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## **Social and Cultural Resources for the Setting up and Functioning of Family Enterprises in a Small Bulgarian Town**

As a field of culture, the family enterprise shows that in the current European societies the economic operation does not proceed only from a purely rational point of view and that notwithstanding the common speaking of globalization, the local may be a prerequisite for successful economic development. My objective has been to show, proceeding from an example from a small Bulgarian town, that the family enterprise is a field of culture in which the observed phenomena are strongly influenced by the social inclusion of the enterprise and by its tie-up with the context of the urban environment. I shall investigate in what way local social and cultural resources are intensively used in the process of setting up and functioning of a family enterprise from the sphere of hotelism and tourism in the town of Belogradchik. I intend to study whether these resources are conducive to the economic prosperity of the firm. Another research objective is to establish the manner of identification of the enterprise with the town, with the region and the local culture by way of the services provided (tourist and restaurant). I shall look for an answer to the question of how the enterprise' working realm fits in the concrete cultural, historical and social context of the town.

### *Key words:*

family enterprise,  
local resources,  
small town, realm of  
labor, Belogradchik

In the discussion of late modernity family enterprises illustrate, on the one hand, an economic relict of the pre-socialist time and, on the other, they present the existing ideal of family solidarity (Lemberger 2007: 10). As a field of culture, the family enterprise shows that in the current European societies, too, economic operation does not proceed only from a purely rational point of view and that notwithstanding the common speaking of globalization, what is local may be a prerequisite for successful economic development.

In this paper my objective has been to show, proceeding from an example from a small Bulgarian town, that the family enterprise is a field of culture in which the observed phenomena are strongly influenced by the social inclusion of the enterprise and by its tie-up with the context of the urban environment. I intend to accomplish this research objective by tackling several tasks. I shall investigate in what way and why local social and cultural resources are intensively used in the process of setting up and functioning of a family enterprise from the sphere of hotelism and tourism in the town of Belogradchik. I intend to study whether these resources are conducive to the economic prosperity of the firm. Another research objective is to establish the manner of identification of the enterprise' members with the town, with the region and the local culture by way of the services provided (tourist and restaurant). I shall look for an answer to the question of how the enterprise' working realm fits in the concrete cultural, historical and social context of Belogradchik.

What researchers conceive to be a small family enterprise is an economic organization in a process of development, which is not separated from the family and from the economic and social activities. According to ethnologists, investigating the culture of entrepreneurship, the specificities of the working culture in small family enterprises, especially those producing for the local market, find expression in a strongly personalized style of management and work, as well as in the extremely high level of identification with their social environment (Lemberger 2007: 10-11). The historical and cultural context of the milieu exerts a powerful influence on the respective formation of the firm's cultural characteristics (Götz 1997: 41). In my study I shall take a similar approach to the object investigated, by laying stress on the local resources employed by this enterprise. They include the available social capital of the owners, part of the cultural traditions of the town and the town's population, the natural environment and contemporary cultural events organized by the town authorities. The strong identification of entrepreneurs and employees with the social environment is mainly realized through the self-presentation of the firm and through its presentation outside to the society.

I chose as the object of my study a small family enterprise in the town of Belogradchik.<sup>1</sup> I collected the empirical data through the ethnographic methods of participant observation, of free informal conversations and a semi-structured interview with the owners and employees of the firm. In addition I reviewed and assessed advertisement brochures, photo- and video materials. I studied the firm's internet page and a few electronic pages in which it advertised its hotel and tavern. The fortnight-long field research enabled me to get direct impressions from the firm's operation and daily work, as well as from the mutual relations of employees and owners.

The enterprise has been constituted in 1993 by the family couple of Tsvetan and Parvoleta. Parvoleta (born 1948) tells that at that time she had been unemployed. Before that she had worked as an accountant in a cooperative farm, which

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<sup>1</sup> During the latest census in 2011 it was found that the town had a population of 5173 ([http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/PDOCS2/Census2011\\_Age.xls](http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/PDOCS2/Census2011_Age.xls), last visit on 20.10.2014).

disintegrated in 1992. Tsvetan (born in 1946) imparted that as a manager of a canteen of a state enterprise, he had been about to be discharged. So in 1993 the family was in dire straits. Moreover they had to take care of their two sons: the elder one - university student in Sofia, and the younger - high school student in Belogradchik. The family opted for the hotel and restaurant business and tourism: on the one hand, because both spouses were convinced that they had professional education and knowledge suiting that occupation, as well as “relations” with good suppliers, and on the other, because tourism had for decades on end been determining the economic image of the town and had been one of the “traditional” spheres of occupation for the townspeople.

