

# Anthropology in Eastern Europe between positivism and constructivism: A case from the Czech Republic

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## Abstract

This article deals with the relationship of *ethnology* and sociocultural *anthropology* in the Czech Republic. The author argues that these discourses are different in principle and, therefore, should not be blended together or, more importantly, confused one for another. One specific ethnographic case is used to show that the two scholar discourses provide different perspectives, or more precisely, are based on various theoretical backgrounds. The ethnographic example is an issue of the collective identity of inhabitants of Voyvodovo, the only Czech village in Bulgaria, specifically their belief that they are descendants of the exiles after the 1620 White Mountain Battle. Texts of selected authors are analysed to compare the different approaches of ethnology and social anthropology. The ethnologists strive to reveal objective historical Truth, led by the principle of the positivist historiography, best characterised by Ranke's 'Wie es eigentlich gewesen?' For them, if the beliefs and identities of the actors do not correspond to this objective historical Truth (as in this case), their belief and identity are incorrect or wrong; therefore, Voyvodovans are not and cannot be the descendants of the exiles of the White Mountain Battle. The author, in contrast, adopts the position of social anthropology, according to which 'if people believe a thing to be true, then it is true;' in this sense, the Voyvodovans really are descendants of exiles of the White Mountain Battle. On a general level, this contradiction is between the positivist approach, maintained by the (Czech) ethnologists and the position of social constructivism held by the sociocultural anthropology which has not yet been fully established in the Czech Republic.

KEYWORDS: anthropology, ethnology, positivism, constructivism, Voyvodovo

*Anybody has the right to claim any identity, and it is illegitimate for an anthropologist to erect himself or herself as the judge of the legitimacy of proclaimed identities (Amselle 1990: xvi).*

## Prologue

Unlike physical or biological anthropology, social/cultural anthropology did not exist (could not exist) as a field or scientific discourse in the countries of the former Czechoslovakia before 1989. Until the regime change, the (domestic) *ethnology*<sup>1</sup> was the hegemon of the corresponding part of social science research. Reactions to the introduction of social and cultural (or socio-cultural, as we have come to call it in the Czech Republic) anthropology to the domestic scene were inconsistent among ethnologists. There were two basic attitudes; the credo of the first of these was the thesis: *It is the same*, i.e. ethnology and anthropology are (with slight differences in accents and local specifics) the same thing. Advocates of this position adopted the label *anthropology*, and began to use it in their texts, in the names of institutions, journals, etc. The second opinion was, essentially, the opposite: *ethnology and anthropology represent different research traditions and various fields*; wilfully giving them the same identity or interchanging them is, therefore, unjustified and inappropriate. This standpoint, whose central thesis is the *complementarity* of these fields, is also the basis for this work; the following pages will, in a certain sense, clarify its rationale.

This work, deriving from my earlier work (Jakoubek 2012), is not unprecedented in terms of its focus; discussions on relations between ethnology and anthropology in the Czech Republic, with some fluctuations, have been held since the 1990s (cf. Holý 1991; Hubinger 1992, 1997; Skalník 2002; Nešpor-Jakoubek 2004; Matoušek 2004). Nearly all the relevant texts, however, are linked by (quite) a unified approach, which consists in a (more or less critical, less or more abstract, dealing with more or less concrete examples) *contemplation* of the topic, the presentation of arguments for or against (the fact that it is or it is not the same field), with a possible formulation of a program within its conclusion. The following pages will have a different objective. I will attempt to show the difference (of approach) between ethnology and anthropology in one specific example. It will not, therefore, be a *reflection*, but a demonstration of a real praxis in ethnology or anthropology, considering the epistemological anchorage of the respective approaches.

Another difference from other texts that thematise the relationship of these fields will lie in the fact that the primary attention will be paid to ethnology, or determining the nature of an explanatory paradigm, which ethnology uses and which will subsequently be contrasted with the paradigmatic anchoring of anthropology. The previous practice was quite the opposite; it was usually tacitly assumed that ethnology is “an old friend”, so, in its case, everyone knows what the matter was; what is necessary to demonstrate and explain, however, is the newcomer on the scene – anthropology. The objective of the first section of the text that follows is actually the opposite; I will attempt to show what the (paradigmatic) nature of ethnology is on the level of praxis, i.e. I do not care what others *think* of ethnology

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this study, we will consider ethnology and ethnography (národopis in Czech) to be a single discipline, or different accents of the same explanatory paradigm, which is the approach of most authors who have lately dealt with the topic in our country.

or what *programmes* they *declare* for it, but what its real procedures are. On the contrary, in the case of anthropology, I will limit myself to the introduction of the main interpretative principles, especially because I have already shown their specific application, using identical material based on which the ethnological approach will be presented (Jakoubek 2010).

## Introduction

In one of the records that capture the findings of research conducted by Iva Heroldová (n.d.), in 1972, among post-war resettlers from the Bulgarian Voyvodovo, the following quote from informant Rudolf Hřůza's testimony can also be found: 'Our grandparents left from there, when there was the White Mountain Battle,' after which a comment of the researcher follows in brackets: 'He has learned this sentence, apparently read it somewhere.' Due to the nature of this remark, as well as with respect to findings published in the studies by Heroldová covering this topic (see below), we can (quite reasonably) assume that through the mentioned note the author wanted to say that this statement is false, and thus Hřůza was not, and could not be, a descendant of exiles of the 1620 White Mountain Battle. In other words, Heroldová is apparently trying, through this commentary, to negate the legitimacy of the informant's testimony in relation to the issue discussed.

On the following pages, I will try to challenge this approach to the testimony of Hřůza on two levels: 1) the historical level, and 2) the anthropological plane. On a general level, based on the approach to the testimony in question, I will try to perform a comparison of the characteristics of Czech ethnology, or ethnography, (I consider Heroldová its representative), and social anthropology (the corresponding part of my argument will be conducted from its positions).

In a sense, throughout the study, I will apply some version of the method of "exemplary criticism"; I will especially deal with corresponding opinions of Heroldová (or Zdeněk Nešpor, see below). I will, however, consider them typical or model standpoints for a whole explanatory paradigm. Heroldová was selected not because her works were the most representative of the given paradigmatic position in a quantitative sense, but because she adopted, for the paradigm, a model interpretative position in one particular *thematically* relevant case. In other words, I do not argue that the work of Heroldová is, within the corresponding context, the most representative, but only that, in one particular case, she adopted a position that can be considered *exemplary*.

## Mistakes and truths

In order to understand the critical approach of Iva Heroldová to the testimony of Rudolf Hřůza, we need to clarify what his statement really was about, or make a small excursus into the history of the Bulgarian Voyvodovo settlement, whose inhabitant, Rudolf Hřůza, over some time, was and from where, within the post-war remigrating processes, left for the former Czechoslovakia.

