

## VITICULTURAL TRADITIONS AND LOCAL MEMORY

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Abstract:

*This paper discusses the process of construction of representation of an urban space as a socially determined phenomenon under the conditions of the post-communist transformation of Slovakia. The subject matter of the analysis is the occurrence of facts from the viticultural past – a common feature of two neighboring towns – in their current public discourse. On the basis of data gathered through archival-document study and ethnological field research, the paper analyzes collective motivations in the process of construction of collective memory and their linkages to concrete conditions of revitalization of private entrepreneurship after 1989.*

Keywords: *post-communist transformation, local memory, viticulture*

One modality of ethnological reflection of the urban social world is to conceptualize the thesis that the city is a phenomenon created by its inhabitants. They create its vision and hand it down to future generations. Dynamic social, generational and individual representations of the city anchor its inhabitants in time. These representations influence their relations of the past, present and prospects of the city to its material and spiritual dimensions.

In this paper I strive to describe forms and meanings of facts from the past in the urban setting in Slovakia undergoing post-communist transformation. I wish to show the principles of representation of the past in everyday life and to reveal the social background of these representations. I base my discussion on the concept of social memory, especially on Halbwachs' ideas about the social nature of remembering and meanings of concrete contents of shared

ideas about a group's past (Halbwachs, 1994). I also strive to capture the logic of these processes and their dynamics (Kiliánová & Krekovičová, 2008).

The paper is based on research I carried out in 1997–2006 in the two neighboring towns of Modra and Pezinok.<sup>1</sup> They are located about 30 km. from Bratislava in the foothills of the Lesser Carpathian Mountains. The district town of Pezinok (population 22,000) and its neighboring town Modra (population 8,000) are, at present, part of the dynamically developing, densely populated region of greater Bratislava, with good infrastructure and roads and, in the case of Pezinok, also train connection to Bratislava. From the north, the towns are surrounded by vineyards spreading over the Lesser Carpathian slopes covered with deciduous forests and, on the southern and eastern side, they face lowlands. In the economic structure of the towns, industry and agriculture play only a small role nowadays; most people commute to work to nearby Bratislava or work in local, well-developed services or in local smaller manufacturing facilities. Pezinok is the administrative and business center, but also the center of social life and recreational activities, thanks to two resorts founded at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in nearby forests.

I draw examples from viticulture which, since the Middle Ages, has been part of the economic culture of both towns. The towns gradually developed from small farming settlements and gained royal privileges. Besides Slovaks, several waves of German colonists also settled in the towns. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, thanks to the thriving wine trade, Modra and Pezinok gained privileges of a free royal town. This way they gained the highest level of independence in the hierarchy of feudal towns in Hungary. Typical for local viticulture was winegrowing on the hill slopes on the outskirts of the towns. This required seasonal work of all family members as well as of hired laborers from the town or neighboring villages. Wine grapes were harvested in the autumn and they were transported in wagons to the winepress. Wine, as a product for sale, was stored in wine cellars underneath houses in a town with fortified walls. Favorable climate for wine growing and several centuries of continuous winemaking have influenced the whole area on the southeastern slopes of the Lesser Carpathians – the core of the Lesser-Carpathian wine country. In both of the towns

<sup>1</sup> I gathered empirical data through observation and interviews, local press and study of archive materials. My research focused on social and economic dimensions of viticulture in the studied towns in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The study was part of the project *Local and Regional Development in the Context of European Integration* (grant VEGA no. 2/5104/25), led by O. Danglová in the Institute of Ethnology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava in 2005–2007.

studied, viticulture has brought about the formation of a class of winemakers differentiated by property. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, wine producers who grew grapes on their own land and sold their wine were an important part of the urban middle class (Popelková, 1999). Through promotion of their economic interests and groups values they still influenced local everyday life as late as WWII.

