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BILATERAL KINSHIP AND BIOGENETIC SUBSTANCE IN THE BALKANS. THE CASE OF VOYVODOVO, BULGARIA (1900–1950)

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Abstract
This contribution focuses on the concept of kinship in Voyvodovo, the village of Czechs and Slovaks in north-western Bulgaria in 1900–1950. The author shows to what extent Voyvodovo villagers insisted on the putative biology in their construction of kinship, and analyzes their notions of kinship that oscillated between patrilinearity and bilaterality. The data are based on a long-term fieldwork (2006–2015) with the Voyvodovo villagers, and on the analysis of genealogy, archive materials, parish registers, and native "family chronicles". The focus of the text lies in the analysis of the flexibility of the bilateral (cognatic) kinship, which still possesses some patriarchal and patrilineal bias. The emic perspective of kinship on the part of the Voyvodovans is put into a wider context of anthropological study of kinship, especially in Europe and in the Balkans. The text shows that Voyvodovo kinship, despite being placed in the Balkans in the first half of the 20th century, does not easily fit into the theoretical frame of the "Balkan family pattern", based on patrilinearity and emphasis on agnatic ties. Apart from this, there was a different view of affines, and a complete absence of ritual kinship and other kinds of "artificial" kinship in Voyvodovo, that have been reported in other Balkan communities in the same period.
Keywords: *European kinship, the Balkans, bilateral kinship, patrilineal bias, Bulgaria, Voyvodovo*

Kinship in Europe: anthropological encounters

Kinship was considered to be of central interest for social anthropologists until 1960s–1970s. This was undoubtedly associated with the fact that first anthropological fieldworks were done in non-European, distant, simple societies, where kinship was supposed to be central, because these societies lacked central political organization or complex social structure. Later developments in the discipline witnessed significant changes in the contextualization of kinship, decline of its importance, and also questioning of the very definition of kinship. L. Holý describes these theoretical and epistemological changes in the anthropological study of kinship as the shift from the structure to process, from the objective to epistemic science, and from the part to the whole (Holy, 1996, pp. 3–5). Declining importance of kinship to anthropology was associated also with the changing focus of anthropological inquiry. With the disintegration of the colonial empires after the Second World War the anthropological fieldwork has been increasingly focused on Europe and the modern Western societies in general (Cole, 1977, pp. 355–356).

Most important changes in the study of kinship were triggered by the shift of the attention to kinship in Western societies. It was American anthropologist David Schneider who turned his attention to the cultural analysis of kinship in the West. He analyzed "American kinship" as being based on the ideas about the "facts of nature", i.e. believed to stem from the biological reproduction and thus form a kind of natural, objective, and immutable bond (Schneider, 1968). In his Critique of the Study of Kinship (1984), he argued that the anthropological concept of kinship is nothing but a projection of the Western cultural assumptions about biology and procreation. Schneider detected two principal assumptions in the anthropological study of kinship that suppose people everywhere reckon their kinship through genealogical links, and that kinship matters because it reflects real, biological ties, and called them "Doctrine of the Genealogical Unity of Mankind", and the assumption that "Blood is Thicker than Water" (Schneider, 1984, p. 174). He suggested we should not assume that the cultural domain of kinship is always defined a priori by bio-genetic premises and based on the genealogical grid. At the same time, however, Schneider argues that this deprives us of an externally based, systematically usable comparative frame (Schneider, 1972, p. 37).

Kinship studies were significantly influenced by feminist writers and the development of gender studies since 1970s. Yanagisako and Collier (1987), for example, used Schneider's critique of kinship to argue that kinship and gender should be analyzed together, because both have been rooted in the Western assumptions about differences between men and women that are allegedly based in nature, and in turn used to legitimate social and cultural differences and inequalities. Yanagisako and Delaney (1995) speak about naturalization as a symbolic activity

that produces social inequalities. Schneider's assertion that attention should be paid in every society to local ideas about procreation and local conceptions of relatedness, had great impact on the subsequent generation of scholars. Following this shift, C. Delaney (1987), for example, analyzed the native concept of procreation in Turkey that made use of the metaphor of seed and the soil. The villagers from the Anatolian locality believed that it is father who gives the basic "substance" to his child, like a seed determine what kind of grain grows up. Thus, the male contribution to engendering of children is crucial, while the woman is seen only as an empty vessel that feeds the fetus, but does not contribute to its identity (Delaney, 1987, p. 38). The author shows how this idea about procreation relates to local gender norms and also to the concept of the male honour.

Schneider's critique of the study of kinship was sometimes blamed to have caused "death of kinship studies". Many scholars, however, disagreed with the Schneider's dismiss of the possibility of comparative study of kinship, and tried to find new ways how to approach kinship. Janet Carsten, for example, maintained that we should study the ways in which our most familiar concepts of kinship are changing, and various new guises taken by kinship at the close of the twentieth century. These new concerns, she indicates, include the issues of personhood, gender, and bodily substance (Carsten, 2004, p. 6). In a similar vein, S. Franklin and S. McKinnon argue that "… kinship studies within anthropology have been productively reconfigured and indeed revitalized by many critical interventions through which they have been transformed". (Franklin & McKinnon, 2001, p. 6). Also Michael Peletz (1995) concludes, in his assessment of the current role of kinship studies in social anthropology, that "… kinship is alive and well and still vital to the discipline" (Peletz, 1995, p. 367).

It was supposed, for a long time, that kinship was central in non-European societies, while its importance in modern societies was declining. Kinship practices in the West were viewed as successive contractions toward the nuclear family. According to Yanagisako, this thesis of decline of kinship in Europe was far from innocent because, it "… distinguished the West from the rest of the world". (Yanagisako, 2007, p. 43). Similarly, Carsten asserts that anthropology thus reinforced the boundary between "us" and "them". The usual phrasing would be: while "we" have families, "they" have kinship (Carsten, 2004, p. 15). Contrary to this view, however, recent historical studies (Mathieu, 2007; Sabean 2007; Sabean & Teuscher, 2007) suggest that European societies were marked from the middle of the eighteenth century by a renewed emphasis on kinship, and describe the nineteenth century as a "kinship-hot" society, where "… enormous energy was invested in maintaining and developing extensive, reliable and well-articulated structures of exchange among connected families over many generations" (Sabean & Teuscher, 2007, p. 3).

