

POLITICS ABOUT FOLKLORE – FOLKLORE IN POLITICS (SLOVAKIA AS AN EXAMPLE)

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The contribution concentrates on the term "folklore" or "popular character" and semantic equivalents of these words in the language (slang) of politicians, journalists and political commentators as well as some representatives of the intelligentsia. It starts mainly from expressions published in the mass media or other media after the changes in 1989–1998. The term is used in negative or even pejorative sense and reflects the inner polarization of Slovak society in the political sense ("Europeandom" versus traditionalism, or civic principles versus nationalism). It consists of the following semantic layers: political (synonym of totalitarianism, or communism); national-identificational; aesthetico-artistic; philosophical; survival of the stereotype of the peasant as contrasting with the higher educated layers, that is, a critique of the improper behaviour of some politicians. "Folklore" becomes a linguistic stereotype. Its individual layers merge and are mutually substitutable. Medialization of the word "folklore" in pejorative sense became one of the indicators of political changes from totalitarianism to democracy.

Introduction

I shall try to demonstrate the changes proceeding at the level of politics and ideology (focused on the relationship between totalitarianism and democracy) from the perspective of the reflection of these changes in political language and the language (slang) of journalists and/or politicians. Particular examples will be given to show the changes in the official language of the mass media based on the political reality of Slovakia after 1989.

In this connection the changes in the official language can be perceived (in addition to other attributes, for instance in the composition and the meaning of national holidays or symbols, unveiling of new memorial plaques, houses and memorials, restoration of Jewish cemeteries and the cemeteries of German soldiers killed in the Second World War, construction of a new Slovak history, demolition of numerous, chiefly national myths and the search for Slovak identity, opening of the tabooed topics, e.g. the Slovak State of 1939–1945, the Holocaust, etc.) also as one of the components of the "rites of passage" (Ivanova 1998). P. Connerton (1992)

traced similar events (e.g. changes in the style of clothing, etc.) in an interesting way using the 1791 French Revolution as an example.

These "external" forms of ideological transformations (which may simultaneously indicate their insufficiency or inconsistency) create a special world of "the language of the initiated". Particular nuances of this "language" can often be understood only by recipients well informed about the real events or about personalities in public life. (I think that this is a component of the processes very similar to those of particular "transforming" European countries, see e.g. Ivanova 1997.) These changes in language include e.g. the domestication of "newly" perceived words known from common or special language (e.g. the use of the words "folklore", "Slovakness", "pro-national", or "anti-national"), but chiefly of different nicknames given to particular politicians, collocations, characteristic statements of some politicians (which have become "popular"), newspaper headlines using folklore texts, slogans known from billboards, incipits of well known songs, or folklore parodying, anecdotal cycles about particular politicians, etc. Many of them refer to or directly use the extant or newly formed mental images of "the self" or "the others", stereotypes or even prejudices in the particular society or territory. In our case it will also concern the reflection of the "political struggle" for an open society and democracy, whose forms are also mirrored in the language used by the participants in the struggle.

Folklore and politics

It is generally known that folklore has been and still is a component of national/ethnic identification, a device for demonstrating its "otherness", national or ethnic uniqueness (not always real but often in a concrete form, merely fabricated, fictitious).

In 1991, researches were launched at the Institute of Ethnology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, directed towards the relationship between ethnic (national) identification and folklore from the perspective of folkloristics, ethnology, ethnomusicology, and political anthropology. The researches confirmed the weakened national consciousness of the ordinary citizen of Slovakia; this implies an increased danger of the manipulation of historical memory of the general public and the increased possibility of filling the relatively "empty" places of historical memory with politically convenient (may be also unconsidered or intentionally explosive) content (chiefly embodied by emotionally appellant images of the "enemies": Hungarians, Jews, Romanies, and now also, for example, "Czechoslovakists", western capitalists as well as particular politicians, political parties, particular strata – such as the intelligentsia, etc.). It is associated with the historical reality that Slovakia – with the exception of the 1939-1945 Slovak State – did not have its own state formation until the establishment of the Slovak Republic. This results in the weaker reflection – in comparison with other European nations, for example, Poles, Hungarians, Danes, etc. – of own ethnic/national identification.

