

## **Traditional Modes of Paying Wages in Kind to Communal Servants in Slovakia**

ZITA ŠKOVIEROVÁ, Bratislava

The servant's estate in Slovakia comprised the ancillary personnel in State administration, offices and self-government of villages and towns, as also servants, craftsmen and members of special trades and occupations employed by the municipality and various economies and special-interest associations. The estate of communal servants may be assumed to have been in existence already in the early Middle Ages and was related to the growing differentiation in occupations, to the promotion of the servants' organization at the royal estate<sup>1</sup>, and also to the occurrence of communal cadastral lands (land belonging to the community – *communic terrae, communitas populorum*)<sup>2</sup> within the municipal holdings (the common). The present study has for object communal servants and members of certain employments who worked for the benefit of local (principally rural) communities, or at least a part of them (servants working on individual farmsteads, hired and paid by one family are this time outside the scope of our attention).

During the period of late feudalism in Slovakia (particularly in the 18th and 19th century), the communal lower servants' estate was relatively well developed and differentiated.<sup>3</sup> Following the abolishment of serfdom in 1848 and the implementation in practice of the so-called land-registry patent of 1853<sup>4</sup>, further economy-pursuing associations came to be set up in the second half of the 18th century (associations of former copy-holders and hinds – farm servants, etc.). The land reform of the 20s of this century brought along new organizations grouping the new owners of parcelled pasture lands and forests.<sup>5</sup> All the above associations, as also the local association that owned the so-called common, and the ecclesiastical community, all needed guards of the property, game-keepers, watchmen, servants and further auxiliary employees in order to be able to function and to permit their members adequate enjoyment of the profits.

The type and numbers of communal servants and the nature of their activities depended on the number of inhabitants of the village and their ability to maintain them. The last of these factors was substantially influenced by the geo-

graphic and climatic features of the region in which the village cadaster lay. During the first third of this century Slovakia was of an agrarian character: roughly two thirds of the population were dependent on production in agriculture, forestry and fishing<sup>6</sup> (this ratio was much higher in rural areas). Size of the cadaster, soil fertility, proportion of arable land, meadows, pastures, forests, watercourses, etc. of the total cadaster area, influenced in a great measure the inhabitants' standard of life, their mode of nutrition the need of communal servants, and also the ability to pay them in money or in kind.

The structure of communal servants during the first half of this century depended on the system of the administrative, economic and ecclesiastical life in each locality, on the existence and functioning of institutions that controlled this life. The above institutions maintained these servants either independently, or in-ion collaborat with others. The activity of economy-pursuing associations was directed by a board – self-government – elected by a general assembly of the association's members. The common property was administered by the above board or committee, and the spiritual or ecclesiastic life by the parish priest in co-ordination with elected representatives of the ecclesiastical community the parish.

During the first half of the 20th century, small villages with less than 500 inhabitants predominated in Slovakia.<sup>7</sup> In such localities there was a natural overlapping of the competence of the above institutions, eventually a cumulation of functions in some individuals. It thus happened that one and the same person came to be the mayor of a village and chairman of the economic association, eventually, the village mayor was also competent to resolve issues pertaining to economic associations.<sup>8</sup> Only where a village was adequately large, prospering and differentiated, did the village council, as a rule, hire a communal servant and watchman, and the economic associations hired game-keepers, herdsman, etc., and the ecclesiastical community the sacristan, bellringer, sexton and school-master.<sup>9</sup>

Localities with a small number of inhabitants could not afford to keep all the communal servants. Just as functions in the management of various institutions were compounded, so also were service duties in the village concentrated in one person. This fusion of duties permits to follow a certain regularity observed in smaller regions.<sup>10</sup> Duties most frequently devolving on one person were those of sexton-sacristan, watchman-sexton, grave – digger, communal servant-watchman, etc. Certain of these duties or posts remained permanently or temporarily vacant in some regions or localities (e.g. grave-diggers, herdsmen). These services were replaced diverse activities (e.g. they were taken over in turn according to house numbers), or were carried out individually.

The social status of communal servants differed. Among the socially weakest and lowest strata were e.g. town-criers, sextons, grave-diggers, night watchmen,

game-keepers, swineherds, etc. Recruited to these services were generally persons with very low resources or none at all, orphans, persons without any provisions, occasionally even those with a physical, or a minor mental handicap (however, only in a measure that would not lead them to cause damage to property). Often, a village would thus resolve its duty to take care of its poor and destitute fellow-inhabitants, to whom it was bound to provide food and care in virtue of the so-called poor-law.<sup>11</sup>

The situation was more complicated in the social position of keepers of herds. They came from families lacking in means and this profession was often handed down from generation to generation, whereby the pastoral experience of forefathers became developed. Although these herdsmen stood on the margin of society<sup>12</sup>, many of them possessed an abundant knowledge regarding animal rearing, their behaviour, veterinary, meteorological and therapeutic experience not solely in relation to animals, but also to people. Herders specialized in tending domestic animals of various species and they were accordingly called: cowherd, swineherd, keeper of oxen, horses, shepherds, etc. The most substantial difference was that between shepherds and the other herdsmen.<sup>13</sup> In regions with the so-called lowland sheep rearing, where milk production was not required, this difference in shepherds' position was not so very striking. However, in regions with the so-called Carpathian type of sheep dairy farming, where the economic success was dependent on the shepherd's work and skill, their social position was strikingly higher.<sup>14</sup> Shepherds were directly interested in a higher production – a higher prosperity of this pursuit also meant higher wages. Head shepherds, in particular, enjoyed respect and consideration within the village community – they were responsible for the economical run and organization of work at the sheep dairy farm and the welfare of the younger shepherds. The auxiliary personnel (keepers of flocks, keepers of lambs, etc.) whom head shepherds hired for lack of family members, again belonged to lower social strata.

The highest social status was enjoyed among communal servants by those whose craft demanded certain abilities, professional handiness or education. This category comprised e.g. smiths who were irreplaceable in ensuring a regular functioning of farmsteads in a village. Occasionally these also owned some property (cattle, fields, etc.) and pursued small-scale farming. Similarly, church organists who usually were also school teachers in the village, enjoyed considerable respect and esteem.