The village of Voyvodovo, located in north-western Bulgaria, 16 km from the Danube port town Orechovo, was founded in 1900 by (for the most part) resettlers from the village of St. Helena, located in the Romanian Banat. One of these resettlers was

Rudolf Hrůza, who was born in St. Helena in 1891 and came to Voyvodovo, undoubtedly with his parents, at about six years of age. A point of discord between Iva Heroldová and Rudolf Hrůza is the foundation of St. Helena. Although Hrůza does not explicitly mention it, it is clear that in his opinion, in this regard, his ancestors (co)founded St. Helena. These ancestors had left the territory of Bohemia in the post-White Mountain period due to religious persecution.<sup>2</sup> The main reason for the skepticism of Heroldová toward Hrůza's opinion represents her repeatedly published opinion, according to which the 'Czech colony of St. Helena in the Banat was established in 1826 by thirty evangelical families from the Čáslav and Český Brod Regions' (Heroldová 1996: 93); thus, it is these families whose descendant Hrůza is. Heroldová based this opinion (unlike Rudolf Hrůza) on the results of research of other experts.<sup>3</sup> On one hand, the informant gives his opinion and presents his statement as the truth for which he stands, i.e. he guarantees it, above all (so to speak), by himself; on the other, the researcher Heroldová bases her position on the scientific arguments of her colleagues-researchers; on this basis, she disagrees with Hrůza's opinion, deems it irrelevant due to the historical truth, i.e. 'how it indeed was'. It should be noted, however, that her approach, even at this moment, suffers from one significant defect: her attitude to Hrůza's opinion is, in fact, based on her, in no way proven (yet potentially verifiable), *assumption* that Rudolf Hrůza only reproduces what he has read somewhere. Although this is, given Heroldová's opinion, a quite distinct and potentially disqualifying inconsistency, I will not take into account this aspect now, and I will (like her) regard this position as justified.

## Historical truth

Zdeněk Nešpor was the first to develop an alternative approach to the history of St. Helena and, especially, its foundation, in his study *Banat Czechs as descendants of tolerance sectarians* (1999). As the name of his study suggests, Nešpor's interpretation is based on the hypothesis that the founders of St. Helena were not 'landless smallholders of Protestant denomination from the Čáslav region' (Heroldová 1975: 114), but the descendants of tolerance sectarians (*lunatics*), i.e. groups that 'emerged in eastern Bohemia and the Moravian borderlands after the issuance of the Toleration Patent' (Nešpor 1999: 129), who, in turn, left (or were forced to leave) the territory of Bohemia due to the reluctance of members of these groups to agree to one of four (patent "tolerated") denominations (i.e. Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and, especially, Lutheran/Augsburg and Calvinist/Helvetian confessions). Compared to the current interpretation stating *economic* reasons as the cause of the abandonment of the Czech lands by later founders of St. Helena, Nešpor, on a general level, emphasises the *religious* motivation.

As for the characteristics of the tolerance sectarians, Nešpor stated that it was the group gathered around the folk religious teachers, 'distinctive interpreters of the Bible ... that firmly stuck to their own interpretation of Christian doctrine' (1999: 130). The

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<sup>2</sup> The testimony cited does not mention this point; it will be seen later, however, that Hrůza almost certainly meant to say so.

<sup>3</sup> Among the latest works, let us name, e.g. Jech et al. 1992; among the less recent ones, e.g. Karas 1937.

basis for the formation of these groups was the ‘consciousness of exclusive salvation’ experienced by the groups’ members (ibid.: 129). Regarding the characteristics of the relationship of these groups to the world and life, Nešpor is based on Kutnar (1948: 165), according to whom, religion and religious life ‘is the main focus of their existence, occupies a central position in it, and is the source of life for them; it is their basis and their home where they return; it affects all the components of their individual and collective life’ (cited in Nešpor 1999: 130). In other words, the defining element of these groups was *religion*.

Members of these groups ‘were rejected by tolerated churches, and they themselves rejected such churches’ (ibid.). Although nobility administrators initially tried to bring members of these groups into some of the tolerated confessions, they soon ‘sensed the futility of such actions’ as ‘sectarians were convinced of the correctness of their interpretation, and rejected anything else’ (ibid.). Eventually, they proceeded to the forced transmigrations that were directed mainly at Banat and Transylvania (ibid.). The basis of Nešpor’s opinion is, in this respect, the hypothesis that it was members of these transmigrated groups who were involved with the birth of St. Helena. Unlike the standard interpretation of the foundation of St. Helena (advocated, for instance, by Heroldová) alleging the assumption of *economic* motivations for the exodus of the later founders of this community from Bohemia, Nešpor assumes it is, on a general level, for religious reasons.

Let us determine on what kind of sources Nešpor bases his hypothesis. In his cited study, these are four main arguments; it is to be noted in advance that, in all cases, they are only of an indirect nature. First, some of the sources (Schlögl 1926; Karas 1937) reported that St. Helena’s non-Catholics were called “rams” (*berani*). This fact, according to Nešpor, ‘refers to the specific form of the East Bohemian toleration sectarianism, the so-called lamb faith (*víra beránková*)’ (Nešpor 1999: 137), which was, in the area, confessed before the issuance of the Toleration Patent. After its issuance, some of these groups agreed to accept Helvetic Confessions, and established good reformed churches; others remained in their faith and became a base for groups of so-called “deists” (ibid.). ‘And because,’ Nešpor continues, ‘it was these “deists” that were transmigrated into the Romanian Banat, it can be assumed that their label “travelled” with them, somehow’ (ibid.).

However, as Nešpor himself observes, the backbone of his hypothesis about the origin of St. Helena is the further religious development of this community, or of its non-Catholic part (ibid.). In this regard, Nešpor, referring to investigations (Jech et al. 1992), mentions the first religious endogamy of the non-Catholic part of St. Helena, persisting until the 1850s (Nešpor 1999), which he considers a ‘typical sectarian feature, valid for the tolerance “lunatics” par excellence’ (ibid.). In addition, Nešpor’s opinion is mainly based on the distinctive feature of the development of the non-Catholic part of St. Helena, which is the process of repeated cleavage between radical-minded members and the “secularised” rest of the non-Catholic camp; Nešpor understands this radicalism, on the contrary, as a *conservatism* in the sense of staying in the (distinctly radical) “faith of the fathers”. Thus, the list of Nešpor’s arguments relating to the religious development of St. Helena is almost ending. In order to make the list of his arguments complete, there is still to cite Nešpor’s reference to Schlögl’s mention of the region as the ‘Promised Land’

(Schlögl 1926: 39). Given the fact that the economic incapacity of the region ‘could not give clear grounds’ for such a description (Nešpor 1999: 136), Nešpor believes we are hearing, in this mention, an echo of the concept of the area from the position of St. Helena’s founders; he assumes that this designation is of an initially tolerance sectarian provenance, as the meaning of the term referred to a place where it was possible ‘to profess your faith as you pleased’ (ibid.).

