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The institutional grant that the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia received in November 2005 has allowed us to take our activities even further for the structural strengthening of Bulgarian academic space. Read on for a fuller account of how ENABLE, the first CAS project supported by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science, enhances the Centre's interdisciplinary and networking capacities, its quality management and institutional resources; or visit our new webpage to take a taste of our new interface.



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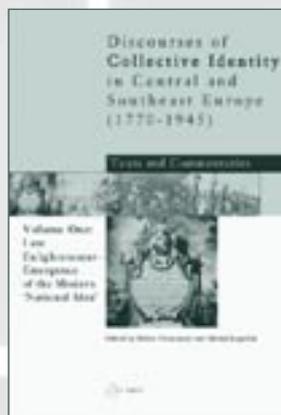
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News

We are delighted to announce that the first volume of four devoted to Discourses of *Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945)*, known as the *Identity Reader*, come out in early June. For more see www.idreader.cas.bg



CAS is pleased to welcome **Neliya Kolarska** as the new CAS administrator, a newly-opened position at the Centre that had been needed for a long time due to the increase in the volume and diversity of CAS activities. Neliya is a Sofia University graduate combining experience in the administration of national and European programmes with an academic profile and knowledge relevant to CAS areas of activity (degrees in English and Spanish and in European Studies).

We would also like to welcome **Silvia Stancheva** at the position "CAS librarian" as the academic interests of our former librarian Stoyan Kotov "pulled" him abroad several months ago. Silvia comes to CAS with a wealth of knowledge in the field of library sciences and the humanities. She is currently a PhD student at the Sofia University.



Those who were wondering why **Petya Angelovska**, the radiant office manager of the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia, is no longer there to meet them at the reception desk, will probably be pleased to know that the 7-month-old reason for her temporary absence is now learning to sit and crawl. In her brief visit to the Centre little Monica undertook an advanced study of the surroundings, exhibiting an inquisitive spirit and a desire for cooperation. ■

Enhancing Advanced Study in Bulgaria for the LARGER EUROPE

We are happy to announce that the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia has received substantial institutional support from the Scientific Research Fund at the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science. We are especially proud that ENABLE is one of the only two projects in the field of the humanities and the social sciences that has received funding under this state-supported programme and CAS is the only non-budget research institution that has been awarded such a grant. The project builds upon our activities and successes, enhancing the interdisciplinary research capacities of CAS in the humanities and the social sciences by lending support in a number of key areas:

- training young Bulgarian scholars to conduct comparative and interdisciplinary research;
- a wider dissemination of innovative research results through workshops, conferences and public lectures;
- bringing together local and foreign researchers;
- career development and fundraising advice;
- improving the standards of quality management through elaboration of evaluation criteria, in-house-training and international monitoring support;
- networking activities on two levels: i) with Advanced Study Institutes and, ii) among young Bulgarian researchers, especially PhD students in the country or abroad;
- improving CAS research infrastructure by upgrading its technical facilities and its library, thus providing Bulgarian scholars with attractive research environment.

These objectives will be accomplished under 4 work packages:

Enhancing CAS Interdisciplinary Forum, Networking, Quality Management, including the organization of a working group on evaluation criteria, and Reinforcing CAS Institutional Resources. The first package envisages the organization of workshops, public lectures and a conference to enhance the dissemination of research results, to increase the visibility of CAS and to allow scholars to engage in a critical discussion in front of a wider scientific community. The series started with a lecture by Prof. Boicho Kokinov who presented the work of the Center for Cognitive Science at the New Bulgarian University and gave a lecture on human memory.

The second package provides for career development and fundraising advice and for the organization of information events. It started with the appointment of a networking officer who continued working on the 'Integrated Database of Doctoral Students in Bulgaria and Academic Newsgroup' and created a centralized register of doctoral students in Bulgaria. The CAS Academic Gateway funded under ENABLE develops the most successful features of PhDGate while trying to avoid its shortcomings by locating a more specific and consolidated community (researchers from the social sciences and the humanities), making them visible to international institutions and colleagues and providing them with wider and more complex academic services (online document storage, publications, critical feedback, database access, information exchange, etc.) in accord with the latest internet technologies.





