



Research Paper

Pál Jedlicska and his view on haban community

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ABSTRACT: The presented paper deals with selected ethnographic knowledge about the community of German-speaking Anabaptists - habans from the period of the 19th century. It was during this time period that several publications were created within the framework of Hungarian ethnography, which largely dealt with the national and ethnic structure of the population of Hungary. The aim of my study is specifically the analysis of the work of Pál Jedlicska (1844 – 1917). In his two-volume work *Little Carpathian Monuments (Kiskárpáti emlékek)*, among other things, interesting informations about population of habans can be found.

KEYWORDS: habans, Anabaptism, ethnography, western Slovakia, Pál Jedlicska

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I. INTRODUCTION

Habans were part of the German-speaking population that has lived in Slovakia in the past. It is an ethnonymic name for one of the anabaptistic groups, which generally speaking, came from the territory of the current Switzerland or Tyrol (Horváthová, 2002; Pöss, 2012). During the 16th century, they began to settle in South Moravia and later in western Slovakia. Their most famous settlements were mainly in Záhorie (Sobotište, Veľké Leváre, Moravský Svätý Ján). However, they also settled in the area of the eastern side of the Little Carpathian Mountains (Častá, Horné Orešany, Košolná, Chtelnica) and even penetrated to the territory in the valley of the Váh river (Dubnica, Soblahov, Trenčianska Teplá). Based on their sense of association, which was based on their faith, they created common settlements of the so-called yards (Dvory) (Horváthová, 2002; Rainer, 1985).

In addition to many crafts, habans were known for the production of quality ceramics, metal products, skin processing and cloth. Due to the high quality and technological quality of their craft products, they have become an important source of income for feudal estates on which they were to be based. The nobility allowed them to set up their own religious, municipal and school self-government (Krajčovič, 2023). Due to many military conflicts, during which the haban settlements were plunged several times and also religious persecutions (Counter-Reformation), the individual haban settlements gradually disappeared. Much of the members of the haban community decided to leave the territory of western Slovakia in the 18th century and moved to Transylvania, South Russia, Canada or the United States of America. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the habans, who remained to live in Slovakia, were almost completely assimilated with the Slovak population. Nevertheless, in the first half of the 20th century there were explicitly at three locations within Záhorie (Veľké Leváre, Sobotište, Moravský Svätý Ján) Haban yards. The descendants of the haban population lived here with a form of their own self-government (Beranek, 1941; Rainer, 1985).

Within my paper, I focus on the analysis and interpretation of the knowledge that comes from the work of Pál Jedlicska. In his two-volume work, the *Little Carpathian Monuments (Kiskárpáti Emlékek)* is, among other data of an ethnographic nature, also the important knowledge of settlements, the way of everyday life and history of the haban population. The methodological procedure of my work consists primarily of the acquisition and sorting of historical sources and information (heuristics), their subsequent critical analysis and interpretation. From the point of view of my research, a critical analysis is an important element in exploring objective historical reality, as the work surveyed could have been influenced by the then period realities (for example, stereotypes of ethnic and religious character).

II. LITTLE CARPATHIAN MONUMENTS

Undoubtedly, an important figure within the 19th century Hungarian academic sphere was a regional historian, collector, monumenter, archaeologist or even later papal prelate Pál Jedlicska. During his priestly work in Častá, he became intensively interested in regional history. A reflection of this is his study from 1868 about historic sights of Častá, which he published in the Hungarian written periodical called Hungarian Sion (Magyar Sion) (Jedlicska, 1868). However, a relatively overlooked fact is that Jedlicska also released two valuable registers. In the first one in 1897, which bears the name A Ráb hero Nicolaus Pálffy and his time 1552 – 1600 (Adatok erdődi báró Pálffy Miklós a győri hősnek életrajza és korához 1552 – 1600) reported brief contents a total of 1160 documents. They came mostly from the Archive of the Červený Kameň Pálffy line (Jedlicska, 1897). In 1910, he published a register in Budapest, entitled Original excerpts from the Pálffy's documentary collection 1401 – 1653 and their biographies (Eredeti részletek gróf Pálffy-család okmánytárához 1401 – 1653 s gróf Pálffyak életrajzi vázlatai). This work contains 1109 concise content of documents, which mostly came from the Pálffy family archive (Jedlicska, 1910).