The manner of elections and of hiring communal servants was closely related to their work content and their social status. Elections of communal servants of a lower position were held so that by a fixed, and generally known date, those interested in the post applied for it and the village committee, or the relevant association chose the most suitable candidate. For the most part, no written

contract was signed with him, for the mode of remuneration was generally known and payments in kind which formed part of it, were traditionally adhered to from generation to generation as binding norms of the common law. An oral agreement in the presence of witnesses sufficed for the contract to be concluded.

In the case of servants with a higher status, on whose activity depended the prosperity of the village, elections were for the most part public, with the participation of all the interested applicants. The assembly selected the most suitable among the candidates, taking into account both his abilities and the height of salary and further conditions of service which he could freely express or alter. If no suitable person for the service could be found in the village, the committee appointed representatives and empowered them to make a campaign for it also in other villages, informing themselves and preliminarily agreeing on conditions of service. This procedure was employed primarily when hiring shepherds. Then, according to circumstances, the election took place in the village, or representatives of the committee concluded the contract in the place of the shepherd's dwelling. If the shepherds hailed from other villages, or if they were frequently changed, a written contract was signed with them, comprising conditions of grazing, height of wages and further duties, but also benefits which the association provided for them.<sup>15</sup> A written formulation of a shepherd's wages was also required in villages where misunderstandings arose between shepherds and their employers.<sup>16</sup> A detailed contract was signed in a similar manner also with the church organist.

Elections, similarly as other meetings in the village (excepting ecclesiastical ones which took place in the church) were held in the communal house, in the mayor's house, at the inn, and in the spring, weather permitting, also out in the open. They were attended for the most part by men only, where the wealthier citizens and functionaries of the village had the principal say.

The election time was adjusted to the rhythm of farm work and was assigned to the winter or early spring period with less work on hand. The election dates were usually bound, in harmony with regional traditions, with the more significant feast day in the calendar. (All Saints' Day, on St Andrew's, St Nicholas's, St Stephen's, the Holy Innocents', on Epiphany Day, St Gregory's, St Joseph's, St George's, in Whitsuntide, etc.) The traditionally kept dates permitted those interested to apply for service and thus facilitated publication of the elections. The latter were often connected with the ending of the term of service for the preceding period<sup>17</sup> and the annual accounts-taking by the associations. This occasion was traditionally highlighted by a treat – a handsel. A common treat was also given as a sign of conclusion of a work contract with communal servants.

The term of service usually lasted one year, or one season – even longer with servants of a lower status. Renewal of service or notice of discharge could be coordinated to take place on the occasion of elections of the village board or the association chairmanship. In general, however, lower servants used to be engaged for longer periods, and even for lifetime.

During the first third of our century, the predominant forms of remuneration of communal servants were in kind which evidently represented the oldest component of wages. There were several reasons for this mode of action. It was primarily the fact that during this period, agricultural small-scale production predominated in Slovakia. At the turn of the century, only 15.8 % of the population were employed in industry and commerce – domains which could have been a source of financial income and could have thus promoted payments in cash.<sup>18</sup> This state of things did not change in any substantial manner also during the next decades. Ready money was scarce in farming families, their economic activity was directed towards self-sufficiency so as to keep purchases to the minimum.

Money was saved to ensure the farmstead's functioning (purchase of draft animals, farm implements) and to be invested in buying off further lands. Hence, it was more advantageous for farmers to pay communal servants in kind from their production and to provide them with certain benefits from the common ownership rather than to remunerate them with money.<sup>19</sup> In payments in kind we may also see the persistence of the tradition of remitting obligatory contributions (ninth to the landlord, tithes to the Church, etc.).<sup>20</sup>

It was equally advantageous to communal servants to receive wages in kind. They were landless people, therefore incapable to cultivate their own farm products for their sustenance. For various reasons (many children in the family, physical handicap) they could not provide enough bread grain as seasonal workers for themselves. If they had been given only money as wages, they would have had to buy foodstuffs. However, seeing their poverty and their long hours of duty, they would have found it difficult to do their shopping. Therefore, the mode of remuneration in kind persisted for long as a suitable form of wages or as a supplement to financial payments.

The fundamental component of wages for communal servants was a predetermined part of cereals which was collected in autumn or early winter. This type of wages in kind was generally practised on the whole territory of Slovakia during the first half of this century.<sup>21</sup> Cereals were collected in two forms. The first one was shed grain of threshed cereals as supported by preserved terms *zosip* (shedding), *sipka* (granary), *zesipné*, etc. and names deduced from measures of capacity, used in measuring cereals to these servants: *mecka*, *merička* (bushel), *štvrtka* (quart), *vika*, *holba* (pint, etc.). The second way was paying with unthreshed sheaves, utilized when the particular servant kept animals for breeding

which required a litter of straw, or when he himself pursued farming (terms for the wage: *snopi* (sheaves), *mandel* (shock of sheaves)).

In the mountainous region of northern Slovakia, cereals used also to be replaced by contributions of potatoes and pulses. Potatoes and beans with peas were also used as wages in the Danubian plain.<sup>22</sup>

An important element in the remuneration of communal servants were donations in kind and foodstuffs, handed over on traditional dates of annual feasts (All Saints' Day, St Martin's, St Andrew's, Christmas Eve, New Year's, day, etc.), the so-called *sviatočné* (fast-day gift). In certain regions and localities, some servants had the habit to go from house to house on certain occasions: e.g. in southeastern Slovakia, cowherds were given wages in kind, foodstuffs and wine on St Martin's day, Christmas Eve and on Whitsuntide, grave-diggers on Shrove Tuesday (Carnival time), sextons on All Souls' Day, etc.<sup>23</sup> Items most frequently given were flour, pulses, potatoes, groats, eggs, etc. – of foodstuffs, bread, cakes, bacon, smoked meat, sausages, etc.