The character of European kinship in the past has been discussed mainly in relation to the structure of the peasant family and inheritance systems (Goody, 1958; Goody, Thirsk, & Thompson, 1976; Wall, Robin, & Laslett, 1983). Concerning the very concept of kinship in Europe, it has been suggested that it is bilateral (cognatic) in principle, but it has oscillated between bilateral and patrilineal emphasis. Sabean and Teuscher (2007, p. 5) state that kinship in Europe through the Middle Ages and the early modern period remained fundamentally bilateral, despite the fact that the transmission of property gained a strong agnatic bias. Property holding classes in Europe have, however, gradually started to exclude females from the inheritance and succession, and imposed strict primogeniture, patrilineal descent and patriarchal rule, the process that come to a final form at the beginning of the 18th century (Sabean & Teuscher, 2007, pp. 8–9). Despite the fact that the normative character of kin conceptions in Europe gained this patrilineal and patriarchal bias, the practice was very complicated and often revealed bilateral tendencies (for example by providing inheritance for all descendants irrespective of age and gender). At the turn of the modern era, they argue, these structures stressing descent, inheritance and succession, patrilines and agnatic lineages gave way to patterns centered around alliance, interlocking networks of kindred, and endogamy (Sabean & Teuscher, 2007, pp. 16–22).

Jack Goody, in his discussion of kinship in Europe, distinguishes two opposing patterns around the Mediterranean Sea, where one of the distinctive criteria was strictly patrilineal descent in the southern and eastern structures as opposed to the bilateral notion of kinship in the European part of the region (Goody, 1990, pp. 6–33). In the history, he continues, the clan systems (i.e. unilineal descent system) of Ancient Mediterranean gradually disappeared, and the bilateral kinship of Germanic tribes prevailed. However, there are some indications that there was some emphasis given to patrilines, at least in some contexts, like the succession to high office (Goody, 1990, pp. 232–239). He concludes, however, that "… there is little or no evidence for patrilineal descent groups … on the continent of Europe in the post-Roman period, with the exception of some peripheral mountain areas". (Goody, 1990, p. 238). Similarly, John Davis, discussing the cultural patterns of the Mediterranean, distinguishes north-western Mediterranean as bilateral (sometimes ethnographers refer to "residual patriliny" in this region), without kin-groups, and north-eastern Mediterranean as patrilineal (Davis, 1977, p. 197).

Family and kinship in the Balkans

Family and kinship in Europe were also studied in relation to geographical variation. Following influential writings of John Hajnal (1965; 1982), many scholars

discussed differences between family patterns in Western and Eastern Europe. They focused on several criteria, like household complexity and composition, the age at the first marriage, or the character of kinship. It was argued that Western Europe was characteristic by simple household system, late marriage, preference for neolocality, and predominance of nuclear or stem families, while (South-)Eastern Europe by complex family households, early marriage, and an emphasis on patrilineal ties (Hajnal, 1982). Hajnal's thesis received serious criticism for oversimplification, and overemphasis of differences between "East" and "West", viewed by many as an act of Western ethnocentrism (Goody, 1996; Todorova, 2001).

Despite this criticism, some scholars have continued to speak about specifics of the Balkan family, and "…attempts to classify the Balkans as 'radically different' from the rest of Europe persist even today and have varying success" (Hristov, 2014, p. 2). One of the typical traits of the "The Balkan family pattern", is the preference for patrilineal reckoning at the expense of maternal ties (Filipović, 1982c; Halpern, 1958, p. 161). The predominance of patrilinearity is confirmed for Bulgaria in the first half of the 20th century by Kaser (1999, pp. 9–10). As the Serbian ethnologist Milenko Filipović has shown, South Slavs, as well as other Balkan nationalities within Yugoslavia, distinguish "thick blood", i.e. relations in the male line, as the only "real" kinship ties that count, and maternal relatives, "thin blood", that are not mentioned in genealogies, and awareness of which quickly disappears (Filipović, 1982c, p. 49). Mountainous areas of northern Albania, Montenegro, or some parts of eastern Herzegovina, have been viewed as areas with a developed tribal structure based on named patrilineal descent groups celebrating a common patron-saint (Filipović, 1982c). Marriages were taboo between patrilineal kin up to many generations, often far exceeding formal Church requirements (Filipović, 1982a, p. 127; Filipović, 1982c, p. 50; Durham, 1928, pp. 214–215).

Patrilocality as an accompanying characteristic has contributed to the concentration of patrilineal kinsmen in particular localities and is reflected in spatial arrangements of many Balkan villages as "mahalas" (Filipović, 1982c, p. 51; Halpern, Kaser, &Wagner, 2012, pp. 56–57). Lowland agricultural societies of Serbia or Bulgaria did not have tribal structures but showed similar agnatic emphasis in the formation of complex family households composed exclusively of relatives in the male line and their wives (and children). The Balkan joint family, often labelled as *zadruga*, has been presented as a typical family structure of this region (Halpern & Anderson, 1970; Byrnes, 1976; Filipović, 1982b). Collective identity of these entities was often maintained by the common cult of a patron-saint associated with a patrilineal group. These celebration rituals of patron-saints are often seen as a Christianised form of ancestor worship (Hristov, 2014).

