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Search for Indian America 4 [Hľadanie indiánskej Ameriky 4]. Conference Report

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International conference known to the involved public as Search for Indian America, more precisely its fourth year, was hold on February 10-11, 2020 at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava (UCM), Slovakia. The conference, which has become, as I dare to say, traditional reunion of mostly Slovak and Czech (but not only) Americanists researching on native American cultures, was organized again by the author of this report and Adam Uhnák from the Department of Ethnology and World Studies at UCM in cooperation with Center for Mesoamerican Studies at Comenius University in Bratislava.

Unlike the third year (2019) we, as the organizers, also welcomed two participants from other countries than Czech Republic and Slovakia, namely from Italy and Colombia, even though both affiliated to the universities in Czech Republic and Slovakia. After two years, however, the official languages of the conference (Slovak and Czech) were complemented by English and unofficially by Spanish, as well.

The two days long event, as usually brought together the contributions from various related disciplines such as ethnology, social and cultural anthropology, history, archaeology, religious studies and literature. Organizers also followed an intentional purpose of this conference and likewise previous years this one was not focused on any specific topic. In fact, as I wrote in the last year report, one of the main goals of the conference is to create a network of Slovak and Czech Americanists with ambition to ample it within the course of

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time more and more abroad. I can say that this goal is slowly getting achieved and the participants keep in touch and cooperate in different fields (conferences, workshops, research, papers, etc.) (HLÚŠEK 2019:127).

The fourth year was divided again in three panels, mostly reflecting the geography of American continent and its cultural areas (North America, South America, Mesoamerica), as well as the subjects of interest and topics of each presented scholar.

After the welcome address spoken by myself Miroslav Černý from University of Ostrava made his speech on topic *Vitalita a ohrožení jazyka západních Šošonů* (*The Vitality and Endangerment of the Western Shoshone Language*). After him Livia Šavelková from University of Pardubice took the word and presented her contribution under the title *Severoameričtí indiáni a jejich účast v olympijských hrách* (*North American Indians and Their Participation on Olympic Games*). Martin Heřmanský from Charles University then took the attenders to the sphere of native music by means of his presentation called *Indiánský hip hop jako prostředek indigenního aktivismu* (*Indian Hip Hop as a Tool of Indigenous Activism*). First block was concluded by Mesoamerican, more precisely Maya, contribution named *Význam a funkcia nebeského pásu v mayskej ikonografii* (*Meaning and Function of Skyband in Maya Iconography*), which was presented by Jakub Špoták from Comenius University.

The second panel was completely Maya and all contributors were from Comenius University. It was opened by Jakub Adámek presenting his recent research in Guatemala under the name *Maíz sólo se come: pol'nohospodárstvo vo Uaxactúne včera a dnes* (*Maíz sólo se come /The Corn Is Just to Eat/: The Agriculture in Uaxactún Yesterday and Today*). He was followed by Nikol Quardová, whose presentation bore the title *Kakao – posvätná plodina Mayov* (*Cocoa – Sacred Plant of the Maya*). Then Maria Felicia Rega made her speech on the topic of *Political and Social Dimension of Ballgame: a Comparative Analysis of Ballcourts Distribution through a Regional Perspective*, and the second block was concluded by Milan Kováč whose contribution was named *Mytologický vzor nebeskej jaskyne pri zakladaní mayských politických centier vo Uaxactúne, Guatemala* (*Mythological Pattern of Celestial Cave and Its Meaning in the Process of Foundation of Maya Political Centers in Uaxactún, Guatemala*).

The last panel, which took place next day opened Monika Brenišinová from Charles University with her contribution called *Mexické kláštéry 16. stoloť. Čas a náboženské oslavy* (*16th Century Mexican Monasteries. Time and Festivities*). Next two presentations were dedicated to the literature reflecting native cultures in Colombia. First one was presented by Lillyam Rosalba González Espinosa from University of Ostrava and its title was *The Legend*

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of *El Dorado in Colombian Children's Literature*. The second one, which closed the conference as such bore the title *Symbolika orla a jaguára v románe Mesto netvorov od Isabel Allende* (*Symbolism of the Eagle and Jaguar in the Novel City of the Beasts by Isabel Allende*) and its author was Roman Zaťko from Charles University.

The fourth year of Search for Indian America can be considered as successful (as well as the previous three years). It revealed that Slovak and Czech researchers on the field of native American cultures are interested in various topics and that their research contribute to the development of native American studies (not only) in both countries. The platform, which was created by the organizers four years ago enables the participants to share their experiences and knowledge and it is more than obvious that this kind of reunions makes sense. Hence the organizers are looking forward to seeing their colleagues next year again. The fifth year, however, will take place for the first time not in Trnava but in Pardubice, Czech Republic. The approximate time remains untouched – the beginning of summer semester in February 2021.

Bibliography

HLÚŠEK, Radoslav (2019): Search for Indian America 3 (Hľadanie indiánskej Ameriky 3). Conference Report. In *Ethnologia Actualis* 19 (1), pp. 127-129.