In the Slovak environment, the most famous Pál Jedlicska work is two-volume historical publication Little Carpathian Monuments (Kiskárpáti emlékek). The first volume was published in 1882 and bears the subtitle From Červený Kameň to Smolenice (Vöröskőtől-Szomolányig) (Jedlicska, 1882). The second part from 1891 has a subtitle From Ostrý Kameň to Nové Mesto nad Váhom (Ľeskától-Vágújhelyig) (Jedlicska, 1891). Both volumes of the Little Carpathian Monuments are captured by the history of castle estates, their owners, serf villages and towns. When Jedlicska was writing his work, he used a variety of written sources from several archives. However, he has also gained many knowledge through field observation.

Little Carpathian Monuments are also beneficial from ethnographic point. However, in my research, it is especially important, that both volumes contains knowledge about haban population. In the part from 1882 there is a description of two at that time no longer existent haban settlements located in Košolná and Vlčkovce. The knowledge of them was acquired by Jedlicska from the German written chronicle, written by Ján Čederla and this chronicle was the property of a notary from Dehtice (Jedlicska, 1882). Based on information from this 17th century chronicle, Jedlicska stated, that the first reports about habans in Košolná were from the year 1626. Soldiers who attacked Košolná even stole eight pieces of haban cattle and two horses. In addition, their barns and dwellings were also set on fire. Here, however, the plundering army did not stop. On the other hand, habans from Vlčkovce, in fear of the army that headed towards Šintava, fled to Trnava and Červený Kameň (Jedlicska, 1882).

However, Jedlicska stated that in this period (17th century) a large part of habans from Vlčkovce was exterminated by the Turks. In Čederle's chronicle, extensive information about the Turkish-Tatar attack was recorded, which took place on September 3, 1663 between 10 pm. Anabaptists were surprised by a quick attack. Some were killed and forty-three took into slavery. The survivors were hidden in the fields and at the lake and later found a refuge in Červený Kameň. Here they were supposed to live in considerable misery for more than a year. During the looting of the haban yard, the attackers captured eight horses, twenty-four pieces of cattle and four hundred and fifty sheep. In addition, 6th September broke out the fire and the yard was completely destroyed. At the time of the writing (the second half of the 19th century), according to Jedlicska, the memento about the habans from the collective memory of the local population of Vlčkovce gradually disappeared. Only the knowledge of the place where their yard was, remained (Jedlicska, 1882).

When finding out informations about habans, Jedlicska also focused on the research of the registry. According to his claim, it was possible in the registry records of the village Suchá nad Parnou from 1637 - 1716, to identify some names of recatholized Anabaptists from Košolná. But which specific people, it was not stated. Interesting is also the mention of the haban yard in this village (Košolná). It was located in the northern part of the village, next to the mill. Even in the 19th century, the local population knew this site under the name of the haban yard. At some time, his administration was supposed to be withdrawn from Anabaptists and the migrants from the Czechia, Moravia and Silesia were invited to their place. He also recorded the Hungarian and Slovak names for the yards: anabaptista udvarnak, respectively habánsky dvór. However, Jedlicska considered the most important haban settlements to be in Sobotište and Veľké Leváre (Jedlicska, 1882).

In the mention of the religious life of Anabaptists, Jedlicska stated a brief data concerning the past of all haban settlements. The most important persons at the forefront of individual haban yards were spiritual leaders - preachers. At the same time, these persons also had judicial powers and managed various administrative matters. According to him, the habans from Košolná were not numerous and therefore could not afford to finance their own spiritual representative (Jedlicska, 1882).

At another place of the text Jedlicska also mentions one of the typical haban crafts - pottery. According to him, it was likely that in Košolná, once, this craft (pottery) was extremely flourishing. In the private collections of some people, a significant amount of different haban ceramics has been preserved, which, according to the oral tradition, was to come from Košolná. Even among the local rural population, the awareness of the fact that the most beautiful pottery products were produced in Košolná (Jedlicska, 1882).

The largest space about habans were in the second volume of the *Little Carpathian Monuments*. On approximately three pages, Jedlicska wrote almost exclusively, about Anabaptists living in Dechtice. He believed that the beginnings of the haban settlement in this village may have reached until the first half of the 16th century. He relied on the letter of Count Thomas Erdődy, which was written in Smolenice on May 23, 1606. It contained an indication from Dechtice priest Albert Bohdanovský (Bogdanóczy), according to which some of the peasants alienated properties from both Dechtice churches. It occurred specifically at the time of the heretical priests (régente az eretnek plébánosok). This report was evidence for the Jedlicska that the Protestant clergy were to be found in Dechtice at the beginning of the 16th century. However, he was not sure whether it was directly Anabaptists or another group of Protestants (Jedlicska, 1891).

