

Community Resilience and Self-organisation in an Event of a Natural Disaster: The Case of the Rakovitsa Neighborhood, Berkovitsa Town

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(Summary)

This article analyses memories of the flood on June 1, 2023, in the Rakovitsa neighborhood of Berkovitsa town through the lens of disaster anthropology. The study aims to understand how socially vulnerable communities experience, interpret, and manage disasters under conditions of limited intervention by local authorities and long-term neglect by the state. Ethnographic methods are used – semi-structured interviews during a visit to the neighborhood a year after the flood, in the summer of 2024. The analysis focuses on the role of informal mutual aid networks, religious institutions, and seasonal labor mobility as conscious and/or unconscious alternative strategies for coping with the unexpected crisis situation. In conclusion, it analyses how the disaster highlights structural inequalities, but also demonstrates the ability of communities to build local resilience.

Keywords: floods; Roma; social vulnerability; religion; seasonal labour mobility; Northwest Bulgaria

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