Belogradchik is an extremely picturesque place in the western part of the Balkan Mountains range. Its fine location, unique scenery and eventful history make it one of the most attractive tourist sites in Bulgaria. Under socialism the town was an important and preferred tourist destination because of the unique rock formation, the renowned Belogradchik Rocks. They are in direct proximity to the town and are one of the most attractive natural sites in Bulgaria. For nearly 40 years tourism remained a stable and highly important economic factor in this region. In the wake of 1990, however, tourism marked a tangible decline in the town. From the early 2009, Belogradchik and the villages in its vicinity have turned into objects of heightened tourist interest from all over the world due to the nomination of the Belogradchik Rocks in the *Caves, Rock Formations and Valleys* category within the frameworks of the worldwide competition for the selection of the *New Seven Natural Wonders*. The campaign continued until 2011. In our days the economy of the municipality of Belogradchik mainly encompasses small and medium-sized enterprises mostly of the light and food and beverages industry, as well as small entrepreneurs working in the sphere of the services. Most extensively represented are the family hotels and guest houses, operating in the sphere of tourism.<sup>2</sup> The object investigated also falls in this category.

The enterprise features a family hotel, including a guest house (with six rooms) and a tavern (seating 70) appointed in a “traditional style”, as well as a bus for tourist trips. The owner is also the manager of the firm; he likewise plays the role of a bus driver and guide of the tourists, accommodated in the hotel. His wife is the personnel head and accountant. When in 1993 they started their private business, the spouses first opened a small shop selling alcoholic and soft drinks in the courtyard of their house. About a year later, a coffee shop was added, with two employees. During the days off work, their two sons were also enlisted. In 1996 a tavern was built in the courtyard again, and two years later two floors were added on top of it, accommodating some of the hotel rooms and the firm’s office. Three of the guest rooms are in the house of the owners. Thereby life and work go on in direct space proximity.

Working in the enterprise are a total of eleven persons: the two owners, their younger son, who had graduated in economics in Sofia, his wife, a chamber

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<sup>2</sup> [http://belogradchik.bg/?page\\_id=197](http://belogradchik.bg/?page_id=197), latest visit on 19.10.2014.

maid and two waiters, two waitresses and two cooks. From among the employees, not counting two who are on retirement pensions, no one has left his/her work in the firm and that absence of manpower fluctuation has been pointed out by the proprietress on the very first day of my studies: *Our staff has remained permanent; we have no one leaving as this happens in other firms* (P.M.). One of the reasons for this is the fact that apart from the family members, in the enterprise are working also their relatives and friends and children and relatives of their friends. All of them have been appointed not by a competition but owing to their personal relations and interrelations with the owners. In this way the family, kin and friendly relations acquire a clearly defined economic significance. They become an important social resource in the constitution and development of the enterprise. The existing personal tie-up exceeds the formal relations employer-employee and proves important for the consolidation of the obligations and interdependence within the enterprise.

This way of economic operation in the recruitment of staff was characteristic of a multitude of small companies in the 1990s in Bulgaria as well as in other post-socialist countries of South-East Europe (cf. Chavdarova 2001, Petrova 2010). In fact this is the way, whereby close informal kinship and friendship relations intertwine with formal business relations in the new economic subjects. It turns out that the potential of the personal social network and the personal relations it holds are actively involved and used in the economic activities of the small entrepreneurship (Petrova 2010). This has been a testimony of the mass involvement of the private sphere in the public sphere of labor.

On the other hand, family and economic roles intertwine in individual members of the family, whereby the economic relations become an important part of the family living world. Coming to the fore in this family enterprise, as well as in other such enterprises, are specific conceptions of the work-kinship interrelations for the needs of the entrepreneurial practice (cf. Lemberger 2007: 26). Even on the scale of space, for instance, the housing structure does not serve only private objectives; it is by and large subordinated to the demands of the family business.

