled after the town where the show is taking place today – Padangpanjang. Again, it is a slow melancholic song with drown-out tones trembling up and down manipulated in the throats of the singers by a special technique, the final sound resembling the sound of the muezzins calling out Allah's name to mark the beginning of every prayer. The text goes as follows: "Umbuik's mother has gone; she walks confused; the earth she steps on is boiling; the sky over her feels like it will fall down. It is a long time on the road; now she arrives at her destination, Lubuk Mato Kuciang. It is a holy pool, but not too holy. It has rained hard that day, there is the sound of thunder, flashes light up the sky. She prays to Allah there. Give Umbuik what he wants, please. Because Allah wants to help, the rain stops, the thunder and flashes reside. She sees the parupak<sup>19)</sup> floating in the water. It is no use to make rendang<sup>20)</sup> from peanuts. It is no use to

make the story any longer; it is better we make it short. She gets the only parupuak there. She runs home, forgetting about every shame and embarrassment. She gets home and sees how happy Umbuik is. He starts to make a flute right away. Who knows, it might clear him from all his shame.”

Now the randai has changed its tune to one less melancholic and more humorous. There comes a scene of a new meeting between Umbuik and Puti Galang. Umbuik sits cross-legged on the floor and plays his puput – a small bamboo flute with a high-pitched voice. Galang enters apparently unaware of his presence – looking in a different direction. She is about to have a bath in the village pool. Umbuik teases her from his hiding place which already drives her mad. But when he comes out in front of her, she becomes furious realising that he’s dared to cross her way once again after she had refused him so clearly. She angrily hits the water carrier that she’s brought with her, striking it with such a strength that it breaks to pieces. What follows is an exchange of elaborate pantuns<sup>21)</sup> about love and friendship. Galang first refuses Umbuik, but at the point she wants to leave she is startled all at once, and cannot quite move. The original sharpness disappears from her voice as does her self-confidence, and she begins speaking in the soft melodic voice typical for noble female characters – the good – mannered and pristine Minang daughters.

The upcoming gurindam announces that Puti Galang got sick, cannot eat anything, and cannot be cured by any of the dukun<sup>22)</sup> invited to her house. The disease is getting worse and worse, Galang becomes very weak, and her parents are very much upset. There is a short dialogue between Galang and her worried father in which he asks her what it is that she needs in order to recover, and she requests ‘Umbuik’.

This scene isn’t followed by another gurindam, but just a tapuak – the sequence in which the dancers energetically beat the crotches of their galombang trousers in a rhythmical unison accompanied by piercing cries of ‘hep-ta, hep-ta’. The scene following this tapuak depicts the father and two villagers collecting umbuik – bamboo shoots! – in the forest. There is a lot of joking among them, especially in relation to Galang’s mysterious disease, which brings about roars of laughter from the audience, especially the present men. The purpose of the scene is clearly to break the serious atmosphere set by the opening scenes of tonight’s performance. Yet while the men joke in a very informal way on one side of the stage marked out by sitting dancers, some of them now enjoying a cigarette or even a glass of coffee as they watch the dialogue and laugh with the audience, on the opposite side we can see Galang’s mother worrying over her daughter lying powerless in her lap. Finally the two groups join together when the father at the head of the villagers arrives back home and passes the collected bamboo shoots to his daughter, who starts screaming and acting like crazy – as my neighbours in the audience comment ridiculing the father. Her mother reacts no less hysterically, screaming that if the daughter doesn’t make her real wish clear immediately, she will stab herself, and pulls out a kris<sup>23)</sup> before the father stops her. As usual in Minangkabau, the clear answer requested of Galang comes wrapped in a metaphor: “Oh my Mother, oh my Father, listen carefully. The thunder and the flash kill the ‘limbeh fish’. The fish is killed by the people of Kampung Subarang. Even though there are seven hundred kinds of medicine, the only cure for me is to meet Umbuik Mudo.”

Then another gurindam in a quite merry tune and fast rhythm, which makes the dancers sweat even though it is night time and the air is quite fresh in the hill town of Padangpanjang especially after rain such as now, informs about Umbuik’s triumphant return on a heavily

decorated horse to the house of Galang where he was invited by her upset father. This time, Galang comes to welcome him at the front of her house.

In the acted scene there is first another exchange of pantuns about love, after which first Galang's father and then her mamak (maternal uncle) – Umbuik's former teacher Panjang Janguik ask him to marry Galang without further thought. Obviously, the time has come for Umbuik's revenge. When he starts speaking, there is a patch of irony in his voice: "Umbuik: Dear Father, teacher, dear elders, who are all sitting in this house now. Forgive me, please. Accept a greeting from an unworthy person. I have black skin, and my clothes are of minor quality. I am unworthy and poor, and on top of it I have bad luck. Galang is pure gold, I am just ordinary metal. How can we live together? Puti's father: Don't speak like that. Think about Galang's heart, please. Umbuik: Listen to me Father, teacher, and elders. I look handsome because of my borrowed clothes. I am rich because of the gold from my father, but this wealth is not enough even to buy Galang's ankle ornaments. And listen to what she said about me before. If I touch her she will cleanse herself right away. If I bring her something, she will throw it away. Don't ever say my name twice, it makes her hair stand on end. Puti's father: Don't repeat yourself. Right now, I ask you. If something was wrong, let me balance it. If there is a debt, let me pay it. Most important is that you marry her right now. Umbuik: Dear elders of the house. Forgive me, I want to go home now. Please grant me my leave. Puti's father: Wait a minute, my son. Wait for the party to be over, drink first. Panjang Janguik: Dear student Umbuik, why do you want to leave so quickly? Umbuik: If that is what you ask, you are right. The reason I want to go is that I don't have enough education yet. My knowledge is limited, my lessons are not yet finished. Puti Galang: If I made a mistake, if my mouth was wrong, don't take it to heart. I need you to forgive me. Listen to this my dear. The ship sailed to Indrogiri; the ship of Tongga sailed to Balawan. You want to go study. I am left here alone with no friends. Umbuik: Ask forgiveness from your love. I don't know if I can come back here or not. Puti Galang: Good or bad luck for me is in your hands. If you go, who will stay here with me and be my friend? Umbuik: What do you want from me? We don't have enough gold and are no use for anything. Puti Galang: What I want in my heart is to be embraced by you. But you refuse. So what can I do? Umbuik: My sister, think first. Your status is high, why do you want to fall? Your clan will be degraded. Puti Galang: My love for you is as plentiful as the hair on my head, and it is in my bones and flesh. Listen to this seriously. Umbuik: Look at this unworthy person carefully, you cannot see him any longer. Puti Galang: If you go now, perhaps we will never meet again. Umbuik: If you die before me, wait for me in heaven. Puti Galang: If I cannot see you any longer in this world, how can we ever meet in heaven? Umbuik: Just live, Galang. I want to go right now."

This dialogue is closed with a sad *gurindam* which describes how Umbuik left Galang behind desperate and crying while back home he cannot get any rest either, worried in his heart. At the end of the *galombang* Umbuik is left behind by the rest of the troupe standing in the middle of the stage, while the actress impersonating his mother comes from the outside to join him. We are to watch another serious conversation between a mother and her son.

Clearly, the mother will give her son some precious advice. I, the anthropologist seated among the important men of the town to whom I was introduced by one of the professors of the academy, receive a complex commentary on what is being spoken about in this passage. Everybody seems to be highly concerned that I get this right, so I guess this must be the crucial point in the story. In fact by this time I've been taken in by the story to the extent of feeling unpleasantly disturbed by this verbal diarrhoea that the men suddenly got into. I'm

told about the key position of the woman – mother in Minang society, and about the special relationship between her and her son, and the proper ways of address and types of speech that they are using, and naturally about the core importance of rantau. This flow of volunteered commentaries prevents me from following the development of the play. In the end I'm grateful for the gurindam, which goes as follows: "The young man goes merantau, because he is no use in the home village. He goes to seek knowledge. He left his village and nagari<sup>24)</sup> behind, his mother and sister too. He left his love, Galang. After a year in the rantau, he has acquired much knowledge and wisdom. He is very clever now for this world and eternity. After another year, and then another year, he finishes his studies, but not yet the silek. He wants to graduate his silek as well, so he can use it in the rantau. He wants to start a trade, but the real meaning is that he wants to find his father's murderers."

In the following dialogue Umbuik speaks to his guru (teacher), and announces that he wants to leave for further rantau, yet is anxious that his knowledge of silek is not complete. The guru approves of Umbuik's plan to go further and gain experience in another world, and then he informs him what the graduation exam will look like: The candidate will have to survive one hundred days in a forest full of dragons and crocodiles, one hundred days on a mountain full of tigers, and the last hundred days in a place inhabited by robbers who eat raw meat. Umbuik agrees. They practice some silek and together recite the prayer of silek graduation. The whole series of adventures is then recounted in the following gurindam.

Umbuik wins the combats with all the beasts because of the holiness of his guru, and thus is ready to look up his father's murderers and seek his vengeance. When he enters the last forest, the robbers dwelling there who know no compassion or mercy are already looking forward to his gold and silver.

The eyes of the children's part of the audience light up in expectation of the pandeka (fighter-robber) scene which will be undoubtedly filled with clowning. The pandeka are supposedly frightening, yet in fact more boastful and often cowardly characters, with which there's always a chance they can turn to better. They display all the malicious characteristics one can think of, yet in their unrestrained simple-mindedness they make a rather grotesque impression. As I watch their comic act, they remind me of the good-natured devils or 'čerti' of Czech fairy-tales, especially in the set scene where they first boast about their strength and meanness, but as soon as the fighting starts, the younger ones get scared and push each other forward to face the enemy. Here the scene develops according to the standard scheme until, at the point when the kids have laughed their heads off, it turns to serious: Umbuik defeats all attacks of the robbers, and starts to stab them when suddenly he hears the voice of his guru (one of the actors in the now seated circle formation) pleading him to save their lives and ask them to return to the right way of Allah, and holds himself back. When he preaches them to reform themselves, and ask for Allah's forgiveness, they accept this with gratitude, and ask him to stay overnight to teach them what is right and what is wrong.

The gurindam closing this scene informs us that he stayed as long as a year, and succeeded in turning the robbers into good farmers. Then the main singer announces a break during which a lelang kue – an auction for a cake will take place with the aim to collect money for the construction of a new prayer house in the town. Following the announcement, the majority of randai actors move to one side of the hall where a meal of rice, tea, coffee and clove cigarettes are served for them on straw mats spread out on the floor provided by the sponsors of the performance, while the actress representing Puti Galang, dressed in the most splendidly decorated traditional Minang costume, is invited to stand up in the middle of the hall

displaying a large cake placed on a plate, and the leader of the troupe enters his role of the jenang – an entertaining moderator, and starts a lively auction. He merrily teases the prominent men of the town to join a public show in which they are expected to display their status and their corresponding generosity overtaking each other with offers of an ever higher price for the simple cake. None of the local functionaries and wealthier merchants take long to join in, and hands waving bundles of banknotes keep coming up accompanied by triumphantly loud price offers. Some of the councilmen suggest to me via a professor of the local academy in whose company I arrived tonight that the present ethnographer should take part in the bidding as well. I'm quite surprised since I see no other women participate, and my feeling tells me this is not a female affair at all. I'm not sure if it is my high status as a Westerner or rather the entertaining aspect of a white woman taking part in such an undertaking which makes them so resolute in their effort to get me engaged. I'm encouraged to make a bid with some money sent to me by the chief of police, and everybody looks extremely amazed when I finally do so. Then the bidding continues with the jenang making a point of "our most honoured foreign guest making a generous gift to the community", and calling the present greatest men of the town not to let themselves be ashamed by a foreigner, and what's more, a woman! He inspires a wave of loud laughter followed by a deluge of bids from all corners of the hall. But even that does not make the jenang happy yet. Next he provokes the present perantau with a couple of verses as follows: "From Lintau to Parik Rantang, the road was built up by the Dutchmen, let's wish a warm welcome to our dear perantau, oh how long have we waited for this reunion. The mosquitoes are biting left and right, turning one's whole body into pain, oh help us poor with a ringgit<sup>25)</sup>, with the rupiah.<sup>26)</sup> Bustling with people is the market of Padangpanjang, full of young people as ever, if you are poor even though in rantau, better you stay in your native village forever.

Each verse is followed by a roar of laughter and a series of more or less elaborate commentaries from among the male audiences, often also in verse, or in the form of a traditional pepatah patitih – a proverb or wise saying. Thus requests are made in a humorous way, and addressed at concrete people who seldom fail to react increasing the bids again and again.

After about half an hour the jenang finally announces the most successful bidder to whom the cake is then ceremonially passed. But the break is not over yet. Attention moves towards the player of the saluang – a large bamboo flute with a deep sound, and two singers, one male, one female, all seated cross-legged on bamboo mats on the floor. People assemble around them announcing their orders for their favourite dendang (folk song) to the jenang who again plays the role of an entertaining moderator mediating communication between the singers and the audiences and collecting the money paid for each order. The atmosphere is light-hearted, the songs are carried on a humorous note, and everybody involved seems to be really having fun. Finally at 11 o'clock, the singing ends and the dancers are getting ready to start the second half of tonight's randai performance. The musicians play their gongs to announce that the performance is about to begin.

In a while the dancers have formed the familiar circle and are moving with silek steps to the sound of the opening gurindam. We learn from the singers who accompany their dance that Umbuik has stayed with the reformed robbers for a month and then for a year, but one day he decides to go home after he has had bad dreams and worries that his mother is ill or Puti Galang Banyak has died.

Then there is a dialogue between Umbuik, who has just arrived home, and his sister Rambun Ameh. She informs him that his mother has been missing him badly but is in good health. However, Puti Galang Banyak has passed away a hundred days ago, and the mother is now on her way to the house of Galang's parents where the hundred-days-after-death rituals are about to take place. Then she recounts everything that happened while Umbuik was away. She explains how badly Galang missed him, how she wanted to go look for him in the surau, and how she asked for the blanket they used to wrap Umbuik when he had still been a baby, and then slept under it at night. She describes how she got thinner and thinner before she eventually passed away with Umbuik's mother and sister at her sides while sleeping. Umbuik asks where they buried her and hearing that they have fulfilled his wish concerning the burial side he asks permission to visit her grave.