We have gradually gone through the arguments referred to by Nešpor, which the researcher collects to support his hypothesis that at least some of the founders of St. Helena ‘should be understood as descendants and successors of East Bohemian tolerance sectarians’ (ibid.: 141) to the extent to which it was possible to learn of them in Nešpor’s article of 1999. In the following sections of this text, let us see how the arguments in support of the hypothesis developed further.

## **Historical truth – round two**

That same year that Nešpor published (the just summarised) study *Banat Czechs as the descendants of tolerance sectarians*, he published (this time in collaboration with other authors) the first part of an extensive four-part study which deals with the issue of Czech non-Catholics in the Romanian Banat and Bulgaria; its initial part is focused on the issues of the origin of St. Helena (Nešpor, Hornofová & Jakoubek 1999). In this text, the above hypothesis about the origin of the founders of St. Helena reappears; the repertoire of arguments to support it expands slightly. The reasons for this progress are, apparently, two: the application of new procedures, and the discovery of new sources, with particular significance in their combination. With respect to, particularly, the new resources, it is clear that Nešpor, in the meantime, had become acquainted with the St. Helena “chronicle”, *Memorial of St. Helena* by Jindřich Schlögl. Based on information from this source, Nešpor completes his arguments regarding maternal areas from which the later founders and residents of St. Helena came; these are complemented by additional indirect evidence in favour of central and eastern Bohemia, in terms of results of an onymic analysis carried out by him. As Nešpor (et al.) reported, comparing the surnames of the tolerance sectarians with the names of the sixteen known families out of those approximately thirty families that founded the village of St. Helena, it turns out that, among the surnames of tolerance sectarians of central and eastern Bohemia, eleven out of sixteen surnames of the first St. Helena families are found (ibid.). ‘This significant coincidence,’ Nešpor, Hornofová and Jakoubek concluded, ‘cannot be just random’ (ibid.).

The conclusion of the study by Nešpor, Hornofová and Jakoubek, after recapitulating the arguments in Nešpor’s earlier study (1999), and subsequently adding further indirect evidence in support of his central hypothesis, is that ‘Banat non-Catholics actually did have their origin in Czech tolerance sectarianism’ (ibid.: 83). In relation to the founders of St. Helena themselves, of course, a certain degree of uncertainty persists. To the (rhetorical) question ‘Was ... St. Helena founded directly by them – the former transmigrated tolerance sectarians, their descendants, or just members of another migration wave, consisting perhaps of relatives of former transmigrated sectarians who

had somehow learned of a relative religious freedom which the transmigrated people received in Transylvania and Banat, and felt the desire for?,' Nešpor, Hornofová and Jakoubek answer: 'We don't know' (ibid.).

I explained Nešpor's hypothesis about the founders of St. Helena, whose basis represents the alternative interpretation of the relevant history. In other words, on a general level, Nešpor's dispute with the (until then prevailing or, actually, the only) concept of the establishment of St. Helena (represented in our study by the position of Heroldová) is a dispute about the historical truth. Although Heroldová (and others) and Nešpor (et al.) do not agree on a specific *version* of this historical truth, there is, between them, a consensus on the sphere on which the dispute is conducted.

### **Truths (and errors) of informants**

I started this study with a reference to Iva Heroldová's comment concerning her informant Rudolf Hružá's testimony: 'Our grandparents left the country when there was the White Mountain Battle.' I understood the concise remark of this researcher concerning Hružá's statement: 'He has learned this sentence, apparently read it somewhere' as an expression of the conviction of an expert that in relation to the historical truth (whose revelation is the very aim of a researcher's efforts), this statement is irrelevant or directly untrue. I have also said that this approach (the approach dealing with the historical truth above all and always conferring, in relation to the discussed topic, the "last word" to a researcher before an informant) can be seen as typical for the position of Czech ethnology both in the pre-revolutionary period and today. As evidence of this assumption, we can mention, for example, the opinion of the authors of the most representative publication dealing with issues of Czech compatriots in the Romanian Banat, who, in relation to relevant issues, clearly state that 'the memories of today's Czechs of the past are ... fragmentary, inaccurate and, *on the whole, of little significance*' (Jech et al. 1992: 12; italics added).

### **Testimonies of (ex)Voyvodovans about their origin**

In the following part of this text, I will consider the testimonies of (ex)inhabitants of Bulgarian Voyvodovo, a village founded by (mainly) the resettlers from St. Helena in 1900. These are testimonies concerning their origin, or, to put it better and more precisely, concerning the reasons why their ancestors left the territory of Bohemia. It is a theme that represented a key area of Nešpor's arguments presented above.

I started to record corresponding testimonies within research among (ex) Voyvodovans in 1999; I did not systematically execute the collection, except for the last few months of 2009; their recording was always just sort of a "byproduct" of another work which was focused entirely differently. As, in earlier periods, I did not pay enough attention to this issue, the testimonies are not exact wordings of what informers said in all cases, but my reproductions of their original statements. I express the difference between a direct testimony of an informant and my own formulations by using quotation marks in the first case. Individual records are arranged chronologically. While a number of testimonies, as far as their content is concerned, are more or less identical, I present, in

principle, all statements gathered; this is because their number as such is already a certain argument. Each testimony includes who the informant is, the year of his/her birth, and the date of the testimony.

It started with the Battle on the White Mountain – they forbade them to be Utraquists, that’s why they left (Štěpán Skalák, 1928, 11 January 1999).

‘Ancestors left the country for the faith in the Dark Age’ (Blahoslav Hrůza, 1930, 11 January 1999).

‘They left because of the Bible. ... They chased them, called them “heretics”. ... When they fled from Bohemia, they baked the Bible into bread. ... They left after the White Mountain from the environs of Pardubice and Kolín’ (Alois Filip, 1919, 11 January 1999).

‘In 1882 Marie Klepáčková was born, who told her daughter [mother of LK] in Voyodovo that the ancestors had left for the faith’s sake – in Bohemia, they wanted them to be Catholics, so they left’ (Ludvík Kopřiva, 1940, 1 September 2000).

‘They were oppressed religiously’ (Josef Dvorský, 1927, 12 August 2006).

‘When they were fleeing, they would bake their Bibles in bread. ... [Granny told him that] they chased them and called them “heretics”. ... We come from near Kolín, from near Pardubice. ... They left after the White Mountain – when persecutions started’ (Alois Filip, 1919, 12 August 2006).

‘They left for the faith’s sake. ... They had troubles through the Catholics, then they started to flee’ (Rozálie Kňourková, 1930, 15 August 2006).

‘Great-grandfather’s ancestors ‘fled due to faith’ (Barbora Čížková, 1921, 18 January 2007).