Apart from the "blood kinship", the Balkans have been described as an area abundant in a number of "alternative" kinship relations, like those, for example,

stemming from godparenthood (*kumstvo*), ritual brotherhood (*pobratimstvo*), sponsorship at the first hair-cutting (šišano *kumstvo*), or milk kinship (*srodstvo po mleku*) (Filipović, 1982a, p. 127; Kaser, 2008, pp. 51–56). The most widely spread of what is sometimes called as "fictive kinship" is ritual kinship (*kumstvo*). Godparenthood (*kumstvo*) in the Balkans is based on both a performance of a role of the "best man" at one's wedding, and as a baptismal sponsor of one's child. These relationships are "inherited" in the patrilineal line and handed over from generation to generation. A classic anthropological analysis of *kumstvo* in the Balkans is Eugene Hammel's (1968) work on Serbia and Montenegro, showing a collective character of *kumstvo* that connects patrilineal groups. Ethnographic material from Bulgaria reveal similar functioning (Hristov, 2018, p. 78). Marinov (1995, p. 153) mentioned that *kumstvo* was considered in Bulgaria as a more important relationship that "blood" kinship.

1. Data and methodology

In the following text, I will analyze the concept of kinship in Voyvodovo, a Bulgarian village inhabited by Czech Protestants until 1950. My data relate to period 1900–1950, when Czechs constituted a majority of the village population. Voyvodovo (north-western Bulgaria) was founded in 1900 by the Czech-speaking Protestants from the village of Svatá Helena (Sfânta Elena in Romanian) in what is today Romanian Banat, along with several Slovak (Nazaren) families, a few families of Bulgarian Catholics (Paulikians) and Orthodox Bulgarians (Botík, 2005; Jakoubek, 2010c; 2017). For a long time, Voyvodovans identified themselves more in terms of religion, i.e. as "believers" than as "Czechs", or "Slovaks" (Jakoubek, 2010a). Voyvodovans were Protestants, most of them joined the Bulgarian Methodist Church after the establishment of the village, and they became the largest Methodist congregation in Bulgaria (Budilová & Jakoubek, 2017). Although the local congregation later split into two parts – Methodists and Darbyists – in 1925 – the villagers continued to share the same principles of the faith based on the direct relationship with the God, good knowledge of the Scripture, and ascetic morality. After the Second World War the vast majority of Voyvodovans remigrated to the border areas of Czechoslovakia. They settled mostly in South Moravia, in the region of Mikulov and Valtice. Only a few mixed marriages stayed in the Bulgarian Voyvodovo, which was soon resettled by Bulgarians from other parts of the country.

Data used in this paper come from field research which I carried out from 2006 to 2015 both in Voyvodovo and in the communities of ex-Voyvodovo inhabitants

and their descendants in the Czech Republic.[1] I interviewed people who were born in Voyvodovo, but also their offspring born in Czechoslovakia after 1950. My oldest informants were mostly people born in the 1920s and 1930s in Voyvodovo. Women made up most of this oldest generation as they usually outlived their male partners. I also interviewed many descendants of this oldest generation, i.e. people born in Czechoslovakia. I spoke with all people from the oldest generation and with most of their children and grandchildren. I have never counted my informants, as Voyvodovo community became a part of my life and I came to know it in detail.[2]

During my fieldwork I have reconstructed a genealogical diagram of the Voyvodovo community. By collecting of genealogies of individuals and their families, I obtained a huge overlapping genealogy of what may be called a community of Voyvodovans. It contains 4 to 7 generations and comprises over 1600 individuals and more than 500 marriages. The oldest individuals recorded in the genealogy were born before the first half of the 19th century, the youngest were born in Czechoslovakia after 1950. Information obtained from interviews with my informants was completed with other sources, like birth, marriage and death certificates, gravestones' inscriptions in graveyards both in the Bulgaria and in South Moravian villages (Nový Přerov, Drnholec, Dolní Dunajovice), Voyvodovo school chronicles, and several "family chronicles", "native genealogies", or Bible inscriptions that often included genealogical information.

In the following text, I will analyze the concept of kinship in Voyvodovo. I will ask how kinship was defined in Voyvodovo, what was the metaphor of kinship and how various kinds of possible kinship ties were perceived. I will analyze the local concept of kinship regarding linearity – did the Voyvodovans share the (supposedly) ever-present and archaic Balkan emphasis on agnatic ties? Or did they demonstrate more cognatic (bilateral) ideology of kinship? What was their kinship imagination as to how to become a relative? Did they share an idea of relatedness based on blood, semen, or milk? How did they conceive of their affines? Was there any idea of ritual kinship in Voyvodovo? I will relate my findings into the wider discussion of European kinship, especially (to) the discussion of the "Balkan family pattern" and ask if, and to what extent, do my data fit into this conceptual scheme.

[1] I have conducted my research together with my husband, Marek Jakoubek, and later with our two daughters, Barbora and Šárka.

[2] For more quantitatively founded readers – the numbers would be between tens to hundreds of people. But: what do these numbers say? My Voyvodovo fieldwork has taken a long time (over almost two decades) and became a part of my life. My data during those years of fieldwork accumulated and became very intimate and interconnected (based on interviews, genealogies, photographs, documents, parish registers, scholar literature, family chronicles, participation in community gatherings, etc.). For this reason, I would very much prefer not to present them in any quantitative measure. In other words, when your first-born child is named after the people with whom you work, is it not a more important measure than a "number of informants"?

2. How to become a relative: The concept of kinship in Voyvodovo

The concept of kinship in Voyvodovo (in this place I mean kinship in the narrower sense, i.e. "blood" kinship) was close to what Schneider described in his *American kinship* (Schneider, 1980, pp. 23–24). It was understood as biological relationship arising from the process of reproduction. The procreative theory of the Voyvodovo Czechs is basically identical to the concepts of reproduction in European societies: the child is conceived as a result of sexual intercourse between a man and a woman, then develops in the mother's womb and both parents contribute to its creation by their "biogenetic substance". This is usually expressed using the blood metaphor: the relatives are those who share the same blood transmitted in the process of reproduction. When my informants talk about incest or about marriages between relatives, they say, for example, that "the same blood should not mix". The answer to the implicit question in the chapter heading is thus simple: to become a relative you must be born one.

