

## Acculturation and rural architecture of czech villages in Croatia

### Summary

We present the results of a research done in the 1960s in Croatian villages, inhabited by Czech settlers in the nineteenth century. If we had seen these villages at the time of the arrival of Czech colonists more than a hundred years ago, we would have recognized them with difficulties. Naturally, they were smaller, rather sparsely populated, and houses were mostly wooden with thatch roofs and without chimneys. Their yards, with scattered economic buildings, had an especially old fashioned look. At that time houses were not built by the road, but were, according to the tradition, situated in the middle of the courtyard.

Czech and other colonists have contributed to the development of these villages demographically and architecturally and have impressed a certain dynamics onto them in the first phase. Although colonists, as is noted frequently in the literature, came from poor strata and were not the bearers of a rich peasant culture, they brought with them well defined cultural ideas which they at first applied in the new milieu mechanically. Some progressive elements, foremost in the domain of agriculture, were accepted by the local populace. A couple of other cultural phenomena, especially in the area of the culture of living gave way to the local tradition.

At the time of our investigation in the late sixties, the process of acculturation in rural architecture of Czech immigrants was so advanced that with the exception of terminology it was difficult to differentiate between imported phenomena and those of local origin. The efforts of colonists continued to be linked to progressive transformations of the rural house. The process of acculturation has continued intensely in its natural way. Modern construction is losing the last characteristics of ethnicity which are still preserved in the area of ideology. With a couple of exceptions, even in the old rural architecture we will surely not be able to tell a holding of a Czech peasant from that of a Croatian or a Serbian peasant. Acculturation has completely won the culture of Czech immigrants but its course has not been unilateral, it has enriched all present ethnic groups.

(Translated by Jasna Čapo)