Even today, viticulture remains the main feature of both towns, although the conditions of the existence of its social foundations have changed several times in the past half century. My starting point is the assumption that, for both Modra and Pezinok, the economic and cultural aspects of viticulture are a continuously relevant factor of local social relations, which I study through issues related to viticulture. Under the conditions of post-communist transformation, I wish to show which pieces of information about the past of the towns are interlinked with the ideas of their current inhabitants about their town, by which channels the information is distributed and what determines the process of its explanation. Within this framework of the urban social memory, I wish to reveal which pieces of information about the past are collectively shared and what collective representations they are linked to. From these aspects of memory processes, I try to uncover if and how social actors, in relation to political, economic, ideological and other processes, via consciously selecting or glossing over certain facts about the past, construct their idea of the past reflecting their group interests. I agree with Viera Bačová (1996: 19) that the motive behind purposeful explanation of past events and functioning of (historical) memory is to explain, understand, justify or criticize the current state of affairs.

### Urban Viticulture and State Socialism

Viticulture that used to be a profitable business was reflected in Modra and Pezinok in the culture and unique modalities of social life, even despite the fact that this fragmented and under-financed field already technologically stagnated and encountered problems with sales in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the crucial turning point came after 1948. All agricultural land was gradually confiscated and winegrowing was taken over by agricultural cooperatives. Viticulture became a branch of large-scale, centrally planned state-socialist agriculture. Wine production and trade were nationalized. The original owners of vineyards either became employees of cooperatives or left for other occupations. They started to commute to work to other locations and steered their children's interests out-

side of agriculture. After the communist coup and ensuing land confiscation, the oldest generation of formerly proud winemakers had to witness a rapid decline of viticulture, neglect of the vineyards due to the lack of labor force at cooperatives, and devastation of the landscape. In the period after 1960, when the state started to subsidize agricultural production, winegrowing underwent a considerable transformation. In a sense, we can speak about long-awaited and much-needed modernization. Smaller plots of land were consolidated and rebuilding of old dense vineyards (until then cultivated by hand) facilitated the utilization of machinery. In several places, vineyards planted on fall lines of hills were liquidated, which was a crucial and irreversible change. They were replaced by terraces, and stone walls, built for centuries during land cultivation, were knocked down. Small local cooperatives started to merge into large units farming on several thousands hectares of land. Winemaking and storing moved to modern production facilities. Wine was produced on a large scale and it was distributed to the socialist commercial network. It lost its quality and unique character created by a particular place of origin and maker.

Qualitative changes strongly impacted the life and nature of the towns. New generations of inhabitants, who still bore the label of "winemakers," grew up in a different environment from their fathers or grandfathers.

### Viticulture and Post-communist Transformation

In Modra and Pezinok, socio-economic and cultural aspects of viticulture are to these days more or less pronounced, although its base was virtually dismantled in the 1950s. Events of the year 1989 and the return to a market economy have, after many decades of state socialism, renewed conditions for free private enterprise and land ownership. At present, grapevines are grown on about 800 hectares of land. After the land restitutions in 1992, owners and heirs renewed their legal right to land ownership. After 1992, it was possible to take land out of cooperatives, gain the right of its disposal, rent it out or sell it. Production and storage facilities that were either nationalized or built during communism were only slowly transferred into private hands in the privatization process. Transformation was complicated and, for a long time, land and facilities remained in the hands of cooperatives.

Mechanisms of socialist economy, before 1989 permeating the whole process from grape growing to wine sales, have mostly impacted those who used their restituted land right after 1992 for business purposes. The reason was

that socialist cooperatives had dissolved the original boundaries of the vineyards and adjusted them to mechanical cultivation. Some vineyards were left uncultivated or new ones were built, or some former vineyards were used for completely different purposes. Many of those who got their land back in restitution did not have any machinery or production technologies; they lacked appropriate production and storage facilities. Although some lived in inherited houses with wine cellars, it was difficult to get seed capital and labor – due to the fact, that over the course of past decades, descendants of old winemakers had started to work in other areas. Therefore, in addition to unclear legislative and land ownership issues, post-communist transformation was also complicated by a number of local and individual factors.

