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METAMORPHOSIS OF SOCIALIST HOLIDAYS

SUMMARY

Socialist holidays originated as symbols of the legitimacy and identity of the authorities. Because they were considered a social levy (culturo-historical) ethnology in Croatia and Yugoslavia has rarely touched upon them. Discussions of Soviet ritual have cast light on the attitudes shown by ethnologists who feel it their duty to take active part in forming socialist rites. In this paper the author takes as her starting point the postulates of historian Michel Vovelle who considers revolutionary holidays within their metamorphoses: he is interested in the way they create rhythm in time. These postulates are applied to an analysis of socialist holidays in Yugoslavia. Evidently there is an elaborate system of socialist holidays of general importance. This system does follow the rhythm of traditional yearly holidays, but also undermines it by anticipating or postponing the holiday peak. The special feature of the Yugoslav socialist ritual is that there are no general regulations for ritual registration of the key moments of the life cycle of an individual, a fact which coincides with the widely known negation of individuality existing in this socialist system.