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PROCESSES OF SOCIAL CHANGES IN YUGOSLAVIA*

(1) Social changes as a contemporary phenomenon are full of contradictions. It is, therefore, necessary to make certain points clear at the very beginning of this paper.

This theme implies ethnologic studies of the changes taking place in the sphere of material and spiritual life of a people, of its culture and its mentality. The studies cover the period from the end of the Second World War until present time, which in Yugoslavia is characterized by a socialistic system.

What are the conditions, social structures and sections of society, aspects of culture and life under which these processes of changes have taken place, is only part of the problems we should like to talk about. However, the limitations imposed by time and space make it impossible to discuss these problems at length, let alone to suggest formulae for their solution. It will be, therefore, a kind of survey of problems hinting at the direction which should be followed for further studies. We shall pay particular attention to some theoretical and methodological problems.

(2) After the Second World War Yugoslav ethnology has begun to apply itself to the exploration of contemporary processes and changes in the life and culture of its peoples. It is looking for actual problems in ethnologic phenomena interpreting them in a new and original manner. This is what we might consider to be new in the scientific orientation of present-day ethnology.

Within the larger context of scientific tendencies modern ethnologist explorations indicate that this science can be of use

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at this moment in creating the policy of planning general social and cultural improvement of a people and furthering of its development.

It is a well-known fact that world ethnology pays special attention to the studies of contemporary changes and processes that are taking place both in the countries in the east and those in the west. These phenomena are also discussed at special sections of ethnological and anthropological congresses.

Studies of contemporary phenomena and processes occurring in population (ethnic structure, movements and migrations of population), in settlements (urbanisation, dislocation), in economy, costume, in social life, spiritual culture and in particular those related to traditional ways of life and folklore have given important results.

Even though the interest shown for the studies of changes has reached a very high level in Yugoslavia, providing a basis for a kind of survey of the results achieved so far, the literature on the whole is of a descriptive character, displaying interest for particular problems, or for the solution of some practical problems. Even the most recent studies have but a small theoretical value. Considerable progress has been made in the methodology of the field-work (direct observation, interviews, questionnaires and sample surveys as well-established methods of investigation), but it still lacks a greater focusing of concepts and firmer theoretical structures.

(3) If we remember for a moment, that ancient Greeks have taught us that nobody can enter two times the same river, because both man and river are subject to changes, then we can easily understand that no phenomenon in any society and in any culture could be said to have developed without changes, or that at a certain point in history it has existed quite independently of all the currents in the society, without the interaction with the social and cultural milieu.¹

National culture has always been subject to changes. In our time they take place before our eyes and constitute an integral part of man's life and society. We should bear in mind that in the past they occurred slowly and successively, in contrast to present-day changes which take place under quite different socio-economic and political conditions.

Great and decisive historical events, wars and revolutions have always brought along social changes and new ideas, which in the final consequence have become common.

If we now turn to the 19th century we can see that the bourgeois society, having entered the era of industrial revolution and rapid technical progress, brought about the changes in the tra-

¹ D. Rihtman-Auguštin, *Pretpostavke suvremenog etnološkog istraživanja*, Narodna umjetnost XIII, Zagreb 1976, 11.

ditional ways of life and culture. A new concept predominated, i.e. the one of technological rationality, the ideal of the power over the nature, of efficiency which the bourgeois society was preparing since the time it came into existence. It was Spencer who united progress and evolution in his analysis of degrees, through which the industrial society has mastered nature.

More marked changes in the traditional culture in Yugoslavia were noticed by Vuk Karadžić already at the beginning of the 19th century. At that time national culture and the ways of life of the whole people were to the highest degree of traditional character, and for the greater part of Yugoslavia almost completely rural. In other words, the greater part of population were peasants, whose number gradually decreased as they began to inhabit towns in greater numbers, while their culture and ways of life were ever more affected by extraneous or town influences.² With the growth of industry and the advent of capitalism in Yugoslavia peasants began to produce more for the market. Thus the town and the village were brought into a closer contact, and under their mutual influences traditional values have been affected. Naturally, at that time the changes were occurring slowly because the industry and agriculture were not sufficiently developed.