These barriers and their consequences led, at the beginning of the 1990s, to the neglect of vineyards and considerable decline of winegrowing and winemaking. However, stabilization came around 1995, which is evidenced not only by the production of quality wines awarded at international competitions, but also by the building of new vineyards. At present, in each town there are about a dozen of successful smaller companies that started their business from scratch. There are also a number of companies established by transformation from former state businesses that specialize in either wine-grape growing or winemaking. Also, a number of companies grow grapes or produce cheaper wine from their own or purchased grapes. In addition to locally grown grapes, winemakers also buy grapes in other parts of Slovakia where some companies rent whole vineyards. They also import wine juice from abroad. As a relic from communism, small cooperatives still survive on vineyards rented from their original owners. By employing experts, the cooperatives strive to enhance the quality of their wines and to compete with new companies on the market. Additionally, small growers, owners of gardens and enthusiastic individuals also engage in winemaking.

The ideal of dynamically developing private companies is to make an attractive collection of quality wines in the most efficient way. That means producing grapes and making wine in their own facilities and selling it under their own trademark in their own wine cellar and restaurant. In Modra and Pezinok, only a few winemakers have reached this level of business efficiency. The main factor determining the level of business development in this sphere is fifty years of discontinuity of land ownership and users' relations caused by state socialism. This handicap has also been compounded by conditions during the transformation after 1989, such as unclear legislation, disinterest of the state in this sec-

tor, and confrontation with better developed markets after Slovakia's accession into the EU in 2004. To this day, generational, technological and ownership discontinuity of the sector lie behind the fact that, even for the most successful wine producers with the best products, it is not easy to find their niche under the liberal conditions of the unified European market.

### Viticulture, the Urban Space and Memory

The term viticulture (*vinohradníctvo*) in a narrower sense means the production of wine grapes, grape growing, while the term winemaking (*vinárstvo*) denotes the actual production of wine, winegrowing. This is also how Slovak legislation understands and distinguishes the terms. In everyday language, *vinohradníctvo* (viticulture) occurs as a more general term. In the local context, the term winemaker/vintner (*vinár*) conveys the fact that a person produces wine and sells it under his/her own trademark. It is not important for their business whether they grow their own wine grapes or not. However, when I spoke with practitioners from the field, the criterion of the ownership of vineyards for winemaking was presented as important. Vineyard ownership indicates the stability and good prospects of the business. This reflects the continuity of local tradition, interconnecting grape growing and winemaking. It also points to rising aspirations of winemakers to produce quality in order to compete on the market: to produce their own, unique wines from their own grapes or from grapes of a certain concrete origin.

After the onset of post-communist transformation, winemaking has reemerged as a continuation of a hundred-year-long local tradition – in the local discourse, strategies and practices of entrepreneurs, local governments and politicians, as well as in the public space of the towns and their social life. It is present as a real economic and social fact and people can come across signs of its presence on a daily basis; they are visible not only for those who come to these places to buy wine but even for uninformed random visitors.

The wine business also influences the social world of the towns and local activities through revitalization of elements of traditions related to winemaking and through various references to the past. Grape growers and winemakers, by stressing and combining information about the past, strive to foster their own economic emancipation; similarly, local governments and other institutions follow their own goals in this way.

## What is Present and What is Remembered

Viticulture in Modra and Pezinok is alive; it is reflected in the face of the towns. Besides wine cellars and wine boutiques, one can see billboards, advertisements and signs of supply stores with various viticultural tools, devices, vessels. Vintners mark their wine cellars and restaurants with their own trademarks and names. Signposts point to locations of wine cellars or winemaking facilities. Large companies advertise on billboards located along roads.