The dancers have stood up from their position on the floor, walked the actors out of their midst while clapping their hands in a loud unison, and are now walking along the circle when the singer begins to sing the following gurindam set in a very melancholic tone, which is in agreement with the text that describes Umbuik's confusion and despair as he walks to the grave of his beloved one. While Umbuik is crying in the imaginary darkness that has fallen upon the grave, Puti Galang's mamak Panjang Janguik arrives on the scene. The following dialogue ensues: "Umbuik: Oh, my dearest love Puti Galang Banyak, forgive me, forgive me, forgive me if you can. I have said the wrong words to you. Now we are in misery together. Panjang Janguik: Oh, dear child, don't be like this any longer, or an evil spirit will overtake you. Misery will come to you. Umbuik: Oh, my teacher, because I let my anger lead me, because I felt vengeful, Galang died. There are no bigger regrets than mine. How can I ever make up for that? How can I repay my debt to my beloved sister Puti? Panjang Janguik: Don't be disappointed in yourself. Just strengthen your belief inside. If we live long, we will feel more things. Allah will give us more and more. He is just testing us. About you and Galang, just leave it in Allah's hands. Why? Because anything we receive, meet, or do, and especially death is in the hands of Allah. It is our secret. Umbuik: I was unlucky all my life, since I was a little child. My father was killed, Galang passed away because of me. Oh teacher, my spirit has gone, my body is weak, I feel like I will not live much longer. Panjang Janguik: Don't say that. Be patient please and strengthen your heart. Make your spirit stronger. Stay on the straight way. Come on, young man, let's go home."

Then Umbuik Mudo tries to stand up with the help of his teacher, but he stumbles and falls face down on the ground, indicating he is too weak to walk. The dancers pick him up and while rhythmically clapping their hands let him join the circle formation in accompaniment to the sad tones of the beginning gurindam. The song describes Umbuik's feelings of sorrow and detest over one's self, which don't let him sleep or relax. There is no way his mind can find peace until eventually he decides to seek the help of the dukun (a traditional magician) of divine power who earlier gave him the instructions for making his magic flute.

In the following dialogue Umbuik explains his situation to the dukun who is shaking his head in disbelief as he listens to the tragic story. Then he makes gestures simulating the movement of hands above the surface of water held in a receptacle, suggesting a familiar technique used by dukuns when they are asked to make predictions about the future. After reciting a couple of magic formulae, he finally speaks out saying that there is no help for Galang's soul anymore, the only chance would be to replace her soul with Umbuik's. The young man declares he is willing to bring any sacrifice in order to repay his debt to Galang and see her breathe and smile again. The dukun then gives him the necessary instructions and sends him off equipped with a bundle of magic palm leaves and a branch with three citrus fruits.

The very process of reviving Galang is narrated by the next gurindam: Umbuik digs out her grave to find her body untouched by decay, she looks like a sleeping beauty. He reads the magic formula obtained from the dukun, throws the citrus fruits high up in the air and beats Galang with the palm leaves from forehead to toes upon which she opens her eyes, and sits up speaking words of love to him. Her waking up is accompanied by supernatural appearances such as lightening of various colours on different parts of the horizon. Happy about their unexpected reunion, Puti Galang lets Umbuik take her to his mother's house in Ranah Tibarau. While still on their way, the news of their return and the mysterious reappearance of Puti Galang Banyak got around to Galang's parents in Ranah Aur. Yet they refuse to believe such strange news.

In the ensuing scene we see Umbuik instructing his sister Rambun Ameh to send out invitations for his wedding, spread the news of it all across the nagari, and get everything ready for a big feast. This is followed by a cycle of galombang dance in the circle to a song describing how everybody in the nagari caught by surprise by the totally unexpected news hurries to assemble in Umbuik's house. When the grave-stricken mother of Puti Galang receives the news, she persuades her husband to come and see whether really it is their daughter who is about to get married. In the end of the dance four actors appear in the middle of the circle of seated dancers: Umbuik Mudo, Puti Galang Banyak and Galang's mother and father.

First Umbuik and Galang walk around on one side of the circular stage, and we listen to a conversation between the mother and father who stand on the opposing side. The mother says she is confident she has seen her true daughter's face while the father argues that she didn't look carefully enough since many girls' faces can be similar and their daughter has long been buried, so it cannot possibly be her. Yet the mother insists until the father gets angry saying that it would have to be the end of the world when all the dead rise of their graves to face Allah if dead people were to come back and walk among the living like that. He expresses his worries that the mother's mind is still overcome by grief, and thus might be vulnerable to evil spirits. But then the young couple approaches them in their walk and Galang greets her parents in a very emotional manner. Galang and the mother perform a highly pathetic reunion speaking in weeping high-pitched voices going alternately up and down following the same rhetoric technique characteristic of maratok – a tragic emotional lythany in verse. Eventually Umbuik steps in asking both parents to stop their lamentations, and rejoice over the return of their daughter. He goes on to ask their permission to the planned marriage between him and Galang. The father expresses his agreement if this is the will of God, and then they go on making plans about the organisation of the wedding, which will take place in Puti Galang Banyak's house in Kampuang Aur.

The galombang enclosing this scene is a merry one in which silek steps alternate with the joyful swaying movements of dangdut – a highly informal dance with an erotic undertone danced to music of clearly Indian influence, very popular in modern-day Indonesia: the dancers sway from their hips clapping their hands to the rhythm of the music. The audience reacts enthusiastically, some of the small boys sitting in the front rows don't even hesitate to stand up and imitate the dancers' movements at the side. The atmosphere is jolly and playful.

The gurindam repeats the news about the now arranged wedding, and summarises all the arrangements that will be done in its preparation naming all parties involved and their



particular responsibilities. Finally the complete wedding procession on its way from the groom's village to the bride's is described in some detail.

The scene of the wedding then opens with the procession of bride and groom being welcomed by three young girls in full attire carrying the ceremonial yellow parasol above their heads and bringing an offering of yellow rice, water and betel while the parents accompanied by Galang's mamak Panjang Janguik stand in the background. During this short ceremony, the troupe's orchestra of talempong (a set of small gongs), puput (small flutes) and rebana (tambourines) provides a joyful musical background creating the atmosphere of a true Minang *adaik* feast – *alek*.

When the music dies out there comes a formal exchange of *pidato adaik* (customary ritual speeches) between Umbuik, Panjang Janguik and Galang's father, which provides the men with another chance for an elaborate performance of their rhetoric skills: If actors happen to make mistakes in the complicated language of symbols, the prominent men in the audience don't hesitate to correct them, if they are really skilful, this is also openly appreciated by loud comments. Finally prayers are recited, and then the bride and groom are seated on prepared plastic chairs in the middle of the performance area. The orchestra resumes their exciting play and the couple together with the audience are going to watch a performance of *tari piriang* – dance with plates.

This dance is presented by four men of the troupe who have loosely placed china plates on the spread fingers of their hands, and are now performing truly acrobatic movements alternately squatting and standing up again, and balancing the plates in their hands turning them upside down and back again in the split of a second, not giving them a chance to slide down and get smashed against the tile floor, and at the same time rhythmically beating the bottom of their rims with a small ceramic hammer tied to the tips of their index fingers. Watching their astonishingly fast movements, I'm almost overcome by nausea. Or is it because it's already past two o'clock in the morning and I'm really starting to feel exhausted after several hours of watching? It seems to be the purpose of this entertaining break in the dialogue to refresh the audience and prepare them for the final scenes of the performance, which will turn from the merry exciting tone to one more serious once again.

After the 'plate dance' comes the *galombang* to which the singer explains that after all the wedding guests have eaten, drunk, and chewed betel to their full satisfaction, they have asked permission to leave. Only Umbuik and Puti Galang have stayed in the house with Galang's parents. Several months have passed when Umbuik suggests to his wife that they visit his sister Rambun Ameh since he misses her a lot.

In the ensuing dialogue Umbuik asks permission from Galang's parents for both of them to leave, and he gets it, even though the mother expresses some reluctance and asks them to come back soon. The next *gurindam* narrates about the couple's tiring journey and their eventual safe arrival in the house of Rambun Ameh in *Kampung Tibarau* before it goes on to describe that after several months in his sister's house Umbuik suddenly gets ill, and cannot be cured by any means. Puti Galang is overwhelmed by worries, and after they learn the news, even her parents rush to *Kampung Tibarau* in an effort to help.

After the dancers finish the *galombang* and get seated, we see Umbuik lying on the floor and Puti Galang leaning over him in the middle of the circular space. Behind the two stand Galang's parents and also Umbuik's mother and sister stand in silence watching the sad

scene. Umbuik says he is aware his last hour is approaching and Puti Galang pleads him not to pronounce such words. He stops her moaning, and in a weak voice he reveals to her the secret of his magic and the truth about his contract with the dukun who enabled him to bring her back to life. He explains that though he knows he is going to die soon he doesn't regret what he's done because everybody will die eventually, and at least he's had a chance to live happily with her for a little while, which has brought him a lot of pleasure. Then he calls the present parents and his sister, and asks them forgiveness for all his past bad deeds. Then his head falls backwards indicating his death. Puti Galang keeps holding him in her arms when she closes his eyes. Then she starts lamenting declaring that her grief won't let her live very much longer, and asks the present family members to promise that if she dies they will bury her and her late husband at the foot of the two hills facing each other – her at the foot of the hill rising above Kampuang Aur, Umbuik at the foot of the hill above Kampuang Tibarau, so that they don't lose sight of each other for eternity. One can spot tears glistening in the eyes of many young women in the audience, otherwise everybody is silent, people appear quite moved. Some of the children have been long sleeping and their mothers are now slowly getting up and heading towards their homes.

The final gurindam tells us that Puti Galang died shortly after her husband and both of them were then buried according to their last will. The singer then announces that the narration is finished here for tonight and sends everybody on a safe journey back home. If it is God's will, the troupe will perform again in a short time. Then the dancers perform the last silek steps towards the centre where they clap their hands for one last time, before the performance suddenly stops with the dancers leaving the 'stage' casually in all directions already chatting about their experience of this evening. There is no applause, no formal ending, people simply start streaming off in all directions heading to their homes just like they were asked to by the final speech.

## **Conclusion**

Naturally the limited space of this conclusion doesn't allow for a full-fledged interpretation of the rich ethnographic material contained in even the single above described performance and the details of its observed context. Let me just hope it has managed to give the reader an accurate idea of the character of the randai theatre as an art form, and provided some clues concerning its function within Minangkabau culture.

In this short summary I would like to simply point to several key cultural issues that the performance addresses in a more or less direct way, and that I considered worth further attention, research and explanation in the dissertation that I'm writing.

The first of them is the respective position of men and women in Minangkabau society, its ideological grounds in the traditional philosophy, as well as its practical socio-historical and economic implications in the development of the Minangkabau society till the present time. While many anthropologists predicted the necessary collapse of matrilineal social structures in face of modernization, Minangkabau is a living example of a highly adaptable matrilineal society, which has been modernizing and opening itself to the wider world over the scope of several centuries, yet has not given up its matrilineal ideology, and indeed has maintained it as the core element of its modern identity and an important ethnic identity marker in relation towards other groups within the Indonesian state. The above described play makes clear the position of women as moral authorities in the community, and especially points to the role of mothers as moral guides and educators for the men, as well as the makers of crucial decisions

in the social life of the community (e. g. concerning marriages). One of the crucial causes of Umbuik's failure is undoubtedly his disrespect towards his mother and her moral teachings. His reckless behaviour towards his mother when he insists on putting her repeatedly in a most shameful position forcing her to face insults from fellow villagers, and finally even asks her to do an errand for the fulfillment of which she is made to put her life under threat, amounts to the breaking of an important taboo in the Minangkabau society.

The crucial mechanism that seems to have enabled the continuation of the matrilineal social organization, and even strengthened it in effect while at the same time initiating modernization, is to be seen in the practice of merantau – the central motive of many randai plays. It seems that the practice of merantau has strengthened the gender division of roles in Minang communities turning women into farmers attached to the soil and the village, and the responsible patron of Minang traditions, while men – unattached to the land – predominantly became migratory workers and traders, and thus also the messengers of modernization. The above presented script provides a clear idea of merantau as a form of male initiation, the various experiences that it involves, as well as the expected skills one is to gain during its process. The fact that Umbuik tried to begin his adult life as a married man before he had completed his initiation is indeed the sole most important cause of his tragedy.

The last motive in the play that I would like to mention is the move away from older animistic beliefs towards an ever stronger authority of the Islamic religion. Islam first arrived in Minangkabau in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century brought to the coastal areas of West Sumatra by traders from India and Aceh – an area on the northern tip of the island of Sumatra. It took over two centuries before it reached the isolated highlands of the Minangkabau heartland, and even then it was mainly Islamic mysticism which appealed to the villagers, and managed to blend with their animistic beliefs forming a complex of syncretic religious beliefs. It was no sooner than the 1830s that pure Islam started to establish itself as a dominant religion in Minangkabau, notably in the context of the struggle against the just arrived Dutch colonizers who at that time started to establish a firm control of West Sumatra. At the time of the wars against the Dutch, Islam proved a powerful ideology able to mobilise significant parts of the population, and thus gained significant authority. This eventually enabled it to establish itself as the second pillar of Minangkabau identity along with the elaborated matrilineal ideology that it however, never managed to take over resulting in a curious cultural mix peculiar to Minangkabau. In the play about Umbuik and Puti Galang Islam is clearly accorded great moral authority while animistic beliefs and magic practices are described as morally corrupt and dangerous as they rebound against those who abused them causing tragedy and despair. A clear preference is given to rational reasoning, diligent work and humbleness associated with Islam.

Nevertheless I find it significant that magical practices play an important role in the story, and indeed are shown to have a great effective potential. Some present Minangkabau researchers see the presence of the magic element in the story as evidence of its 'ancient origin' moreover corresponding with its fairy-tale form, which is in contrast with the majority of more 'realistic' kaba. This is of course possible, yet I see in the argument an effort typical of Minangkabau nowadays, that is to stress the importance of everything Islamic (understand modern and civilised), and pretend that the older 'primitive' animistic beliefs have long been forgotten, or are only adhered to by the most backward, uneducated peasants while everybody laughs at them in the cities. Indeed animistic and magical beliefs and practices are a taboo unless they can be masked in the coat of Islam and Islamic mysticism and

presented as Muslim, which is an acceptable option, in fact very often resorted to by the town and city folk.