During the research, the question of the strong polarization of the people living in this territory in relation to folklore in general came to the fore. I would like to

use Slovakia as an example of a country characterized in some regions and genres by a relatively unbroken continuity of folklore tradition, and to demonstrate the issue of the open proclamation of the relationship of particular social groups and opinion (status) groups to folklore.

The political polarization of Slovak society is closely linked with a totally different evaluation of folklore as an ethno-identifying phenomenon in different strata of Slovak society at the level of education and status and largely also in the comparison between town and countryside. On the one hand, there are members of the intelligentsia with relatively clear-cut – chiefly political – views (mostly in opposition to Mečiar's ruling power). On the other hand, there are particular direct continuers and bearers of folklore tradition in its "classical" sense, that is the rural population with the prevailingly lower education level and usually with a positive relation to folklore. My intention in this article is not to discriminate between the terms "folklore" and "folklorism", that means I shall primarily speak about folklorism. (It represents, in this context, the scientific term used in ethnology or folkloristics, which, however, merges in principle with the term "folklore" among common people.)

I shall concentrate on the period from 1989 to the present. The 1989 fall of the Iron Curtain in Europe and the following years can be judged from the long-term historical perspective as crucial and after 1993 (i.e. after the establishment of the Slovak Republic) even as a two-fold discontinuous break in the social memory of the inhabitants of Slovakia. The first break brought, to simplify matters, the fall of communism at an ideological level. The second breakthrough was associated with the official birth of a nation-state in multiethnic territory. This was accompanied by the emergence of the problems associated with ethnic and national identity, the self-image of the Slovak, the actually weakened ethnocentrism of the Slovaks and nationalism. Therefore, we are concerned with a clearly transitional to hectic period, ideal for researching the relationship between social memory and historical reality, which has a discontinuous character.

The word "folklore" in the jargon used by politicians and journalists

My focus will be on the meaning of the word "folklore" and their semantic equivalents in the language (jargon) used by politicians, journalists, and political commentators as well as by some representatives of the intelligentsia. My study is based on the expressions published in newspapers, periodicals, in radio and other mass media after 1989. In the communist regime, folklore represented a sort of sacred and untouchable "taboo" at the level of the official language and we know this also from other socialist countries (Dégh, L., Bausinger, H.). Folklore had its specific ideological functions and was closely associated with the communist ideology, although in different countries in different periods and with different intensity (e.g. in the former GDR such a trend was characteristic of the 1970s). Folklore as "the art of the folk" contained a strong ethno-identifying charge; for example Slovak

folklore and its media presentation in communist Czechoslovakia in the programmes on political issues as if optically (not realistically but only fictitiously) "levelled off" the power asymmetry in Czech-Slovak relations at the level of real state politics. This politics, along with other factors and through its inertia, also played its role in the 1993 split of Czechoslovakia.

It was particularly in the fifties that folklore was generally preferred in this territory in the official culture. It was frequently presented in the media and the communist representatives of the intelligentsia initiated discussion on the "dominance of folklore" (launched by the writer Vladimír Mináč in 1958). I think, however, that such a discussion was of no effect in former Czechoslovakia. We could see the forms of "folklore dominance" in the media with our own eyes practically until the so-called "velvet revolution". Recent years (particularly before the September 1998 parliamentary elections, which brought the collapse of the emerging dictatorship of former Slovak Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar) witnessed a sort of indirect continuity of Slovak folklore (or, more precisely, different forms of folklorism) of the "communist" line of "cultural policy". This meant its "insinuation" into the minds of the masses, appearance in more or less tasteful forms broadcast in the state-run media (controlled at that time by Mečiar's government) usually at peak viewing times. Such a presentation of "folklore" brought, however, dishonour on folklore as such in the eyes of a wise viewer or listener conscious of the possibility of manipulation. The result was often – in spite of the proclamation of "Slovakness" – quite the reverse. It was a deviation from the identification with the folklore of "one's nation" and thus an action against the creation and strengthening of Slovak identity among a great part of the inhabitants of Slovakia.

