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

ABSTRACT

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

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

IZVLEČEK

TRADICIJA JOSIPA JURČIČA NA MULJAVI: MEJE LOKALIZMA IN NACIONALIZMA

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

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

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**On misunderstandings**

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

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

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

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

8 Rogers Brubaker: Ethnicity Without Groups. In: Archives européennes de sociologie, XLIII, 2 (November 2002), pp. 163-189. Brubaker’s theory uncovers important »spaces« and helps us to overcome the terminological and methodological inconsistencies. He synthesised the approaches, which many researchers of nationalisms have already used (frequently without realising it), into a coherent theory. Nevertheless, as we apply his theory we are in danger of taking the methodological deconstruction of the nation »too literally« and losing sight of the nation as the subject of our research (as a practical category).
indefiniteness of the nation\textsuperscript{10} allows different people to identify with it. Precisely because nationhood is a misunderstanding that works, it requires – in order to truly work – an »understanding«. It calls for an intermediary link, groups small enough not to be meant in Anderson’s sense of the word (the members of the groups may know each other), which have direct links to the imagined community. Such groups may be invented with this purpose (cultural associations, gymnastic societies with a national character), but they can also be the already affirmed groups from the pre-national period, which gain additional national significance during the process of modernisation (village communities, parishes). Such groups maintain contacts with the imagined community through symbols and ritual practices.

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

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


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

\section*{On Slovenians}

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

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

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{16} Robert A. Kann: The Multinational Empire, Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy 1848 – 1918, Volume 1. New York 1964, pg. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Peter Vodopivec: Od Pohlinove slovnice do samostojne države. Slovenska zgodovina od konca 18. do konca 20. stoletja. Ljubljana 2006, pg. 46.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Miroslav Hroch: Can Nation-Forming Processes Be Used as a Criterion of Uneven Development. In: Criteria and Indicators of Backwardness, Essays on Uneven Development in European History. Prague 1996, pg. 134.
\end{enumerate}
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old Slovenian literary language standard, which had been shaped by the Protestants in the 16th century. The first demarcation of the envisioned Slovenian space and the first use of the expression »Slovenian« took place. According to Hroch, in case of Slovenians we can identify the beginning of the national agitation (Phase B) in the 1830s and 1840s, in the period of the so-called Metternich’s absolutism, when the dissatisfied Slovenian patriots began mobilising the supporters of »the national cause«. In 1848 the aspirations of these groups manifested themselves politically with the first Slovenian political programme called »United Slovenia«. The programme included the demands for the unification of Slovenians in a single political unit (within the Habsburg state), i.e. the abolishment of the old provincial borders and the establishment of new borders according to the »national« criteria. The second half of the 19th century was characterised by the strengthening of the modernisation processes: the complete dissolution of feudalism, railroad, (modest) capitalist production, development of trade, press, education and representative parliamentarism. The Slovenian national movement became a political endeavour, which attempted to penetrate the state institutions.

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

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22 Ibidem, pp. 111-147.
On Jurčič

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

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

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

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

The small rural community had never seen anything like it before. According to the newspaper reports more than 7000 people gathered in Muljava on that day\textsuperscript{33}, while in 1880 the Muljava municipality only had 285 inhabitants (54 houses).\textsuperscript{34}

\textsuperscript{31} Slovenski narod, 14 August 1882, 184.
\textsuperscript{32} Slovenski narod, 17 August 1882, 187.
How did the villagers of Muljava see the festivities? Judging by the testimonies of patriots themselves they were, first and foremost, surprised. »They really had to like him very much to honour him so«, the former Jurčič’s neighbours wondered. Some of the village children were afraid of the Sokoli and their uniforms, thinking they were »Turks in red shirts.« The memory of the festivities has been preserved in Muljava for several decades to come.

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

After World War I, Muljava, together with two thirds of the »Slovenian territory«, found itself in the new state: Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Even though the ideology of the single »Yugoslav nation« prevailed, the Slovenian leaders saw the establishment of the First Yugoslav State as Slovenian »national liberation«. In the Slovenian part of the state the administration and school system were completely Slovenianised. The works of Josip Jurčič were included into the school curriculums. The Jurčič tradition received a new encouragement. In 1924 the people of Muljava established their own fighting society. The villagers, still remembering the Tenth Brother performance of 1911, came up with an idea to stage it themselves on this occasion. Thus the village theatre activities began, which have – save for a few interruptions – lasted until today. During the first years the amateur theatre operated in the context of the firefighting society and was managed by the aforemen-
tioned Ciril Hočevar. During this period (1918-1941) Jurčič's birth house became a kind of a cultural tourist attraction. Besides the people's theatre the tradition of solemn events dedicated to Jurčič also continued. On such occasions Muljava would be visited by the members of the cultural and political elite. In 1929 Jurčič's house was restored and elaborate festivities with a cultural programme and entertainment were organised. The makeup of the committee for the restoration of Jurčič's house demonstrates that the tradition was kept alive by the local elite. The committee consisted of the priest, two teachers, two landowners, a notary and a veterinarian. Since Jurčič became famous in the time when the dispute between the liberals and the conservatives was not yet so prominent, people of various ideologies could take part in the invention of his tradition. Besides the liberal Hočevar, at that time a renowned farmer Anton Lampret, an (unsuccessful) candidate for the conservative Slovenian People's Party several times, also played an important role in this. Meanwhile, theatre activities have become traditional. The villagers realised »that people's theatre is pleasant entertainment and social gatherings."