In Voyvodovo, kinship was understood as an objective, natural, and undeniable bond between people created by "facts of nature". Kinship was seen as something that cannot be changed or altered and cannot cease to exist. The share of substance from the mother was understood as having the same proportion and the same importance as the share of substance from the father. In other words, the Voyvodovans shared the principle of the bilateral, or cognatic kinship. Their concept of reproduction corresponded to this: in the process of reproduction both the mother and the father transmit the same share of substance to their child. Voyvodovo Czechs do not specify any concrete features or traits that would be passed on to children specifically by their mother or father in the process of biological reproduction. Physical and mental features can be acquired from both parents equally. Similarly, in case of half-siblings the fact whether a father or mother was a common parent was not important for my informants; they classified all of them in the same way.

The transfer of biological substance from parents to children in the process of biological reproduction is reflected, for example, in how the Voyvodovo Czechs perceive the inheritance of physical traits, but also temperament, habits or specific tendencies of individuals. Children resemble their parents and their relatives on both the mother and the father's side. The Voyvodovans were looking for (and finding) in their children's faces the physical features of their relatives.

Certain characteristics of individuals were perceived as given in Voyvodovo because they were inherited from parents. During the Second World War, for example, a childless couple in Voyvodovo adopted a newborn found on a bench in a park in Sofia. The "biological parents" of the child were not known, but the people of Voyvodovo hypothesized that it might have been a child of a German

soldier. Later, the "German descent" of the child was derived from his character traits, such as restraint, caution, or frugality. As our informant phrased it:

> That's what the old lady Elagin always said to me: "Vasko doesn't drink, he doesn't take a sip of wine, he doesn't taste it, he doesn't smoke. And Vasil, his dad, drank. But he [the child] does not put it in his mouth. He is so cautious, frugal because he is not Bulgarian, he is German".[3]

The understanding of kinship as a given and unaltered relationship is also illustrated by the story of another informant, Alois. He was the only child from the first marriage of his mother; his father lost an arm in the First World War and soon he caught typhus and died. Alois was not even one-year-old when he became an orphan. His mother soon remarried, and Alois grew up in his stepfather's family (where three more children were soon born). Alois respected his stepfather, used respectful language forms to address him, but he knew (like everyone else) that the stepfather was not his "true" (i.e. "biological") father. Although his relationship with his stepfather was correct, other children often prompted Alois to disobey him, which was to be legitimized by the fact that it was the case of a stepfather and not a father. Stepfather, unlike his father, did not have such an absolute claim in this perspective of the loyalty, obedience, and love that his "own" father would have had as only a biological relationship can establish that. At the same time, however, when Alois, for example, needed money for school aids, his stepfather refused to help, saying, "He has nothing to do with me." In that case, Alois sought help from his uncle, his mother's brother. "Biological relationship", in the perception of our informants, creates love and responsibility that characterizes the relationship:

> The people were prompting me: "Do not listen to him, he is not your dad!" He was not bad, but it is normal: if you have two children and one is not yours, yours will be closer to your heart. He was not evil, he did care, but people prompted me to disobey him.[4]

The above-mentioned story of adoption can also serve to illuminate the notion of the role of pregnancy in creating a mutual relationship between mother and child. In the perceptions of our informants, this period of physical unity of the mother and child contributes to the later relationship. Our informant (the mother of three children herself) was very surprised how a childless woman from the previous story, adopting a boy found in Sofia, was able to love her adopted child so much:

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[3] Female informant Rozálie K., born 1930; Dolní Dunajovice, 30. 5. 2009.

[4] Male informant Alois F., born 1919; Valtice, 13. 8. 2006.

> When Vasko died, she cried all nights and all days. I do not know where such love could find seed in her when she did not carry this child! It was because she did not have her own, if she had had one, and then took him, she would have distinguished between them. But since she did not have one of her own, she was glad she had this one and she loved him so much. The whole village knew that she would have given her soul for him. They got so used to him and they liked him, and he respected them.[5]

Another category of relatives were affines, i.e. relationships resulting from marriage. Affine relationship was not considered to be the same as the "blood" relationship, since the affines, according to our informants, "do not share the same blood". For this reason, there were no prejudices in Voyvodovo concerning marriage between affines (as were, for example, among the Bulgarians), unlike marriages among "blood" relatives. Voyvodovans admitted that these ties might involve emotional strength, respect and obligation, but they assumed that they were not the "real kinship". Affines were seen to be close, but were distinguished from the cognates

There was one kind of relatedness that was practically absent in Voyvodovo, and it was *ritual kinship*, which in the Catholic and Orthodox churches establishes the relationship of the godparent-sponsor at baptism or confirmation and the godchild (for the Catholic Church, see Goody 1990: 56–57). The Orthodox Church, while defining kinship, speaks of two types of kinship: *blood and spiritual*, the basis of which is baptism. In this case, kinship grades are counted in the same way as in case of blood relatives. Although spiritual kinship, represented mostly by godparentship (*kumstvo*) was widespread in the surrounding Orthodox societies (Hammel, 1968; Hristov, 2018) it was absent in Voyvodovo. The reason was a difference in religion: as Protestants, the Voyvodovans did not have baptismal patrons, and one part of the Voyvodovo religious community refused the baptism of small children at all (see Budilová & Jakoubek, 2017). There were no godfathers in the Voyvodovo Protestant community, and so the Voyvodovans did not have godparentship as a social institution.