After November 1989, the term "folklore" started to be used often in the negative meaning in the Slovak, but also in the Czech, Polish and East German press (chiefly with political orientation) just as an indicator of the change in the political direction from totalitarianism to democracy and an open society. The word "folklore", as if expressing a distance from the pre-November political situation, became more or less openly or consciously an "accomplice" of communist political practices of the totalitarian power. In the process of the gradual domestication of "folklore" in journalist and political jargon we also observe an extension of the levels of meaning of the perception of this term. The use of the word has been increasingly enriched with new semantic nuances and subtexts, often becoming, to some extent, a tool for demonstrating the "wit" of particular authors, co-creating the presentation of the "comickness" of the particular situation, political events, politicians' behaviour, etc., being evaluated or commented on (see the photograph from the Hungarian 1998 parliamentary elections published in the Slovak dailies with the comment: "Elections as folklore?").

It is important that the word "folklore" preserves its unambiguously negative, even pejorative axiological charge in this sphere. It is mainly associated with its perception as nonliving anachronism, stage wings for the masses, beyond which the

real politics is performed. The term “folklore” is perceived in a similar way, for example, within certain Austrian intellectual circles (although without the above-mentioned political background, as a prejudice or the performance of folklore on the stage). A certain negative assessment of “folklore” is here associated with the use of the scientific language to date (the word “folklore” is perceived as an import from other territories – whether Anglo-Saxon or Francophone). The negative sense of the word “folklore” is in the first place connected with the commercialization of folk art and folklore (i.e. it is a synonym of folklorism, primarily folklore performance on the stage), or it is used (of course beyond folkloristic literature) only in the narrowed sense to denote surviving customs and traditions (in the eyes of a town inhabitant and an intellectual in principle as an anachronism).

Semantic connections of the term “folklore” in the Slovak and Czech mass media and in politics

It is particularly the expression “political folklore” that occurs very often in the Slovak media. Its unambiguously pejorative undertone bears even on politicians’ morals, for example (quote): “Regardless of political folklore and morals of the particular political grouping...”, in connection with events on the political scene we speak about “folklore” or “political rituals”. For instance, in the Czech press, in connection with frauds committed in football (before 1993), we witnessed the identification of folklore with fraud using the term “national folklore” and, in the same commentary there even occurred the collocation “football folklore” (quote): “If football players swindle,... or practice deceit, it is understood as part of the game, as part of football folklore...”

During the 1994 municipal elections, the following commentary on mayoral candidates for the Slovak capital Bratislava appeared: “There are different types indeed, ornamental types, “folklore types”. Here, “folklore” represents a device of the two-faced political power serving to cover up the politicians’ real aims. In this sense, it is a symbol of manipulation of the masses and, simultaneously, of indirect telling of lies, the opposite of truth or reality. (If politicians tell untruths or do not keep their word, it is often denoted in daily newspapers as a manifestation of “Slovak folklore”.)

“Folklore” is often used as a synonym of the folk culture as a whole. Politicians of the type of folk ‘pub’ narrators giving promises which cannot be fulfilled are called “folklore types”. Such “folklore types” of politician can put folk costumes on, as in the following commentary (quote): “No nation was morally revived when it had its historical memory erased. The only thing left was the national costume which “reform pragmatists” put on.” Another significant sign of the phenomenon of “folklore” in this slang is its use in terms of spiritless, primitive entertainment, as in the commentary on the behaviour of the members of parliament during TV political talks (quote):

“What a folklore, what an entertainment!”. The sessions of Parliament are often commented on as the object of entertainment – “rhetorical exercises, which were probably a mere charitable folklore to liven the debate up”.

Both in Czechia and in Slovakia the semantic field of the word "folklore" has expanded, for example to defining insignificant political groupings without a chance of gaining any political weight: "... with its six per cent, it (particular political party – remark E.K.) is today well on the way to becoming 'a folklore political grouping' of the south-Moravian countryside..."). A similar name is given to a political subject established on a merely formal basis or with the aim of disguising real political goals (before the September 1998 parliamentary elections in Slovakia): "the sense of establishing and maintaining folklorist miniparties with their acolytes assisting the chairman of the HZDS (V. Mečiar) at the head, was exhausted – chiefly because it did not take any votes from those in opposition..." "Folklore" can thus be something that is not taken seriously but that serves as entertainment, to distract public attention, for example, from the crisis of the ruling coalition: "Cyclic rebellions (of a party that refused to obey, remark E.K.) against the stronger partner are "folklore worn-out long ago". "Amusing" statements by some notorious loquacious deputies during the sessions in Parliament are described by their opponents as follows: "Mr. C. is a funny fellow and a "folklore" figure in Parliament, and I take his statements in the same spirit" (that is, not seriously, but as entertainment, remark E.K.).