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

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44 Jutro, 17 August 1929, 191.
45 Slovenec, 17 August 1929, 181.
50 Slovenec, 5 March 1944, 53.
communism». However, the Jurčič tradition could not avoid the civil war. When an anticomunist Home Guard battalion occupied Muljava, the partisan plaque was destroyed.

After World War II, the Jurčič tradition was in full swing. Already in 1945 the Tenth Brother play was enacted again. In 1950 the Josip Jurčič cultural society was established, and it is still active. In the following decades the village teachers took over the role of theatre organisers. After 1981 the society modernised its theatre activities. Since then the openair staging of Jurčič’s works has taken place every year in the natural amphitheatre next to Jurčič’s house. Much effort has been invested into attractive set design, authentic costumes and professional lighting. The performers are, naturally, local people, speaking the local dialect.¹¹ Jurčič’s birth house came into the custody of the cultural institutions of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia as a monument of national importance, and it was opened for the public as an ethnographic museum.¹² Since then the Jurčič homestead has been a popular venue for various cultural as well as commercial events. In the time of Tito’s Yugoslavia the local culturalpolitical organisations liked to associate the Jurčič tradition with the struggle of the partisan heroes for the social and national liberation. Jurčič was presented as a forerunner of the Slovenian partisans, because he »raised our national and social political awareness with his cultural and political mission«.¹³ On special occasions during this time Muljava was, just like before, visited by important guests: university professors, renowned poets and writers, painters, etc., who kept confirming to the local population how important Jurčič had been for the Slovenian nation.

The attainment of the Slovenian independence in 1991 did not bring any changes in this sense: the tradition simply kept on going. Today Jurčič is everywhere: the Jurčič awards are given, the local school is named after him, a tourist footpath is named after him, he even has his own Facebook profile. We simply cannot imagine Muljava without Jurčič. Do the people of Muljava perform the plays because of pride or because of the social gatherings that come with it? »It’s fun,« an elderly amateur actor admits. »And the company, well, that’s one of the best things about it. Good company, since almost everyone from Muljava comes together for this, the older as well as the younger, even children.«¹⁴ Despite that, the author of this paper has been reassured that the villagers were very proud of »their« Jurčič, because Jurčič had done so much for the Slovenian nation. However, »their« Jurčič is not the Jurčič of the »official« culture. In 1982 a feature film Tenth Brother was shot in the national production. The best Slovenian actors acted in it. Nevertheless, when the film was screened in Muljava, the villagers were not happy with it. »It just wasn’t ‘their’ Tenth Brother.«¹⁵

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¹³ Jurčičev svet, Muljava, June 1977, pg. 13.
¹⁴ Klasje, 10, 3 (March 2004), pg. 17.
What is, in our example, the misunderstanding that works? The most obvious misunderstanding takes place between the national elite and the local community, which adapts the new national cultural contents to its own perceptions. This is how the local nationhood is created, which is radically different from the nationhood of the cultural elites. The essence of the local nationhood lies in the reverse perspective. Instead of focusing on the national integrity, the local community focuses on itself. This is what makes this phenomenon impervious to the changes in the ideological and national context and allows it to endure. States and ideologies crumble, but the Jurčič tradition in Muljava lives on and on. If we define the Jurčič tradition as an invented tradition, then we should ask ourselves who invents. The initial invention was started by the cultural elite, which introduced their invention to the village community in a spectacular manner. As the village community adopted the novelty, it started inventing its own tradition in accordance with its own ideas. The formula for the constant reaffirmation of the invented tradition was brought into the village by the (young) cultural elite with their theatre activities (1911). In order to keep the awareness of a personality alive, the local community has to be active and creative in cultivating a memory. The identification with the significance of »our« man in the national mythology increases the importance of the village in the ideological national space. The organisation of rituals is an important volunteer activity, which brings the village community together. The organisation of village rituals simultaneously represents the organisation of national rituals. The adherence to the local community outgrows itself. On one hand it is concrete and the members confirm it with joint activities, while on the other hand it is placed in the wider national context. Even though the local nationhood, encouraged by the elites, no longer needs the elites for its reproduction, the well-established links with the elite nationhood do exist. These links are kept alive by the intermediaries: teachers, members of educational societies, even important village individuals (innkeepers, merchants, the more important farmers with political ambitions). These people act as organisers, they are in fact the bearers of the local nationhood. Just like the elites exploit the old localisms for the »true« national goals, the villagers exploit the nationhood to strengthen their own community. In our example the localism does not stand up to nationhood (as the resistance of the periphery against the centre). Quite the opposite: people are being national through localism.

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