The economic relations in the enterprise investigated draw resources from the social capital of the family, built up in the private sphere. Social contacts, personal relationships and activities in the town cannot be completely separated from the professional; they overlap. Both kinship and other personal relations and earlier acquaintances are put to use for professional work, i.e. such as relations with suppliers of foods and drinks. The good relations, acquaintances and trust within the frameworks of the small town, where anonymity and alienation are not so much characteristic as in the big cities, help in the establishment of good economic partnerships. In the family enterprise the use of the resources of the social capital results in a tangible growth of the economic possibilities, respectively of the economic capital.

The entrepreneurs in the firm studied prefer to initiate business relations only after relations had already been established in the private sphere. This approach is not unusual; it is also observed in other small and medium-sized enterprises in Bulgaria (cf. Chavdarova 2007). It has been evidence of the successful ex-

perience of transforming the social capital into economic capital. The activation of the existing personal social relations aims at helping the professional work of the new economic organization. In the new conditions the personal relations are adapted becoming an important social mainstay of the economic operation in an enterprise under the conditions of market economy.

The observation of the everyday work in the firm shows that the economic practices, apart from being closely intertwined with the direct social environment, are also strongly connected with the natural conditions and culture of the town and the region. The main cause of that circumstance is the nature of the services offered. The simultaneous offering of tourist and hotel and restaurant products has to compete with other local enterprises of this branch and in this case “striking roots” into the local and its culture, as well as identification with the town and the region prove to be of existential importance for economic survival. The natural resources, which turn into an important part of the tourist routes, organized by the owners of the enterprise for the guests, are the Belogradchik Rocks, the Magourata Cave and the Rabisha Lake. The historical cultural monuments, listed as an attractive part of these routes are the Kaleto ancient town fortress and the Baba [Granny] Vida fortress of Vidin, as well as some monasteries in the region. Tapping the local natural resources, the enterprise offers highly popular eco-tourism, which is in high demand. I shall illustrate these assumptions by excerpts from the presentation of the firm on its internet page. “You will have excellent opportunities of practicing alternative tourism, hiking, cycling and caving, mountaineering, hunting and angling, sporting, kayaking and rafting”.<sup>3</sup> All these activities are guaranteed by the personal commitment of the manager: he takes the guests by a microbus, offers bicycles for rent, guides himself the group of tourists on the routes, organizes and manages picnics at suitable locations in the open. The numerous ways of entertainment are integrated under the motto of friendship, informality, personal care: “The hosts take personal care of the accommodation, servicing and accompanying their customers round the sights in the vicinities of Belogradchik... The hosts treat every visitor as a friend”.<sup>4</sup>

The proprietress’ work with the customers is staged in a similar manner: she personally welcomes each one of them, regales them, tells them stories: “Ms Mladenova, besides her delicious meals, will fascinate you with tales of half-forgotten legends”. Their son is also presented as an active party in the provision of complex services of personal orientation: “Mr Mladenov, Junior, is well acquainted with the history of the town and the region and will overwhelm you with numerous intriguing facts”. In this way, personalization of relations with customers as an entrepreneurial practice spreads onto all the services offered: from reception through accommodation, meals to a rich tourist program. Of particular importance here are the communicative skills of the owners. The fact that Tsvetan always personally guides the hikers on the tourist routes, and Parvoleta stages their reception and ser-

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<sup>3</sup> <http://madonainn-bg.com/>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

ving as long-awaited and close guests aims to establish close bilateral relations as well as to strengthen the two way tie-up, exceeding the formal relations between an entrepreneur and a customer. The owners themselves consider this personal communication with the customers as a factor for the success of the enterprise. During my field research the owners showed me with particular pride a box with a great number of illustrated postcards sent by satisfied customers from many European countries and from Japan. Lately the messages of gratitude have been mostly received by e-mail and have been also kept by the son of the owners. On the internet page the success of the personal communicative style established with the customers has been presented in the following way: "In this way visitors become friends with the hosts and come again".