It is used in the criticism of the violation of a special law (adopted by the Czech-Slovak Parliament in 1992) according to which those who had worked or collaborated with the communist State Secret Service (ŠTB) should not be allowed to occupy high political functions, as in the text to the caricature in the daily SME: "It was the local folk band of former honoured members of ŠTB that I liked most at the festival." The motif of folklore as a synonym of "Slovakness" is often repeated in newspapers, particularly in connection with the unending "dominance" of the public television broadcasting under Mečiar (comment by a SME reader: "If there is something Slovak on telly, we mostly see people in "krpce" (peasant boots), shabby Slovak paupers, priests, churches, dirty yards, hens (we should probably have them in our emblem). There is no accounting for tastes. But let everything be in its place: folk costumes in folklore ceremonies, priests in churches, hens in henhouses.") The term "folklorist position" is also used in official political speeches in terms of backwardness, the break in the positive development towards European integration trends, anachronism and irrationality, the opposite of factual problem-solving: "In order to avoid the idea of our statehood becoming stunted 'in the folklorist position', it has to be developed along factual and pragmatic lines." (From the Report on the situation of the Slovak Republic delivered by the Slovak President Michal Kováč in Parliament on December 4, 1993).

The terms "folklore", "folklorist" in the pejorative sense often fulfil the function of an instrument of the criticism of politicians' behaviour, power abuse, etc., for example, during the negative evaluation of the secret Slovak Information Service (SIS) under Mečiar's government (before the September 1998 elections). The results of its activities are mere "folklore" – quote: "Henceforth, explosions, fires,

and other manifestations of the “folklore” of our secret service will fulfil, in addition to an intimidatory function, also propagandistic functions. Their motto is: The Opposition is behind everything.” In these contexts and at this time “folklore” is a common thing, something that naturally belongs to us and is hardly worth noting: “The fact that journalists are constantly followed by the SIS is not only an open secret but it is as if it has become part of “our folklore”... “Folklore” is thus simultaneously a manifestation of isolationism and the opposite of democracy: “Our secret service ...has opened up to cooperation with the Russian intelligence service expanding towards Central Europe. These facts, “in addition to unique Slovak folklore”, represent an important signal for western countries about how to judge Slovakia.”

“Folklore” symbolizes the antithesis of Europeanism, it provokes the Slovaks to escape from identity or patriotism, or, on the other hand, it represents a “stigma of vulgar nationalism”: “Therefore, some intellectuals distance themselves from Slovak nationalism, which today often becomes a “false folklorizing kitsch and capering around bonfires.”

“Folklore figures” on our political scene represent isolationistic nationalism and are the opposite of the civic principle. These are “the chosen people” who do not have to obey the rule of law, policemen-thieves or totalitarian politicians: “...“folklore” or other figures of the era of great thieves and small parasites”...

As part of the anti-corruption government programme, a law was adopted which reads that bribery is not a crime. According to the Opposition, Mečiar’s government, “however, ...does not deduce any consequences...” from the fight against money laundering “...since they understand it as ‘a manifestation of Slovak folklore’”. “Folklore” embodies here the opposite of the truth, something that should not be taken seriously.

The abuse of public holidays in the pre-election period by the government also belongs to “folklore”: for example, on August 29, 1998 (just before the September 1998 parliamentary elections), during the celebration of the anniversary of the 1944 Slovak National Uprising against Nazi domination, the glasses carried the HZDS (the ruling Mečiar’s Movement for a Democratic Slovakia) logo and the Opposition’s comment was: “This belongs to ‘folklore’.”

The synonym of bad politics criticized abroad is also “folklore”, quote: “...we have to elect a President because... the foreign countries will again point out that “folklore is going on in our country”, that we are unwise and we do some things badly.” Or: “The political folklore of election or non-election of the President” was enriched (by the former Prime Minister V. Mečiar) in a new component: presidential candidates are not nominated exclusively by deputies but they offer themselves for the position.” (The point of these commentaries was that when President Michal Kováč’s term ended in March 1998, the Slovak Parliament failed to elect a new President.)