## Epilogue

It took a year of living in the community and the establishment of very close friendly and family ties before people started mentioning magical practices they were involved in to me. And probably were it not for the extreme situation which developed when I brought with me to Padangpanjang a Javanese boyfriend and my later husband, thus causing great distress to the family of my landlady who was afraid of the reaction of the community to the fact that their 'almost daughter' was openly pacaran – that is going out with a boyfriend without clear plans to marry him, I wouldn't have learnt that my 'modern city landlady' who walked around in sexy jeans and T-shirts, played tennis and daily watched American soap operas on TV, plus was married to an apparently stout Muslim who prayed in the mosque everyday and recited prayers at home long into the night during Ramadan, was in fact also seeing a shaman! Me and I had been confidants even before, at times she would sleep in my room so that we could engage in gossip undisturbed in the middle of the night, she told me about her arguments with her husband, and about her inability to get pregnant, which was really bringing her down. I also new about the young guys who came to flirt with her in a very inconspicuous manner in her small restaurant, and I knew which of them she secretly admired. Yet it was obviously the last resort for her to tell me that 'perhaps I should try to see the dukun since it looks like that Javanese guy might have bewitched me'. It was at that point that to my amazement, she confided to me how during my absence while I was attending a conference in Java she suddenly couldn't resist one of her suitors and started dating him bringing her family to overwhelming despair about their married daughter having an extramarital affair. Eventually, they persuaded her to quit the relationship, yet she was not strong enough as she kept being tortured by an unquenchable passion every day she didn't see him. In the end she decided to see a dukun who made a special concoction for her and told her to pour it over her head before every morning shower. Eventually, she said, this procedure managed to cure her: the passion disappeared and she was able to forget her lover.

## Notes

- 1) Originally the bachelor's house eventually turned into a village Islamic school and prayer house.
- 2) An older man who educated the young boys not only in the martial art meant for self-defense while travelling the unsafe jungle-covered mountainous terrain of West Sumatra, but also in *adaik* – the complex of customary law and traditional philosophy.
- 3) It seems that before the spread of Islam the sound of the flute used to accompany shamanistic performances in which it served as a means of communication between the shaman and the spirits.
- 4) C. Harun, *Kesenian Randai di Minangkabau*. Jakarta: 1991; D. Zulkifli, *Randai: Kesenian Rakyat dan Sejarahnya*. Thesis S2. STSI Padangpanjang: 1994.
- 5) The name 'kaba' stems most likely from the word 'kabar' meaning 'news', which refers to the fact that the stories are considered to report about true events rather than fictitious stories, no matter how much they may have been transformed in the process of oral transmission, of which their interpreters are clearly aware and even point to in the opening speech of every performance
- 6) They often describe conflicts and fights with the Dutch, or mention Dutch-introduced realities and institutions which provides evidence for the likely time of their origin.

- 7) Temporary migrant.
- 8) Area of Minangkabau migration.
- 9) The kaba were recited or sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument – either saluang – the afore mentioned bamboo flute, rebab – a string instrument, or even just the rhythmic beat of a box of matches, similarly to the manner of the European troubadour tradition of the Middle Ages.
- 10) The complex of Minangkabau customary law and natural philosophy.
- 11) Based on the observation that only women are able to give birth to new human beings, and thus secure the continuation of the society, the Minang matrilineal customary law gives them full control of the main life resource of the community – the rice paddies, which are inherited along the female line, and provides them with the security and protection of their own houses passed from mother to daughter so that they could devote themselves fully to the nurturance of the new generation. Women are the rulers inside the village houses, and as such they are customarily referred to as 'the pillars of the house'.
- 12) D. Zulkifli, Naskah Randai Palimo Gaga. Padangpanjang: 1983.
- 13) This is a successful variation on a traditional motive of the classic stories where irresponsible male youngsters devote themselves to hazard games, especially cockfighting, spending all their mothers' and sisters' money and bringing the whole family into debts following which they are sent to rantau in order to work and assemble enough money to repay the debts and regain a respectable position for themselves and their families.
- 14) Matrilineage heads and adai experts responsible for settling affairs within the community.
- 15) The Indonesian name for Idul Fitri, the Islamic holiday marking the termination of the fast and celebrating the moral renewal achieved.
- 16) The play reproduced here was performed by randai group Sago Sejati from the village of Baruh Bukit in the district of Sungayang, on 19 and 20 December 2001 in the market of the town of Padangpanjang.
- 17) Nature become your teacher.
- 18) The Long Beard – apparently, the teacher is named after a feature typical for traditional ulama or Islamic scholars.
- 19) Erianthe or water bamboo.
- 20) Minang meal of beef cooked in coconut milk.
- 21) Traditional form of Malay poetry consisting of four verses of which the first two are a comparison from the natural world and form a poetic introduction to the second half which expresses the message of the poem.
- 22) Traditional Minang shaman and healer.
- 23) A traditional Minang weapon – a kind of dagger.
- 24) An administrative area based on traditional kinship organization.
- 25) A coin of old Dutch golden money.
- 26) The rupiah is the present Indonesian currency which has lost in value after the inflation following the so called Asian crisis in 1997.



**LENKA SMOLINSKÁ**

## **WHO SAYS THAT WE ARE POOR? COMMENTS ON THE DISCOURSE ON POVERTY**

### **Introduction**

Before I set off to Nairobi to carry out a research for my final thesis I tried to prepare myself well for the three-month stay, looking for some information on the Internet and meeting people who went to the Kenya's capital, and especially to the slums. Without exceptions, all the written materials I gathered and all the oral testimonies I heard were, to a greater or lesser extent, negative. Let alone the possible quality of my theoretical preparation, I started to have doubts about the very intention of doing a fieldwork in Nairobi's informal settlements.<sup>1)</sup>

Another disappointment was my Internet research concerning the topic of my fieldwork: youth-led development in the slum Kibera, which I found almost no information about. However, I knew that it existed thanks to the website of an organisation, Kibera Community Youth Programme (KCYP)<sup>2)</sup> that gave me some idea and hope. Apart from this single website, the existence of youth groups was hidden in silence.

The fact, that I actually found on spot many people of my age trying to improve their situation by establishing community-based organizations<sup>3)</sup> was quite surprising then, let alone they were not supported and organised from outside! My instant decision was, therefore, to know their work and to transmit my findings to the thesis.

Moreover, soon after coming to the field, I started to feel the discrepancy between common discourse on poverty and the actual situation in the particular context. The information I found so threatening when still at home, appeared to be far too generalising. Mentioning always and only the negative aspects of the life in slums, the dirty environment, and the incapacities of the inhabitants made it almost impossible to imagine the presence of positive things. I felt it as an injustice towards all those people I met and therefore I assumed a position operatively called "Show-the-positive approach" intending to reveal that under the dust and rust, under the so called poverty line, there can be found many things that are impressive in a positive way. This became the single most important task of my work. I hope that it will help to uproot some stereotypes about the inhabitants of slums, especially the youth.

In the thesis, I therefore focus on describing the work of young people from Kibera as members of community-based organisations but also as individuals with some personal motivations and dreams, and indeed as philosophers. I regret that people as beings who try to realise their inner potential are being ignored in the development literature and project design. The importance of the personal development and discovery of the power from within is being neglected at the expense of economic progress.

In this short article I will try to present in brief my view of the situation and the agitation I felt while still in the field. Much of the text sprang up after conversations and interviews with the youth from Kibera.

Kibera, ...please (don't) tremble!

Being the biggest African slum, sheltering around one million of people, having one of the highest densities of population, and, virtually, a high “density” of life, Kibera is a very juicy plantation for many well-wishers, “well-wishers”, researchers, international volunteers and gold-diggers. In fact, Kibera is over-researched and over-“developed”. Lots of work is being done to keep the semblance that everything is in move, though the situation doesn’t seem to be improving. Is it that the status quo is being maintained purposefully? (Just one of the perspectives that sees poverty reduction efforts as a self-serving business focused on prolonged solving rather than resolving the problem in order to keep constant influx of cash from donors).

Kibera has a lot to offer but do these “professional helpers” have something to offer to Kibera really? Did they not come to impose just another office-stitched policy? Where are the results of innumerable researches being put into practise? Where are all the money that are being brought here flowing? Can anyone give answers to these questions? I doubt.

I imagine most of the fieldworks having the following scenario: A team of researchers with hired assistants run around the place to reach as many people as possible in as little time as possible (there are thirteen villages in Kibera each with tens of thousands of people!). What is the result of these researches? According to my view, it is stereotypical picturing of the place that serves the development agencies to get more funds. This picturing is usually based on “show-the-worse-that-can-be-found” approach, count the “flying toilets”. It is thanks to this that the Dark Myth of Kibera was created.

But does this approach really benefit the individuals? (Apart from the individuals at NGOs’ offices. Please, do not forget that those who should benefit are still people of Kibera!). I am not sure. Maybe I should have carried out a research on this issue. The only thing I can say now is that I know, that it does not delight the youth I met to be portrayed without respect and approached with biases. Many questions are buzzing in my head when I hear their testimonies.

How can someone be trying to help the people and at the same time be applying this approach? How come that someone who wants to teach people is not willing to be taught by them? How come that someone does not understand the difference between co-operation and exploitation? How come that someone who comes the whole way around the world does not understand that all the people on the Earth are the same? Why is he dividing between us and the poor from the ghetto? Crushing perspectives!

What I feel is that Kibera does not need another impersonal huge data collection, nor heart-touching testimonies that are meant to attract compassionate donors. Everyone knows already how many toilets there are. To my view, Kibera needs recognition (but it is an informal settlement!) and this can only be done through an approach focused on positive examples. But who would bother with spending time on digging gold that is covered with mud? I am talking about gold that does not fit in the data required, that cannot be counted nor measured as it is the gold that human beings hide inside. An anthropologist should bother, of course! Through the qualitative method, through an individual approach, through listening and learning.

Poverty is when ...

"We live from hand to mouth, but we are not poor in minds." (Robert)

Among researchers and experts on poverty there exists nowadays a consensus on a multidimensional character of the concept. Therefore, poverty is no longer perceived as a mere lack of material assets, but as a complex sense of ill-being underpinned by psychological deprivation. Nevertheless, the unexceptionable line for absolute poverty was set at \$1 per person per day, an amount necessary for meeting the basic needs necessary for an healthy life.

The literature on development usually pursues a policy of stressing the "lacks" of the poor, their incapacities and the stigma bound with poverty. "Poor people often lack practical skills that would help them earn a livelihood. Their lack of ability to provide for their families and belong to society leads to low self-confidence and self-worth" .... "The stigma of poverty, and the perception of deviant behaviour associated with it, is recurring theme in discussions with poor people." Lack of acceptance by broader society is seen as one of major constraints of poverty in the series of papers called Voices of the poor.<sup>4)</sup>

Lack, lack, low, stigma, deviant, poor... I do not see the need to add more examples. Vulnerability, crime, poverty, apathy, poverty, lack, humiliation, lack... This stigma makes young people from Kibera shout: "You can't philosophise, you're in Kibera!" Although meant as a joke it carries an important message. Firstly, the slum Kibera is regarded by the rest of the society (how broad?) as a place where none is able or even supposed to philosophise<sup>5)</sup> and secondly, it tells us that people from Kibera actually can philosophise.

Do we not help to nourish these stereotypes and the stigma by still putting emphasis on the "lacks" and deprivations, an experience that is far from what we can imagine? How can we pity someone and at the same time accept him? Fortunately, the problem is not so boss-eyed. "Those who work directly with low-income groups in urban areas, their community organisations and the local professionals with whom they interact (for instance, local doctors, nurses, teachers and staff of local NGOs) are constantly confronted with exceptional people, doing exceptional work with very few resources."<sup>6)</sup> And so was I in the field ...

### **Who says that we are poor?**

I was given the opportunity to join in one discussion on poverty, held on 6. 3. 2006 in Kibera. The participants (consisting only from youth of Kibera engaged in community-based development) were giving various ideas that altogether rejected the common views on poverty as unfair and indeed, humiliating.

For example, Frank from Kibera Community Youth Programme (KCYP)<sup>7)</sup> mentioned the relativity of the concept of poverty by saying: "I think that nobody is poor. It is just the fact that you don't have something that he has. Poverty is just a state of mind – When you think you are poor. The point is, we try to picture things and set standards, like if he has these big shoes he is rich and if you can't afford shoes like him, you're poor. These are the standards set by people."

Similarly, Leo adds: "OK, people say that we in Kibera are poor, so then you just believe that you're poor and you're not working hard. So that being poor is a mental idea that makes poor of me because I believe I can't make it ... because someone else tells you."



Laura, an assistant director in the same youth group talked about the subjectivity of poverty: “It depends on your feeling of comfort. You can feel bad while living in Lavington<sup>8</sup>) and feel good living in Kibera. Why should I want to live in Lavington? Everyone has its own perspective of life.”

Kepha, a 23-year-old boy, who likes philosophising, recognises all the constraints but sees a big challenge in them: “Poverty is a very strict teacher because it leaves you a mark that can never be erased. It develops your character in a way because you really really struggle hard to live. It teaches you really strongly how to live, how to survive. And it is not a teacher that loves you, like the teachers that love their children. It is very very angry, sometimes. Sometimes you sleep hungry. It punishes you temporarily but it builds you ever more. So I believe we are students in this class...People could learn from poverty if they saw it as a teacher and not a punisher, something that develops them as well. Those who are poor and live in Kibera should therefore learn from poverty and how to be students in this class ...” Of course, the material aspect of poverty was also discussed during the meeting, the lack of basic needs, but according to Kepha, “The most important food in man’s life is not just the physical food that you eat.”

Leo concluded the discussion by a full-hearted phrase: ”I am poor only when I am dead.“ Wow, what a dare thought! He lives in Kibera, the biggest slum in East Africa! He is supposed to ... whatever.