If the communal servant came from another village, or was unprovided for, local inhabitants provided him with daily food according to the order of houses. The traditional contribution for shepherds was a loaf of bread which the housewife prepared for them on request during the course of the year. The number of loaves was determined by the number of animals they grazed in the common herd. Foodstuffs and brandy (or wine) were given to communal servants also on further occasions: at the first cattle-walk (first drive to pasture – the so-called *víhonovô*, *vihonka*, *príučok*), on the farmer's visit to the vinyard, to the sheep's dairy farm, as a bonus or fringe benefit before annual feasts. The quantity and kind of the food gift reflected the differentiated standing of the village inhabitants – from the poorer families contributions in kind were not even expected.<sup>24</sup>

A specific form of wages in kind was that given to shepherds in regions of sheep dairy farming with milk production. They worked for a fixed wage expressed by the quantity of milk products – cheese or smoked ewe's cheese. Another form of wages called *na vídaj* permitted them to keep for themselves all surplus production after having met the contracted quota for the farmer (owner). Milk as a part of wages was also given to cowherds. For instance at Závadka nad Hronom they received milk once during the season from the Sunday morning milking.<sup>25</sup>

In localities with abundance of common forests, or on the contrary with dearth of timber, communal servants were also given firewood for the winter. Felling of trees, their sawing into cord and delivery went to the charge of the village.

As wages in kind we may also consider the enjoyment of benefits from landed property which a village put at the disposal of its servants. According to the site of a village's common property, communal servants had at their disposal arable

land prepared for cultivating root-crops, a major off which they took hay, a garden or even a dwelling-place (e.g. a herdsman's house). However, if a *mojaro* profit was envisaged, the servant had to pay rent for the property he used (e.g. a smith for his smithy and his dwelling). In the case of herdsmen, the profits provided comprised also the right of grazing on the common, the possibility of manuring their own fields by moving sheep-folds, to share in the profits from this manuring, to fatten pigs, etc.<sup>26</sup>

Lower communal servants also received from the village smaller sums for clothes and footwear (the so-called *krpcové*, *bačkorové*, *obuvné*). Originally, this was also paid in kind. For instance, shepherds in Liptov used to collect twice a year wool for cloth from villagers.<sup>27</sup> In 1919, the direction of the village Kokava nad Rimavicou bought cloth for trousers of public criers.<sup>28</sup> A small amount of money (Kčs 2–5) had been a part of the wages of communal servants also in the preceding centuries.<sup>29</sup>

Wages used to be paid to communal servants in several ways.<sup>30</sup> The first one was the simplest – it meant an ordinary payment. After the intended payment had been proclaimed by the public crier, villagers brought the dues in kind to the communal servant's house. If the employee had a contract for a precisely calculated quantity of cereals, this was brought to the competent functionary who measured out his share and handed it over to him. In this way, for example church economists collected dues and contributions from the faithful and divided them for the sexton, the organist, the sacristan, etc.

In the second mode, the communal servant, either alone or accompanied by other persons, went from house to house and collected his dues. These rounds need not have had a fixed date and had no ritual form. In this manner, the smith in the environs of Levice used to collect his *mecki* in autumn, mayors in vine-growing localities, cereals for keepers of their vineyards, etc. If communal servants had the choice, they gave preference to personal visits to the homes, for they were then offered some "refreshment" on such occasions and were given something extra.

A third manner, was that when the round of the houses by communal servants was connected with some festive occasion; it then took on a ritual form and eventually comprised a verbal or a musical expression. This type of rounds was considered by the inhabitants to be most binding and was relatively long-lived. Ritual rounds usually supplemented one of the preceding modes of remuneration.

The height and kind of remuneration of communal servants was a binding legal norm to the inhabitants. The right to the remuneration is also embodied in the names of the wages – *víplata*, *pláca*, *služba*, etc. (payment). At the same time, villagers exactly differentiated remuneration for the various employees: *pastierske* (herdsmen's wages), *bachersko* (night-watchman's), *zvonové* (sexton's)

*dzvunčina* (bell-ringer's), *hrobárske* (grave-digger's). Honouring these contracts and the traditional-legal norms was supported both by public opinion and by the direction of administrative institutions which accepted them and controlled their fulfilment.

As to the duration of wages in kind, the most stable element were remunerations which communal servants collected on their annual ritual rounds. For instance remunerations in kind to herdsmen on the first cattle-walk and the so-called *sviatočné* (festive) were still in use in the 50s and the 60s – until agriculture had been collectivized.<sup>31</sup> As to the remaining components of wages, there was an effort on the part of the inhabitants, with their increasing capacity for payment, to substitute ready money for them. Gradually, extras for footwear (bast sandals) and for clothing disappeared, as did also supplies of fire-wood and hay after nationalization of forests in 1958<sup>32</sup>, further, payments in cereals, milk and the bread quotas.<sup>33</sup>

The most acute intervention which reduced, or practically annulled all possibilities of paying or remunerating communal servants with cereals or in kind proved to have been the shift from private to collective farming. The differences in the persistence of wages in kind, alongside financial wages among the various regions are in harmony with the different years when collectivization was introduced in the villages.

Factors of immense importance that affected the system of remunerating communal employees, but also communal administration and economic units in general, were the social and economic changes in the 40th and 50s. The reorganization of the State administration, the dissolution of copy-holder associations, nationalization of education, taking over of ecclesiastical estates, etc. disrupted the traditional system of communal servants' estate and with it also remuneration in kind became extinct.

### **Basic Characteristics of Communal Servants and Their Wages in Kind in the 1st Half of the 20th Century**

**The communal Servant** – (*bubeňik, kišbír, pougár, burgar, konšel, hajduk* etc.) (drummer – public crier alderman, pandoor, etc.) served the municipal committee, especially the mayor, and carried out ancillary work at the municipal office: with the drum he announced bits of information and rulings to the inhabitants, delivered personal invitations and orders (occasionally also the mail), heated and tidied up office rooms, etc. In addition to a paltry sum of money, the village also provided him, according to its means, also with accommodation at the communal house, firewood etc., and citizens with foodstuffs for his sustenance.

