

In The Wake of the Matyó Traditions by József Bán

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☒ Tracking our ancestors

Remembering and preserving our past and traditions help to understand our present. The Mezőkövesd Library Trust is aimed to develop the database of our local history collection and also to patronize publishing. This collection of manuscripts by József Bán, is the fruit of a preserving work done by the local patriot for many years. This rich ethnographical material is a tribute to the author and a gift to the reader.

" Folk customs have its unwritten moral rules and laws, manners and common courtesies are bound to events, and in them poetry, myth and magic are also present" – says the author. Besides the written documents of the time and the relics on display in museums, oral traditions also tell us about the life of a community, and the names of long-forgotten people greets the reader on the pages of this book, wearing their nicknames like an ID card. The book also recalls the a notorious event that took place in the town between the two world wars: the era of ' let your tummy rumble, but your outfit must sparkle ' ended with putting all the expensive and glittering folk costumes on bonfire.

Collecting the list of beliefs of special calendar days, weather forecasting and traditonal weather observation feature the thinking of the people. Observing nature, they tried to reduce the risks of farming and turn to profit. They believed that ' time rules' , since work on the fields depends on the

calendar, thus man depends on the calendar. Our ancestors were intimately and vitally connected with nature, but we are not any more. (Our future might depend on whether we can manage to find our way back to nature.) The ploughman was devotedly and vitally connected to nature. His life depended on it thus he kept praying and observing nature.

This book is a very special one. For posterity it is a curiosity, for ethnographers is a gold-mine of scripts, that have been collected for years by the enthusiastic author with the aim of preserving this knowledge and present it as a moral lesson to the readers. It is a must to read by every local patriot, all local historians, our grandchildren, who might want to carry on the good work. Hopefully they will. This great work is to certify how our ancestors are honoured.

Many thanks for all those who helped in publishing. Thanks for the author for his enthusiasm, for the sponsors for their help making publishing possible.

Editor Mária Pintér

The book is available in Hungarian!