The close intertwining of the enterprise with the local culture has found expression in the culinary specialties served. The menu of the tavern draws original samples from the local culture, more specifically from the traditional cuisine of the ethnographic group of the *Torlaks*. "The cuisine is traditional Bulgarian; the specialties are *Torlak* specialties typical of the region". Such dishes on the menu are *bel muzh*,<sup>5</sup> *cheese cooked the Torlak way*, *chicken liver in the Torlak way*. On the list as dishes from the traditional Bulgarian cuisine are *liver in the village way*, *kachamak*,<sup>6</sup> *kebab*.<sup>7</sup> Noted in the menu is that the tavern's wine cellar offers "a fine selection of wines and brandies from the region". In this way the customer is shown an enterprise, highly valuing the local culture and supporting other branches of the local economy (producers of dairy and drinks, served in the tavern).

The interior of the tavern and the hotel is also meant to draw the customers' attention to local traditional culture. The internet page reads: "The tavern's interior decoration features a Bulgarian Revival period style: a wooden bar and tables, table cloths with characteristic Bulgarian embroidery, hunting trophies on the walls and an old-time fireplace... Cart wheels, and walls, decorated with old-time weapons and women's clothing... Everything is authentic here: the cart is from 1929, and the woman's clothing is more than a century old... Everything in the hotel and the tavern keeps on the Bulgarian spirit and traditions. The rooms, and the tavern, and the nooks under the old vine, all emanate unique coziness and a specific atmosphere. Tourists can get in touch here with the lovely natural environment, the diverse landscape and the calmness of this place".<sup>8</sup> In this way once more emphasized is the powerful identification of the enterprise and the services offered with the local cultural traditions and natural resources.

In the advertising electronic sites the owners have taken care to present the enterprise by staging togetherness, coziness and personal care taking: "A guest house and the Madonna Tavern are located on a quiet little street in the town – a

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<sup>5</sup> Unsalted soft cheese, baked with flour.

<sup>6</sup> A dish of maize semolina; *hominy*.

<sup>7</sup> A meat dish with vegetables, flour and spices.

<sup>8</sup> <http://madonainn-bg.com>

place of quiet atmosphere, tasty dishes and friendly hosts... Putting up there are people yearning for conversations and human stories. You will hear them from Parvoleta, the hostess. You may find seclusion in the water nook... Tsvetan, her husband, will drive you to the rocks, among which you may squeeze bicycling. Then you will be served Bulgarian dishes. In the evening you will be told by all means the love legend about the Madonna from the monastery, standing still forever child in hands, awaiting her beloved to come and lead her far away”<sup>9</sup>. The products offered are presented in ad materials as closely associated with traditional family values, with which the enterprise also identifies: household coziness, harmony, concern, unity. The owner is shown as hospitable and competent head of a family, the hostess – as a care-taking mother and housewife, while their son is well brought up and worthy successor.

With the specificities presented so far the culture of this enterprise resembles the culture in other small family firms – it is characterized by a high degree of personalization and informality in the approach to the customers (Lemberger 2007: 75-76). These characteristics, however, also refer to the internal communication between owners and employees. The two entrepreneurs demonstrate their preferences for the personal style of management and for transforming the formal labor relations into informal through the establishment and keeping up of quasi-family atmosphere in the realm of labor. This approach finds expression in the transfer of family orientations and the respective ways of behavior from the private sphere into the working environment. The everyday work in the enterprise is dominated by the idea of “a family firm”: in it “the father” has to have authoritarian power, while the two “parents” have to be taking incessant care of their growing “children”.

The quasi-family interrelations may be highly useful as far as the claims of the employers go for high results in labor, as this becomes clear from the interview with the proprietress. In her view, the employees have, just like the children in a family, to be working all the time and assiduously under the direction and control of the parents, performing most diverse (professional) tasks. Here it turns out that she includes all kinds of work by the employees regardless of their posts in the enterprise, as well as doing additional work beyond the working hours scheduled. In other words, the development and encouragement of such a kind of quasi-family relations is considered by the employer as an important means of mobilizing the employees in the cases when a huge volume of work has to be done by few on the staff, for instance working two or three shifts and extra work.