‘Great-ancestors left because of their faith’ (Sofie Dvorská, 1933, 18 January 2007).

‘Great-grandfather was told he either changes his denomination, or out! – he didn’t change his denomination, so they left’ (Kateřina Bojadžieva, 1921, 1 February 2008).

‘Great-ancestors were fleeing because God’s word was being destroyed. ... They would bake the Bible in bread’ (Petr Dobiáš, 1930, 22 March 2008).

‘Great-ancestors “were evicted with Comenius”’ (Petr Filip, 1945, 27 April 2008).

‘Granny told us about how they were saying goodbye on the Rose Meadow near Litomyšl. ... They said “Protestants out of here”, so they went. ... Then they went into the mountains in Romania – so nobody could find them’ (Štěpánka Skaláková, 1920, 28 May 2009).

‘[The ancestors] left for Romania because of religion’ (Františka Hrůzová, 1917, 8.5.2009, Hodonín).

‘They left “for their faith” after the White Mountain [from Velim and Kolín]. ... They left to find land and keep their faith’ (Miroslav Štrbka, 1936, 11 June 2009).

‘They left mainly because they didn’t agree with Catholics in Bohemia, so they sold what they could in Bohemia and went’ (Štěpán Hrůza, 1918, 16 November 2009).

‘They left because of the Bible. The Catholics chased them. They, to keep the Bible, baked it in bread; they made a loaf and carried it away, so the Catholics didn’t take it away. They left behind their property, cows, fields and left for Romania. For the Bible’s sake’ (Sofie Hrůzová, 1925, 16 November 2009).

‘They left in the Dark Age ... Catholics terribly persecuted Protestants ... they were bad, so they fled away from Catholics ... just the Bible; they left behind properties, everything’ (Sofie Hrůzová, 1925, 18 April 2010).

‘It was 200 years ago, ... and, at that time. They were like Germans’ slaves ... and once Germans said: you’ll either renounce the Protestant faith – they were Protestants – and accept the Catholic faith or out. What could they do, poor them? What could they do? They didn’t want to have their faith stolen. Why should we be Catholics when our ancestors were Protestants? So, poor them, they moved out from there, over Hungary, over Romania...’ (Kateřina Bojadžieva, 1921, 23 February 2010).

‘For the faith’s sake, they left, because of their faith. It was after the Catholics came to power, in the government ... they [the ancestors] fled because they had burnt them, chased them ... they were persecuted for their faith, nothing else. If they had stayed there, nothing would have happened, provided they were Catholics, which they didn’t want ... And they used to say ... they didn’t want those Catholic parsons of theirs to read them the Bible and say “you are not able to read this”...’ (Alois Filip, 1919, 11 June 2012).

‘Due to their faith [they left], I knew this from my Granny. So she would tell me that when they were leaving, so – she knew it from her Granny, her great-grandmother, actually – they had to leave because of their faith, they banned them, so they put their rucksacks, children and whatever they had on the wagons and went where their eyes would lead them, they said “we are going through Romania” and went somewhere to the mountains so as not to be found; well, they stopped somewhere in Romania, in the mountains, and stayed there quite a long time’ (Štěpánka Skaláková, 1920, 13 June 2012).

‘They [Catholics] persecuted our great-grandfathers ... They [our great-grandfathers] left because of their faith’ (Tinka Pechalová, 1924, 14 August 2012).

‘They persecuted them due to their religion; that’s why they left’ (František Pitra, 1925, 1 November 2012).

‘They were banned because of the Gospel’ (Olga Pitrová, 1927, 3 November 2012).

As a certain supplement, let me quote also the testimony of a former Bulgarian neighbour of the Czechs in the village of Belince (north-eastern Bulgaria, region Deli Orman), which was founded in a secondary migration wave from Voyvodovo in 1935, and which the Czechs left (like Voyvodovo itself) during (the Czechoslovak and Bulgarian governments-controlled) relocation of the Czechs and Slovaks from Bulgaria to Czechoslovakia after World War II. As far as the sources of information are concerned, Žeko Kiranski himself said in an interview: ‘I know it from them [i.e. Czechs]’. I am presenting the testimony of a former neighbour of the Belince Czechs, among others, because it – in contrast to the testimonies of (ex)Voyvodovo Czechs, which are, essentially, of recent origin – reflects the “state of information”, at the latest, of the years 1949/1950. This information state was, apparently, formed by members of the generation with whom the author of this article had no opportunity to speak. So, generally speaking, the oldest above-cited informants’ parents’ generation.

‘They were banned from Bohemia for their faith. ... They were forced to move out – they were tortured there [i.e. in Bohemia]. ... They were Protestants, Hus’ followers. ... They were victims of the battle [i.e. the White Mountain Battle]’ (Žeko Kolev Kiranski, 1927, 24 July 2006).

In order to make our list complete and exhaust all known sources, we still have to quote the corresponding part of the text of the superintendent of the United Methodist Church, Vančura, of 1950, dedicated to “re-emigrants from Bulgaria”. In it, the author states that on 24 May 1950, for which date the arrival of the second transport of resettlers of Voyvodovo was planned, ‘They all came to greet the precious *descendants of those who, 300 years ago, left their country for the faith, conscience, and freedom*, taking with them nothing but the Kralice Bible and their Psalter’ (Vančura 1950: 16; italics added). Regarding the source of this definition of the Voyvodovo community as *exiles* (term used by Vančura) because of faith, Vančura adds quickly: ‘... as they [the exiles] told us,’ from which it is clear that Vančura received the said information from the Voyvodovo resettlers themselves in the same year, given its inclusion in his article. It is one of the first interceptions of the interpretation of the origin of the Voyvodovo community after the remigration, which (again) provides quite clear evidence that this interpretation acquired its solid form prior to the arrival of the members of the community to Czechoslovakia.

The statements presented contain a variety of information; it would be possible to analyse them from a variety of perspectives. For our purposes, however, I only limit myself to stating one of the key findings (in two basic positions), which results from the testimonies: first, in the *general* position, through which it is clear that, in terms of the motivation of the departure of their ancestors from Bohemia, (ex)Voyvodovans are clearly convinced that, in the case of their ancestors, *religious* factors were undoubtedly the

reasons for leaving the Czech lands; and second, as far as the *specific* level is concerned, it is beyond doubt that (ex)Voyvodovans consider themselves *descendants* of the post-White Mountain exiles.

## **Voyvodovans as descendants of post-White-Mountain exiles**

I have indicated that I will not follow in the footsteps of Nešpor; as for the origin of Voyvodovans or St. Helena's non-Catholics, I do not argue in favour or against a certain historical truth on the basis of those statements; although it is, in principle, possible. My interest is different: on the most general level, we could describe it as an *anthropological* interest. I am convinced that both Heroldová (Jech et al. 1992) and Nešpor lead their (albeit mutually contradictory, as regards their specific content) reasoning from *common* positions. We could mark these positions as (in principle) *ethnological* positions (this is how this term is understood in the countries of the former Czechoslovakia), which, in this regard, share the explanatory paradigm of the *history*, whose central question is still the question: 'Wie es eigentlich gewesen?' (Ranke 1871).