Folklore or singing folk songs is perceived by the observers of the Slovak political scene as one of the “tricks” played by politicians on their potential voters. The

outgoing Premier Mečiar ended his last appearance on the “state-controlled” (i.e. “pro-Mečiar”) Slovak TV (after the unsuccessful September elections) with a farewell song. The commentaries classified it as a “tragicomic farce” and the “outgoing Premier used almost all known tricks to influence the masses, namely the Slovak TV viewers, during his appearance. He criticized and praised, threatened and promised, spoke and sang...”

Extremist nationalism was characteristic of the policy of the Ministry of Culture during the reign of the Mečiar’s government. The Culture Ministry prepared a controversial “Minority language law” directed particularly against the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, which was strongly criticized by European Union Member States. This institution was named by opposition journalists “Ministerstvo folkloristiky a ‘kulturistiky’... (‘kulturistika’ in Slovak means body-building)”. The mass recall of 28 ambassadors by Mečiar’s government at the beginning of 1998 was denoted by opposition politicians as “a folkloric, Byzantine element, a gesture, which can be performed in a pub, but not outside”. “Folklore” embodies the stereotype of plebeianness and the peasant mentality of the Slovaks, with which one has to reckon in the election campaign: “The rustic soul or essence is a priceless asset to a politician in Slovakia. The clearest evidence is the phenomenon of the HZDS leader (Premier V. Mečiar before September 1998 elections, remark E.K.), who, as a personality, resembles a successful rustic philanderer, a terror of the pubs, and a master of rhetoric in one.”

The ordinary Slovak citizen divides the whole area of “folklore” on the basis of its topical function into two groups: “pub folklore” and “stage folklore”. This characteristic, like the quoted statements, does not indicate a high status of the word “folklore” in the value hierarchy of the citizens of Slovakia.

Folklore and political reality

For some Slovak citizens the word “folklore” and the whole area of folk culture has thus become a synonym of anachronism, retrogression, obsolescence, non-modernity, provincialism, backwardness, exoticism, improper returns to the past, and in addition anti-democracy, something unreal, make-believe, hypocritical, a relic of the past, and non-existent but proclaimed chimera. In this perspective “folklore” is the embodiment of the primitiveness or clumsiness of the peasant, a comical figure well-known across Central Europe from the Middle Ages, who does not know how to behave in “the big world” of the higher social strata of the scholars, nobility, or burghers. From the point of view of aesthetics, the presentation of folklorism is often of poorer quality and is described as “anti-cultural musical trash” or so-called “rustic entertainment” and is commented as follows: “the present-day television screen and family journals exhibit ...peasants in ‘krpce’ (peasant boots) and in greasy trousers, stuffing themselves with Slovak sheep cheese (bryndza).”

In view of the really ongoing processes on the Slovak political scene we can speak about a direct link between the use of the term “folklore” as a pejorative

word and the political situation. A significant increase in the frequency of the word "folklore" and its equivalents in the opposition-orientated dailies is documented by the material as directly dependent on the strengthening of anti-democratic and isolationist pressures of the then ruling coalition. The use of the word "folklore" increased with the approaching fear of pro-democratic forces of the possible rigging of the election in September 1998. These elections brought the fall of Mečiar's "dictatorship" and, at the same time, the restoration of pro-European and pro-reform politics in Slovakia. The term gradually disappeared from political commentaries and its occurrence is less frequent after the 1998 parliamentary elections. Such was the situation at the end of 1998.

"The other side" of the relation to folklore in Slovakia

I have already mentioned that, during the period in question, the use of the term "folklore" in the pejorative and mostly in the negative sense was characteristic of a particular group in the Slovak population – especially of intellectuals, politicians and journalists with a particular level of education, political orientation (the then Opposition) and place of residence (urban areas). The opposite extreme persists in the overwhelming majority of the population, particularly the grass roots with lower levels of education (but not exclusively). They have a positive relationship to various types of folklore – both its "classic" authentic forms surviving in some regions, and secondary forms of varying quality and stylization (not excluding various types of kitsch propagated by television or commercially successful audio and video recordings, e.g. the "Senzi senzus" group, but also others). After 1989, pop music, jazz and rock, but also folklore (often second- or third-hand) enjoyed a boom. This was sometimes a far cry from the original. It is chiefly the background music or dance songs (not excluding the erotic ones) intended primarily for entertainment that are commercially successful. From time to time we also witness the commercial use of traditional folk songs politically updated, recalling the period of socialism with its typical partisan songs or songs about collective farms. This issue is, however, worthy of special analysis, which is outside the scope of this paper.