Jovan Cvijić has remarked that in the past migrant workers from the village were much less dependent on their environment than other peasants. They more easily changed their place of residence, and travelling about they brought innovations into their villages, and they often changed important anthropogeographical and ethnographical characteristics.³

The Second World War marked in Yugoslavia an historical boundary between two fundamentally different periods. After the Second World War the village, with an underdeveloped land economy, has rapidly and spontaneously entered a new phase of economic and social changes. The changes brought about in the people's ways of life and culture have gained momentum.⁴

The changes that occurred in the past in a patriarchal village environment can bear no comparison at all with present-day changes either in their intensity or degree of the process which does not represent normal evolution of human culture.

(4) What fundamental factors affected the processes in ethnical changes that have taken place after the Second World War?

If we take industrialization and urbanization as decisive factors, we can see that the phase through which Yugoslavia is pass-

² Р. Ракић, *Савремене промене, предмет или аспект истраживања*, Симпозијум Етнолошко проучавање савремених промена у народној култури, Етнографски институт САНУ, Београд 1974, 33.

³ Ј. Цвијић, *Антропогеографски проблеми Балканског Полуострва*, СЕЗБ IV, Насеља и порекло становништва 1, Београд 1902, 53.

⁴ П. Влаховић, *Приступ проучавању старог и новог у народном животу у сеоским насељима Србије*, Симпозијум (in footnote 2), 9.

ing now, and which in all probability will continue in the future, is characterized by a huge technical progress and industrial productivity. The processes of industrialization and urbanization make the basis of the contemporary social dynamics in Yugoslavia and they play an ever greater role in the sphere of development. Industry has emerged as a dominant activity, while land economy has become a branch of industry. The social category of a *peasant* is becoming less and less distinct or is reduced to a small quantity.⁵ Even in very small villages smaller industrial plants or specialized workshops have of late been opened as branches of larger factories, which employ a good deal of village labour.

According to the 1971 census out of the total number of active population in Yugoslavia 53,6% were working in industry, mining, civil engineering and tertiary activities, while 44,6% were engaged in agriculture with fishing and forestry.⁶ A new census will no doubt reveal a great decrease in the percentage of the village population in favour of the town population. However, some of those who are cultivating land are exposed to the extraneous influences and are embracing urban values.⁷

Yugoslav political system with socialistic ideology and socialistic relationships within the society contributes to an ever greater social mobility. The influence of the mass media and communication as well as education, administration and the like also play an important part in the general process of changes.

Socialistic system in Yugoslavia is also distinguished for its planned changes by which it deliberately modernizes Yugoslav society, uprooting various antiquated ways of life, for instance eradication of illiteracy, replacing obsolete technology by the modern one, introducing planned melioration of land, adapting the functioning of machines and tools to man, introducing new form of association of men, and more equitable relations in the sphere of ownership and remuneration.⁸

We should also point to two important geographical factors which both in the past and today play an important part in the transformation of folk culture. The first one is the space connections, i.e. modernization of the road-network, and the second, the gravitational pull of central settlements.⁹

The road-network plays an important part in bringing about speedy and important changes, including regional and village roads which were adapted for car traffic and which directly connect

⁵ Ц. Костић, *Перспективе промена у нашем друштву и култури до 2000 године*, Симпозијум (in footnote 2), 132.

⁶ Коначни резултати пописа становништва и станова 1971. Савезни завод за статистику.

⁷ Ц. Костић, *op. cit.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁹ М. Панов, *Утицај депопулације на промену културе у планинским селима СР Македоније*, Симпозијум (in footnote 2), 98.

villages with towns. There are many examples which provide evidence that after such a road has been built, in course of one year only the landscape has changed to such a degree that it is difficult to recognise it.

Modern road-network has today inevitably brought the village population to currents of modern life. Car and bus connections have been extended even to the most remote villages.