In the specific case of testimonies of (ex)Voyvodovans, which I mentioned in the previous section, Heroldová's attitude is more or less obvious, since it would (with high probability) resemble her attitude towards the testimony of Rudolf Hruža, which can be found at the beginning of this essay, and which is essentially identical with the sense of the above-quoted collection of testimonies of other (ex)Voyvodovans. Iva Heroldová would, presumably, consider that (ex)Voyvodovans are mistaken, and that it is not necessary to consider their opinion, or that their memories and beliefs are (wording of Jech et al. 1992) "of little overall significance". Iva Heroldová (Jech et al. 1992, and many other ethnologists) would, therefore, label the identity of (ex)Voyvodovans as descendants of the post-White Mountain exiles as *erroneous*.

As for Nešpor, it can be assumed that he would use the testimonies of (ex)Voyvodovans presented as other circumstantial evidence to support his hypothesis about the religious reasons for (the ancestors of) the founders of St. Helena leaving from Bohemia, but with some corrections in the sense that, over time and generations, the memory of the *real* reason for emigration (the repression of tolerance sectarians) has been lost, so the memories of informants are true only in their (say) general position, which documents the religious (rather than economic) factors as the cause of the departure of their ancestors from the Czech-Crown countries. However, when it comes to specific beliefs of (ex)Voyvodovans that they are descendants of the Post-White Mountain exiles, it can be assumed that Zdeněk Nešpor, like Iva Heroldová, would mark these as erroneous beliefs. We came to this conclusion based on the comment of Nešpor cited above, in which he considers the belief of some tolerance sectarians that they are descendants of the Czech Reformation as erroneous,<sup>4</sup> undoubtedly because it is precisely contrary to the "reality" (i.e. they consider themselves to be somebody they are not "in reality"). When Nešpor

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<sup>4</sup> 'Some tolerance sectarians considered [themselves] to be descendants of the Czech Reformation – mistakenly, but the more doggedly' (Nešpor 1999: 137; italics added).

considers Voyvodovans, based on his own research argumentation, to be descendants of tolerance sectarians, it is clear that he would opt for an identical attitude towards their beliefs about who they are (which do not match his conclusions), as towards the above conviction of tolerance sectarians; also in this case, Nešpor would, by all accounts, have the opinion that (ex)Voyvodovans consider themselves to be someone they (“in reality”) are not.

Contrary to the view of the Czech ethnology, for whose representative I chose, in this study, Iva Heroldová (to whom Zdeněk Nešpor was soon added), which (in its corresponding studies) still considers Ranke’s maxim to be its credo, and thus labels the conviction of (ex)Voyvodovans, that they are descendants of the post-White Mountain exiles, as “wrong” or “erroneous”, an assessment of the above-presented collection of testimonies of (ex)Voyvodovans about who they are, from the standpoint of social and cultural anthropology, deriving from Cooley (1909), would be based mainly on the fact that ‘as far as a modern social anthropologist was concerned, if people believed a thing to be true, then it *was* true’ (Tonkin, McDonald & Chapman 1989: 9; italics in original). In particular contrast to the attitude of Nešpor, taking the position of anthropology means, for example, that while Nešpor is arguing from ethnological and historical positions that the founders of St. Helena and later Voyvodovo inhabitants *could* be (if *his* arguments are correct) descendants of tolerance sectarians (historically, or “really”, while they could not be descendants of post-White Mountain exiles), an anthropologist argues that if the (ex) Voyvodovans themselves consider themselves to be the direct descendants of post-White Mountain exiles, then *this is what they are*.

This thesis will undoubtedly seem to historians and ethnologists-historians (if choosing a slightly euphemistic formulation) as if from another world. And they will not be very far from the truth: the given thesis is based on an entirely different conceptual world, or paradigm, which relies on the premise of social constructivism. By contrast, the basis for explanation schemes of ethnology or ethnology-history is, as we have seen, the quite classical positivism. Within the positivist paradigm, the above thesis of (ex) Voyvodovans as being post-White Mountain exiles descendants is probably unacceptable, especially since it is *erroneous* because it does not correspond to the historical truth, i.e. “how it really was”. Social constructivism sees *reality* quite differently.

The constructivist-oriented political scientist Pavel Barša presents a brief recapitulation of the birth of the social constructivist position in his inspiring study (2008); (unlike ethnology, many Czech scholarly discourses, or at least significant and influential schools within them, have adopted social constructivism, and integrated it into their bases). According to Barša, at the beginning of the (not only) relevant debate, there was the question that, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the German *Methodenstreit* brought as one of the main topics: whether, in their methodology, social sciences should follow the pattern of natural sciences, or whether the specific nature of society requires a special method (Barša 2008: 213), i.e. whether the ‘social reality is, in principle, the same type of reality as the one that Newtonian physics explores, or whether it is so different that it requires an entirely different approach’ (ibid.). Supporters of the specific nature of social reality ‘saw the fundamental difference of social reality in the fact that, unlike natural reality, ideas about the reality’ are its constituent parts (ibid.); in other words, the constitutive

components of human-specific reality are formed by how people themselves imagine it. In the context of the debate about the existence of the difference between natural sciences, *Naturwissenschaften*, compared to sciences of spirit, *Geisteswissenschaften*, today's constructivists follow the advocates of the position according to which 'concepts (representations, ideas) cannot be conceived, in the research of the being of the spirit, as mere reflections of the reality – that is, as something secondary and derived – but, on the contrary, as its constitutive elements' (ibid.). Changing the concept of reality (ontology) also bore the transformation of its cognition (epistemology), as 'through merging of being and consciousness, reality and imagination ... what becomes a problematic option is to measure the accuracy of imaginations by comparing them with reality which is independent of them' (ibid). The aim and purpose of the knowledge of sciences of spirit are not, unlike the natural sciences, establishing a correspondence between an idea and a reality, which is independent of it and separate from it but understanding the concepts. The position of modern social constructivism is basically the same: 'to understand the social reality means, first of all, to understand the ideas in which people give a meaning to their world' (ibid.). In relation to our initial question of the conception of reality through the prism of social constructivism, Barša leads us to the following formulation: 'acts of discursive structures (ways of conceptualisation of the world) in their connection to other, non-discursive types of acts, create a social reality that – as follows from the term "reality" itself – exists' (ibid).