This service was often combined with other duties, mostly with night watching



and grave digging, less often with bell ringing. The traditional fusion of these service in one person makes it more difficult to exactly determine which duty the remuneration in kind referred to and the rounds which communal servants had to make. At Sazdice near Levice, the communal servant received 6 cartloads of firewood (4 for drumming and 2 for delivering the mail). To the west of Bratislava, communal servants used to visit every home on Epiphany day to wish New Year. On this occasion they were given beans and flour and were offered meals from pig-killing and products which wealthier families had already prepared for Shrovetide.<sup>34</sup>

**Nighth Watchman** (*hlásník, vartáš, bachter, bokter* etc.) had for task to guard the inhabitants and their property from fire and thieves. Using devices agreed upon (trumpeting, whistling, singing), he announced the night hours and signalized danger by sounding the alarm. This employment, too, was connected with further services, most frequently with grave-digging, public crying and keeping herds of swine. As a watchman's duty began in the evening and ended in the morning, in some places he also had to ring the bell in the evening and morning, and even at midday. The public watchman was paid a small sum of money by the village, eventually he was given a plot of the common for use, or was given accommodation. The citizens provided him with foodstuffs, e.g. in the region of Nitra he received in autumn a measure of cereals determined by the size of the farm or the number of chimneys on the house. Near Levice (at Mochovec) watchmen used to make the round of houses on Christmas Eve, noisily stamped in the vestibule and shouted that the hearth is choked with smoke, at which the housewife gave them plaited cakes (*bokterkáláč*). On their New Year's rounds, they were given in every house rolls with greaves. In the Gemer region, watchmen were given on Christmas the so-called *sviatočné* – brandy and cake, in northeastern Slovakia a few bundles of straw.

The **Village Smith** used to be hired in localities of a strikingly agricultural character (especially in southern Slovakia). He was usually selected by the association of former copy-holders. The smithy and the corresponding dwelling quarters were communal property. The smith was also allotted a part of the common for root crops. A smith was paid in cash for his work as smith. For sharpening ploughshares, which he was bound to do according to farmers' needs, he received cereals. The size of the ration was determined according to the arable land acreage or the number of ploughs in the farmstead so that the collected cereals would suffice to the smith for his family's sustenance.

**Grave-Digger** was one of communal servants engaged for a long-term tenure of duty, often until death. This duty used to be combined with that of bell-ringer's, public crier's, sacristan's or drummer's, though it did not exist at all in some regions; graves were then dug by relatives, neighbours, or householders according to the order of houses. Grave-diggers were paid money for digging

a grave and during the work were given to eat and drink by survivors. They were given further remuneration on their rounds of houses. These generally took place during the Shrovetide season – the diggers carried a broach on which cuts of bacon were stuck. They sang carnival songs danced with the housewife and were given bacon and sausages. In the environs of Bratislava, the grave-digger made this round with his family on New Year's Day. When he had expressed his New Year wished the villagers gave him, according to their possibilities, flour, wine, potatoes, lard and eggs. In the environs of Nitra, he was given on this occasion a whole loaf of bread. A frequent part of a grave-digger's payment was also the possibility of cultivating hay in the cemetery garden.

**Bell-ringers** were selected and paid by the ecclesiastic community. For their services they were given by the believers a measure of cereals which was collected together with dues for the parish priest or parson and for the organist. In some places he received a small sum of money from the ecclesiastic taxes, given him by the church community. In richer localities he received a few cartloads of firewood from the common forest or a few acres of church lands for his own use. In the environs of Bratislava the bell-ringer collected his wages on his rounds on All Souls' Day. He received his further dues (beans, eggs, etc.) on his New Year Day's rounds together with the parish priest, the teacher – organist, the church warden and altar boys. This type of round, known as *kolada*, *posviacka* (carolling, blessing) was fairly widespread. In the Kysuce region, villagers used to pay the parish priest and ecclesiastic servants, and in addition to beans, eggs and money, they also prepared a bowl of oats for every visiting member. The bell-ringer's due was termed *zvonové*. Besides a small sum at funerals and weddings, the bell-ringer also received money (formerly cereals) for special "ringing against storms", when, by sustained ringing, he had to disperse the clouds.

**Field Watchman** (*poľní hájnik*, *hájňik*, *keruľ*, *hotar*, *poľnik*, *harmeckí*, *čös* etc.) had for task to guard fields and harvest from thieves and from damage by cattle, carters, etc. He watched over the common cadastre day and night, had the right to seize cattle and poultry that grazed on others' plots, to arrest a thief or take away his implements, part of his dress or take an advance on a fine. In the lowlands he used to be paid with cereals, the amount being determined in accordance with the size of the fields. He also had a right to a part of the money collected as fines (the so-called *hajtovné*). In northeastern Slovakia a field watchman also had at his disposal a common, or a copy-holders' meadow. This service used to be combined with others, e.g. with duties of the communal servant, game-keeper's duties, etc.

**Game-keeper** (*lesný hájnik*, *horár*, *hájňik*, *jáger*, *revírník* etc.) kept watch over copy-holders' and common forests, controlled timber felling, the extraction of forest benefits and supervised works in cultivating and maintaining forests held in common. As remuneration, he received a few cartloads of wood. In moun-

tainous regions where wood was less valuable, he was also given a small plot of arable land and was paid in cash from money obtained through sale of timber.

Vinyard Watchman used to be hired specially to guard vinyards and wine-cellars. His services went on from the time grapes began to mature, until they were picked. In villages which had wine cellars, he also served in winter. He was remunerated with a measure of wheat according to the size of the vinyard and in some localities also with money. But also further contributions were customary, e.g. at Sazdice (in the Hont region) to the fixed due they also added a litre of wheat "for gun powder". In reality this meant a contribution to the 'post-harvest treat' of vinyard watchmen and the headmen of the viticultural community. As a supplement to wages of a vinyard watchman, we may also consider grapes and must which wine-growers gave him during grape-picking and grape pressing. During work in the vinyards, housewives offered him more frequently lunch or cold meals.