The second important geographical factor, particularly in the transformation of folk culture is the space-gravitational and functional relationship between towns and villages. In other words, the process of urbanization is nowadays occurring without central places, and in some cases it goes in the opposite direction, introducing the elements of traditional culture, especially into smaller town settlements. This can be accounted for by intensive settlement of village population in towns. It is in such places that the collision, interpenetration and changes between these two types of culture can be best observed, although this process is limited in time. In any case the higher standard affects the currents of folk culture.¹⁰

(5) The combination of the mentioned factors fundamentally changes traditional cultures and social elements and phenomena. The bulk of the population, and in particular that from the village, together with its traditional features is undergoing a change and is being restructured. These processes, naturally, do not follow a straight line and are not synchronized, and they do not occur in the same manner in every part of the country. Hence, we have many discrepancies, differences and even deviations.¹¹ A great ethnical heterogeneity of the Yugoslav multinational community bears its part in it for there are three religious denominations: orthodox, catholic and islamic. The intensity of changes also depends a good deal on the still uneven economic development of individual parts of Yugoslavia, which is a burden from the past.

As a result, all these changes differ in their types and categories. Some traditional values have completely disappeared, some emerge in a new form, some have not been fundamentally changed, except that they have assumed a new function.¹² Completely new values devoid of traditional features both in rural and in old urban settlements are becoming more and more common.

The category of *acculturation* includes such phenomena which come as a result of *cultures in contact* (British term), i.e. when groups of people or individuals with different cultures come into a direct contact, and the changes that follow.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 99.

¹¹ P. PAKUŠ, *op. cit.*, 42.

¹² D. RIHTMAN-AUGUŠTIN, *O nekim metodološkim problemima etnološkog istraživanja sadašnjosti*, Etnološki pregled 12, Ljubljana 1974, 122.

The changes that follow from the cultures in contact should not be understood as the transfer of elements from one culture into another, but rather as the final result of interaction between groups or individuals with different cultures. Here we are dealing with a two-way process which affects not only rural but also urban milieus.

Since we are dealing here with fundamental changes that have taken place in the Yugoslav society and its structure, it is difficult to speak of total continuation of traditional patterns although a certain amount of *continuity*, which at first glance can be observed in contemporary picture of the society and culture, cannot be denied.

»If traditional patterns of culture lend colour or certain values to contemporary ways of life, that would be the last thing we should regret and ignore in our investigations. The trends of the growth of civilization are so levelling in their quality, that we can only wish for modern interpretation of the tradition.«¹³

The changes that have taken place in the life, culture and opinions of the Yugoslav peoples since the Second World War until today are indeed numerous. They include all spheres of life: the system of economy and labour, place of residence, clothing, nutrition, social relations and family life, customs and beliefs, folklore (songs, music, dances), the attitudes that people take towards things and phenomena surrounding them etc.

To illustrate we submit several actual examples, reflecting changes in the traditional cultural heritage.

Migrations of population play an important part in changes. For the last three centuries, and especially after the Second World War, the population in Yugoslavia has migrated all over the country. This was conducive to intermixing and mingling of the population, which can be noticed in the physical and anthropological characteristics.

There are several kinds of migrations: *permanent, daily, and seasonal or temporary*. To the first group belong the transfer and moving of people from one place to another, from one part of the country to another, where as a rule they settle permanently. Such movements follow the direction from village to town and industrial places.

Daily migrations of workers employed in town, and who otherwise live in the village and also work on the land, is quite a new phenomenon in the life of our village, and it is one of the ways by which contemporary changes are introduced into the life of village.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 123.

There exist also *seasonal migrations* which are connected to some kind of non-agricultural activities, for instance house-building workers or those working on the land during the summer and autumn season, on the fields of large agricultural estates.

Of far greater importance is the *economic migration* which takes people out of the country to work abroad temporarily in order to earn money. A special feature of this kind of migration is a large number of women participating in it.