In addition to outlining a history line, another benefit of Barša's text is the fact that it directly and explicitly addresses our key issue of the non/existence, or *real* existence of groups. In direct relation to the above definition of constructivist positions, Barša continues and writes:

Applying the attitude of constructivism to the issue of the existence of groups, we come to the following thesis: *if a certain number of people believe that they belong to a group, and behave accordingly, and if a substantial part of others who are not considered to be members of such a group consider this group to exist and behave accordingly, then this group exists – it is a social fact*. The application of this specifically constructivist notion of a social fact to the issue of group identity implies [that]: *XY are those who identify themselves as XY and are identified by others as such*. Groups and boundaries between them are constantly being created through everyday practices of people. They cannot, therefore, be understood in the objectivist manner, as if they were prior to such practices (Barša 2008: 213, italics added).

Barša's condition ('... who identify themselves as XY and are identified by others as such') is, in this case, met on both sides, (ex)Voyvodovans, as well as their descendants themselves, in addition to the majority of persons involved outside the group concerned, both in Bulgaria and in the Czech Republic, consider them to be descendants of the post-White Mountain exiles. An exception is formed by a handful of scholars, ethnologists-historians, but their voice does not reach the persons concerned; if the individuals concerned came into contact with this voice, members of these groups would

consider their attitude toward the issue as simply an erroneous opinion, as a mistake.

We must not be mistaken: the basis of the above (in its core, paradigmatic) dispute about who (in fact, if you like) (ex)Voyvodovans are or are not, does not represent a difference between the (in-the-social-constructivist-manner understood) present and (in-the-positivist-way conceived) past. For constructivists, social reality was constructed in the past, just like today. The positivist idea (which, apparently, at least in our case, ethnologists-historians are sharing) that if we had been “there and then”, we would have been able to definitively resolve that dispute, does not apply to the constructivist paradigm. Being descendants of post-White Mountain exiles (or the existence of descendants of post-White Mountain exiles) is no different from being post-White Mountain exiles themselves (or the existence of post-White Mountain exiles) in its nature. So it is not true that the “then” members of the respective groups were post-White Mountain exiles in a massively ontological sense, meaning “really”, i.e. that their then existence as post-White Mountain exiles was a positive (historical) fact, while today the existence of (ex)Voyvodovans, as “their” offspring, is “only” socially constructed; in a constructivist perspective, there are no *true* (deriving their existence from the “real” post-White Mountain exiles) and *not true* (if not downright false) descendants of post-White Mountain exiles whose presence is “only” the result of current labelling processes and categorisation practices. Viewed through social constructionist optics, it is not possible to confirm or disprove the existence of (ex)Voyvodovans as descendants of post-White Mountain exiles by some historical “fact” positively documenting how it really was. The existence of a corresponding group (post-White Mountain exiles) is no different, intrinsically, from the nature of the existence of (ex)Voyvodovans as their offspring; not one of these “facts” is positively determined; both are constructed through (in principle) the same procedures and practices.

An anthropologist could, in their anti-positivist arguments, probably go even further and state that the term “post-White Mountain exile” and its variants are terms that were created *ex-post*; they are retro-constructs (like, for example, in the case of a division into “pre-White Mountain” and “post-White Mountain” periods). At the time, no post-White Mountain exiles as post-White Mountain exiles existed, and could not really exist *as such*; in other words, such an existence (i.e. being a post-White Mountain exile), at the time, was not and could not be a positively given fact. If now a historically-ethnologically oriented researcher argued that these arguments are heading, so to speak, outside the target, since the corresponding terms constitute analytical tools of a researcher, not emic terms of the actors (which is, incidentally, an argument, of which, in Heroldová’s and Nešpor’s texts, we cannot find any trace), an anthropologist would, presumably, without hesitation, agree that through such a step, the whole issue of existence and non-existence of any entities acquires a more or less nominalistic form, and is no longer, if we use Jenkins’ terminology (1994), talk about a *group*, but a *category*; a reproach towards an informant that s/he was wrong – as Heroldová proceeded towards Hruža – loses (at least in this round and now) its purpose and justification.

In some ways, it is possible to understand the above (paradigmatic) “dispute about who Voyvodovans are” between the historical-ethnological and anthropological positions (that is, in a general manner, a dispute between positivism and social constructivism) as a

dispute about the nature (definition) of kinship. I will immediately explain why. A (very different) concept of the key notion *descendant* (or origin) within the two explanatory matrices will serve as a basis. Let us start with the historical-ethnological standpoint. That the term descendant represents, in the context of the relevant considerations about the origin of Voyvodovans, an indeed, essential term, is clear from the title of the first fundamental study on the topic entitled, adequately, *Banat Czechs as descendants of tolerance sectarians* (Nešpor 1999). In a sense, one of the main topics of Nešpor's exploration is the issue of whether non-Catholics of St. Helena and later Voyvodovans are *true* descendants of tolerance sectarians. It is true that we do not find this formulation in the discussed texts themselves; however, there are good reasons for the fact that it is quite adequate to the given opinion. One of these reasons is the formulation that appears in the above-mentioned study by Nešpor, Hornofová and Jakoubek (1999), which immediately follows (as for its arguments and chronologically) on the said Nešpor's text. Although in terms of available and used arguments, the later study is better than Nešpor's original text, its rhetoric, regarding the conclusions drawn, is slightly milder; compared to the unequivocal opinion of the older text, according to this study, 'non-Catholics of St. Helena are (*at least spiritual*) descendants of tolerance sectarians of Eastern Bohemia' (Nešpor at al. 1999: 79; italics added). In other words, Nešpor distinguishes, or is aware of and acknowledges (half-explicitly formulates), the difference between "real" and "spiritual" descendants. A spiritual descendant is undoubtedly one who adopts the legacy of tolerance sectarians but lacks a *real* link (origin) to this group, or whose origin is different, and it does not connect him/her with that group *in fact*. This brings us to the announced kinship: it is obvious that the term true descendant is based on the ideas of the existence and provability of an objectively given fact of the corresponding origin; we can hardly avoid the fact that this origin is, eventually, referring to relations arising from human biological reproduction. Its conception undoubtedly follows the Euro-American folk model that considers kinship as sharing biogenetic substance transmitted in the process of reproduction. Descendants are, in this perspective, all those who share the identical substance they gained in the process of transmission from generation to generation, dating back to a common ancestor. A true descendant of tolerance sectarians, thus, in Nešpor's terms, differs from the spiritual descendant by the fact that the blood of tolerance sectarians – his ancestors – is, *sensu stricto*, coursing through his/her veins.

Compared to this (in its core positivist) conceptualisation, the anthropological theory of kinship (the supreme discipline of the field) builds on the premises of social constructivism. Kinship is, in this conceptualisation, considered a system of social relationships modeled according to the model of relationships resulting from biological facts of reproduction. In this view, the "biological facts" related to the reproduction of kinship are only models that are used, in a number of specific cultures (including the West), to legitimise the relationships that social anthropologists perceive as purely social relations.