Viticulture is the subject of business and individual activities as well as leisure-time gardening. Wine grapes are grown in vineyards on the outskirts of towns as well as in gardens located next to individual houses. Wine grapes are used for wine production for individual consumption, for sales to other winemakers, but also for direct consumption as table fruits. In the streets or stores, in discussions and fragments of conversations one can hear opinions about how to take care of grapevines, worries about spring frosts, summer hail or high humidity that could cause grapevine diseases. In a gardening supply store even complete strangers inform each other about the newest chemical grapevine sprays, the quality of machinery, and the like. During the time of autumn harvests the traffic is slowed down by trucks loaded with grapes. People in the streets or on public buses speak about the best dates for grape picking. It is customary to invite distant relatives, colleagues from work or friends to come to the family vineyard or garden to help with grape harvesting.

Until today, in both towns there are a number of names of local places that are Slovakized old German names. They are still in use to identify individual vineyards in the town land registry. Until the 1950s, these names, nowadays considered to be something like a local peculiarity, were known to and used by all the inhabitants of the town.

Terms related to wine production appear in the names of restaurants and hotels (e.g. *The Wine Press Restaurant* or *Vintner's House Hotel* in Pezinok) located in the historical center in old townhouses or wine cellars underneath them. Festivals and cultural events also take on names related to winemaking (e.g., in Pezinok *The Pezinok Bunch of Grapes* – an international ballroom-dance competition, *The Brass Band in the Wine Press* – a competition of brass bands). Municipal governments of both towns establish special committees for grape growing and winemaking. Local governments issue propositions about guarding ripening grapes in vineyards – at the end of summer and in autumn everybody except owners is banned from entering them; they

organize collection and composting of discarded vines stored near wine cellars, and the like.

Both towns, their vintners' guilds and wine entrepreneurs are members of the Lesser Carpathians Wine Route Association – a marketing product of rural tourism active in the region since the 1990s. Besides other year-round activities, it organizes very successful Days of Open Cellars linked with tasting of young wine in winemakers' private wine cellars. A favorable visitors' response led in 2007 to the organization of the first spring Day of Open Cellars on St. Urban's Day. In both towns, autumn vintage festivals are regularly organized as well as various wine tasting and exhibits organized by winemakers' guilds. Especially at vintage festivals, visitors can see various performances and enactments of customs related to grape harvesting and winemaking. They can also see old, no longer used, technical equipment, tools and vessels.

Indirectly, the winemaking theme enters the lives of the inhabitants via various museum activities (the regional museum in Pezinok has a whole department focusing on Lesser Carpathian viticulture). Both towns publish monthlies also popularizing, among other things, historical facts about local winemaking in the past. Traditions are also disseminated through folklore shows, traditional cuisine, ornamental decorations on traditional pottery produced in Modra, and the like.

Mayors' speeches, New Year's addresses, celebrations of towns' memorial days always mention also the glorious past of winemaking in the area. Almost every address of municipal dignitaries refers to the centuries- or thousands-of-years-long traditions of winemaking in the town and to wine as a typical beverage for the region. Company logos feature symbols of wine and grapes or their various stylized depictions." However, their promotional materials usually use simple pictures of wine bottles with the company's name, prize-winning wines, photographs of production facilities or company's cellars. They also often use photographs of work in the vineyards. Promotional texts often refer back to the winemaking past of the family as motivation for present-day business activities. The fact that winemakers in Modra and Pezinok in the mid-1990s also revitalized their guilds is a specific reference to the past. As professional associations, the guilds existed in the towns from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of communist collectivization. They were influential both within their professional groups and towards the town and state. They represented their own interests, educated the public, purchased fertilizers and sprays against grapevine diseases, organized wine sales and helped resolve

cultivation and sales problems. The present-day guilds – *Spolok Vincúr Modra* (The Vintners' Guild) and *Združenie pezinských vinohradníkov a vinárov* (Association of Winegrowers and Winemakers) revived the traditional institutional form. Their activities are mostly in the organization of social, promotional and marketing events, with no actual impact on the individual business intentions of their members. The existence of guilds and their organizational or at least their symbolic presence at social events in towns shows their inner coherence and common interests to the outer world.