Conclusion

1. My considerations focused primarily on the perception and assessment of the phenomenon of folklore and its gradual domestication in the language of politicians and journalists after "the 1989 fall of the Iron Curtain". I spoke about folklore as perceived and evaluated by its real or potential recipients. This is also connected with the merging of "folklore" with "folklorism" or with the fact that the use of the word in the pejorative sense is primarily based on the manifestations of "folklorism" understood as "folklore". The term itself consists of several components:

1.1. Political (based on the ideological misuse and use of folklore during the totalitarianism period for political aims). In this sense, folklore becomes a symbol of the former communist totalitarian politics.

1.2. Nation-identifying. Both these components merge to some extent in the period studied since also during the transition from totalitarianism to an open society and democracy, politicians misuse the “national” card and deliberately manipulate the patriotic feelings of citizens and voters, extremist nationalist parties, in particular. In the search for “an adversary” as part of the political struggle, the “national card” (especially the use of the historical stereotype of the Magyar-oppressor of the Slovaks in the old Kingdom of Hungary – part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy) is not repudiated by other political groupings either (especially by the post-communist ones).

1.3. The aesthetic-artistic standard. It is an inseparable part of folklore in any form of its exploration or presentation. Today, such an assessment of folklore and folklorism (inclusive of negative) is chiefly associated with the processes of commercialization and with its labelling either as kitsch or as a not particularly valuable, often rude “rustic entertainment”.

1.4. Ultimately, I shall mention the component of folklore perception which is linked with the philosophical currents of contemporary thought, that is postmodernism. I think that a sort of deviation of the intellectual strata from folklore is also connected, in addition to arguments already mentioned, with the rejection of “romantic nationalism” in our science itself, with a sort of “awakening from the search for “purity” and “the roots” in the rural setting as a contrast to the “bad” and “immoral” city alien to nature.

2. The analysis of the perception of the word “folklore” in the language of politics and its use as a linguistic stereotype shows that during the constitution of this word, primarily its negative semantic links, the individual layers of the perception of the word merge and interchange with one another. The term “folklore” itself becomes part of several metalanguages extending its original meanings. Close links between “folklore” as a linguistic stereotype and the particular political reality were also shown to be important, mainly in the use of this word in political and journalist languages. The word “folklore” with its unambiguously pejorative axiological undertone has thus become one of the indicators of political changes from totalitarianism to democracy in Slovakia – and not only there – in the last decade.

3. To simplify matters, both views of Slovak society presented in relation to folklore as a kind of symbol represent extreme examples of the contemporary domestic polarization of society. It concerns the historically conditioned path of particular opinion currents not only in relation to the contrast town – countryside but also within the learned strata. Here they can be studied as a dilemma of “Europeandom” versus traditionalism and/or civic principles versus nationalism (Krivý 1997). These split opinions are associated with, among other things, the belongingness of the Slovaks (according to the historian Miroslav Hroch) to the so-called “small” European nations. In the nineteenth century, when modern European nations were constituted, members of these nations lived in multinational state for-

mations. The consequence of this historical experience is the still dominating and persevering regionalism in Slovakia (in contrast to e.g. Czech "centralism" with respect to Prague as historical capital). In comparison with the neighbouring European nations, the ethnic/national consciousness of the Slovak people is much weaker. This is abused by nationalist populist politicians for political manipulation of the masses. One of the vehicles of such a manipulation is folklore (anecdotes, songs, etc.).

The relation to folklore within this context is not only a natural manifestation of the differentiated aesthetic or artistic taste of contemporary man but it assumes even today other dimensions, including political ones. A special problem is the relation of the ethnocentrism of Slovak territory to folklore as a still important ethno-identifying phenomenon as well as the relation between folklore and nationalism (that is folklore as a symbol of "Slovakness"), or the complicated problem of Slovak identity in the indicated correlations. On the one hand, disassociation from "folklore" as a symbol of national identity leads to some extent practically to the presented or also real "escape from identity". On the other hand, "folklore" becomes (in spite of the proclamation of the ideological fall of communism) an object of "political bargaining" between a politician and his/her voters.

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