3. How to put oneself into a "family circle": "Family chronicles" in Voyvodovo

Some of my informants have recorded something they would call a "family chronicle". These written records of family relationships represent the way people

[5] Female informant Rozálie K., born 1930; Dolní Dunajovice, 30. 5. 2009.

see themselves situated in the web of kinship. This kind of representation of kinship is what Barnes calls "pedigrees" (the setting of the informant in the complex of his or her family relations) as opposed to "genealogy", which is a researcher's construction based on the accounts of many different informants (Barnes, 1967, pp. 102-104). These representations usually keep form of the family history of one particular family or a "lineage" (*rod*). In this case "lineage" (*rod*) does not refer to a corporate unilineal descent groups, so dear to the heart of many anthropologists (Fortes, 1953; Fried, 1957). "Rod" rather refers to a different type of kinship groupings: some of them might be called cognatic descent groups, some of them might be called kindreds, others were merely a record of an extended family group. Family relations were often recorded also in family Bibles. Some of my informants also attempted for a visual elaboration of their kinship relationships and outlined genealogies and family trees. In the following section I will analyze two of these "family chronicles", to show some general tendencies that are observable in the concept of kinship in Voyvodovo.

3. 1. Tomeš Hrůza

A valuable piece of evidence of how Voyvodovo inhabitants classified themselves in the complex of their family relations is "Kňiha pamňetni Tomše Hrůzy, žitele Vojvodofského" (*A commemorative book of a Voyvodovo resident Tomeš Hrůza*) book that was published as a material edition (Jakoubek, 2010b). It is the only source of this type that was created in Voyvodovo before 1950. All other "family chronicles" we have encountered during the fieldwork were put down only after the resettlement. Tomeš Hrůza, the author of the text, was born in Svatá Helena in 1888, he moved to Voyvodovo in 1914 and married a local Czech, Barbora Kňourková one year later. He did not resettle with other Voyvodovans to Czechoslovakia and he died in Bulgaria in 1950. His "memoirs" contain information about various topics, mostly on the prices of various goods in different years. One of his entries is called "A birth evidence of our family" ("Rodni list Naši familiji") and contains genealogical information (see Fig. 1).

Tomeš Hrůza starts his "family tree" by enumerating himself, his wife Barbora (Barka) and his children whose names he mentions together with their exact dates of birth. In the following section he states that he comes from "Venca Hrůza family from St. Helena" and continues ascending in the male line. What follows is a list of his brothers, this time without birth dates (we can only assume that this is a chronological list) with the addition about the death of one of them in the war. After a series of brothers, Tomeš's sisters are listed. Again, we encounter two (probably chronological) rows of siblings: first male, second female.

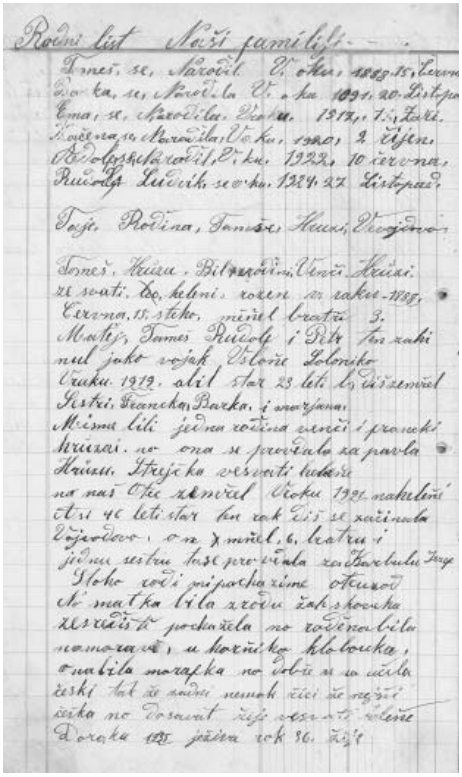

Fig. 1

Only then there is the statement that they were one family coming from Venca and Francka Hrůza, where his mother's first name appears for the first time. At the same time there is a remark that his mother, after the death of their father, married Pavel Hrůza, "an uncle from Svatá Helena"[6]. This is followed by the date of the death of the father who died in the year of the establishment of Voyvodovo in the age of about 46 years. Further, Tomeš records that his father had six brothers and one sister, with her husband being mentioned. It is the first ascendant generation, and at the same time the most distant generation captured. Towards the more distant generations, it goes down from a detailed description to a mere mention of the number of father's siblings (without mentioning their names).

What follows is the statement that the author comes from "rod" (*lineage*) and that it is his father's "rod" (*lineage*): in this case, the term lineage means all relatives on the

[6] In this case a kinship term „uncle" is used in a metaphoric way, meaning a resident of Svatá Helena.

father's side. "Father's lineage" probably means patrilateral kin (but not patrilineal). After his father's lineage (*rod*) comes the mother's lineage (*rod*): "mother was of *Žabsk*ovi lineage". Again, the term "rod" is used herein in the foregoing meaning – It is a family, or rather the mother's maiden surname (Žabsková).

We can see from the Tomeš's account of his relatives a fundamental role of nuclear family in Voyvodovo. It is clear that in the center of family life of a person in Voyvodovo was his nuclear family. Tomeš starts with his own nuclear family, continues with his or her father's family, and mentions his own mother only in passing, probably because she remarried in Svatá Helena, founded a new family with her new husband, and did not move to Voyvodovo. The author does not give more information about the mother's second marriage. Obviously, this fact was not significant for his subsequent life.

The order of enumeration suggests, however, some kind of "patrilineal bias" in otherwise bilateral (cognatic) reckoning of kinship. Tomeš pays significant attention to his father's kin, and explicitly states that he comes from the "rod" (*lineage*) of his father. In other aspects, however, his account displays traits of bilateral kinship, with the focus on the closest kin, and decreasing attention towards more distant relatives. Tomeš, for example, did not record his grandparents: we might assume that they did not live at the time of he wrote his "chronicle", so they did not get into it.

A reference to one of his father's sister's husband is the only reference to affine relatives in Tomeš's enumeration. It is interesting, because father's sister herself is not named here. This might be another indication of a "patriarchal bias" with male relatives seen as more important than female relatives. But it might have been caused by another factor, for example, if the father's sister died a long ago, she might not have been remembered. Also, the fact might have been important that this father's sister's husband lived with his family in Voyvodovo, and therefore he was a neighbor of Tomeš.