These norms shared by the owners have to be internalized in the firm and conveyed to the staff, whose behavior has to be oriented to compliance with them. In order to legitimize the norms and secure the employees’ abidance, the managers try to confer the family orientation and the respective ways of conduct from their own private life world into the enterprise and, respectively, into the work practices. The correlation of the firm community with the family and the imposition of family models in the everyday working life are ways of action, due to the fact that the rela-

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.travelguide-bg.com/news/news.php?id=4394>

tives, especially the members of the family as the closest of kin, enjoy the highest trust (cf. Fukuyama 2000). In the enterprise investigated the imposition of such conceptions is facilitated by the intertwining of the owners' family with the group of the employees. According to Tsvetan, the family enterprise "*has to be for all the employees something like a big family*". Clearly formulated here is the firm's self presentation to the employees: this idea has to outline "the profile" and to give an example of "the character" of the economic organization; it has to underlie all ways and forms of expression. This is no new idea; we can see it in a great number of medium-sized and small private enterprises (cf. Götz 1997, Buhr 1988), especially those in the field of tourism. It is widespread in the small firms, which are usually family enterprises (Langreiter 2004).

The two owners consider it of particular importance that all employees in the enterprise really feel like members of one family. The question however, arises from this, whether it is likewise comfortable and desirable for those working in the firm to feel as belonging in a big family, since the authoritarian management actually suppresses the individual creative energy and potential for innovation (Buhr 1998). Voiced in the interviews were some critical stands, mainly by two young employees.<sup>10</sup> In their overwhelming majority, however, the employees back up the idea about the firm as a family. This acceptance can be explained by the fact that this model offers, on the one hand, considerable security in the hard years following 1989 and, on the other the image of a rallied family community is associated with positive feeling in the employees' personal experience.

The domination of the idea of a family firm within the frameworks of everyday occupation finds a clear expression in the selection of a name for the tavern, viz. *Madonna*, after the name given to one of the best known Belogradchik rocks. On this occasion the hostess Parvoleta related the following: *This wonderfully beautiful rock represents a loving mother, embracing her baby. She is bending over it with care, to keep it safe from the external world. Coming opposite is the father, riding a horse, to take his beloved and his child.*<sup>11</sup> The founders of the firm have quite deliberately chosen this name as a symbol of security and protection, characteristic of the family's life.

In certain social situations the personal style of management and regulative understanding of the firm community as a family is best manifested, which have to tie up employees with enterprise. Good examples of such situations are the holidays periodically held on various occasions. The presence of these symbolic actions is fairly highly assessed by employers and employees alike. On the one hand, the strength of tradition plays a role here when celebrating at the work place, as well as the expectations and claims of the employees. On the other hand the owners' need is crucial for securing the loyalty and motivation of the staff. Therefore the employer feels obliged to show his generosity to his staff through the organizing of holi-

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<sup>10</sup> For instance waiter M.N. imparted: *Sometimes I am fed up with the constant instructions and the unceasing control.*

<sup>11</sup> Another rock represents "The Horseman".



days (cf. Petrova 2001, Petrova 2006). The aim of the holidays in the firm is to keep up the the quasi-family community of the staff, deliberately stimulated by entrepreneurs.

I shall give an example of a holiday directly associated with the family enterprise and highly valued by the owners. This is March 22, *Mladentsi*, a traditional holiday in Western Bulgaria (of the 40 Holy Martyrs), celebrated on this date according to the Julian calendar<sup>12</sup>. The holiday celebrated in the past is closest to the day of the springtime solstice; it is a holiday of the transition from winter to spring and for that matter its ritual elements have a preventive and productive orientation (Vassileva 1994: 314-315). The owners' family, carrying the family name Mladenov, had declared more than 30 years earlier that day a family holiday celebrating it every year. After the constitution of the enterprise, the character of the holiday changed and from a family celebration it became an event of the firm. On this day, employees are involved in celebrating the owner' holiday. *Mladentsi* [*Juniors*] as a traditional holiday of the coming spring is related by the couple of owners with the beginning of the active tourist season, which is of huge importance for the enterprise's development.

