

The Case of the Resnik Wedding

Summary

The author explores the identity of the Resnik wedding, an innovation that may become a tradition. This refers to a change in the carnival custom of the village of Resnik, near Zagreb, a village whose inhabitants work, for the most part, in the city. In 1963, the inhabitants of Resnik introduced to their carnival procession a reconstruction of sorts of an authentic old-fashioned wedding, that was lost to tradition, instead of the customary mock wedding of the carnival. The work of the director [a local intellectual] is visible in description of the three versions of this innovation [1963, 1975, 1984]. He does not dramatize the text of the wedding as a writer might, but *instructs* the performers how to improvise on the theme of the given story. This procedure, as well as the stage adaptability of this innovation, indicates that the Resnik wedding ought to be treated as folklore theater. The author speaks of the Resnik wedding as an oral literature phenomenon, and of the functions of this performance, with consideration for the participants' attitudes. She then goes on to speak of the influences [conscious and unconscious] that have led to such innovations in the customs.

Although ethnologists are reluctant to study non-standardized phenomena, phenomena that have not yet become traditions, the author considers that the Resnik wedding is interesting for traditionalist ethnologists as well, particularly the route it takes from a carnival improvisation to a contemporary folklore "life-like" comedy.

[Translated by Ellen Elias-Bursac]