We see here how flexible the bilateral genealogical relations are: they can be forgotten or unmentioned if they are not relevant for the contemporary situation. It was the case, for example, of the relatives of the Voyvodovans who stayed in Svatá Helena and did not move to Bulgaria. On the other hand, it was possible to activate a close relationship just because the people moved to the same locality and were in a daily contact.

3. 2. Štěpánka Skaláková

Another example is the family chronicle of Štěpánka Skaláková, who was born in Voyvodovo in 1920, that was recorded as "a remembrance" for her children.

The "chronicle" is not accompanied by a picture of the pedigree but consists only of a list of names supplemented by the dates of birth and death (see Fig. 2 and 3). The author progresses chronologically and begins with her grandmother and grandfather from her mother's side: she lists their names, dates of birth and death. This section is called the "Karbula Family". It is followed by a section titled the "Pitra Family", which includes the same grandparents' data on her father's side, together with information about the parents of the informant. The names of grandparents are given the terms "grandmother" and "grandfather", the names of the parents the terms "daddy" and "mom". The man is always put in the first place, the woman under him.

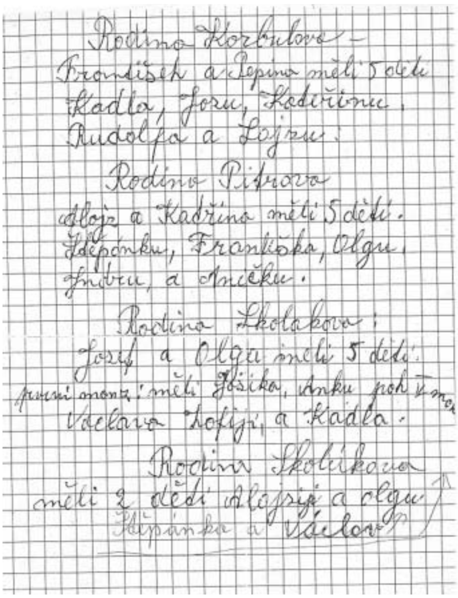

Fig. 2

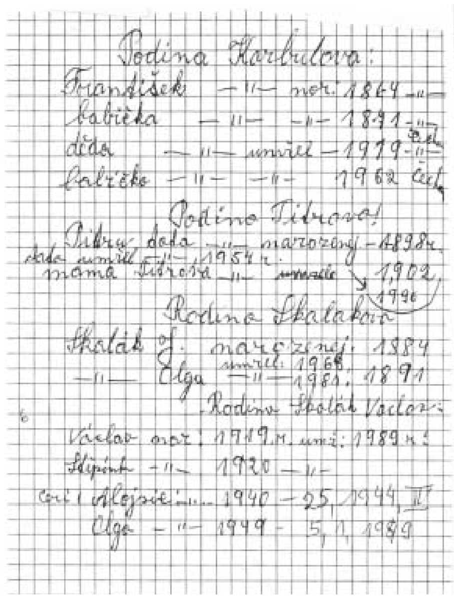

Fig. 3

Her parents are followed in her record by the "Skalák Family", which includes information about her husband's parents. Men are again put in the first place, the names and dates of birth and death are included. In this section, the names are not preceded by family terms. After this part, our informant continues with a part called "Skalák *Václav*" which contains the names and dates of birth of her husband, herself and her children. On the other page, she sums up the individual nuclear families that she listed with regard to the number and names of their children, whereby the children are listed by age (for example, "Karbula Family – František and Pepina had 5 children – Kadl, Joza, Kateřina, Rudolf and Lojza").

In this case, the author lists all her cognates, descending from the second ascendant generation to the present. Interestingly, she does start with her mother's parents. She does not include the generation of her great-grandparents, she probably

never met them, and they did not play a significant role in her life. All relatives are recorded as a part of a particular nuclear family ("Karbula family", "Pitra family"). Again, we can see that for the Voyvodovans nuclear families formed a "natural" point of reference. Also, the way nuclear families are recorded reveals the basic principles of hierarchy: men first, older generations first.

After enumerating her cognates, the author of the chronicle moves on to her husband's family, starting again from the oldest generation. However, the record of her affines does not display the same genealogical depth as the record of her "consanguine" relatives (only the first ascendant generation). The enumeration then ends with one's own family. The way her "chronicle" is put down suggests that the focal point of reference of the whole genealogy were her children, which she admitted at the very beginning by dedicated her work to them ("a remembrance"). In fact, the web of kinship she has recorded might be called ascending kindred, or a bilateral (cognatic) kinship group – i.e. the sum of relatives of an individual (or a sibling group) traced through both male and female line.

4. Closer and more distant: Classification of relatives in Voyvodovo

One of the sources of data for ethnographers is often not only the data they gain as a result of their fieldwork, but also the very process of questioning or observation. In this way I gained a lot of information connected to the Voyvodovo concept of kinship when interviewing the ex-Voyvodovans and recording their genealogies. For example, when I asked my informants about their siblings, they always enumerated them in the chronological order of birth. Also, people present at the questioning were often complementing and correcting each other with regard to the birth order of the children in the family ("No, Štěpa was the oldest", "Lojza was the youngest, he took care of his elderly parents", etc.). Some of my informants also distinguished boys and girls: they often named boys by age first, and then girls from the oldest to the youngest. So I often obtained an enumeration of two different sibling groups: male and female, both of which were ranked by age. The factor of mutual age clearly played very important role and influenced the individual's position within the family. This was undoubtedly reinforced by a special position of the youngest son in Voyvodovo families: the youngest son would normally stay with his parents after his marriage, and he would have an obligation to look after them in their old age. Eventually, he would inherit the family farm (Jakoubková Budilová, 2018).