Jedlicska had several available data towards the Dechtice habans. They settled firmly here in 1626. Based on the information from the Erdődy archive in Čhtelnica, they were used to use one of the village's house. However, it was tied to various counter-services. It was probably part of the profit from their craft work. In 1650 they had a rented part of the mansion in nearby Čhtelnica from Count Elizabeth Erdődy. At the same time, they were settled in Dechtice in a rentedom from Count Judita Amáde. Some of the properties habans also had in the villages of Kátlovce, Horné Dubové, Kočín (today Kočín-Lančár) and Šterusy (Jedlicska, 1891).

Written reports from the later period recorded by Jedlicska have already shown that a compact haban community was created in Dechtice in the second half of the 17th century. For example, on 1663 he stated that from this period the record of the haban yard came. The reports about it also come from the 18th century. Specifically, from the will of Count and the landscape judge George Erdődy (Jedlicska, 1891). Jedlicska also described the localization of the haban yard. It was located on the northeast side of the village. His autonomous position within Dechtice is evident by the fact that this yard was separated from the non-haban population by the flow of the Blava stream (Jedlicska, 1891). According to Jedlicska, houses that were part of the yard, were still in their original state. They were typical of having a habitable attic. In another place of Jedlicska text, he highlighted the resistance of haban roofs, which were made of straw and mud. They had a lifetime of a hundred years and were even fire-resistant (Jedlicska, 1891).

In the mention of crafts, Jedlicska noted that the habans from Dechtice focused mainly on pottery and to some extent the shoemaking (csizmadia). However, he also wrote a general data relating to all habans in Slovakia. According to him, all types of craftsmen were found among the members of this community. Namely, they were mainly tailors, shoemakers, cutlers, drapers and potters. A sign of their strict discipline was that they almost did not talk during their working period (Jedlicska, 1891).

Jedlicska also devoted himself to haban religion. The Anabaptists, on the basis of his claim, recognized only the baptism of adulthood. They considered the baptism of newborns invalid. Every haban settlement had a person who was intended to spread the Word of God. This religious representative was elected from the so-called older brothers and was in charge of the religious life of members of his community. This included, for example, baptism or education of other older brothers on faiths. He proclaimed reception under both ways and if he happened to be trained in some craft, he also devoted himself to this secular aspect of everyday life. At the same time, the Anabaptists living within one district (several yards) also had the main spiritual person, which also belonged to the highest secularity. According to Jedlicska, his position could be compared to the Catholic bishop (Jedlicska, 1891).

According to Jedlicska, the beginnings of the formation of Anabaptism could be dated to the life of several important theologians and at the same time, reformers. Specifically, it was Thomas Münzer, Martin Cellarius and Nicolaus Storch. They were supposed to claim their teachings in Saxony, namely in Zwickau (Jedlicska, 1891). From there, these reform ideas were then extended to Switzerland and Lower Germany. Later they also appeared in the Czechia and Moravia. The main pillar of Anabaptism was, based on Jedlicska's claim, a common property management. It was because of the egalitarian way of life that the Anabaptists were a frequent object of various persecutions, as it was supposed to disturb the authority of individual nobility. At the same time, they refused idolatry, or worship of various statues and paintings (Jedlicska, 1891).

III. CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that the most extensive information about habans in Slovakia can be found primarily in academic writings from the 20th century, to some extent the authors writing in earlier periods were also devoted to them. In the 18th and 19th centuries, a whole number of content of extensive ethnographic works was created. These were largely devoted to the description of individual nationalities, ethnicities and ethnographic groups living in the territory of the then Kingdom of Hungary. Pál Jedlicska was also an integral part of the Hungarian academic writings. In his two-volume publication, in addition to another, there are important knowledge regarding the haban settlement in Slovakia.

In the first volume from 1882, Jedlicska focused on the fate of habans from Košolná and Vlčkovce in the 17th century. He captured specific knowledge of how they were due to numerous attacks of looting armies (Turkish-Tatar troops, imperial ride), their yards plundered. The Vlčkovce yard was even completely destroyed

in 1663. Interesting is also the Jedlicska's information about pottery. Even in the second half of the 19th century, the collective memory of the local population has been aware that pottery products from Košolná were the most beautiful. In the second volume of the Little Carpathian Monuments, where almost exclusively information about Dechtice habans appears, their religious life is described in detail. However, the written knowledge applied to all Anabaptists. The beginnings of the formation of their faith were possible according to Jedlicska to locate in Saxony. Every haban yard had its own spiritual representative, who was in charge of the religious life of the estate. He baptized, educated his fellow believers in the area of faith and accepted under both ways. In addition, the habans were opponents of idolatry.

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