All kinds of migrations mentioned above affect to a lesser or greater degree the village and its ways of life and contribute to its embracing of the achievements of modern culture. When speaking of acquiring new ways of life, there is an obvious difference between the people who earn their living only from land and those who can earn, if only temporarily, in some other ways, too. It is not only an increase in the income that matters here, but also the acquiring and application of all that has been seen in a new milieu, in other words we are dealing here not only with changed possibilities, but also with a new evaluation of needs and desires.

The introducing of *agricultural technology* into the village has resulted in important changes in the agricultural life of the village. Modern techniques in the cultivation of land together with the application of up-to-date machines, tools and chemical fertilizers has liberated from hard work a good deal of village labour, which has come from the village to work in industry or to seek other employment.

The growth of industry and rapid advancement in general technology has caused the material standard of the people to acquire a new basis and dimension. This is particularly manifest in new *types of settlements* (in town suburban industrial centres) establishing urban centres in villages and in their tendency to become equal with the towns.

The evolution of *the house* has been manifold. It is constructed on contemporary architectural principles both with regard to material used and the arrangement of the inside and the function designated to the rooms. The outbuildings on the farm have undergone the same modernization as the house.

The national costume has on the whole lost regional and ethnic characteristics. The innovations from the town are ousting or have completely ousted traditional clothes, having as a result gradual uniformity in the style of dressing on a large scale.

Considerable changes can be noticed also in *the diet* of the population, not only that its standard has been improved, which is natural in view of the fact that general standard has risen, but also with regard to the changes in the composition of the diet. Until the Second World War in some parts of Yugoslavia maize was staple food, and bread made of it was eaten all the year round, while bread made of wheat was used only as ritual bread

for holidays. Today is only eaten bread made of wheat. Products of food industry have profoundly changed the eating habits of people in general.

The ethnologists studying the changes occurring in contemporary life of the people are all unanimous in their opinion that *spiritual culture*, including customs, preserves its traditional forms much longer than material culture.

The customs which have not been abandoned or are only very slowly abandoned are subject to transformation during which their ritual function is the first to disappear. On the other hand, owing to new socio-economic conditions, new customs, devoid of religious and ritual character, are being introduced and accepted, e.g. the sending-off of recruits, the celebration of the Day of Uprising, the Republic Day, New Year Day, the socialist patron saint (*slava*), etc.¹⁴

The transformation of a custom is achieved in such a manner that it is not abandoned in its entirety, but only partly, i.e. only some elements are given up. It is not uncommon that a custom is observed for sheer inertia, and its form is preserved while the real cause for its observation has been either completely lost or changed.

As for the custom practice, it has undergone many changes, which is, for instance, quite obvious with the accessories whose appearance and use have been changed. Changes can be observed too with regard to the number and composition of participants in individual customs. This is particularly noticeable when watching ritual processions. It is a well-known fact that for instance *dodole* (rain makers) are no longer performed by young girls from the village, but their place has been taken over by Gypsies.¹⁵

Since the agricultural machines were introduced, complex customs of various magical character, formerly performed in the field on the occasion of first plowing, sowing and harvesting, have been discontinued.

Some of the collective celebrations which until recently have had a marked ritual character (patron saint — *slava*, church patron saint — *litija*, wedding, etc.), but which have been discontinued, have nowadays acquired a socio-economic character. Such celebrations, which provide an opportunity for displaying economic power and reputation of a family, are also an occasion for members, relatives and friends of family to gather together, and

¹⁴ Д. Антонијевић, *Социјалистичка слава у Срему*, Рад XX конгреса Савеза фолклориста Југославије, Нови Сад 1973, 91—95.