School-master – organist was an aid to Christian priests at various church ceremonies – played the organ and sang in church. Since this function required musical education, teachers of ecclesiastic schools were mainly employed for this profession. This led to a fusion of the functions of teacher and organist.<sup>35</sup> In Evangelical (protestant) villages a teacher-organist was hired by the ecclesiastical board in an open competition. A contract, the so-called *vokátor*<sup>36</sup> was signed with the successful applicant which stipulated his duties and the height and kind of remuneration. The contract listed the area of a field, meadow, garden and dwelling which the teacher would have at his disposal, the total quantity and species of cereals from the community and the amount of firewood destined also for heating the school. The amount of financial remuneration at various ceremonies, such as baptism, wedding, funeral, the share from church collections on annual feasts, donations during the rounds of houses, thanksgiving masses and masses for the dead, were determined by the so-called *štóla* that formed a part of the *vokátor*. The kantor performed the so-called *hostiácie* – baking of wafers before Christmas feasts. School children delivered the wafers and the faithful gave flour, eggs, honey, walnuts etc. to the teacher as reward. On annual feasts (Easter, Whitsuntide, Christmas, New Year) and on the feasts of St Martin, St Blaise and St Gregory, the kantor had the right to *kantácie* – i.e. he could make the round of houses either alone or represented by his pupils, and sing – which was again an occasion for some reward-giving: beans, flour, bacon, sausages, eggs, apples, etc. Before the opening of the school year, parents brought to school the so-called *zápisné* – or enrollment fee: live chicken, cheese, poppy-seeds, large beans etc. In vinegrowing regions teachers were also given a measure of must after grape-picking, or ready wine. As a teacher enjoyed respect and consideration in a village, farmers would occasionally also send him a present – a "hamper" from pig-killing.

**Cowherd** – (*kraviar, pastier, pastier kráv*) grazed cows in a common herd from spring until the first snow. In a less numerous herd, heifers and calves grazed together with milking cows, but in regions of specialized cattle breeding, a cowherd was hired to tend younger cattle. A cowherd took cows to pasture daily, returning with them for the midday milking and going out again in the afternoon. In some villages this function was combined with that of the public crier. A cowherd's pay was determined in terms of cereals, bread, milk, daily food and money per animal. To this was also joined payment in kind on festive occasions. At Muránska Zdychava (Gemers) a herdsman received a *mierka* (measure of 15 l) of rye per cow, milk from one milking (about 5 l) and the so-called *rováš* (tally-stick with notches): slice of bacon, a small loaf of bread, one egg and a piece of salt (rock). On Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide he also received a cake and 1 dc brandy, at the first drive out, money or bread, bacon and brandy from every household. This last gift was also given when a new cattle head was included in the herd.<sup>37</sup>

A widespread custom was that of rewarding a herdsman who ceremoniously brought into farmstead branching budding birch twigs (at Jelenec near Nitra whip-stocks). In villages near Bratislava this round used to be made on St Martin's day, in other localities on Christmas Eve, or on St Andrew's day.<sup>38</sup> The herdsman wished the owners of the cows economic profit in the coming year.<sup>39</sup> The housewife would pull out one twig from the bundle and lightly whipped the herdsman who by his leapings and jumpings imitated healthy and young cattle. The twig was put away for the first drive out of cattle and the herdsman was given a loaf of bread (in some places a special herdsman's cake), potatoes, beans, flour, wine, etc. Earlier, precisely on this day, the cereals for the herdsman were measured.<sup>40</sup>

If the cowherd was without property, or from another village, he lived in the communal room. Next to it usually stood also a stable of bulls kept for reproduction, and as rent for his dwelling, the cowherd had to feed them; sometimes this task was taken over by the night watchman or some other person. The fodder was provided by the community or the copy-hold association. Farmers paid money to the cowherd for letting a bull cover their cow (the so-called *tringelt, skočné, od skoku*).

The **Shepherd** (*pastier oviec, juhás, ovčiar, valach*, etc.) was hired by the copy-hold association, the union of sheep dairy farming, or that of pasturage. In the lowlands, he tended sheep for a predetermined quantity of cereals, further traditional emoluments (bread, cakes on annual feasts, etc.) and profits stipulated in the contract with the community. Gradually, wages in kind came to be replaced by payments in money. With the spread of the dairy farming system to the lowlands, shepherd's wages became also increased with milk products that remained after they had remitted the contracted quotas to the owners.<sup>41</sup> For

instance at Sazdice, the shepherd kept milk products after he had delivered to each owner 4.5 kg of cheese from each sheep and 2 dl of butter. For each ewe or ram, he received 2 lit. of wheat and after yeaning, 1 lit. of beans. On the drive out on St Joseph's day, a shepherd collected brandy and wine into demijohns, during the Christmas round he received bread and during the shearing a smaller sum of money. He stayed with his family that helped him in his work, in the common house. The wealthier farmers took in one or two of his own flock free of charge for the winter. He also had a right to 6 cartloads of firewood from the common stock.

The way shepherds met their tasks towards sheep owners was controlled by the head of the sheep dairy farm union (*salašní gazda, salašník, šoltýs, juhbtó*). Responsible for milk production, grazing and organizing further work at the sheep dairy farm, training of aids, etc. was the head shepherd – *bača*. To him were subject all other grazing and auxiliary personnel, called according to the work domain he was engaged in) *valach* or *dojčiar* (milkmaid or dairyman) who took care of and milked ewes, shepherd of nonmilking sheep (the so-called *jarčiar, baraňiar, jahňačiar*), and his aids – *bojtari, hoňelníci*, etc.<sup>42</sup> At Hanková (Gemerský region) shepherds had a contract for every 7th quintal (cent) of cheese (1 quintal, or cent = 56 kg or approx. 112 lbs). This was shared by the head shepherd and the dairyman – *dojšar*. A *baraňiar* had 12 lambs for the whole season – according to his own choice – and a small sum of money. Two further aids (*bojtari*) were paid by the dairy farm union also in money. Settling of accounts (*ližba*) took place at the house of the head of the union on St Martin's day. At Kobeliarovo (Gemerský region) shepherds were hired in the form *na vídavok* (on a quota). They paid the owner 18–20 lbs of cheese per each ewe (1 lb = 56 dg) and kept the rest for themselves. From the money obtained for the sale of this cheese, a head shepherd paid all the overhead expenses for running the dairy farm, including also wages of auxiliary personnel. Only the *baraniar* received one young ram from the owners for every 8–15 nonmilking sheep. While the sheep-fold stayed on a farmer's field (for manuring) the latter gave a loaf of bread to the shepherd and on a Sunday, an abundant meal and a litre of brandy.