### **Gold covered with mud**

If the quotations have not made it clear and someone still wants to ask: But what positive things can be found in such environment with no ... and without ...? For those who have never been there it is hard to imagine. For those who went there as tourists to “see how the poverty is like” it is hard to imagine. Fulfilled expectations?!

It was on the very first day: I immersed trembling in the dusty streets of Kibera, when I realized it, saw it, felt it ... The lively atmosphere, the nice smile of my guide, the helpful attitude of the youth (really surprising when I consider the fact that I was the third Mzungu, White person, in the KCYP’s office). Let then people from KCYP say how I felt, and more importantly, how they feel about their home: “People see guy from ghettoe and they see drugs, AIDS, theft. But Kibera has beauty too. It has all the good things, they’re just covered with mud. When you wash out the mud you find gold...Kibera has beauty, too. I have been empowered to know that!” (Frank)

Kathy, an 18 year old girl has also a very mature opinion: “Life is just how you take it. If you take Kibera as a hard place to live in, a dangerous place, that is how it will be. But if you take it just like any other place, Kibera is a good place“.

There is not enough space here to describe the work of youth groups, ranging from leisure activities like football, educational theatre, to environmental clean-ups, and various income-generating activities. These organisations also play an important role in supporting young talents, realising their potential. People who want to become actors, singers or playwrights are given a chance to show their works to their fellow members and the community and through their organisation, sometimes, they can find also material support. “Here in KCYP, we have opportunities for meeting many people that you interact with and they might inspire

you. In one way I am empowered because I will be able to think beyond the box. I can now make an independent choice and have a vision about my own life” Fred, director.

Is there something you want to share? Your philosophy of life...?, I asked Fred, in the interview. “... Life is no rehearsal. You live today and then it’s gone. So if you have some knowledge, if you have some skills you are supposed to ensure that apart from you there is somebody else who gains from that otherwise it is irrelevant for you to have lived this life if you cannot contribute to the welfare of others, I mean mankind, humanity”. You say irrelevant? Yes, because what else have you lived for? For yourself? Only you, you?

To conclude, Frank’s words can be an inspiration for everybody: “When you sacrifice, when you give in, it is the best way the universe gave you mercy in the future. We know, God is looking at us. And something comes. Just do your best without expectations and you will harvest one day.“

So you see, Kibera has beauty, too. I have been empowered to know that ...

### **Concluding remarks**

I realise that I am not in position to challenge current concepts of poverty, the measures and definitions, and it was not my intention anyway. Instead I wanted to point at things that create the reality, too. The reality that is often omitted and neglected. Be it the reality of only few enlightened youth who live next to the people who feel deprived by poverty and therefore not capable enough to create a change (how much is it for fulfilling the expectations of a researcher?).

I still believe though, that the current perspective is not likely to bring real change into the World. It is likely to bring more pity but pity will none bring recognition. Pity is a feeling that makes someone feel superior to the person he is taking pity on. It is hard to induce respect through pity. Pity gives mercy, but mercy is not respect. In the article I argued, that highlighting the capacities and similarities (be it the same potential of people from whatever country on the Earth) instead of lack of abilities and differences, caused by impoverished environments, could be a useful tool for the fight against the stigma or “lack of acceptance”. In spite of trying to induce new, the so called participatory strategies for poverty reduction, the discourse is still a bit far from recognising people from low-income areas as partners in the development. Equalities, not differences, have to start to count. Saying what the “others” can and are able to do is the fair way to create a change. A change in the whole World, not only the Third World. On the other hand, what the “poor” themselves can do to claim respect? Maybe just by saying: Who says that we are poor?

### **Notes**

- 1) Low-income areas with semi-permanent structures built on private or government land and therefore, not officially recognized as part of the city.
- 2) [www.kcyp.net](http://www.kcyp.net).

- 3) Community-based organization is founded and coordinated by members of a community and is responsible for planning, managing, and implementing developmental change with little, if any, intervention from governments, or other external actors.
- 4) Voices of the Poor is a multi-country research initiative undertaken to understand poverty from the perspectives of poor people and creating a basis for the *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking poverty*.
- 5) According to an on-line dictionary philosophizing means to 1) speculate or theorize, usually in a superficial or imprecise manner; 2) think or reason as a philosopher (<http://www.infoplease.com/dictionary/philosophize>). Similarly, according to thesaurus it is to “*reason philosophically*”, <http://www.infoplease.com/thesaurus/philosophize>, [2006].
- 6) Aid and urban development: Where are the views of the “recipients“?, *Environment & Urbanization Journal* 13, 2001, 1, p. 5.
- 7) KCYP was organizing this meeting and their members created the biggest part among the participants. During my research I was in closer touch with them and had the possibility to discuss further the issues that were mentioned on the meeting, therefore, I quote mainly their ideas.
- 8) Lavington is a posh residential quarter in Nairobi.



**MONIKA BAER**

### **FEMINIST CRITIQUE IN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY: A SKETCH ON POST-SOCIALIST CONTEXT**

In Polish or, to put it more widely, post-socialist context, influence of feminism-inspired anthropology that has developed in Anglo-American settings for several decades seems highly limited. In mainstream anthropological debates sex, gender and sexuality do not appear extensively recognized research subjects and feminist leanings of persons engaged in the discipline are usually perceived as illegitimate in academic spaces. The interesting point here is that the above statements hold true not only for more “traditionally” inclined scholars, but also for those who are significantly inspired by most up-to-date ideas from Anglo-American academic centers, where the above process seems to proceed in the opposite direction. The main grounds for this situation are perceptions of “feminism” as the purest emanation of “political”, which for historical reasons is still taken here as a synonym of “ideological”, understood not in a Foucaultian, but in a classical way. This results in a specific vision of feminist critique as an anti-thesis of contemporary anthropology. However, if we grasp anthropology as a discipline that combines analysis of culture based on ethnographic detail with a social critique, then “political” becomes not an antinomy, but a necessary context of academic analysis, which allows feminist critique to be its important aspect.



**LENKA BLAŽKOVÁ**

### **WAXCHANDLER AUGUSTIN ČÍŽEK IN PŘÍBRAM (1877–1946)**

Wax-craft used to be a special craft which concerns processing of beeswax. Wax-chandlers manufactured many sorts of candles – Passion candles, Christmas candles, many kinds of souvenirs, devotional articles, oblations, fancy goods, flowers or statuettes from beeswax, moreover, they produced soaps, perfumery etc. Wax-craft expended in Příbram during the

17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries through the proximity of very famous Holy Mountain, a pilgrimage place with the Baroque basilica and the wooden statue of Virgin Maria which took its origin in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. However, first written documents about this kind of craft in Příbram come from the year 1703 and they are connected with the first wax-chandler Jakub Brod. The period of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is the best known part of Příbram's wax-craft history. The interest of wax-chandlers was concentrated on pilgrimage goods, nevertheless it is possible to presuppose this trend earlier, too. It is interesting to study the ways of production in wax-chandler's workshop on the basis of Anna Čížková (died in 2004), whose father Augustin Čížek was one of the last wax-chandlers in Příbram. In order to penetrate into wax-craft problems well, we have to study preserved subjects and implements dealing with this craft. A rich collection of these subjects is deposited in the Mining Museum in Příbram. The collection contains more than 380 subjects dealing with the craft, 206 of them are implements which were used in the wax-chandler's workshop. The cooperation with the artist Alena Čáková, who is the holder of a creative workshop in Příbram, has been contributive to these studies, too. Alena Čáková creates wax candles and moulds oblations according to reminiscences of Anna Čížková, the late daughter of wax-chandler Čížek. The wax-chandler Augustin Čížek was born in Příbram on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1877 in the family of one of Příbram's townsmen. Čížek was skilled as a wax-chandler, but he was able to bake gingerbread and to make soap, too. After that he went to Germany (near Munich), where he spent few years. He started his workshop, bought his own house and got married some time between 1900 and 1906. He was an outstanding personality because of his social activities. He was elected as the Příbram's councillor on behalf of the Czechoslovak People's Party (between 1928–1941), he acted as M. P. of National Council and he occupied many honorary offices in the city during the thirties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Čížek's workshop was abolished in 1945. Augustin Čížek died on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1946. The main part of the article deals with creation of various sorts of candles, for example by coating, drawing, moulding oblations, further their decorations and use.



## **MARCIN BROCKI**

### **SEMIOTIC ANTHROPOLOGY IN POLAND**

The aim of the paper is to contribute to the research of the forming of the semiotic ethnology (anthropology) in Poland. The structural and semiotic approach to culture in the Central and Eastern Europe was started to be applied at the turn of 1960s and 1970s. In the Polish background, semiotic anthropology has not been reflected in consistent theoretic orientation (semiotic school), but rather as inspiration appearing in (more or less) theoretical concepts of prominent Polish ethnologists belonging to the circle of the so-called „Nowa Etnologia Polska“ (NEP). Within NEP two methodological directions were formed – structural semiotic and phenomenological-hermeneutic, both of which are characterized by turning away from positivism (postpositivism), focus on the system of spiritual culture, preparation of synthetic (interpretative) works, and orientation towards interdisciplinary cooperation with related disciplines (history, semiotics, religion studies, linguistics, and literary studies). Social phenomena understood in the context of folk culture based on the mythical structure of thinking are in the centre of NEP's interest. In the frame of the structural-semantic methodological tradition, Polish ethnologists try to discover the internal logic of the studied culture (“interpretation of culture by the means of culture”) and thus they prove its symbolical character as well as the large number of forms of its semiosis.



**MICHAELA BUDIMAN**

### **CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE TORAJA**

The Toraja, who inhabit the area presently called Tana Toraja, a mountainous region of the Indonesian province of South Sulawesi, were rather isolated until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the introduction of Christianity by Dutch missionaries, most of the Toraja gradually converted from their autochthonous religion *Alukta* to the new faith. The first converters were mostly children who attended the schools built by the Dutch. Afterwards, their parents became Christians too. However, despite the fact that nowadays most of the Toraja population claims to be Christian, the features of *Alukta* obviously still remain in the contemporary Toraja rituals.



**MICHAELA BUDIMAN**

### **TORAJA FUNERAL RITUALS IN THE PAST AND PRESENCE**

The Toraja, who inhabit the province of Tana Toraja, located in the southern part of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, were rather isolated until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1913 Dutch missionaries introduced Christianity to the Toraja people who until then adhered to their autochthonous religion Aluk Todolo or Alukta. Almost all of the Toraja people gradually converted to the new religion, though they did not fully leave behind their original customs. Contemporary Toraja rituals, especially funerals, comprise Aluk Todolo features as well as Christian elements.



**MICHAELA BUDIMAN**

### **TORAJA PENTECOSTALISTS AND THEIR FUNERALS**

The Toraja inhabit the province of Tana Toraja situated in the southern part of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. Until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century they were rather isolated and adhered to their autochthonous religion *Aluk Todolo* or *Alukta*. After the introduction of Christianity most of them converted to the new religion, though they did not fully leave behind their original customs. Therefore contemporary Toraja rituals, especially funerals, comprise *Aluk Todolo* features as well as Christian elements. Different religions and denominations have different levels of tolerance towards the presence of *Aluk Todolo* influences in contemporary Toraja funerals. The most rigid ones are pentecostalists who try to avoid most practices that are otherwise commonly present at funerals of other denominations. Pentecostalists do not allow killing buffaloes and pigs at funeral rituals for ceremonial use and they do not eat meat from sacrificed animals at *Aluk Todolo* funerals. Besides that, pentecostalists forbid to consume the blood of buffaloes which is normally used by other Christians to increase the flavor of the prepared food. Also, they strongly oppose the traditional division of heritage, and the division of meat from the sacrificed animals. Last but not least, pentecostalists do not agree with burying the deceased ones several months or years after their actual death.



**MICHAELA BUDIMAN-RYBKOVÁ – RADMILA LORENCOVÁ**  
**THE TORAJA BURIAL RITUALS AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION ON THEIR FORM**

The present article describes how social stratification influences forms of burial rituals of the Toraja people. According to their original religion *aluk todolo* the society was divided into four social groups: *Tana' Bulaan* – higher nobility, *Tana' Bassi* – lower nobility, *Tana' Karurung* – commoners, *Tana' Kua-Kua* – slaves. Depending on what social group people belonged to, they were obliged to hold a certain type of a burial ritual, carve special ornaments into the front part of their house or use certain colours for its decoration. Christianity was introduced in this area at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and most of the Toraja people converted to it. Due to this fact the division into social groups with different rights and duties was officially forbidden but in everyday life it persisted more or less until these days. The Toraja people used to believe that the souls of the animals killed during the ceremony (buffaloes and pigs) would help the soul of the deceased to easily get into the realm of the dead *puya*. Not many Torajas believe in it anymore but the tradition is stronger than the rational attitude of a modern Toraja and therefore tens of buffaloes and hundreds of pigs are still killed at the burial rituals of the members of the higher nobility. Toraja burial rituals are considered to be a synthesis of the autochthonous religion *aluk todolo*, the common law *adat* (it is very difficult to distinguish what elements come from *aluk* and what from *adat*) and Christianity. In the period of the 1960s and 1970s young Torajas from the lowest class left for Kalimantan where there were new opportunities to easily earn a lot of money in the oil and wood processing industry. This sudden wealth enabled the former slaves to have more complex and more expensive funeral rituals than ever before. But even if they nowadays collected enough money to be able to hold a funeral ritual of the higher nobility, they would not be allowed to do it. Despite the fact that the division of the Toraja society into four social groups was officially forbidden, its presence in every day life is still evident and it still influences the form of the held funeral ritual.



**DAVID CÉSAR**  
**THE SELECTED TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE: THE RISE OF THE ATLANTAIC SLAVE TRADE WARS IN THE 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURY**

Slavers used to buy their "goods" along the African coast from Gambia over the especially advantageous region of the Gulf of Guinea till the southernmost point of the continent. In 15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Portuguese played the major role in this trade. After 1640, their positions were taken over by the Dutch. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, England took the lead in the slave trade in the "trade wars" background. This commercial and military success allowed England to lay the foundations for its future empire. Slaves captured in Africa were among the poorest strata of African population. In their hunting, African slave states such as Asante and Dahomey were engaged, and so did also private hunters from other indigenous ethnic groups. Business of this kind led to the slave states expansion at the expense of their competitors. However, for the African population itself it was a demographic and economic disaster. Slaves were transported in miserable hygienic conditions, leading both to their extensive mortality during the voyage and numerous rebellions as well. Nevertheless, the huge numbers of Africans brought together with their huge natality enabled to develop new specific companies overseas, especially in the British islands of Jamaica and Barbados.