In this sense, if Voyvodovans consider themselves descendants of the Czech Reformation: they are the descendants of these people, in the strict sense and without further detours. They are these in the same sense that we are all children of our fathers:

we consider a given man our father, in accordance with our cultural concepts, as well as Voyvodovans, in accordance with their identity concept, consider themselves the heirs of the Czech Reformation.<sup>5</sup> The (social) *fact* of such a link is equally indisputable in both cases: if you consider someone to be your father, then that person really is your father; if Voyvodovans consider themselves to be the heirs of the Czech Reformation, then they also are these equally really (assuming, of course, that they are not alone in this considering: the social construction, by definition, implies a greater number of people sharing this “belief”, see above). One can argue that we can consider the social fact of fatherhood as embodied in the “biological reality”: in our culture, we define the father as a man whose sperm fertilised the ovum of our mother, and the mother as the one who gave birth to us. Positivists can (to some extent rightly) argue that the social construction of fatherhood is “verifiable” by *real*, i.e. *biological* “facts”. This argument is, however, not valid: most of us have never verified this fact; a “mere” social structure *is* what creates the reality of fatherhood: it is not the *biological fact* that is thus constitutive, but the *social fact*. In addition, there is evidence that for most of European history, fatherhood was understood as it is today: the cultural construction of the physical uniqueness of fatherhood was present for many centuries without any “evidence” of the role of the father’s sperm in the process of human reproduction being available (Barnes 1973: 66). Only much, much later did modern science describe the principle of physical fatherhood and motherhood (the miracle of conception), and we now *believe* that our cultural construction of fatherhood is what it is because it refers namely to these advances in medicine (“kinship is what biologists say it is”). The chronological priority of the cultural structure before the progress of science, however, proves that it is primarily and, in particular, a *social/cultural* construction which we, only much later, “supported by” knowledge of biological facts (more on this issue, cf. Barnes 1973).

*Summa summarum*: while ethnological and historical position sees terms like “offspring” or “origin” as expressions reporting of/towards a positive givenness of biological links, an anthropologist considers them as categories of a social nature designed within processes of human symbolic interactions. Trying to get to the origin of a given group is, therefore, in the case of an ethnologist(-historian) and an anthropologist, in both cases, an issue raised differently, whose answer is always in an entirely different paradigmatic field. To be clear: I do not want to say that issues of Czech ethnology are bad or uninteresting, no; I just want to say that they relate to an entirely different explanatory paradigm (in fact, the paradigm of history (of Ranke’s cut)) which is, in certain principles, markedly distinct from the interpretative paradigm of social and cultural anthropology. I believe, simultaneously, that especially at a time when Czech social and cultural anthropology is, so to speak, (still) looking for itself, and when there is, even among academics, a (still) widespread opinion that ethnology and anthropology are one and the same, and the designation of ethnologist and anthropologist is, in principle, only a matter of situational choices (‘who cares?’), it is necessary to highlight the differences between the disciplines, or the *distinctive* character of each of them.

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<sup>5</sup> As for the concept of identity and descent among the Voyvodovans see Budilová (2008).

## He has learned this sentence, apparently read it somewhere

I attested that Heroldová, in relation to the issue discussed, i.e. if Voyvodovans are descendants of post-White Mountain exiles, holds the methodological principle ‘Wie es eigentlich gewesen?’ (Ranke 1871). I also indicated, already at the very beginning, that Heroldová quite markedly offends, through her inconsistency (she did not verify her assumption that Rudolf Hřůza ‘learnt the sentence, apparently read it,’ even though she quite easily could have), the methodological principles which she herself holds (how was it, i.e. did he read and learn it, or didn’t he read and learn it?). Let us now look at what might have happened if Heroldová had asked Rudolf Hřůza.

During one of our repeated visits we paid, Lenka J. Budilová and I, to one of our (ex)Voyvodovo informants, Štěpánka Skaláková, maiden name Pitrová (born in 1920), the talk also came to the topic: reasons for the departure of ancestors from Bohemia. Initially, Š. Skaláková gave us (apart from a minor exception) quite a standard interpretation for the community: ‘Ferdinand expelled them because they were Protestants – whoever wanted to be a Protestant, they had to go.’<sup>6</sup> The exception, in that interpretation, was the name of King Ferdinand, who, in this context, constituted a novelty. Soon, Skaláková added she ‘had calculated’ that ‘they had left 389 years previously.’ If I had been Iva Heroldová, I probably would have noted down that information and at home, I would have added a commentary to it like, ‘She has learned the information, probably read it.’ The striking accuracy of dating, however, forced me to ask, ‘How do you know?’; then a brief answer followed: ‘From the history;’ it had taken only a moment before Mrs. Skaláková brought the relevant book, *Countries of the World*, and I myself could read the highlighted part:

The Estates Uprising, however, was defeated by the end of 1620, and King Ferdinand II used his victory to liquidate the Estates Revolt and reconvert Bohemia into a Catholic country. *Gradually all who refused to convert to the Catholic faith had to go into exile* (Mořavy 2002: 70).<sup>7</sup>

Yes, Štěpánka Skaláková had, perhaps just like Rudolf Hřůza, read and learned the information (the calculation was her own); it does not prevent her from understanding it as being about *her own ancestors*, thus affecting *her own identity*. It is not so that (as Iva Heroldová might have thought) the corresponding identity is, in this case, only “read”, therefore (wholly and comprehensively, or at least in its defining features) based on the read and learned information. With all the previous interpretation, it is quite clear that a dialectical relationship exists between “registered (and later learned)” information and the corresponding identity (identity of (ex)Voyvodovans as post-White Mountain exiles) – on the one hand, the identity of the members of the community *finds its expression* in in-the-book-contained information (as it closely suits it) and on the other, this identity is backwards-re-*shaped* by registered/read information; this phase of the dialectical relationship repeatedly changes so (apart from the general relationship of *mutual*

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<sup>6</sup> Record of 9.11.2009, Dolní Dunajovice.

<sup>7</sup> The highlighting corresponds to the underlining in the original text by Š. Skaláková.

*dependence*) we cannot say which side is (in terms of *meaning* ascribed<sup>8</sup>) determining, and which is determined.

Through this optic, it is necessary to view, for example, the testimonies about the ancestors of Voyvodovans' parting with their homeland on the Rose Meadow by Litomyšl (see Štěpánka Skaláková's testimony above). Of course, with the highest degree of certainty, this information comes from one edition of *Old Czech Legends* by Alois Jirásek,<sup>9</sup> but the fact that the identity of the (ex)Voyvodovans finds its expression here, and that the (ex)Voyvodovans claim the corresponding stories as their own, does not in reality detract anything from this identity, and it is as real (also true if you like), as only the real (and true) identity can be.