In both the systems of management, head shepherds and their aids (*valasy*) also received side payments in kind and money. The occasions for these rewards, their height and mode varied according to local customs. For instance at Horehronie (the Upper Hron river valley) shepherds were given the so-called *sviatočnosť*, i.e. cake and brandy (in some localities also bacon and sausage) on Easter, Whitsunday and Christmas. The gifts were the same also on the day sheep were driven out for the first time, (the so-called *miešanovô, víhonovô*). During the time of grazing, farmers were also obliged to provide contributions to the shepherds' meals, the so-called *tíždňovki* (weeklies). The rate was: 1 loaf

of bread, 1 kg of bacon or lard, 4–5 kg of flour for 4–5 sheep for the season; for young sheep, 1 lit. of flour per piece. *Baraňiar* (keeper of nonmilking sheep) had his special portion: 1 loaf of bread, 3 kg of flour, 1 kg of *brindza* (Liptow cheese) or a corresponding quantity of bacon, lard, or sausages and *štvrťka* (quarter) of potatoes for every batch of 5 rams.

A traditional part of shepherds' remuneration also was a contribution for footwear (*bačkorové*). To this were added further advantages and profits: the possibility of grazing their own sheep, of feeding their pigs with *žincica* or fermented ewe's milk, compensations for moving the shep-fold on to fields for manuring, a ration of wool from sheep shearing, appropriation of young lambs born late in the season. In some localities they were also given arable land prepared for potato planting.<sup>44</sup>

The **Swineherd** (*gondáš, kondáš, sviňiar, kanás*) tended pigs from spring until autumn and in some places he drove the herd out also in winter to the forest to feed on acorns and beech nuts. On the day of the first drive out (in the valley of the Slaná river on St Joseph's day, in the environs of Levice on St George's day), he was given bread and a glass of brandy. In the environs of Nitra, a swineherd was given a *štvrtlík* (about 16. lit. of cereals) and half a loaf per season per 1 pig. In the area of upper Gemer, he also received his all-day fare (the so-called *chovanka* – nutriment). On feast days, he was given, in addition, gifts in kind: in Gemer and Horehronie his employees gave him cakes, bacon, flour and a little money on Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide. Similarly, like the cowherd, the swineherd also made the festive round with birch boughs and was given the same reward – in some localities all those tending animals made this round together. In richer villages, these employees were given accommodation in the common house, or they were given a plot off the common for planting potatoes.

A cowherd, as a rule, kept also boars for reproduction. At Záhorská Bystrica near Bratislava, he received a measure of cereals for feeding the boar when it covered a sow. Elsewhere he received a small sum of money. At Sazdice, he was given in addition a loaf of bread after the farrow. If the sow farrowed for the first time, the cowherd had the right to one of the piglings; however, he received such a reward from one farmer once a year only.

Pig tending in common by a hired swineherd persisted longest in the southern regions of Slovakia.<sup>45</sup>

The **Horse Keeper** was hired for members of the horse breeder union by their representative – *šoltis*. The horse keeper was as a rule the owner of horses which he grazed in the common herd. In mountainous regions, horses grazed in common on downs where they were driven after spring work in the fields and stayed there until mid-August when their owners took them for collecting hay. Horse keepers were remunerated for their work with money – a monthly payment agreed upon beforehand, which was divided among the owners according to

the number of horses. Once in 2 or 3 weeks, the farmers paid a visit to the horse keeper in his hut and together with salt for the animals, bought him also brandy and tobacco.<sup>46</sup> Horse grazing in a common herd in the care of a hired keeper was not a general practice. It was rather widespread in Orava and Liptov and in some smaller areas of western and southern Slovakia.

The Goatherd was hired by the breeders' union solely when the number of goats in the village increased so that they could not be kept to graze together with cows. A goatherd drove the flock to pasture daily from spring usually to the same on which cows grazed. In fairer weather he occasionally drove them out also in winter to scamper about. He was paid monthly according to the number of goats (in the fifties it amounted to 10 Kčs per head). At Devínska Nová Ves, the goatherd stayed at the common house. He was paid every Sunday at the morning drive-out and on Christmas Eve he received cakes and wine from the owners.

Goose-herd – he was rather rare among communal servants. Few villages had a suitable and adequate pasture land for this purpose. In view of the undemanding nature and the relatively short period of this employment (May – August), this duty was carried out by school children from the family or of some relation. Communal goose-herds used to be, as a rule, local Gipsies who kept a common flock of geese outside the school holidays. At Rybany near Topoľčany they were given 1 loaf of bread per goose and occasionally the housewife would give them a little flour, a few eggs or some other reward in kind. At Kamenný Most near Štúrovo, boys served as communal goose-herds. They were given meals by the owners in turn – they had 1 bottle of milk daily and a slice of bread (eventually a loaf once a week – the so-called *cipó*). At the end of the season – on St Stephen's day (August 20), farmers paid goose-herds at the rate of 1 Kčs per goose and 2 Kčs per gander as a contribution for clothes for the coming kermes.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The establishment of royal guardians of forests (custodes silvarum) called *hájníci* (gamekeepers) may be presumed to have existed already in the 13th century. KUČERA, 1974, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 344.

<sup>3</sup> It also comprised e.g. communal midwives. We find the first references to this in that they were hired and paid by the town, as far back as 1581. BEŇUŠKOVÁ, 1990, p. 206, and following.

<sup>4</sup> ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA, 1982 pp. 192–193.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 1980, pp. 470–471.

<sup>6</sup> In 1990 66.3%, in 1921 – 60.4%, in 1930 – 56.7% of the population earned their living in agriculture, forestry and fishing. ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA, 1982, p. 494.