As far as collaterals are concerned, our informants distinguish between relatives of different degrees of kinship. In this classification, they use the terms "first cousins", "second cousins" and "third cousins". The first cousins

are, according to this classification, children of siblings, second cousins are children of first cousins, and third cousins are children of second cousins. Some informants then speak of "first cousins" as "true cousins". The gender of siblings does not play a role in this classification: children of two sisters are just as "first cousins" as children of two brothers or children of a brother and sister. We encounter here a notion of a "graded" kinship, according to the amount of the shared substance – first cousins share more of the substance (blood) than second cousins, etc.

The character of relationship between first cousins is usually explained by the fact that they are descendants of a sibling pair. For example, that they are people, whose "father and mother were brother and sister". The relationship between the second cousins is then explained in a way that "his grandfather and her grandmother were brother and sister", or that "her mother and my mother were cousins, from two sisters". Another of my informants, for example, explains her relationship to a certain woman, saying: "Her dad and my dad were first cousins. So, we're second cousins". Our informants then explain the relationship of third cousins, for example, in the way that "his mom and her dad were second cousins" or that "his grandfather and grandmother were the first cousins", or "our grandfathers were cousins, so we are third, yet we are still cousins". These three terms are commonly used and need not be explained in everyday communication.

From this method of specifying the relative degrees of collateral relatives we can see that the relations that my informants emphasize are sibling relations: each explanation refers to a sibling group ("his father and her mother were brother and sister"), or to a wider collateral group of cousins ("his father and her mother were the first cousins"). What is not emphasized in this context is a common ancestor. The first cousins can be described either as two persons who have the same grandparents, or as two persons whose parents were siblings. Our informants have always used only the latter. Similar to other cognatic systems, the reference point is an individual rather than a common ancestor (Fox, 1967, p. 170). A similar kinship system is described, for example, by John Campbell in a pastoral transhumant community of Greek Sarakatsani, where the relationships were not legitimized by reference to a common ancestor either: "The collateral relationship is a relationship derived from a sibling couple" (Campbell, 1964, p. 107).

The relationship of the first cousins is perceived as closer than the relationship of second or third cousins, which has significant implications for the understanding of kinship and barriers to marriage. In the perceptions of the inhabitants of Voyvodovo it was possible to marry a second or third cousin, but the marriage with the first cousin was considered too close. The third cousins' boundary is usually referred to as the limit beyond which people are no longer considered to be relatives:

"Then they did not uphold, we did not uphold it to the third cousins, it is too much, we do not know even know them".[7]

My informants used *emic* terms "rodina" (*family*), sometimes also "vzdálená rodina" (*distant family*), or "přízeň" (*kin*) for an unspecified degree of distant relatives. They usually use the term "family" in the sense of a nuclear family but sometimes also in the broader sense of a synonym for relatives. We come across, for example, expressions like: "It was somewhat distant family", "they were somehow family", or "they were kin, they were in kinship". Still other informants use the term "kinship" to explain the interconnection of relatives within the village: "The whole village was in kinship. No matter how you looked at it".[8]

5. Shared surname as a source of common identity?

As we have seen, the Voyvodovans used to define kinship relations bilaterally. Their genealogical memory was relatively shallow: it usually included the grandparents as the most distant relatives. If they had to reconstruct a relationship to their third cousins, for example, which was a class of relatives at the edge of the circle of kin, they often had to rely on the memory of the older members of the community. The network of kin was very flexible: it could also include affines or distant relatives simply because they lived close, or because they married someone who belonged to a close circle of relatives. On the contrary, after moving away from Svatá Helena, a lot of persons who would normally belong to this circle fell out of this network. This was the case, for example, of many children who did not know their grandparents because these grandparents stayed in Svatá Helena. Similarly, the siblings of the parents who did not move to Voyvodovo did not maintain relations, while equally distant relatives in Voyvodovo were very important to the individuals. The idea of relatedness was, therefore, affected by whom they have met and interacted with in their lives. For example, the oldest siblings remember their grandparents well, while younger children in the family who were born after grandmother's or grandfather's death sometimes did not even know their names.

Apart from the terms "family" and "kinship", our informants used also the term "lineage" (*rod*), which usually refers to the family from the father's or mother's side, but not in strictly unilineal way. It refers rather to patri-lateral (or matri-lateral) than to patrilineal (or matrilineal) kin. The term "mother's lineage" usually means all relatives related through the mother, the term "father's lineage" refers, then, to

[7] Female informant Štěpánka S., born 1920; Dolní Dunajovice, 10. 11. 2009.

[8] Female informant Lída F., born 1930; Nový Přerov, 20. 1. 2007.

all cognates related to the father. As our informant says, "He was from my mum's lineage." By the term "rod" our informants usually mean all cognatic relatives either from the mother's side or from the father's side. But there is one more use of the term "rod", which refers to descendants of one male relative. This use is then closer to the conception of the cognatic descent category, a sum of all persons deriving their origin from a common ancestor through a male or female line, or a combination of both (see, for example, Holý 1996: 116). This concept of "rod" (all descendants of one man), however, did not have a great depth: its definition usually did not exceed three generations.

In Voyvodovo, several families of the same surname lived that had had common ancestors in Svatá Helena many generations ago. The shared surname suggested a common descent in the male line, as surnames were handed over patrilineally. These families, however, were considered to be unrelated, despite the fact that their common origin could be reconstructed from the memories of older informants. One of our informants states in this context: "There were also a few, the Kňoureks, like the Hrůzas, but they were not related – different Hrůzas, different Kňoureks."[9] These families, once related, were thus referred to as "unrelated families", or "different branches having nothing in common". Our informant, for example, whose wife came from a family with the same surname as himself, says, "Our families were not related, they were cousins some 150 years ago!"[10] Even though he admitted a distant kinship, it was not relevant in his eyes.