**DAGNOSŁAW DEMSKI**

**BETWEEN RITUALISATION OF THE PAST AND ADAPTATION: MAN IN A SITUATION OF CULTURAL DISORIENTATION**

Cultural disorientation is a phenomenon well-known in the social life and occurred between two social, political or cultural movements which reshapes the society. It is a part of assimilation and acculturation processes described in classical literature. But it can be described from micro and subjective perspective analyzing social behavior of members of such group and their reactions to the undergoing transformations. What seems to be interesting are the factors like certain experiences which defines traditional collective identity and intentionality of individuals and subgroups. Both are deeply affected by changes. Because in such events the context has main meaning, the case (Lithuanian-Polish cultural contact in Kaunas region) depicted here presents specific features of the situation and process of transformation.



**KONRAD GÓRNY**

**BORDELAND AND NEW LOCALISM**

One of the most apparent effect of globalisation processes is the opposite process called glocalism, glocalisation or a new localism. The borderland became the site of the revival of regional identity and regaining the local tradition. The notion of the borderland, as applied in studies of culture, is equivocal and its comprehension is much wider then its hitherto territorial meaning. Borderlands are perceived today as places of incommensurable inconsistencies, as zones of cultural interconnections where processes of cultural melting of styles occurs. It causes that anthropologists involved in the subject refers not only to the idea of territorially located culture.



**OLGA HELDENBRUG**

**VISIBILITY AND INVISIBILITY OF THE GODS AND FUNCTION PERSPECTIVE IN THE BOOK OF JAPANESE MYTHS *KOJIKI I***

In Japanese culture a stare possesses a special magic power, which could be both creative or destructive. Japanese *Kojiki* myths emphasize that the first five powerful gods, which are also the highest gods in the *Kojiki* hierarchy, are invisible. When the divine couple of Izanami and Izanagi descended from Heaven to the islands they created, they also gave form to the first visible things: a divine column and a ritualistic wedding palace. Although Emperor Showa (Hirohito) officially rejected the idea of his divine origin in 1946, until that time it was believed that the Japanese Emperor is a descendant of the *kami* (Japanese gods), an intermediary between the world of the *kami* and the Japanese people. Therefore, according to myths, the gods are becoming increasingly visible. The Emperor was there in plain sight, his purpose being to announce the will of the invisible *kami* to the people. There are also countless local gods that can inhabit *shintai* (the body of god), usually represented by ritualistic or natural objects (i.e. a mountain), to show their will to people. It should be noted that the word “*kami*” also refers to the souls of the dead, which are equally invisible, but can act by possessing a living person. This usually occurs when an insult or jealousy is binding the soul to this world of emotions, preventing it from entering the *kami*

world. The fear and respect towards the will of the *kami*, which can also show itself in someone's stare, is often reflected in the desire to avoid direct eye contact.



**LUCIE HRONEŠOVÁ**

## **ETHNOGRAPHICAL SPECIFICITY OF INITIAL YEARS OF THE CZECH HISTORY OF MODERN GRAFFITI**

This article is based on the field research of the Czech graffiti subculture and it is the second part of the serial started in *Studia Ethnologica* XII. This part describes the initial years of the Czech history of graffiti. Although the story of the Czech graffiti is short in time, its development was fast and dramatic. That is why it is impossible to talk about the Czech graffiti subculture without specifying the period of time. Each stage has its ethnographic specificity concerning the relations, rituals, institutions and the graphic instruments. At the end of the 1980s some people started to use spray to paint or write on the wall even without having any idea that a phenomenon of modern graffiti even exists. The first works inspired by modern graffiti appeared at the beginning of the 1990s. At the same time, pieces made by foreign writers appeared in Prague and they became also an important source of inspiration. One of the questions of this research is who the first writers were and why they were interested in graffiti. Many of them were students of Art high schools. Most of them liked to listen to hip-hop music. For the first time they usually saw graffiti on TV – just for a second – but as they say, the impression was great. Future writers knew nothing except what they could see about the graffiti, it means nothing about its rules, rituals, styles, vocabulary. They did not even know that the subject of graffiti was the Name. At the beginning there existed several ways of understanding what the graffiti should be. The first approach I could call “arts pastime“. Even if these people knew graffiti thanks to its subculture context, the hip-hop music, they used graffiti mainly as the new creative means. From all the facts they learnt about the graffiti they chose just what it was convenient for them (jams, painting on the trains). The graffiti was a pleasure for them, a way how to find some new friends and enjoy the time with them. This is the case of Bungle Clan crew. The second approach was more oriented to the hip-hop culture, these people wanted to spread it more. If they were not artistically oriented, they worked only at the tags. But the others wanted to build the graffiti subculture with all its signs. From the beginning graffiti was the competition for them. The first crews with this way of understanding graffiti were CSB, TCP. In 1992, points member of TCP crew founded the first electrostatically printed white and black graffiti magazine. The third way of graffiti was represented by anarchists who learnt graffiti in squats in Berlin and they understood it most of all as a political pronouncement. Such a crew was CSA. As the community was very small (in 1991–1994 there were about 20–30 writers in Prague) regardless of their different aims, the atmosphere was very friendly, they frequented the same music clubs and bars, they organized firsts jams for themselves. The biggest trouble of the first writers was the absence of graffiti tools and also the ignorance of technical procedure. The spray tins available here were too small with a low pressure and they were too expensive. That is why painting on the wall was considered a great event after a long preparation and a lot of sketches had to be done in a black book. The only kind of spray jets was so called “originals”, so the writers had to invent some “home made solutions“, i.e. to put a pin into a jet to obtain a thin line. Instead of thick markers for tagging they used shoe cleaners in which they injected the ink. Afterwards it was quite surprising to find out that special graffiti shops in Berlin and other western cities exists. As the first writers ignored type face as the object of graffiti, graffiti was anything written or painted on the wall for them. Czech graffiti of this time were the pictures with letters. Even though the writers had already known that graffiti



was about the name, they drew more attention to the whole composition than to the letters. Czech writers spent several years finding all the information about the world graffiti subculture, and also solving all the problems of material equipment. In 1994, this target is achieved. Now the writers started to pay more attention to the subject of graffiti, to the question what the graffiti should be? And they find the message of graffiti in letter's shapes, they discover "style writing". Other parts of pieces, characters are outstanding. At the same time, friendly atmosphere changes. Style writing defenders consider themselves the only real graffiti writers and they make it obvious to the others. The competition became the most important rule of graffiti, only now the old writers start to bomb massively. When before a crew was based on friendship, now the most important motive are graffiti skills. Some former writers gave up, but an important amount of newcomers is attracted by the articles in magazine, by their friends. But their products are far to be called style writing. Graffiti started to be a fashion. In this situation the former writers find it necessary to build a hierarchy. A part of them and some beginners, talented and the most active writers constitute the NNK crew. The members of NNK are getting the respect by using force and violence. As they are also good writers (and they write a lot) they become number one of the community. They act together with the DSK crew, their friends and the most important rivals from the graphical point of view. At the bottom of the hierarchy there are newcomers = toys. In 1995 some institutions are set to make the base for the community life for next years, i.e. the meetings at the Museum and the 007 Club. From 1994 until 2001, every Friday at 8 p.m., graffiti writers meet at the Museum subway station. They discuss in small groups, they make their plans for the evening, solve the personal problems, the beginners shows their sketches to masters and hope to obtain the invitation to a joint venture. New style called the Prague style came into existence as the culmination of the Czech graffiti. This style was put through by members of NNK and for a short time it influenced the activity of the other writers too. The most typical graphic sign of that style were broken letters, often with the stripes at the backdrop or in a space between the letters. Popularity of the Prague style lasted approximately a year (1996). At present it is not considered to be successful even by its creators. In this processes the Czech graffiti became a part of the world wide subculture.



**PETR JANEČEK**  
**PRAGUE LOCAL LEGENDS BY POPELKA BILIÁNOVÁ AND THEIR ORAL AUTHENTICITY**

Prague local legends of Czech writer and revivalist Popelka Biliánová (1862–1941), published in two volumes in 1904 and 1905, represent a unique collection of urban oral narratives from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Apart from some historical and Christian legends, adapted by the author from other written sources (mostly old Czech chronicles and previous collections of Prague local legends, most notably from the collection of Josef Svátek (1883), majority of the work consists of authentic oral narratives, collected mainly from inhabitants of Vyšehrad and Podskalí city quarters between 1895 and 1905. Most of these urban narratives can be labeled as a genre of superstitious legends (folk belief stories/legends, Dämologische Sagen), dealing thematically mostly with revenant and lost treasure motives. Part of these narratives could be interpreted as a cross-breed between traditional rural folk legends and so-called new urban genres, especially those linked with specific local historical events of the 1800's (such as Prague revolution of 1848 or local criminal stories). The collection can be also conceptualized as an example of the nationalistic folklore studies of the period, with specific links to some important cultural symbols of the Czech national movement (such as importance of Vyšehrad Castle as a birthplace of Czech historical

consciousness) as well as role of the collector's impact on editing and publishing folklore narratives in the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century.



**JANA JETMAROVÁ**  
**ANDEAN MUSIC IN CHRONICLES OF GARCILASO DE LA VEGA AND**  
**GUAMAN POMA DE AYALA**

The paper represents outline of andean music in chronicles of Garcilaso de la Vega and Guaman Poma de Ayala. It briefly describes lives of both chroniclers and observes their contemporary descriptions of andean music. It mentions the most important musical styles, used musical instruments and other interesting folklorical habits connected with native music. It states remarkable historical continuity of some music phenomenons. Garcilaso and Guaman Poma's attitude is compared in terms of their status as nobleman in Garcilaso's case and – said in modern terminology – ethnographical fieldworker in Guaman Poma's case.



**OLDŘICH KAŠPAR**  
**CZECH SOURCES OF THE 15<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES IN THE SPANISH, PORTUGAL**  
**AND MEXICAN RESOURCES**

The paper is the first summarising result of the initial stage of the research of historical library resources of Spain, Portugal and the Spanish Overseas. It is based on the long-time researches carried out in the years 2005 and 2006 in the libraries especially in Madrid, Lisbon, Coimbra, Ciudad de México and La Paz (Baja California Sur, Mexico). The complementing comparative material was gained by the research in university and aristocratic libraries in Vienna, Salzburg, Krakow, Trnava, etc. The results show that it will be inevitable to change our view of the occurrence of Czech sources in the Luso-Brazilian and Spanish-American context of the 15<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is obvious that especially books of Czech authors of this period (written in Latin, Spanish, Italian, German and French) are much more frequent in this cultural area than it has been so far supposed (on the basis of partial researches). Also the characteristics of the intended readers becomes much more distinct (on the basis of the realised *supralibros*, *ex libris* and marginal notes). It becomes evident that Czech sources were represented not only in the royal library and in the personal libraries of the individual sovereigns, but also in aristocratic and monastic libraries.



**OLDŘICH KAŠPAR**  
**NEW WORLD AS AN EXOTIC CURIOSITY IN THE EUROPEAN OPERA OF 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**AND 18<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES**

The paper stands on the boundary of three disciplines: ethnology, history and musical history. Using the example of chosen French, English and Italian operas with the topics concerning the New World, the author tries to describe the entirely specific phenomenon of depicting the New World as an exotic curiosity in the European opera of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Exotic subjects coming from Antique mythology had been encountered in European culture from the very beginning of its development. However, in the middle of 17<sup>th</sup> century new impulses coming from extra-European cultures start to appear in the opera genre. The change in the thematic orientation of opera was connected with the changes of the internal world of a

European, for whom the faraway horizon meant allurements of really fateful importance. One's wishes, dreams, imagination and unfulfilled desire could be projected in this space. In contrast with the subjects from Antique mythology, operas with exotic extra-European themes gave both librettists and composers much greater creative freedom, new possibilities of fabulation and plot construction. European operas about America thus become a remarkable part of cultural events of the old continents of 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.



**TOMÁŠ KOBES**

### **THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE “GIPSY QUESTION” AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: GENEALOGICAL CONCEPT**

The aim of this article is to make a short genealogical description of the “Gipsy Question” and its transformation as the integral part of the regional development in Slovak Republic. Development is conceptualized as a discursive formation that defines the object of study and the specific knowledge related to the institutional background. This developmental discourse has a potential to divide regions and ethnics to the dichotomy of developed and underdeveloped, and it has the power to constitute the relation of control and dominance that has the potential to initiate social change, and to reconceptualize of the object of its reflection. It is accepted that the period of Enlightenment is the constitutive beginning of the “Gipsy Question” in Habsburg monarchy. The reforms contributed to the constitution of the notion „gipsy“. The Roma started to be a domain of the governmental regulations and administration to be integral part of monarchy. The results of this process are the confirmation of the constituted relations of control and dominance during the medieval times, the behaviour standardization, and identity homogenization in the context of national empowerment as the basic tendency to enforce specific identity, and the confirmation of meaning potential related to notion “gipsy”. After the second war the “Gipsy Question” was reformulated with stress upon the four main areas: housing, employment, education, health service, and criminal protection. The specific solution is based on the result of the conceptual dispute between the Ministry of Information, and the Ministry of Interior. This dispute is possible to accept as the dispute about the Roma language which is accepted as the main factor of the Roma otherness (diverseness). The result of this conceptual dispute is that the Roma language is assessed as a factor of backwards and the Roma people started to be conceptualized as underdeveloped social class. The failure of complex solution of the “Gipsy Question” led to the constitution of the main domain of this problem which is related to the Roma settlements, and to the financial support of government as the beginning of the dependency trap culminating during the 90s'. The period after year 1989 is significant in the effort to cancel the ethnic deficit in definition of Roma people, and in the building of conceptual paradox in the solution range. In this sense the Roma people are accepted by the state as a nationality, and simultaneously the solution of Roma problems is related strictly to the problems of social weaks. The main topic the first Slovakian government was Roma settlement. The Slovak Government elaborated the complex developmental plan of the Roma settlements which is focused on building of infrastructure. This governmental position was redefined after parliament elections in 1998. The Roma settlement are accepted as a result of ethnic segregation, and the Slovakian government prepared the Strategy that should guarantee the range of long term solution of Roma problem initiated by enlightenment project during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The strategy supposes that the Roma problems will begin to be a part of regional development and the implementation of strategical aims will be realised on the level of local nongovernmental organization with financial support of foreign donors, and EU funds. The strategical document of UNDP and World Bank are accepted as complementary

part of Strategy. On the base of these documents it is resolved the concept of Roma people in Slovak Republic. This documents emphasize the roma problems as a problem of poverty. The difference between the UNDP concept and the concept of the World Bank is in the understanding to the Roma problem as a result of unequal position of Roma people in labour market. Mainly the concept of UNDP has a tendency to accept the Roma as an autonomy social group with different social dynamics defined by the terms tradition, backwards compared with modern and developed majority. In the contrast with this the World Bank accepts the Roma problems as the problem of ethnic segregation.