Typical for the construction of the past in the process of emancipation of the wine business after 1989 is the fact that mediators of the past avoid certain facts and linkages. Nowadays, references to the communist past occur in public speeches only very rarely, although they were quite frequent in the years right after the fall of communism. At that time, in their speeches people articulated enthusiasm for redressing past injustices, welcomed land restitutions and radically rejected the existence of cooperatives in the name of the return to the pre-communist order. Today, these things are no longer mentioned; successes, scientific findings and technological innovations made during communism are ignored. Equally forgotten are stories, popular just a few years ago, about non-transparent restitutions of former state wine production facilities. Forgetting appears to be a pragmatic strategy, especially when it concerns events closely relating to the present actors and their companies. However, what is also not publicly mentioned in Modra and Pezinok are, for instance, facts about the Holocaust of the local Jews. Older people who still remember the interwar period remember the portrayal of Jews as hated traders who bought wine from smaller makers cheaply and sold it for huge profits. Equally forgotten are the post-war fates of the local Germans, whose confiscated land, machinery and facilities were the fundamental basis of agricultural cooperatives after the communist coup. It is not desirable to mention these stains from the past. They have no place in the construction of the self-image of the prospective group of wine entrepreneurs, just as they do not fit into the self-representation of the above-mentioned towns.

### How the Towns Formulate their Outlooks

Although viticulture is the common feature of the neighboring towns of Modra and Pezinok, the parameters of their development dynamics as well as their hierarchical standing in the region are different. In the transformation period,

differences in their current economic and social traits create original contexts for representation of the towns, presentation of their past and present, ideas about their outlooks or the degree of references to their glorious past.

Strategies that the forming group of current wine entrepreneurs follows in the process of their social acceptance and in achieving success in the market more or less correspond with the strategies of local governments and the local political elite. These try to build the kind of identity of their towns that would stir up a broad public response. In so doing, they also more or less accentuate the winemaking agenda. Mechanisms of this relationship are complicated and their dynamics and some of their elements at the level of memory processes can be captured by interpretation of empirical field data in the historical perspective.

The course of post-communist transformation and hence the starting position of wine entrepreneurs has been strongly influenced by the pre-communist past. At that time, the towns also differed in, e.g., the degree of dependence of their economies on viticulture. In Pezinok, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the economic structure was already more diverse with a larger share of industry. In Modra until the 1950s, more than a half of the population worked in agriculture (Slavík, 2007: 478) and the tie to inherited land was much stronger. In Modra there was a strong group of winemakers whose elite enjoyed a high social status and thanks to its economic power had an important political standing. The change of the regime in 1948 struck this group particularly hard. According to archive records, at the end of the 1950s more than half of the winemakers were still reluctant to give up their land. Living on the verge poverty, subject to repressions from the state and communist power they held on to their vineyards as their private property. Those who handed their land over to the cooperative and decided to work for the cooperative were subject to humiliation. They had to watch former landless peasants and bad vintners unprofessionally manage the vineyards. In Modra, the strength of the ties to the inherited land worsened the impact of the fifty-year-long discontinuity and made the start of the renewed wine business after 1989 more difficult. Before World War II, winemakers from Pezinok had already tried to resolve problems with wine sales together and had established a cooperative (1936). Its objective was to concentrate wine in common storage facilities and to take care of its marketing. Wine sales were flexibly managed depending on the needs of the market, and the cooperative paid its members instantly. Some vintners from Modra also became its members. However, their guild – just like the municipal government – initially did not trust the cooperative. It was suspected of preferring the wine from Pezinok

to that from Modra. The *Slovak Vintners' Cooperative (Slovenské vinohradnícke družstvo)* acquired storage space from the town and built its own storage facilities in both towns. The activity of the cooperative as an institution established to promote the common interests of its members ended after the communist coup. Collectivization of land and nationalization of production and sales after 1948 caught the vintners from Pezinok in a different situation from that of the proud vintners from Modra. Until the last moment, the vintners from Modra relied only on themselves.<sup>2</sup>

At first, viticulture as a characteristic feature of the town caused problems with nationalization; however from the 1960s to the 1980s, it was paradoxically accentuated by socialist propaganda when stressing the regime's successes. Behind the creation of the stereotype of Modra as the "viticultural pearl of the Lesser Carpathians" was the argument of its glorious past. This was also backed up by the extent of the vineyards. These together with the land belonging to auxiliary municipal cooperatives ranked Modra as the largest viticultural town in communist Czechoslovakia (Dubovský, 1983: 16).

