

CHARLES UNIVERSITY PRAGUE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
Anthropological Studies



Master Thesis

Černá Voda halali
Hunting as a Leisure Activity in
Czechoslovakia in 1960-1989 on the Example of
the Former Hunting Estate in Černá Voda

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Prague 2024

ABSTRACT

The aim of my thesis is to conduct a historical microprobe into the life of society in Czechoslovakia in the second half of the 20th century in the East Bohemian border village of Černá Voda and its surroundings, specifically focusing on socio-cultural practices related to hunting during the socialist dictatorship, examined through the example of the functioning of the system of fee hunts for foreign tourists taking place in a former hunting estate confiscated by the state. I have tried to approach a closer look at the picture of social reality in the defined period through the epistemological foundations of historical anthropology, approaches and concepts that help to reveal the lived experiences of contemporary actors through which the world of the past was shaped. I have been inspired by microhistorical concepts and theories that focus on tracing the multiple forms of representations of symbolic action whose detailed analysis and correlation open up new meanings and interpretations (Levi 1991). I was also inspired by anthropological theories related to the social production of space (Lefebvre 1992), theoretical concepts dealing with actorhood, performativity and the formation of relational relations between human and non-human actors (Actor Network Theory) (e.g. Latour, Law), or theories of agency, particularly in relation to symbolic capital and the concept of habitus (Bourdieu 1995). Also important for me were epistemological assumptions touching on the interconnectedness of culture, symbolic agency, and ritualized social practices (Hobsbawm 1983), drawing on the notion of culture as a dynamically forming system of symbols shared by members of a particular community. The background of post-positivist oral history (Portelli 2020) was also an important addition to the thesis.

Using the example of the former *Zámeček*, I examined how socio-cultural practices associated with hunting, especially the phenomenon of fee hunting, changed after the onset of the socialist dictatorship. On the basis of everyday actions and materialised spatial practices, fee hunting shaped a world that was not only very socially diverse, but also contained a range of phenomena that can be seen as deviations from normality, which prompted the formation of a wide range of actorial strategies and social microworlds that I seek to approach in my work.

Keywords: historical anthropology, sociocultural practices, socialist dictatorship, hunting, Czech borderlands