**ZUZANA KORECKÁ**

### **HUITZILOPOCHTLI IN THE CZECH BAROQUE SOCIETY**

The paper named Huitzilopochtli in the Czech Baroque Society is attempting to give the appearance of the Aztec divinity Huitzilopochtli as the European baroque art and the paper searches what role of the Huitzilopochtli play in the European let us say Czech society based on the three pictures: the 1<sup>st</sup> named Vitzliputzli from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century from probably some missionary during the conquest of New World working in some Aztec mission, the 2<sup>nd</sup> named Abgott Vitzilpucli is also from an anonymity but the origin is possible to date to the end the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the next is the picture named Ficli-Pucli, Hell /herkomann/ Notary. The most important element signaling the status within the European let us say Czech society is as the relationship within each picture as the relationship of the identical cultural elements and their placed in the body divinity within all the pictures. According to these elements it is possible to give the conclusion that the Huitzilopochtli in the 1<sup>st</sup> picture is put on the upperworld /on the heaven/, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Huitzilopochtli is squirmed into the underworld and the last Huitzilopochtli gets off from the underworld on the world he is appear as the Herkomann, Hell Notary.



**ZUZANA KRÁTKA**

### **„WE AND THEM“ FROM THE ETHNIC PERSPECTIVE IN THE SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY OF CREW MEMBERS WORKING ON THE CRUISE SHIPS**

I tended to investigate this theme after I had experienced an extraordinary cooperation of people from all around the world on the cruise ships. On board of each of them people from a variety of cultures, religions and beliefs of over 50 nationalities live together. In spite of their different origins and cultures which have been forming their behavior and way of thinking, they share this quite a small space without any conflicts. Indestructibility of the system which is created by particular circumstances, crew members and internal rules, interested me in the era of inter-cultural conflicts so much, that I dedicated 15 months to its research. I summed up my research findings in my diploma thesis. This article introduces a part of my work which is dedicated to a problem of ethnic stereotypes which is related to a theme of self-identification. In this case, it is a self-identification of crew members in a contradiction with determination of those who don't share life of a crew. Multicultural constitution of crew on the cruise ships and the constant interactions between them are good predispositions for ethnical conceived way of thinking, which leads to a significant quantity of stereotyped formulations. The need of each individual to self-identify as a member of some group, is on the ship manifested by accepting of socio-professional identity of a crew member. This doubled identity is a reason why stereotyped formulations with ethnic character expressed on

the cruise ships are not so confident and doctrinal as they are in the territories, in which people don't get in touch with members of other cultures. In this article I try to answer following questions: "What are the reasons for preferences of some ethnic groups in the stereotyped formulations?", "In which situations and under what circumstances are people inclined to conceive the stereotyped formulations?" and "In what range is our opinion about different ethnic groups determined by our own first-hand experiences and in what scope is it determined by people participating on our enculturation and socialization?"



**MACIEJ KURCZ**

### **BETWEEN THE RIVER AND THE DESERT: THE CATEGORY OF A BOUNDARY IN THE FOLK CULTURE OF THE NORTH-SUDANESE MUSLIMS**

The Islam divides the basic categories into two sharply separated spheres: the secular sphere and the sacred sphere. This phenomenon determines almost all areas of life of a Muslim. Due to the importance of this division, the boundary and contact points, connecting as well as dividing both spheres, gain particular significance. The author analyses the issue of the boundaries – one of the elementary culture categories – on the basis of his experience of several trips to the North Sudan. In this territory, the border zone – both physical and symbolical, is formed by the river Nile, which is most strongly associated with the experience of the boundary and the sacred. However, it is also a specific example of conceptualisation of all kinds of places or events connected with crossing the boundaries. The described phenomena, though strongly connected with the North-Sudanese context, are basically common to many areas of the Near East, for they form an integral part of the Islam religion.



**MACIEJ KURCZ**

### **HOW TO SURVIVE IN AN AFRICAN CITY? MIGRANT TO THE URBANIZATION PROCESS IN SOUTHERN SUDAN JUBA**

During the recent civil war in Southern Sudan Juba was a wretched town inhabited by a few thousand poor people. Now, on a daily basis it is transforming into a big city, the capital of autonomic South Sudan. Since 2005 a constant flood of migrants runs into the city. Among them are officials of the currently forming administration, entrepreneurs, who seek business opportunities and peasants pushed into the city by harsh conditions in the rural areas. Most of the migrants, however, are refugees from other parts of Sudan as well as neighboring African countries. They are the main force propelling the rapid urbanization processes in Juba. The basic issue for migrants is the adaptation to a new environment which is not an easy task. That is because of the extremely hard living conditions in the city. Water is scarce; there is a lack of sewage system not to mention electricity. Due to underdevelopment of the transportation infrastructure of the region, the prices in the city went sky high. These problems are accompanied by multi ethnicity and multiculturalism of the migrants as well as traditionalism and conservatism of certain individuals. That is a mixture filling the majority with a sense of alienation. What is even worse, most of these people carry the trauma of war experiences. The city is practically dysfunctional. It serves as a kind of human storage, a place where the chances of surviving in the post war South Sudan are the highest. In this it resembles more a refugee camp than a city. An African inhabitant of the city despite the piling problems in front of him, tries to tame this hostile environment; he seeks a patron who would help him settle in the city or find an occupation fit for his abilities. He also has to arrange accommodation, conceptualize the cityscape and organize time fighting the alienation

and eventually tries to melt into the surroundings. In short – one strives to survive and bid farewell to the past of a rural migrant or refugee. These efforts effect in the constitution of a new urban culture. It is a reality desired by everyone without which life here would be much harder. It has, for present, a strictly functional character. The above phenomena were the object of my interest during three research seasons in Juba in 2007 and 2008. The ethnological research on Sudanese urban environment were conducted within the "Juba – center of cultures and conflicts" project financed with a grant from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Poland.



**PAVOL MARTULIAK**

### **TRADICIONAL HABITS IN VILLAGES OF NOVOHRADSKÉ PODJAVORIE**

Pastoral and agricultural population of villages, that are situated nearly of south side of Javorie mountain, grew and conserved individually items of material and spirit culture until yesteryear. Unfortunately, most of them are lost in present days. Article contains basic compendium about main items of spirit culture for which belong traditional habits during four seasons. Used habits, which referred to fixed days or feasts in the course of calendar year, conserved with maximal consistence. Author divided them into four parts according to seasons. Study arose according to material processing which conserved in archives, municipal chronicles, but also according to narration of people, author's own informations and experiences of infancy.



**LADISLAV MLYNKA**

### **SOCIAL COMMUNICATION AS A DEMONSTRATION OF STATUS HIERARCHY**

The paper informs on the first research results of contact, interpersonal communication in the conditions of a selected enterprise. The enterprise operates in agro sector. It is a medium-size farm in rural, pre-urban environment. The study is based on an assumption that communication within the company is a demonstration of status hierarchy as a reflection of formalised organisational structure. Communication process is followed on vertical level (relationship between an employee – the head, superior, social environment, social situation of communication); on horizontal level (partner relationships within the company, managers, employees, external environment – economic partners, power and political elite, municipal self-government). Third, diagonal level of communication is focused on informal relationships within communication groups, relationship to the boss – leader, on communication between managers and its forms or rituals (addressing, greeting, and using the second person as the familiar form of address). We are pursuing organizational culture within a company, unwritten rules of relationships, rituals building the identity and image of a company, communication tools and their manifestation among employees (web-page, parties, harvest home, demonstrations of religion, relation to the company). We are investigating to what extent the loyalty and self-esteem of employees is formed depending on their position in the company hierarchy through economic and social privileges and various forms of support for employees.



**JAN PARGAČ**

**FIRST ATTEMPT AT THE INDEPENDENCE IN KAZAKHSTAN:  
INTELLIGENSIA AND NATIONAL MOVEMENT “ALASH” AT THE BEGINNING  
OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY**

This paper deals with the formation, history and leading figures of the national-liberation movement of Kazakhs Alash, which was the important milestone in development and culture of the Kazakhian nation at all. Analysis of the movement in question in the Russian empire and its continuation in the Soviet Union represents one of the amount of topics, which were in the past put into the taboo and which are now accessible. This movement and intelligentsia of the similar liberal thought at all was in the Soviet era considered to be "bourgeois-nationalistic", i.e. anti-socialistic and as result both of it were denounced or put into the taboo. Publishing of the contemporary writings and biographies at the present time provides an independent analysis, which one could base on the ever-rising tide of literature on the topic in question that is not only written by Kazakhian authors, but also by Russian, European and American ones. This paper draws from both present literature biographies and contemporary writings, and these sources are supplemented by studies of leading specialists on that topic. At the outset of the paper is outlined social and historical circumstances, that gave the rise to the movement (Part I, Social and Historical Background). Simultaneously are mentioned ethnical, cultural and religion grounds that launched the formation of the movement in question. The second part deals with the most important personalities of the movement – A. Bukejchanov, A. Bajtursynov and M. Dulatov (Part II, Leading Figures of the Alash), where especially basic biographical data, political and social activities and finally scientific interests of the members are at the point. The very subject of the movement is content of the third part called Events, where is put the accent on the seminal historical events of the Alash, i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> All-Kazakhian Congress and renders the sense of the documents of all these events. The final part called Alash and the Bolshevists is focused on the Alash' s relation to the Bolshevik Party and on the endeavor to carry out Kazakhian autonomy after the October Revolution.



**JAN PARGAČ**

**THE CENTRAL ASIAN RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY *MAHALLA* IN  
COMPARISON TO CENTRAL EUROPEAN LOCAL COMMUNITY**

This article is focused on the oriental local community, which is usually termed mahalla. Today mahalla is distinguished by the following features: keeping of traditional patterns behavior and culture, high level of integrity and cohesiveness as for every day life, men and women of all generation. The first part of the article deals with the historical development and meaning of mahalla as a local community in general. The second part discuss position of mahalla in Uzbekistan in particular. On the one hand its status under independence of Uzbekistan and relation to the political authorities are pointed out and on the other hand it is its position in everyday social life of Uzbeks. In this regard marriage ceremonies are described in some more detail whereas is stressed the importance and economical consequences of such an event for family life. The last part compares mahalla with Central European local community.



**MICHAL PETRÁŠEK**

### **NON-COITAL SEXUAL INTERCOURSE AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE PILSEN REGION**

This article is a partial message from the wider exploration of sexual manners of students who study at secondary schools (finished with school-leaving examination) in Pilsen region. This part of exploration concerns petting i. e. sexual contact without coitus. At the beginning of my work the methodology of the exploration and the choice of respondents' pattern are analysed and the very progress of the exploration at the secondary schools is described. Then petting is defined. In this article it is demonstrated how many respondents practise petting, at what time they begin practising it, what kind of petting is preferred by the respondents most frequently, how often they change their partners and what strategies are used by them when they are choosing their partners. In this part of my work you can find also the most frequent places where petting is done. At the end of it obtained data are gathered. Well-arranged tables and graphs which are enclosed present these data.



**JAN POHUNEK**

### **YOUTH CAMPING MOVEMENTS AS A SUBCULTURE**

Youth camping movements based on R. Baden-Powell's „Scouting“ and E.T. Seton's „Woodcraft“ were introduced into what is today's Czech republic in early 1910s and have undergone a distinctive local evolution during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of forming factors, which heavily influenced their character, were totalitarian regimes, which disapproved this kind of voluntary education and forced many youth camping clubs based on scouting to disband, enter illegality or find refuge under hood of allowed organizations like Pioneer movement, sporting clubs, tourist clubs etc. The article briefly summarizes history of Czech youth camping movements and discusses the possibility of treating them as one specific subculture because of both shared similarities in their structure, method and ethics and the fact, that the entire scene and it's parts were more or less pushed into a position of a contra-culture by nazi and communist governments. While there are many official youth camping organizations based on scouting today, some of them more fitting into a definition of a subculture than others, there is also a degree of shared awareness of their affinity among their members and representatives. This was more apparent in the communist regime period, as many clubs were connected personally and shared common background, but had nothing common officially. A short comparison of this subculture with Czech tramping movement, which is not organized in a formal way and lacks pedagogical dimension, but is often interconnected with youth camping clubs both personally and culturally, is also made.



**JAN POKORNÝ**

### **ABSOLUTE REFERENCE FRAME AND CULTURE**

This essay refers to the studies on the language of space – and on so called absolute reference frame in particular – as the intersection of linguistics and cultural anthropology. Its point is, above all, to draw attention to this rather new linguistic area and to highlight its importance to the ethnology. The essay presents the most common forms of referential frames and points out some of their characteristics – the importance of context, metaphoric and methonymic nature of terms, radial form of space relation categories, and their



connection with the linguistic group's surroundings and way of living. The text mentions, as well, different ways of grammatical (morphological and syntactical) expression of referential frames on the one side, and the relative frequency and individual variability of their use on the other. As for examples of space language forms, we employ bound forms in Australian language dyirbal, pronouns in Alaskan language yup'ik, directionals in Australian language taba and Athabaskan language Tanacross and affixes in Moluccan language Tobelo. In addition to research into language influence on thinking, the essay focuses on cultural implications, especially on religious reflection of the absolute referential frame, the last mentioned serving not only as a functional means of communication, but also as a model of some religious concepts. We have chosen the Bali culture as an example of very narrow connection between a form of referential frame, religious model of the universe and cultural taboos.