When comparing the current hierarchy of regional towns, Modra ranks below Pezinok (Slavík, 2006: 491). During the latest reforms of the territorial administration in the 1990s, Modra was not awarded the position of district center, and from the ethnological point of view its calm atmosphere contrasts with busy Pezinok, which attracts more visitors. The municipal government of Modra more or less succeeds in negotiating consensus and supporting mutually economically advantageous partnerships of various subjects, overcoming opinion differences, activating business and stimulating outside investments. In public discourse emphasis is laid on cultural, artistic, religious, educational and handicraft traditions, the history of the town and its close linkages with the national history. Frequent are references to the past importance of the town that are meant to fill its inhabitants with pride – a town connected with the 19<sup>th</sup> century national movement, a town famous for its pottery, a famous wine town. Descendants of older vintner families still live in the town, keeping alive the consciousness of the importance of their social groups. Also, the town is the home of a number of winemaking experts and promoters of wine tourism, rural

<sup>2</sup> Research on communist collectivization reveals a strong resistance of Modra winemakers to land confiscation and collective farming. It indicates the depth of alienation from the land caused by a purposeful reorientation of the next generations to other activities and occupations – due to the feelings of injustice and resentment over the way in which the cooperatives managed wine production (Popelková, 2003).

tourism, conservationists, scientists and pedagogues from the field of viticulture with ties to local schools and research institutions. The group of wine entrepreneurs, however, does not hold a sufficiently strong position, nor does it have a common, more offensive marketing strategy. Thus far, it has not succeeded more markedly in pursuing their interests by more closely involving the town and other entrepreneurs. References to the glorious past and the pathos present in allusions to winemaking traditions sound like appellative argumentation. They are used as a virtual condition and aid towards fulfillment of promises of potential development.

Pezinok, on the contrary, has many advantages following from the fact that it has continually been a regional center, as well as from its economic structure, more coherent interest groups, more proactive behavior of municipal representatives in regional politics and their better support of business and tourism. The town does not declare its interest in creating "a calm environment" for the life of the town. On the contrary, the town is doing everything to attract people to its businesses, offices, schools, sporting places, festivals, exhibits, restaurants. Winemaking traditions serve to promote more tourism. Several local wine entrepreneurs have established cooperation with the town. They put their efforts into promotional activities even though these did not bring them instant profits. However, they made them known in the town and its vicinity. The entrepreneurs have gained experience with marketing and business contacts at home and abroad. They openly proclaim their interest in achieving success in their business. The town respects them as creators of new jobs and as successful entrepreneurs, and winemakers, in return, with their success and products are good advertisements for the town. It seems that they do not consider their traditions sacred. They utilize them, together with some others, as practical marketing tools (Popelková, 2006).

Differences between these two towns can be also read in the language and content of the texts by which the towns describe their profiles and formulate their visions for the future. An analysis of the strategic plans of both towns shows that Pezinok defines itself as a modern district town with varied industry, excellent wine production, a developed business network, and many historical monuments.<sup>3</sup> They project the image of the town as a lively business center

<sup>3</sup> Mesto Pezinok. (2007, February). Program hospodárskeho a sociálneho rozvoja mesta Pezinok. Profil mesta Pezinok [Brožúra], p. 4. (The Town of Pezinok. Program of Economic and Social Development of the Town of Pezinok. [Brochure]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.pezinok.sk/index.php?vggid=359>)

interested in improving its technical and transport infrastructure while also improving and protecting its natural environment. The town supports entrepreneurship and within its framework mainly viticulture and light industry. They also want to build on tourism, continue in organizing international events (music, dance and theater festivals, sporting events, and the like), reconstruct historical monuments and open them to the public, and build a network of good tourist services. The town declares that it wants to utilize the proximity of the capital of Bratislava to offer short-term rural tourism stays combining natural beauties with winemaking and handicraft traditions and the local cuisine.

