

CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE MIGRATION OF SERBS IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA

(Popular scholarly summary of the project)

In the early modern era, Serbs were among the most mobile social groups in Europe. This was due to their geopolitical location, as the areas inhabited by them often constituted *theatrum belli* and were a place of rivalry between the then powers – the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg monarchy. The constant uncertainty of tomorrow and the real threat to their own existence meant that at the threshold of modernity Serbs often decided to migrate north – initially to the Austrian state, and later to the “sweet Orthodoxy”, i.e. to the Russian Empire. However, the movement between the different ethos of contemporary Europe inevitably had an impact on Serbian culture.

The main objective of the project is therefore to analyze the changes that took place in the Serbian cultural model from the end of the seventeenth century to the second half of the eighteenth century. This issue will be examined in three categories: culture of existence, social culture and symbolic culture. Thus, issues of interest will include establishing the relationship between the phenomenon of migration and the transformation of the lives of eighteenth-century Serbs. The development of Serbian culture in the Habsburg monarchy and the Russian Empire will be compared. Links between migration and the Serbian axiological sphere will be explored. An important part of the project will be to examine the hypothesis of the emergence of the “habit of migration” among the eighteenth-century Serbs, which generated their further mobility towards the Polish-Russian border.

A broad range of cultural texts will be analyzed in the course of the project. Historical relics of Serbian literature (memoirs, epistolary texts, but also normative texts) will be examined. Iconographic materials from the period (including works by Martin Engelbrecht and Hristofor Žefarović) will be included as well.

Research methods adopted in the project will draw on the achievements of various disciplines of humanities and social sciences. However, the model of descriptive research on the cultural dimension of migration developed on the basis of cultural sociology will be given priority. It will be expanded by the methodology of traditional literary and historical criticism and supplemented by historical linguistics research methods.

The implementation of the research project provides an opportunity to better understand the culture and fate of one of the South Slavic ethnoses. The results of the research may give rise to the intensification of research on modern cultures of the Balkan Peninsula, which is now rather scarce.