In the early afternoon the hostess goes out in the courtyard of the tavern with the other women of the staff. Each one of them plants a few flowers. Cook M.P. interprets this custom in the following way: *Earlier people believed that everything planted on that holiday grew very well. Therefore the mother planted a great number of flowers in the courtyard with her daughters. Now we are doing it, too, so that we may be successful with the running of the tavern and the hotel.* During the same time the host gets together the male staff in the tavern and pours to each one of them to taste his home-made brandy. On the traditional holiday men get together and drink some brandy to be healthy and to be successful in their work throughout the year. Having this symbolic meaning today this custom is performed by all the staff.

The owners cook a festive dinner and invite the staff in the tavern. Parvoleta has baked special French rolls called *Mladentsi* [*Juniors*] in the shape of a baby, with honey spread on top. They resemble the little breads with anthropomorphic features, which mothers in the region of Belogradchik used to bake for the holiday to secure the health of their children (to ward off measles and other infectious diseases) and handed them out to relatives and neighbours (Marinov 1994: 285, 522-523). The children ate the small breads to grow up healthy and strong. Before the dinner starts, the hostess explains to the staff the symbolic significance of the festive elements. Every member of the staff receives one little bread, which they later eat. During the dinner the hope is always expressed that the new tourist season would be better than the previous year's. According to tradition established in the firm, Tsvetan pours red wine in the glasses wishing that they all together receive and service more numerous tourists during a successful season. In the celebrations

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<sup>12</sup> According to the Gregorian calendar the holiday is celebrated on March 9 (Vassileva 1994: 314).

the guests taking a meal in the tavern also get involved: each one receives a little bread as a present from the hostess.

The holiday described is one of the attempts at a symbolic realization of the firm as a family. Its occasion points to the intimacy of a holiday from a traditional regional calendar, celebrated within the frameworks of the family. It brings to the fore association with an intimate atmosphere, but the festivities are shared by the celebrating family with the staff they have employed. The two owners include the festive elements which target at staging family traditions like, for instance, ritual planting of flowers, ceremonious brandy drinking, a common holiday meal and eating the traditional little breads. Within the frameworks of the celebration the owners acts as “father” and “mother” of the family enterprise: they are well aware what roles they have to perform during the holiday. This experience they have transferred from their personal life together on to the realm of work. Their family holiday remains no personal occasion, rather becoming a holiday of “the new bigger family” and as such it is accepted by all the rest (employees and customers). On this festive day the two owners have numerous informal contacts with the employees and in this way they present the firm as a community whose members are tied by quasi-family relations (cf. Petrova 2006).

The employees’ approval legitimizes this image, because for them it is likewise important to get to know other aspects of their bosses’ characters, which stand out during the holiday. The hostess is valued and respected as a connoisseur and guardian of traditions, and the host as an awe-inspiring head of the family, capable of rallying around himself all during the holiday. These feelings surfacing in the intimate atmosphere of the holiday contribute both to the reaffirmation of the hierarchical positions of the owners and to strengthening the sense of belonging to the firm in the employees. By way of the holiday the relationship with the town community is also realized as the visitors to the tavern are involved in the common celebration and relations are established or strengthened with them by their been presented with the ritual bread.

An outstanding example of how the town’s cultural resources are tapped with the aim of presenting the enterprise within the frameworks of the town community is the participation of the owners and staff in the gathering on the Bulgarian-Serbian frontier, annually organized by the Municipal Council in the month of August. The owners close up the tavern for 5 hours and the whole staff is taken on board the firm’s bus to the location of the gathering about 15 km away. Everyone on the staff receives some pocket money from the owner, which he/she can spend during the gathering. All attend the cultural program together, which consists of presentations by folk singers, vocal and dance groups. The employees take seats in front of the tribune and sometimes join the common dancing rings. About a couple of hours later they all go to some of the Serbian eating places and sit down to a dinner. Encouraged by the owner they choose from the menu such dishes and drinks which are typical of the Serbian cuisine. The employees try the dishes and compare them to the way those cooked in the tavern taste. The flavour and taste of the Serbian alcoholic drinks and the servicing are also subject to commentaries and the conversations are directed to the cultural program and the attractions offered. The bill is

paid by the owner. After lunch there is free time of about an hour during which all can have a look of the stands and make a purchase using the pocket money. Finally all get back to the bus commenting on their way back on their impressions from the gathering.