An opposite view of the distant relatives sharing the same surname may be observed after the remigration to Czechoslovakia. In some cases, remigrants from the Bulgarian Voyvodovo (residing mostly in South Moravia) kept contacts here with the remigrants from the Romanian village Svatá Helena (residing mostly in western Bohemia). There were people among them with the same surnames. This, again, suggested a possibility of a common descent, but the genealogical memory of these ties was usually not maintained in families. As these people were often interested in reconstructing their family trees and searching for their origins, they were often keen to (re)discover mutual kinship. Kinship relationships were reconstructed to a common ancestor (or a sibling group) in order to determine the mutual relationship. My informant, active in these mutual contacts, says:

> They all discover it there, through some kin, they come and find it, for example, by the the surname: "We are the Hrůzas and you too, that is impossible, we must be somehow related!" Maybe they are discovering it through grandfathers and grandfathers. Or, they

[9] Female informant Gena H., born 1924; Drnholec, 19. 3. 2008.

[10] Male informant Štěpán H., born 1918; Chodov, 16. 11. 2009.

discover something and do not know the exact relationship – "they must have been first cousins or something." Or, they discover a connection through a particular person, such as grandfather Kovařík who had a mill in Helena.[11]

This emphasis on relations through the male line, which we observe in the above mentioned cases – as opposed to generally bilateral character of Voyvodovo kinship – was reinforced by sharing the same surname. In some way people sharing the same surname felt mutual closeness, and links between them were also easily traceable through time. As surnames were passed down in a patrilineal way (Budilová, 2012), in cases of distant relatives – like in the case or remigrants in Czechoslovakia – it was always easier to detect patrilineal kinship. The same held good in case of tracing family names in genealogies, family chronicles, archives, or any other documents. This "patrilineal bias" in Voyvodovo kinship might have been affected also by the system of land inheritance that favored males to females (Jakoubková Budilová, 2017; 2018). Because sons inherited twice as much land as daughters, and it was always the youngest son who had to look after his ageing parents, sons were seen as "the roots of the family", unlike daughters, who were supposed to leave the family upon their marriage and change their surname (Budilová, 2008).

Conclusion

We have shown that Voyvodovo kinship rests on the assumptions about the biological reproduction; according to Voyvodovans, kinship resulted from the "facts of nature". These bonds were seen as immutable and permanent. There were very few examples in Voyvodovo of relatedness that was not stemming from the alleged biological ties. These kinds of "artificial kinship" (like adoption) were always build on the model on the "real", that is, biological, kinship. Unlike the surrounding Balkan societies, there was no "fictive" kinship, like, for example, godparentship (*kumstvo*), milk kinship or blood brotherhood.

The concept of kinship in Voyvodovo was fundamentally bilateral (cognatic); people counted as kin their relatives from both the mother's and father's side. Bilateral kinship is very flexible: relationships that are not used are forgotten, but if necessary, it is still possible to update them, renew them and thus legitimate a current relationship. Like in most societies with cognatic kinship (Holý, 1996, p. 117), there were no permanent, structural units in the sense of corporate descent

[11] Female informant Anna S., born 1949; Žabčice, 20. 3. 2008.

groups in Voyvodovo. The type of kinship grouping we encounter in Voyvodovo – apart from nuclear families or extended family household – might be called kindreds. These were flexible bilateral networks centered around individuals, sibling groups, or nuclear families.

The genealogical memory was not deep: it usually did not exceed two or three generations. It also developed throughout one's life: children focused on their ascendant generations and their collaterals (siblings, cousins), grown-ups concentrated more on collaterals at the expense of the ascendants, and as people grew old their focus shifted more towards their descendants. This memory was markedly influenced by "lived" kinship relations – it picked up the relations that were crucial for a person at the actual moment of life. Also, people who shared everyday activities were counted as closer relatives than people who did not.

However, like in many other bilateral societies (Holý, 1996, pp. 117–121), there were applied additional criteria in the Voyvodovo concept of kinship: this is what I have called "patrilineal" or "patriarchal" bias. In Voyvodovo this was represented by the principle of patriarchal ideology favoring males to females (Jakoubková Budilová, 2017), the system of handing over landed property, or the system of surnames inherited in the male line. The patrilineal bias had more significant role in tracing the distant relatives and reinventing of these forgotten ties, as happened in Czechoslovakia after remigration of people from Voyvodovo and Svatá Helena, who were distant kin. The "family chronicles" of Voyvodovans suggest that the basic unit of the social world of for them was nuclear family. This corresponded to the system of household formation and the division of land in Voyvodovo. Households were ideally formed by nuclear families and each marriage meant the establishment of an independent economic unit (Jakoubková Budilová, 2018). Analysis of "family chronicles" also reveals shallow genealogical memory, bilateral reckoning of kinship, and the focus on nuclear families.

In this regard, Voyvodovo kinship corresponds to the conceptions of kinship we have encountered in the analyses of (West) European societies: a fundamentally bilateral kinship, with a certain "patrilineal" bias, that take on various expressions depending on a given time period and region. It does not fit very well, however, into the "Balkan family pattern", putting stress on agnatic bias, patrilocality, and formation of extended households made up of relatives in the male line. There was no idea about "thick" (male) and "thin" (female) blood, and relatives from both sides were counted as kin.

It might be concluded although the lived kinship was clearly bilateral (cognatic), it was always easier for my informants to "reinvent" forgotten kinship ties in the paternal line. This was made possible by the Czech system of transmitting of surnames in the male line. This situation is very similar to the type of kinship remembering R. Astuti describes among the Vezo people in Madagascar. In the

living generations the kinship was principally bilateral (cognatic), but the dead people became members of their patrilineal descent groups (Astuti, 2000). In case of the Voyvodovans, their concern with their origin, family trees, and their "roots" emerged only after their remigration to Czechoslovakia. It was only then, when the patrilineal bonds started to be reinvented and highlighted at the expense of the formerly lived bilateral relationships.

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