The thesis that the (ex)Voyvodovans have read and learned the appropriate information is now inappropriate for one more reason: members of the community have not only been *reading* but also *writing* such information for quite a long time. For example, the *Chronicle of My Family* by Kateřina Králíková (maiden name Fabouková) begins quite tellingly:

At the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, during the period the Counter-Reformation, hidden non-Catholics started to be persecuted in the Czech and Slovak countries. People of the Protestant faith were leaving their homeland with only bundles of the most necessary things, but, above all, with their Bible in hand (2011: 81)

Similarly, we can also quote from the material drafted by an anonymous author from among Voyvodovo natives as an (unpublished) basis for the history of congregations in the Mikulov parish of the United Methodist Church, which were (and largely still are) made up mostly of remigrants from Voyvodovo and their descendants. In the first chapter of this text, entitled *Departure from Bohemia Abroad*, we read:

The period after the Battle of White Mountain (after 1620) was very difficult for evangelical believers in the country. Whoever did not confess teachings of the Catholic Church was persecuted. This religious situation forced the faithful to leave their homeland. After a long journey through Hungary and Romania, they settled in St. Helena (Romania). Their generation lived there until 1900 ... [after their] families moved over to the Bulgarian Voyvodovo (ECM n.d.).

Furthermore, the originally "only" audio-published testimony of Filip from the interview broadcast on Trans World Radio in December 2009 in the regular program *River of Life* has been recently published in written form. Due to the dialogical nature of the sequence, I will also quote the question of the presenter of the program to which Filip responded:

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<sup>8</sup> It is not, of course, the written words or sentences, but their meaning, which does not consist in the writing itself, but constitutes itself and arises from the act of (the reader's) interpretation. Thus, although the written words, in a mechanical sense, are the primary words, the situation is different in the case of their meaning.

<sup>9</sup> For all, e.g. Jirásek 1989, chapter Rose Hill, pp. 207–9.

*Presenter:* The show's guest today is Mr. Alois Filip, a descendant of post-White Mountain exiles, who was born in Bulgaria in the village of Voyvodovo. ... And how did your parents get to Bulgaria?

*Alois Filip:* Well, it's a bit long, but I'll shorten it. Our great-grandparents were in Kolín and near Pardubice, there in that region. And after the White Mountain, there was the revolution, or whatever it was, and they began to persecute Protestants – and we were Protestants. They burned Bibles, tortured, tormented them, and so they, in the night, left a lamp burning, loaded their rack wagon and drove away (cited in Jakoubek 2011: 134).

In these cases, the expression of the corresponding identity is not the read, but the written, which, although it has no particular influence on the fact (or truth) of this identity, clearly represents a notable shift, at least with respect to the (discrediting) formulation of Iva Heroldová, as well as (and more) to the method of transmitting the aforementioned information (as well the to-it-linked identities). In any case, of course, whether read or written, the corresponding information is for (ex)Voyvodovans never a dead letter, but a fully and immediately living tradition, as well as their living identity, deep and true: identity that is an expression of this tradition.

## Conclusion

I spent the first part of the text on a discussion of the origin of the founders of the Czech Banat village St. Helena. Compared to the classic interpretation of Czech ethnology, according to which the main reasons for the group leaving from the Czech lands were of economic impact, I presented, supported by other arguments, an alternative hypothesis formulated by Nešpor, which identifies the ancestors of St. Helena's population as East Bohemian tolerance sectarians, and finds the reasons they left their homeland in the religious area.

In the next part of the study, I showed that Voyvodovans themselves (as also, apparently, before them, their ancestors in St. Helena) considered themselves and consider themselves descendants of post-White Mountain exiles. I showed that both in the (methodologically/in principle/historical) perspective of Nešpor and in the perspective of Czech ethnology (represented, for the purposes of this study, by the stance of Iva Heroldová), this belief is seen as incorrect or erroneous, particularly since it does not correspond to the historical fact or truth. As the main reason for the negative approach to relevant actors' beliefs, I then showed that (Czech) ethnology, as well as history, in the general view, share the positivist paradigm. Then I have tried to show that in a paradigmatically complementary socio-constructivist perspective of (emerging Czech) social anthropology, whose motto is the thesis that 'if people believe something is true, it is true,' the people concerned *really* are descendants of White Mountain exiles, but that this *reality*, as well as the entire corresponding regime of truth, is incompatible with the above-outlined ethnological conceptualisation, and these branches represent distinct and mutually-not-obviously-transferable scholarly discourses.

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## Archive materials

Heroldová (n.d.) – Records from the research aimed at the processes of adaptation and acculturation of remigrants from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria carried out by Iva Heroldová in 1972-1973. Documentation from the research is deposited in the archive of EÚ AVČR, the fund 'Jižní Morava'.

ECM (n.d.) – Archive materials related to the history of congregations of Mikulov parish. Materials are deposited in the archive in the manse of ECM in Mikulov.

## Povzetek

Članek se ukvarja z odnosi med etnologijo in sociokulturno antropologijo na Češkem. Avtor prikazuje, da se oba diskurza načelno razlikujeta in ju torej ne bi smeli združevati sploh pa ne, kar je še pomembneje, enačiti. Na podlagi etnografskega primera je prikazano, da oba znanstvena diskurza ponujata različne poglede, ali natančneje, temeljita na različnih teoretičnih ozadjih. Kot etnografski primer je predstavljeno vprašanje kolektivne identitete prebivalcev Voyvodovo, edine češke vasi v Bolgariji in še posebej njihovo prepričanje, da so potomci izgnancev po bitki pri Beli Gori leta 1620. Analiza besedil izbranih avtorjev omogočajo primerjavo različnih pristopov etnologije in socialne antropologije. Etnologi si prizadevajo odkriti objektivno zgodovinsko resnico, ki jo vodi načelo pozitivističnega zgodovinopisja in jo označuje Rankejev: 'Wie es eigentlich gewesen?' Po mnenju etnologov so prepričanja in identitete akterjev nepravilne ali napačne, če ne ustrezajo objektivni zgodovinski resnici (kot v tem primeru) in zaradi tega vaščani Voyvodovanega niso in ne morejo biti potomci izgnancev bitke pri Beli Gori. V nasprotju z etnologi avtor sprejema načelo socialne antropologije, ki pravi: 'Če ljudje verjamejo, da je stvar resnična, potem je resnična' in v skladu s tem so vaščani Voyvodovanega res potomci izgnancev bitke pri Beli Gori. Na splošni ravni se to protislovje nahaja med pozitivističnim pristopom, ki ga vzdržujejo (češki) etnologi in pristopom socialnega konstruktivizma, na katerem temelji sociokulturna antropologija in na Češkem še ni povsem uveljavljen.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: antropologija, etnologija, pozitivizem, konstruktivizem, Voyvodovo

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