The visit to a cultural event is organized in the common free time of the staff on the initiative of the owners. These few hours are declared free from work so that all could take part. According to the wish of the owners, *“these visits to the gathering are to give an opportunity to everyone to steam off and feel respected in a few hours”* (P. M.). The employees impart that they always associate the visit of that cultural event with a pleasant rest and a change in the everyday routine. Strengthening such positive feelings is the great variety of cultural offers as well as the generosity of the bosses. This town cultural event, however, not only acquires the function of giving time for physical and mental relaxation; it also performs an important role of integration of the staff and is highly conducive to the structuring of the image of the family community. During the cultural events the two owners operate as “parents”; they dispense pocket money to everyone, encourage common action, take care that all spend the time together, pay the bill. The staff is represented “to the outside world” (in front of the other visitors to the gathering) as a single community. They watch all together the cultural program, then they go to have a lunch together and are seated at a common table, after which they again together go to see the stands. These actions during the gathering are highly important for shaping the image of the firm to the outside world and become symbols of the community of owners and staff. Thereby the feeling of protection and the basis of trust, of belonging to the firm is conveyed to employees. The common participating in the gathering, which is a change of the working routine, gives an opportunity of steaming off and is a kind of a compensation for the workday stress (cf. Petrova 2006). The annual visit to the gathering also stimulates the tie-up of the enterprise with its social environment and the identification with the local milieu. The gathering becomes a stage on which the enterprise is presented as a quasi-family community.

The organization of the enterprise investigated is characterized by an authoritarian traditional style, where the collective results of labor are ranked above the individual desire. The reasons of the specificities of this firm culture are both traditional models of conduct operating to our days and maintained by society in the small town, and the importance and high value of the family and local tie-up.

The management of the enterprise and the style of work may be described as personalized and paternalistic, and the reasons for this are the weakly differentiated organization of labor and the dominating regional ethos, which the enterprise complies with. The entrepreneurial actions of the firm studied are an example that in the economic practice in the present-day small town the personal links overlap with the professional ones and are actively used economically. The small family firm generates its economic success when it is strongly related to the local social contacts, abiding by the conditions of the branch and of the products offered, as well as to the market (Lemberger 2007: 92). The firm studied meets these conditions and achieves economic successes. The entrepreneurial practices of the Belogradchik company powerfully fit in the social environment of the town and the

region, actively drawing on the local social and cultural resources. The owners act as “parents” in the organization of the work processes; they strive to establish quasi-family relations with the employees, which they use for self-presentation and for showing the firm to the customers and the local community. The example adduced shows that the modern economic enterprise is not dominated by the motivation of profit, alone, but should also be construed as a social and cultural field of studies.

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## **Социјални и културни ресурси оснивања и функционисања породичних предузећа у малом бугарском граду**

Породично предузеће, као део културе, показује да у савременим европским друштвима економско деловање не мора искључиво да потиче са строгог рационалног становишта, те да локално – упркос општој причи о глобализацији – може да буде претпоставка успешног привредног развоја. Циљ овог рада је да се на основу примера из малог бугарског града покаже да породични посао представља део културе у којој су посматрани феномени под снажним утицајем укључености предузећа у друштво и његове повезаности са урбаним контекстом. Овај истраживачки циљ се остварује решавањем неколико задатака. Најпре се истражује како и зашто се локални социјални и културни ресурси интензивно користе у процесу оснивања и функционисања једног породичног предузећа у сфери хотелијерства, угоститељства и туризма у граду Белоградчику. Проучава се да ли и како ови ресурси доприносе економском просперитету фирме. Следећи истраживачки задатак је сагледавање идентификације чланова предузећа с градом, регионом и локалном културом, а преко пружања услуга (туристичких и угоститељских). Тражи се одговор на питање како се рад предузећа уклапа у конкретни културно-историјски и друштвени контекст Белоградчика.

### *Кључне речи:*

породично  
предузеће, локални  
ресурси, мали град,  
област рада,  
Белоградчик