<sup>7</sup> As late as 1971 when the number of villages as against 1921 had declined by 11.9 % (as a result of their fusion) a total of 34.4 % of small villages were on record. Middle-sized villages amounted to

- 31.2 %, the rest being large villages, with over 1000 inhabitants. *ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA*, 1980, p. 135.
- <sup>8</sup> Regulations of the higher state administration admitted this possibility on condition that expenses and profits would concern only members of economic unions. *NOVÁK*, 1924, p. 337.
- <sup>9</sup> Hiring of herdsmen until the 19th century was in the competence of village mayors. After the abolition of serfdom, it gradually passed on to chairmen of the former copyholders and pasturage societies. *REBRO*, 1959, p. 510.
- <sup>10</sup> *ETNOGRAFICKÝ ATLAS SLOVENSKA*, 1990, p. 62.
- <sup>11</sup> This right was maintained in this country from the Middle Ages and was still valid in our century. *RAŠLA*, 1974, p. 682; *NOVÁK*, 1924, p. 48.
- <sup>12</sup> Evidence of an unworthy, even inhuman attitude towards herdsmen is presented by *GALLO*, 1976, p. 220.
- <sup>13</sup> *PETRÁŠ*, 1975, p. 71.
- <sup>14</sup> *PODOLÁK*, 1982, p. 113.
- <sup>15</sup> *M. Petráš* presents specimens of written herdsmen's contracts from the 19th and 20th century in the Liptov region. *PETRÁŠ*, 1975, pp. 79–84.
- <sup>16</sup> For that reason, in the little town Ratková, herdsmen's wages were entered in the Town Book which could be scanned by every citizen. *GALLO*, 1976, p. 223.
- <sup>17</sup> *ETNOGRAFICKÝ ATLAS SLOVENSKA*, 1990, p. 65.
- <sup>18</sup> *ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA*, 1982, p. 494.
- <sup>19</sup> When herdsmen's wages were being settled, farmers had the least objections towards wages in kind as they represented the lowest expenses for them, hence, they remained for the most part without changes. *GALLO*, 1976, p. 224.
- <sup>20</sup> *HORÁK*, 1932, p. 18, p. 31.
- <sup>21</sup> *ETNOGRAFICKÝ ATLAS SLOVENSKA*, 1990, p. 63, 65. See maps Nos. 8 and 25 on remuneration of communal servants and herdsmen in kind.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- <sup>23</sup> Cf. *ŠKOVIEROVÁ*, 1986, p. 166, 17, 181; *Ibid.*, 1989, p. 189, 198, 206; *VÁCLAVÍK*, 1925, p. 103.
- <sup>24</sup> At Rača near Bratislava, the cowherd made the rounds solely of the households of richer farmers on Whitsun Monday when he was given flour, lard, wine and money. *ŠKOVIEROVÁ*, 1989, pp. 204–205.
- <sup>25</sup> *PODOLÁK*, 1969, p. 123.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109, 110.
- <sup>27</sup> *PETRÁŠ*, 1975, p. 81.
- <sup>28</sup> *RIMAKOKOVA NAGYKÖZSÉG JAGYZÖKÖNYV*, p. 298.
- <sup>29</sup> *GALLO*, 1976, p. 224; *PETRÁŠ*, 1975, p. 80 and following.
- <sup>30</sup> See *ŠKOVIEROVÁ*, 1988, pp. 218–219.
- <sup>31</sup> *PODOLÁK*, 1982, pp. 123–124.
- <sup>32</sup> *ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA*, 1982, p. 193.
- <sup>33</sup> Cf. *PETRÁŠ*, 1975, p. 224; *PODOLÁK*, 1982, p. 110; *ŠKOVIEROVÁ*, 1988 p. 225.
- <sup>34</sup> Instances of remunerating communal servants in which the source is not given, originate from the author's own field surveys.
- <sup>35</sup> *PEDAGOGICKÁ ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA*, 1984, p. 388.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 1985, p. 555.
- <sup>37</sup> *GALLO*, 1983, p. 116.
- <sup>38</sup> Cf. *HORVÁTHOVÁ*, 1986, p. 25, pp. 62–64.
- <sup>39</sup> At Vajnory near Bratislava the shepherd wished:  
Kolko je na temto prutku lístečku  
tolko nech vám Pámbú požehná statečku,



kolko je na tejto palički prútečkú,  
tolko nech vám Pambú požehná sinečkú,  
abi vám kravi hodne dojili  
a mne abi ste hrubí dar dali. (NEUMANOVÁ, 1978, p. 190).

<sup>40</sup> ŠKOVIEROVÁ, 1986, p. 165.

<sup>41</sup> A detailed description of the system of remunerating shepherds was given by PODOLÁK, 1982, pp. 99–115.

<sup>42</sup> See PODOLÁK, 1969, p. 99.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, pp. 100–101.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p. 101, also PODOLÁK, 1982, pp. 109–110.

<sup>45</sup> ETNOGRAFICKÝ ATLAS SLOVENSKA, 1990, p. 20.

<sup>46</sup> PODOLÁK, 1969, pp. 79–80.