**JAROSLAV SKUPNIK**

### **GENERALIZED EXCHANGE, UNILINEARITY AND SIMULTANEITY OF RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS: WHAT ARE MOTIVATIONS FOR THE HUMAN ACTIONS?**

In the article, results of the combination of spouse exchanges, unilinearity, exogamy, marital residence and gendered perspective are taken under consideration. In such a complex view, amitalocality for example – once considered to be impossible – is shown as existing simultaneously with patrilocality: a household that is composed of men of one patrilineage and women of another patrilineage. The motivation for continuation of such patterns—which might create a higher social cohesion in the long term – can be, on the level of individuals' lives and decision making, a simple and logical choice to live with “one's own relatives”.



**VIKTOR SVOBODNÍK**

### **VLASTENECKÁ LIGA, SKINHEADS AND CZECH (NATIONAL) CULTURE**

Vlastenecká liga, VL, (The Patriotic League) active since 1993, is an organisation of the so-called “Kalich (chalice) skinheads”, specifically a Czech branch of skinheads within the skinhead movement, arising from symbols of Czech national culture. By analysing texts issued by VL, I try to conceive logic of its conceptually identifying scheme in order to reveal the principles on which its skinhead identity is based. At first I attempt to find out what “to be a skinhead” means for its insiders, what skinheadness is associated with, and how such a concept is defined against potential competitive skinhead identities. Then I am more deeply interested in the question of “acceptability” / “non-acceptability”, finally I concentrate on its programme and aims. I stem here from the premise that inter-subjective concurrence of attitudes towards topics related to the peaks of thus designed relational triangle makes up basic constitutive elements of the identity of the observed association. A strong nationalist position of VL, revealed by the analyses, should be, in my opinion, understood as one of possible projections of an ideological system, structurally solidly fixed in Czech cultural surroundings – the Habsburg (eastern) model of nationalism. At the very end I set the nationalism in a wider context of European thinking tradition. Here I accept a view of N. O'Sullivan, who considers nationalism as one of eventual demonstrations of activist political style. This political style crystallised by conjoining elements of messianism and chiliasm, joined during the French revolution by the doctrine of folk sovereignty, merging, then, with the tradition of civic humanism. This form of total style in politics resulted in the fact that all modern radical ideologies, as O'Sullivan puts it, “advanc[e] the view, that no government can be lawful

unless it provides space for active political co-operation of 'folk', no matter how defined it is." The definition of "the real folk" – along with "the appropriate enemy"/ "enemies" – for the realisation of ideological aims is flexible (e.g. the criterion of race, language, culture or class is applied), for freedom is seen purposely here, in the sense of "fulfilling ideas". In case of VL, the criterion of belonging to the Czech nation is applied. Its "interests" and "needs" are declared as "objective" and the association accounts itself to be the only guarantee of their "correct forms" and their "adequate protector".



## **LEOŠ ŠATAVA**

### **LANGUAGE AND ITS ROLE IN ETHNIC CONTEXT**

Language, also considered the cultural capital of the ethnic group, is usually referred to as the main attribute of ethnicity, particularly in the European context. The precise number of languages can hardly be determined because the imaginary borderline between a language and a dialect is quite vague, flexible and subject to political, cultural, linguistic and other contexts and relations of the times. Allowing for all these aspects, we can accept only a rough estimate of about 5 000 to 6 000 living languages existing in the world at present. The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, was the time when the language shift, i.e. the gap in the intergeneration passing on of the language, occurred in a number of languages in many parts of the world. This fact was reflected in scholarly publications and also became evident in the mounting interest in ethnic and minority problems, and in activities in this field. Since the 1990s the heightened realization of the reality has been under way. (Socio)linguists and consequently also representatives of other social sciences have focused their attention on the fast diminishing scale of languages of the world, frequently sounding the alarm in this respect. The number of living languages is decreasing rapidly at present; assimilation processes are very effective even in the most remote corners of the world and their speed is very high. Over one tenth of the world's languages are already in the final phase of their existence, and, due to the intergeneration gap, another 80 percent out of these are threatened with extinction today. It is expected that in 2050 there will be only about 1 000 living languages left on Earth.



## **IRENA ŠTĚPÁNOVÁ**

### **HARMONY IN THE LIFE OF A WOMAN: A JOURNAL FOR HOUSEWIVES 1883–1893 AND MATURATION OF AN AUTHOR**

The paper is focused on the cooperation of the young writer and ethnographer Teréza Nováková with the female journal "Domáci hospodyně", published in Olomouc in the years 1883–1893 and edited by Miloslava Procházková. It was a good publishing opportunity for the young author, though the orientation of the journal was rather conservative. The article is based on an analysis of the published papers and the private correspondence between the two publicists.



**IRENA ŠTĚPÁNOVÁ**

### **TRADITIONAL RITUALS IN THE BACKGROUND OF A SMALL TOWN AT THE TURN OF 19<sup>th</sup> AND 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES**

The paper is based on a confrontation of a scientific text, published by Teréza Nováková, an ethnologist and writer, in 1908 in *Národopisný věstník československý* [Czech-Slavonic Ethnographical Bulletin], with the materials form the author's inheritance. Mother, who had lost four of her five children, transformed her painful tragical experience into her literary works, but she tried to find some kind of catharsis in scientific work as well. Its results were presented in her study *Lidové zvyky na venkovských městech v letech sedmdesátých* [Folk Customs in the Countryside Towns in the 1870s]. This study, presenting one of the earliest researches into the field of urban ethnology, deals with the cycle of annual rituals, as well as family rituals. The author focuses especially on the analysis of the funeral of a young single woman. The material is authentic and it is compared with a similar ritual in the traditional rural society of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The sources used by Teréza Nováková, especially her family correspondence, are presented in the paper, trying to show which parts of the text are based on a personal reflection of the author and which ones on a sympathetic observation and ethnological research, eventually on scientific literature.



**MILOŠ TOMANDL**

### **INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE URBAN AND SUB-URBAN ENVIRONMENT: THE CASE OF JIHLAVA LANGUAGE ISLAND**

The submitted study is an intermediate output of a longitudinal complex research into local communities. The study is aimed at grasping the crucial cultural and historical aspects of inter-ethnic relations in the environment of the "Jihlava Language Island" in 1850–1941 by means of contents analysis of written documents and literature. It closely examines the Czech-German relations in the spheres of local municipal policy. The goal of the article has been to map the social-political situation in the Jihlava's territory with the respect to inter-ethnic relations and its development throughout the later half of 19<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century.



**MILOŠ TOMANDL**

### **NATIONAL IDENTITY IN AN ETHNOMETHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The observations presented in the article are connected with the analysed category of identity of individuals (broader community). The question connected with "I" ("we"), i.e. my personality (our community), is usually asked in acute (exceptional, emotive) situations. The answers to this question are usually influenced by the context in which the examined subject is found and by the aim which is pursued by the asked question. Within humanities and social sciences, the concept of identity is predominantly derived from the Erikson's model of the "health of identity". The criteria of identity, inspired by the formal organisation of the subject, are to be used here for the decision whether they correspond to the conditions of the respective socio-cultural norm, or not. The basic resolution whether the given culture is national or not, lies in its acceptance (or rejection) by the respective community.



**MILOŠ TOMANDL**

**ON THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF CREATION OF SOCIAL IDENTITY**

The paper is a contribution to the study of the issue that is undoubtedly highly interesting and crucial from the methodological and social viewpoints. In a selective manner, it highlights some questions relating to the application of the category of identity within the system of social and humanitarian disciplines examining the shaping of the consciousness of an individual, ethnic groups and nations. By revealing the mechanism influencing the behavior and conduct of bearers of identity it will be possible to understand the activities of members of various cultural communities in the past and present and – in a more general approach – to think of their development in the future. From the formal viewpoint, the study consists of chapter and subchapters according to individual issues (Group identity: ethnic character, auto-stereotypes versus group identities; social change versus concept of group identity; individual identities versus group identity. Ethnic identity: ethnic identity in the communities that are distant from civilization centers; ethnic identity in multicultural societies).



**MILOŠ TOMANDL**

**PRESCRIPTIVE DIMENSION AND SOCIO-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES LOCAL SOCIETY**

This paper attempts to present and to access some chosen legal standards affecting the shape of the local administration institutions on the Czech soil (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia) in the years 1848–1945. In the retrospection some attention was paid to the turning points in the development of the basic unit of the territorial self government, i.e. the local administration. The author attempts to present a vivid picture of the situation by interpreting some legal standards of the local community system. The research made on the local societies shows that the thesis supporting the existence of relations between the cultural activity of individuals and local societies and contemporary legal standard is justified. Those standards contribute – directly or indirectly, to the shaping of the mentality of the inhabitants concerning their belonging to a particular socio-geographic environment.



**MARIE TŮMOVÁ**

**WUPATKI PUEBLO: CONTINUITY AND NATIVE ARCHITECTURE OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST**

Wupatki National Monument protects the ancient dwellings of puebloan peoples. It occupies dry, rugged land on the southwestern Colorado Plateau directly west of the Little Colorado River. The remains of pueblo is the most evidence of the human endeavor in this expansive land. It tell of the 1100s, when ancestors of today's Hopi came together to build a farming community. With the first eruption of Sunset Crater, the agricultural potential improved because the thin ash layer absorbed precious moisture and helped prevent evaporation. Water was limited. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century tens of people were farming on the Wupatki landscape. People gradually building this 100-room-pueblo with its community room and ballcourt. Pueblo dwellers shaped their lives to this land letting sun, water, wind and earth influence decisions. Their buildings fit perfectly into the landscape. High walls on the north and west sides blunted prevailing winds. Terraced rooms to the south and east bathed in winter sun.

Wupatki is a far more typical pueblo home of the 12<sup>th</sup> century than a cliff dwelling and stood three stories high in places. Walls were about 6 feet (2 meters) high; roof were constructed with large timbers, cross-laid with smaller beams, and finished with bark or grass and mud. There were no exterior doorways at ground level. The environment provided materials ideal for the construction of freestanding masonry dwellings. Sandstone slabs, limestone blocks, and chunks of basalt set with a clay-based mortar yielded sturdy buildings that, despite weathering and vandalism, remain partially intact more than 700 years after their owners departed. The reconstructed circular structure is a great kiva. Archeologists speculate that this open-air community room could have served as a central place. The ballcourt, one of the northernmost, is the only known masonry court in the Southwest. By 1250, when the volcano had quieted, pueblo stood empty. The people of Wupatki had moved on and established new homes. Many people traversed the high deserts of the Colorado Plateau over time, but few stayed long. Those who did adapted to the region's challenging environment. Their descendants still live nearby, including Hopi, Zuni, and Navajo people. 19<sup>th</sup> century explorers marveled at the pueblo and the stark but strangely beautiful volcanic landscape. The modern iron beam, plate and Portland cement, used from the 1930s to 60s, support the upper walls and never stabilization mortars that more closely duplicate original materials. Stabilization has compromised the historical architecture, but helps an excavated building withstand natural and human-induced erosion. Reconstructed rooms may help us to visualize the past, when in reality, so much will never be known. Stories of Wupatki are passed on among Hopi, Zuni, Navajo, and perhaps other tribes. Wupatki is remembered and cared for, not abandoned.



**JIRÍ VESECKÝ**

### **ISLAMOPHOBIA IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC: LOCAL SPECIFICS AND THE PRESS ANALYSIS**

In the introduction I've defined islamophobia and relevant terms and presented possible ways of its division. A certain ambiguousness of the word „islamophobia“ results from the fact that it's composed of two somewhat different parts. First one is the aversion to Islam and the second is the aversion to Muslims as people, especially immigrants. Both these parts are closely related and are often inseparable. That's why it isn't appropriate to use two separate terms. My research implies that in Czech press, the first option, i.e. the negative stereotypization of Islam as a whole, is much more numerous. On the other hand Halliday's concept of division of islamophobia into „strategic“ and „populist“ is based on historical context and as such is suitable mainly for the assessment of prevailing motivations of islamophobia on the national or larger level. This is also one of the reasons why I presented the history of Muslim presence in our territory, which implies that in Czech republic, contrary to the majority of other European countries, the „strategic“ islamophobia is dominant. If we proceed to the comparison of the Muslim presence in Czech republic and in Western Europe, where currently many countries are facing deep problems, which are primarily related to the feeling of uprootedness among the so called „second generation“ of local Muslims, we will find huge differences. Those lie not only in the relatively small number of Muslims in our territory, but also in their different social profile and circumstances under which they came to our territory. As for the research, the main goal was to gain solid empirical data concerning how Czech press informs about topics related to Islam and Muslims and subsequently to interpret them in relation to my subject. As the most significant fact I consider the abnormally frequent appearance of collocations which consist of the words „Islamic“ and „Muslim“ together with words like extremist, radical or fundamentalist

together with relevant „-isms“, i.e. extremism, radicalism or fundamentalism. It is without doubt that all these terms are perceived as negative in the Czech society. It seems evident that the frequency and negativity of the collocations based on these words largely contributed to the creation of the present negative media view of Islam and Muslims. The frequent repetition of these collocations that creates an automatic reaction, where the majority of people assigns to the word „Islamic“ or „Muslim“ one of those terms as their first association. As the most significant islamophobic phenomena I consider the blending of the meaning of Islam with its marginal movements and extreme forms, which, however, don't have almost anything in common. In particular terms like Islamic or Muslim fundamentalist (fundamentalism) which are used in the media often differ from the meanings, which are given to them by experts on Islam. The media give these terms a very loose meaning. The term „Islamic fundamentalist“ is used both as a synonym for „Islamic terrorist“ or as a designation for a believer, who thoroughly follows the traditional religious rituals. In short, this stereotype could be formalized with a sort of an „equation“ Islam = fundamentalism = terrorism. This equation shows best that it is the ambiguous term fundamentalism which helps to create a transition between two terms, which are still impossible to equate directly.