¹⁵ Д. Бандић — Р. Ракић, *О проучавању савремених промена у обичајном животу нашег народа*, Симпозијум, (in footnote 2), 84.

in the village it is still the best way to keep up one's social relations.¹⁶

If we thus go on from one custom to another, we shall come to the conclusion that they have not disappeared, even though they are rapidly changing, but that they exist on several levels, one of them being explicit and visible, while the other not visible.¹⁷

(6) From what has been said so far we can come to the conclusion that contemporary ethnical phenomena, taken as a whole, display a strong unity of the old and new. In some instances it is only a modification of old elements, while sometimes completely new structures have been formed. Factors inducing changes in Yugoslav society do not affect with the same intensity ethnical groups, peoples and individual destinies.¹⁸ Sometimes these processes manifest themselves differently and will be felt sooner in one place than in another. It is certain, however, that forces of future are already felt in present-day changes, and that they surpass the existing ethnic structures and differences.¹⁹

As for the perspectives in Yugoslavia like in other industrially developed countries, one can expect further growth of urban and industrial society at the expense of the agrarian and rural one. Technological processes will have a levelling effect both in the sphere of material and the spiritual life, but mostly in the former one. Different conclusions can be drawn from these facts. Some are of the opinion that society will develop towards the *universalism* and that such processes will strengthen and confirm in practice the equality of people, while the others, on the contrary, think that the notion of people's equality will decline, and that the tendency that every individual will differ from the other one, will be on the increase.²⁰

Our basic assumption is that in the future the process of changes in the traditional culture and ways of life will develop on a still larger scale, while the man's actual power in relation to these processes will imply his more efficient mastering of the nature.

In any case, the interest for studies relevant to the changes concerning man will continue to be in the centre of ethnology, and we are confident that it will constantly grow, and for this reason ethnology will have to change and improve both the subject matter and the methods of its explorations.

¹⁶ P. Kažmačević, *Промене у народној култури Семберије*, Симпозијум, (in footnote 2), 108.

¹⁷ D. Rihtman-Auguštin, *O nekim metodološkim problemima etnološkog istraživanja sadašnjosti*, 126.

¹⁸ D. Rihtman-Auguštin, *Pretpostavke suvremenog etnološkog istraživanja*, 13.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ И. Костић, *op. cit.*, 134.

ПРОЦЕСИ ДРУШТВЕНИХ ПРОМЕНА У ЈУГОСЛАВИЈИ

Резиме

Друштвене промене као изразити феномен савремености разматрају се са становишта етнологије. После сажетог указивања на резултате до којих је етнoлошка наука дошла у проучавању друштвених промена у нас у периоду после другог светског рата, чини се краћи поглед у прошлост и указује на XIX век и зачетке промена у традицијским вредностима народне културе, на које је далекосежно упозорио Вук Караџић. Наравно да су се у овим временима промене одвијале споро, под условима недовољно развијене индустријске и аграрне средине.

Други светски рат означио је прекретницу двеју суштински и садржајно различитих друштвених епоха. Промене које су се дешавале у прошлости у патријархалној сеоској средини ни издалека не могу се поредити са данашњим, ни по својој јачини, ни по својој свеобухватности.

Од фактора који су деловали на процесе друштвених промена после другог светског рата, истиче се на првом месту снажан индустријски развитак, а са њим и урбанизација. Указује се и на значај географске средине која је са мрежом нових путева и саобраћајем приближила сеоско становништво савременим токовима живота. Просторно-гравитациони и функционални однос између градова и села се развио у великој мери.

Сви ови фактори суштински су утицали и променили или трансформисали традицијске културне и социјалне вредности села. Свакако да ови процеси не иду ни праволинијски ни синхроно. Отуда за последицу имамо различите типове и категорије промена традицијских вредности. Акултурација као производ културног контакта је веома изражена, а проблем континуитета се не може порећи. То потврђују и конкретни примери у начину привређивања, и рада, становању, одевању, исхрани, породичном животу, обредима и веровањима и фолклору.

Даљи развитак урбаног и индустријског друштва на рачун аграрног и руралног, у коме технолошки процеси доводе до изједначавања како у материјалном тако и духовном животу, отварају различите перспективе. Неки сматрају да ће се због тога друштво кретати у правцу „универзализма“ и међусобне једнакости људи, док други, да ће осећање једнакости међу људима слабити, а да ће јачати тенденција међусобног разликовања.