## REFERENCES

1. BEŇUŠKOVÁ, Z.: Profesia pôrodných báb v kultúrno-historickom kontexte (Profession of midwives within the cultural-historical context). In: Slovenský národopis, Vol. 38, Bratislava 1990.
2. ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA (Encyclopaedia of Slovakia). IVth Vol. Bratislava 1980; VIth Vol. Bratislava 1982.
3. ETNOGRAFICKÝ ATLAS SLOVENSKA. (Ethnographic Atlas of Slovakia). Bratislava 1982.
4. GALLO, J.: Muránska Zdychava. Rimavská Sobota 1983; Obecní pastieri v Gemeri (Communal Herdsmen in Gemer). In: Gemer, národopisné štúdie 2. Rimavská Sobota 1976.
5. HORÁK, J.: Urbárske a príbuzenské pomery na Slovensku (Copy-hold and family relations in Slovakia). Prague 1982.
6. HORVÁTHOVÁ, E.: Rok vo zvykoch nášho ľudu. (The year in the customs of our people. Bratislava 1985.
7. KUČERA, M.: Slovensko po páde Veľkej Moravy (Slovakia after the fall of Great Moravia). Bratislava 1974.
8. NEUMANOVÁ, T.: Tradičné výročné zvyky (Traditional annual customs). In: Ed: Vajnory. PODOLÁK, Bratislava 1978.
9. NOVÁK, J.: Rukoväť obecných starostov (Manual of communal mayors). Bratislava 1924.
10. PEDAGOGICKÁ ENCYKLOPÉDIA SLOVENSKA (Pedagogical Encyclopaedia of Slovakia). Part I. Bratislava 1984; Part II. Bratislava 1985.
11. PETRÁŠ, M.: Funkcia pastiera a jej kodifikovanie v pestierskych zmluvách v Liptove (Shepherd's function and its codification in shepherds' contracts in Liptov). In: Agrikulárna, v 13. Nitra 1975.
12. PODOLÁK, J.: Poľnohospodárstvo a pastierstvo (Agriculture and pastoralism). In: Horehronie, Vol. 1, Bratislava 1969.
13. Tradičné ovčiarstvo na Slovensku (Traditional sheep-rearing in Slovakia). Bratislava 1982.
14. RAŠLA, A.: Ochrana spoločnosti (Protection of the society). In: Slovensko. Eud, Part 1. Bratislava 1974.
15. REBRO, K.: Urbánska regulácia Márie Terézie a poddanské úpravy Jozefa II. (Maria Theresa's copy-hold regulation and Joseph II's serfdom amendments). Bratislava 1959.
16. RIMAKOKOVA NAGYKÖSZÉG JEGYZÖKÖNYV (Book of records of the large village Rimavská Kokava).
17. ŠKOVIEROVÁ, Z.: Život v obci a výročné obyčaje. (Life in the village and annual customs). In: Záhorská Bratislava Ed. PODOLÁK, J. Bratislava 1986.

18. Obchôdzky obecných zamestnancov. (Rounds by communal employees). In: Zborník Slovenského národného múzea, Vol. 82, Etnografia 29, Martin 1988.. Spoločenský život. Výročné obyčaje. (Social life. Annual customs). In: Ed. Rača. PODOLÁK, J., Bratislava 1989.
19. VÁCLAVÍK, A.: Podunajská dedina v Československu (The Danubian village in Czechoslovakia). Bratislava 1925.

## TRADIČNÉ SPÔSOBY NATURÁLNEJ MZDY OBECNÝCH SLUHOV NA SLOVENSKU

### R e s u m é

Obecné služobníctvo na Slovensku predstavovalo jednak pomocný personál štátnej správy a samosprávy miest a obcí, jednak sluhov, remeselníkov a príslušníkov špecifických zamestnaní, ktorých zamestnávala obec a rôzne záujmové a hospodárske združenia.

Štruktúra obecných sluhov sa v rôznych lokalitách odlišovala. Dialo sa tak v súlade s odlišným systémom hospodárskeho, správneho a duchovného života obyvateľov obce. V menej početných lokalitách dochádzalo k väčšej kooperácii inštitúcií, ktoré tento život riadili, a tým aj k prelínaniu a zlučovaniu viacerých služobných povinností na jednu osobu, prípadne k nahrádzaniu služby rôznymi svojpomocnými aktivitami obyvateľov.

Nižší obecní služobníci (obecný sluha, zvonár, hrobár, hájnik, hlásnik, pastierik kráv, ošípaných atď.) patrili k najnižšej sociálnej vrstve obyvateľov. Vyšší spoločenský status mali sluhovia a zamestnanci obce, u ktorých sa vyžadovali špecifické schopnosti, remeselná zručnosť alebo vzdelanie: pastieri hospodáriaci vo vlastnej rézii, obecní kováči, kantori – organisti a pod. Spoločenskému statusu sluhov zodpovedal aj spôsob akým ich volili a pracovná zmluva.

Naturálna mzda predstavovala najstaršiu zložku odmeňovania obecných sluhov. Tento spôsob odmeny prevažoval u nižšieho služobníctva vďaka obojstrannej výhodnosti i v prvej tretine nášho storočia. Základnou zložkou naturálnej mzdy bývalo obilie (dokladom sú rozličné zaužívané názvy pre výplatu). Rozšírené boli ďalej dávky chleba, naturálií a potravín odovzdávaných pri rôznych výročných sviatkoch a pracovných príležitostiach. V niektorých lokalitách obyvatelia poskytovali sluhom dennú stravu, chlieb, príp. mlieko. Medzi naturálne odmeny patrilo i palivové drevo a rôzne úžitky z obecného a spolkového majetku: užívanie pôdy pod okopaniny, lúky, záhrady, obydľia, pasienka atď. Časť štúdie obsahuje základné charakteristiky obecných sluhov a konkrétne príklady ich naturálnej mzdy v prvej polovici 20. storočia.

Naturálna mzda sa vyberala viacerými spôsobmi. Zhromažďovali ju poverení funkcionári, ktorí sluhu vyplatili, alebo si ju sluha v ohlásenom termíne vyberal sám. Často bolo naturálne odmeňovanie spojené s niektorým výročným sviatkom alebo pracovnou príležitosťou (napr. Štedrý večer, prvý výhon dobytky) a malo formou obradnej obchôdzky.

Pokiaľ ide o životnosť naturálnej mzdy, práve posledne spomenutá odmena bola jej najstabilnejšou zložkou (zaužívala sa ešte v 60-tych rokoch nášho storočia). V ostatných zložkách mzdy bola zo strany obyvateľov so zvyšujúcou sa platbyschopnosťou snaha čoraz viac ju nahrádzať peniazmi. Výrazným zásahom, ktorý zredukoval, ba temer anuloval naturálne odmeňovanie, bola kolektivizácia poľnohospodárstva. Ďalšie sociálne a ekonomické zmeny v povojnovom období (reorganizácia štátnej správy, zrušenie urbaniálnych spoločenstiev, zoštátnenie školstva, cirkevných majetkov atď.) tiež prispeli k rozrušeniu tradičného systému obecného služobníctva a spôsobili jeho postupný zánik.