Modra proclaims that on its road towards the future it must respect the values of both the present and the past, as the neglect of its history and disturbance of its environment would lead to undermining of the very foundations of its development.<sup>4</sup> For the sake of development and change, it wants to activate people and utilize their potential, since the municipal government is unable to do so by itself. It wants to map and improve its unique features, so that visitors would understand their hidden values. It also wants to protect the natural environment that creates a unique backdrop of the town and is a precondition of its further development. The town wants to be a viticultural center and tourist hub providing employment opportunities in traditional agricultural branches and public services. It wants to create suitable conditions for the life of its inhabitants with quality housing and opportunities to spend leisure time in a healthy natural environment. According to the strategic vision, the town of Modra will be the leader among Slovak towns in the protection of its natural, historical and cultural heritage.

## A Note in Conclusion

In the micro-environment of the towns studied, elements of viticultural traditions and information about the past of winemaking have, in the process of post-communist transformation, become part of the current dynamic social activity. The analysis of their occurrence (at the level of contents) and functions (at the level of processes) in the local memory indicates that their key factor

<sup>4</sup> Mesto Modra, Pauliniová, Z. (2006). Piliere Modry. In *Strategický plán rozvoja mesta Modra. Program hospodárskeho a sociálneho rozvoja na roky 2007–2013*. Modra: Projektový tím pre strategické plánovanie. (The Town of Modra. Pillars of Modra In: *Strategic Plan of Development of the Town of Modra. Program of Economic and Social Development for the Years 2007-2013*. Modra: The Project Team for Strategic Planning.) Available on the Internet: <http://www.modra.sk/strategia.html>

is the persistence of viticulture in both towns. The principles of selectiveness of memory are especially revealed in concrete forms and consequences of the periods of discontinuity. In the study of post-communist transformation, in these towns such a factor is mainly the qualitative change in the ownership and disposition rights to land after 1848 and 1989. In this light, representations related to the present and future of the towns show close linkages to the economic and social profile of the urban micro-space as a whole, but also to collective interests of wine entrepreneurs who are part of its structure. Those facts from the past that survive thanks to the natural needs of the differentiated group of winemakers (skills and knowledge, festivals and promotional activities related to the wine trade and the like) have neither a negative nor a positive charge – they are normal parts of the urban life. Some facts (the Jewish Holocaust, deportations of German inhabitants after 1945, the course of formation of socialist cooperatives, post-communist restitutions) have no place in the current memory of the towns as they are charged with feelings of responsibility and undesirable confrontational meanings. They interfere not only with the self-presentation of wine entrepreneurs, but also with the construction of the image of the towns and dissemination of their outlooks by local politicians. The last group of facts from the past – documenting the glorious past of free royal towns and their winemaking traditions – is an especially suitable tool for local politicians who select and combine them as needed; in presentation of their town they can argue its historical importance. By drawing a positive picture of the past they try to motivate people to be more active or divert attention from problems of the present.

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preneurship as well as manifestations of viticulture in the everyday life and social relations of the inhabitants of the above-mentioned towns. Further, she is interested in the process of the constitution of national identity in Slovakia at the time of modernization at the beginning of the 20th century. Her interests also include the history of ethnology in Slovakia. She occasionally teaches in the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of Comenius University in Bratislava (subject: urban ethnology). Since 2001, she has also been giving lectures at the Department of Slovak Studies of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. Between 1997 and 2004, she worked as a scientific coordinator at the SAS Institute of Ethnology in Bratislava. Since 2004, she has been the Deputy Head of the Institute.

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