**MARTIN VOSTŘEL**

#### **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE IN LOUNY BETWEEN 1880–1914**

In my work I would like to describe activity of some important clubs in Louny. It is remarkable, that in the year 1900 more than fifty clubs operated in the town. A decade later the number of the clubs overtook seventy five. The clubs had different intention. Some of them were educative, charitable, political, and sport, some showed theatre activities and others organized balls. It is very difficult to identify the borders of interest within each club. Their activities were mostly overlapped. A typical club was e.g. “Sokol“. It was established in 1867 and quickly became the most important club in the city and in its wide surrounding. Its members' activities concerned sport at first but they quickly covered education as well as help to other similar clubs in ambient towns. Various trips were organized for its members. The club participated in all feasts taking place in Louny. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century animosity between Czech and German ethnic groups increased in Bohemia and therefore each club supported a similar one in the area with German majority territory. In current life German and Czech ethnic groups helped each other, compete in building schools, foundation of clubs and many other healthy projects.



**FRANTIŠEK VRHEL**

#### **ČESTMÍR LOUKOTKA AND EXOTIC LANGUAGES: FORMOSAN LANGUAGES**

The article is continuing previous efforts of Čestmír Loukotka in the field of classificatory linguistics (cf. František Vrhel: Čestmír Loukotka and Exotic Languages. Part 1: Native America, *Studia Ethnologica* XII, 2000, pp. 9–19; Part 2: Papua – New Guinea, forthcoming). Whereas Loukotka's studies in classification in the scope of languages of native South America may be qualified as methodologically doubtful (albeit Loukotka's justifiable position, as a precursor of glottochronology), the same is not true in the case of his materials, still in the present valuable; on the contrary his efforts both in the scope of Papuan languages and in the scope of Formosan ones which are the object of the present article may, even must be conceive of the failure. The Analysis in the light of present-day

studies in the field of Formosan Language manifest clearly, that Loukotka's classification, written with P. A. Lanyon-Orgill, is poorly hierarchized, being in the last instance merely some sort of unsystematic catalog.



**FRANTIŠEK VRHEL**  
**INNER LINGUISTIC FORM**

The presented article consists in three parts. The first one delineates German Neoromantic linguistics and its protagonist L. Weisgerber who, in a way, can be conceived of as a „Humboldt Redivivus“. The second part is analyzing W. von Humboldt's view on „inner linguistic form“ based especially on *Über die Verschiedenheit*“. Whatever the result could be, it is without any doubt that W. von Humboldt's concept of „inner linguistic form“ is aiming to articulate the languages as a dynamic whole. The following third part, the very core of the paper presented here (present contribution), is trying to detect various parallels and connexions to „inner linguistic form“ not only in the field of linguistics. The identified parallels may be summed up in following way: Inner linguistic form (W. von Humboldt, E. Cassirer, L. Weisgerber), the so called conceptual categories, „ponjatijnyje kategorii“ (I.I. Meščaninov, S.D. Kacnel'son), fashions of speaking (B. L. Whorf, J. A. Lucy), architecture of language (Ľ. Novák), and probably „semantic gesture“ (J. Mukařovsky) and maybe „energiticism“ (B. M. Ejchenbaum) or P. Bourdieu's „habitus“, all these phenomena may be calibrated as constructs which are parallel in the measure in which they view the object under investigation in dynamic way, energetically, in a word, they all conceptualize the object as an event, as a set of events. At the same time, it may be pertinent to consider the relations, a bit speculative, of these constructs to the J. Kurilowicz's concept of isomorfism and V. Skalička's concept of transposition.



**FRANTIŠEK VRHEL**  
**PROPER NAMES: SEVERAL ETHNOLOGICAL THOUGHT**

Proper names are considered from the line of three perspectives: analytical, linguistic and ethnological; ethnological perspective is divided in the view of classical ethnology (proposition related to the inherence between the name and named person or object) and the view of modern ethnology in which one can observe an interplay of the classificatory on the one hand and the identificational standpoint on the other. It is to stress that in this aforementioned threedimensional perspective the proper names appear as if they were related always to another object, to an object not conceivable as a unity.



**FRANTIŠEK VRHEL**  
**WITTGENSTEIN AND ETHNOLOGY: JAMES G. FRAZER**

The article tries to present Wittgenstein's view on *The Golden Bough*, one of the topmost classical work of social anthropology. Part one is formulating an Wittgensteinian perspective in ethnology distinguishing both conceptual, e.g. a series of Gellner's studies, and substantive standpoint which is the case of Wittgenstein's reading of Frazer. The following part present Frazer's work as a source of inspiration in fiction, in poetry, in linguistics stressing in the latter case Jakobsonian distinction between metonymy and metaphor, distinction based on Frazer's definition of two types of magic, and in ethnology exemplified

by Leach's „transitive inspiration“ in his analysis of general concept of magic. Part three resumes “The Golden Bough” as a whole, whereas part four, the core of the article, deals directly with Wittgenstein's “Notizen” and comments by a few specialists. Analysing the text the author is claiming several parallels between Wittgenstein and Lévi-Strauss: the search for „depth“ on the one hand and universal operations of human mind on the other; at the same time there is to state their sensitivity to the methodological value of language in general. Concluding part of the article is concentrating on Wittgenstein's insultative tone with regard to Frazer. It is to conclude that Wittgenstein's Notizen present today – from the perspective of contemporary ethnology – rather an instance of „curio“ written by the man of genius.



**MONIKA ZIZLEROVÁ**

### **LIVING AND LOCAL CUSTOMS OF HUNTSMEN OF THE BRDY MICROREGION**

As a consequence of the society's differentiation, hunting as a matter of the fact, gradually became the sovereign and his nobility's exclusive right and early in the second millennium of our era was also legally modified. Game keeping and hunting management have been established as a result of a deliberate game preservation. Initial menials of the hounds, serving nobility merely during the hunt itself, converted into huntsmen. At the beginning of game keeping and hunting in our country dated to 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> century, the hunting staff (professional huntsmen appointed by the sovereign and nobility) was settled fairly down on hunting grounds. Huntsmen were predominantly recruited from rural population and compared to the common social conditions, they had certain privileges such as immunity from statutory labor, liberation from servitude. However, huntsmen were not ranked among the privileged society, they never used to be decently maintained for their livelihood. They had to have control over their craft to perfection and were imposed to extremely high demands. Frequently, their existence has hinged on the number of quarries. Young adepts of hunting profession had to cope with primarily all types of forest operations. Then, after the period of three years the apprentice was ceremonially declared a huntsman by his Master of the hounds and certificate of apprenticeship was handed over together with a hunting knife and a huntsman's horn. A newly employed huntsman was provided with a uniform, fuel and housing, but a lower salary. A service hunting uniform has always been an external feature of the huntsman's exclusivity, in particular. The huntsman's uniform was necessary to represent his professional attitude, estate and status as well as to demonstrate to aliens they face a professional in active service. Apart from above mentioned, huntsmen had also some perquisites – they were allowed to collect loppings and brushwood, chop faggots and mow the grass in the wood. Not all huntsmen were assigned to a gamekeeper's lodge outright – in that case the huntsman had to perform in his own house for a certain period of time before he was given the gamekeeper's lodge allocated. Gamekeeper's lodge was frequently named after the keeper's surname who had served there before (e.g. Pourka, Nuslovna). Basic needier gamekeeper's lodge equipment has been continually innovated, moreover the houses used to be plentifully decorated with trophies. The structure of huntsmen's food and the food of their families was similar to the rural, the only variation was a higher consumption of forest fruits. Plenty of poultry and cattle were produced at the gamekeeper's lodge. None of the keepers was allowed to hunt game nor catch fish for personal consumption. Huntsmen were particularly appreciated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They could not frequently visit pubs – poachers could have taken advantage of it as they had their informers in almost every village. Villagers considered the huntsman a master in the village as well as a huntsman laborer meant something to them. Working hours used to be almost with no limits, the huntsman was given



a day off only to arrange for a necessary family affairs. Huntsmen used to be churchgoers, but a matter of professed religion of theirs did not depend on their choice. For example, an Evangelic at the Czernins had to convert to Catholics, otherwise he could not be accepted to service. As a matter of fact, a proverb saying that "let every man praise the bridge he goes over" came true. Winter time was dedicated to some culture life around the gamekeeper's lodge such as reading in evenings. Amateur theatre performances were frequently visited on foot or sometimes the huntsmen were also performing themselves. Family members often actively participated in the Sokol Sports Club. Life around the huntsman's lodges has not always been so comfortable. Electrification of houses in the 1950's became the turning point in the history. Till that time it was common to light with chips of resinous kindling wood, candles, torches or kerosene lamps. Forest work mechanization, electrification and telephone installation in the gamekeeper's lodges meant a significant progress to cause a rapid change in the life of professional foresters.



## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

### **Monika Baer**

Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University in Wrocław.  
Field research and courses taught: feminism in European and Extra-European cultural contexts.  
(E-mail: monikabaer@hotmail.com)

### **Lenka Blažková**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: ethnology of material culture – handicrafts.  
(E-mail: BlazenkaLenka@seznam.cz)

### **Marcin Brocki**

Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University in Wrocław.  
Field research and courses taught: non-verbal communication, critical anthropology, methodology and semiotic of culture.  
(E-mail: mbrocki@magma-net.pl)

### **Michaela Budiman-Rybková**

Institute of South and Central Asia, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: comparison of Toraja funeral rituals in the past and presence.  
(E-mail: michaelabudiman@gmail.com)

### **David César**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: anthropological aspects of the slave trade.  
(E-mail: david.cesar@seznam.cz)

**Dagnosław Demski**

Institute of Archeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Science in Warsaw.  
Field research and courses taught: ethnic stereotypes in the Middle- and South of Europe and South of Asia.

(E-mail: sanosara2@yahoo.com)

**Konrad Górny**

Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University in Wrocław.  
Field research and courses taught: anthropology and sociology of local societies, anthropology of film, theoretical problems of contemporary anthropology.

(E-mail: kgorny@uni.wroc.pl)

**Olga Heldenbrug**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: Japanese culture and thought, ritual practices in Japan, Heian period (794–1185).

(E-mail: olga2002@yahoo.com)

**Zuzana Hrdličková**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: emancipation of Tamil women in Sri Lanka.

(E-mail: zuhrdlickova@seznam.cz)

**Lucie Hronešová**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: urban ethnology.

(E-mail: lucie.hronesova@kaskady.cz)

**Petr Janeček**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: prosaic genres in folklore.

(E-mail: petrjanecek@seznam.cz)

**Oldřich Kašpar**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: history of ethnology, history and culture of Latin America. and Czech-Hispanic contacts.

(E-mail: oldrich.kaspar@ff.cuni.cz)

**Tomáš Kobes**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: theory of culture, cultural change and regional development.

(E-mail: t.kobes@post.cz)

**Zuzana Korecká**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: native culture of Mezoamerica.

(E-mail: zuzana.korecka@ff.cuni.cz)

**Zuzana Krátka**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: ethnic identity, adaptation and inter-cultural communication.  
(E-mail: zuzika\_kratka@yahoo.co.uk)

**Maciej Kurz**

Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology Silesian University in Katowice.  
Field research and courses taught: cultural changes in contemporary Africa.  
(E-mail: kurczm@poczta.onet.pl)

**Radmila Lorencová**

Institute of South and Central Asia, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: funeral rituals of native ethnic.  
(E-mail: radkal@volny.cz)

**Pavol Martuliak**

Chair of History, Faculty of Humanities, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.  
Field research and courses taught: folk culture, regional history and history of Slovak education.  
(E-mail: martuliak@fhv.umb.sk)

**Ladislav Mlynka**

Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Comenius University in Bratislava.  
Field research and courses taught: material and social culture in Central Europe.  
(E-mail: mlynka@fphil.uniba.sk)

**Jan Pargač**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: ethnology of economy, ethnic and ethno-cultural problems in the Europe and the Central Asia.  
(E-mail: jan.pargac@quick.cz)

**Michal Petrášek**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: cultural changes and postmodern sexuality in the Czech Republic.  
(E-mail: michal-petrasek@seznam.cz)

**Mariana Pflegerová**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: folk-theater of Indonesia.  
(E-mail: marianapflegerova@yahoo.com)

**Jan Pohunek**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.  
Field research and courses taught: microhistory, youth subcultures, anthropology of space.  
(E-mail: prebral@seznam.cz)

**Jan Pokorný**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: linguistic anthropology.

(E-mail: janpokojny@gmail.com)

**Jaroslav Skupnik**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: cultural and social anthropology, anthropology of kinship and Roma problems.

(E-mail: jaroslav.skupnik@ff.cuni.cz)

**Lenka Smolinská**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: social problems of developing countries.

(E-mail: backofbeyond8@yahoo.com)

**Viktor Svobodník**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: ethnology and anthropology of subcultures.

(E-mail: vitrin@volny.cz)

**Leoš Šatava**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: ethnicity, socio-linguistic and processes of migration.

(E-mail: leos.satava@ff.cuni.cz)

**Irena Štěpánová**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: history of Czech ethnography, ethnology of material culture and gender studies.

(E-mail: irena.stepanova@ff.cuni.cz)

**Miloš Tomandl**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: methodology of fieldwork, ethnology of social groups and urban ethnology.

(E-mail: milos.tomandl@ff.cuni.cz)

**Marie Tůmová**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: folk architecture and ethnology of law.

(E-mail: Marie-Tumova@seznam.cz)

**Jiří Vesecký**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: Muslims in the Czech Republic and Islamophobia.

(E-mail: vesec@seznam.cz)

**Martin Vostřel**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: social and cultural development of the urban population at the 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

(E-mail: martin.vostrel@centrum.cz)

**František Vrhel**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: theory of ethnology, ethno-linguistic and anthropology of sexuality.

(E-mail: frantisek.vrhel@ff.cuni.cz)

**Monika Zizlerová**

Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

Field research and courses taught: ethnology of social groups.

(E-mail: monika.zizlerova@quick.cz)



**Miloš Tomandl (ed.)**

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