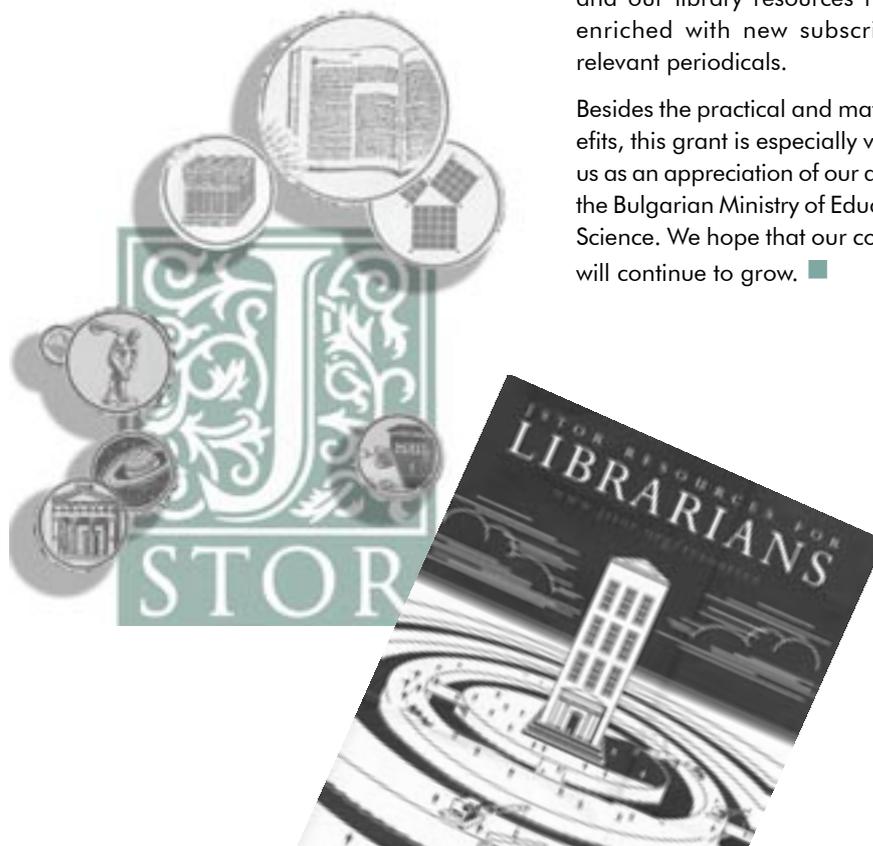
Another web-based project funded under ENABLE is the renovation and enhancement of the CAS institutional website. The new institutional webpage has been structured so as to provide contents easily managed both by CAS staff and by the regular internet user. A more flexible and user-friendly news-and-notification system is being introduced. The *Fellows* and *Programmes* subsections will be interrelated to mirror adequately the group organizational structure of human resources. A *Working Paper Series* section will be also available. The newest, reviewed and edited texts that result from the research projects will be presented in addition to the CAS newsletter

electronic copies to which we envisage subscription.

Package 3 is dedicated to Quality Management, including the organization of a Working group on evaluation criteria in order to optimize evaluation procedures (new forms of questionnaires, assessments, electronic evaluation and submission, etc.). In this component, experienced administrators from other Institutes for Advanced Study would be invited to offer training to CAS personnel under local working conditions, facilities and everyday practice.

Work Package 4 encompasses the update and expansion of CAS technical facilities, the development of CAS informational resources through providing a carefully selected, up-to-date collection of reference materials and granting access to current bibliographic information capacities, high-quality databases and on-line full-text resources. Since the beginning of 2006 CAS has been able to offer researchers the chance to consult the resources of Jstor and History E-Book Project. Our access to Questia has also been continued, and our library resources have been enriched with new subscriptions to relevant periodicals.

Besides the practical and material benefits, this grant is especially valuable to us as an appreciation of our activities by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science. We hope that our cooperation will continue to grow. ■



Minding Memory: Boicho Kokinov Opens the 'Academic Dialogues' Series



What happens inside human memory? What happens when we remember something?

The construct of memory was the subject of the first lecture from the series 'Academic Dialogues', sponsored under the ENABLE project. On the second Thursday of each month the Centre for Advanced Study invites a representative of a major academic group to popularize the work of their colleagues and their own research agenda. The series was opened with a lecture by Boicho Kokinov, Associate Professor of Cognitive Science and a vice-rector of the New Bulgarian University – Sofia, who specializes in the understanding of human thought and the decision-making process. Assoc. Prof. Kokinov described the activities and the accomplishments of the Central and Eastern European Center for Cognitive Science and spoke on Memory as a Theoretical Construct.

He gave an impressive account of the structure of the Center, its history and structure, stressing the efforts made to ensure the high international standards of education, its graduate programme and the annual International Summer School in Cognitive Science, the conferences on memory and analogy and the innovative projects developed by the Center, whose topics varied from cognitive economics to EYE to IT (a project investigating the cognitive process in interpreters) or MINDRACES (a project designed to create robots with a sense of anticipation). The spontaneous reaction of the audience to the projected images of the students' pet robot dog or of young graduates wearing sensors to register their cognitive processes was a genuine proof that the work of the Center was valuable and intriguing even to non-specialists.

The lecture started with an analysis of the concept of memory, understood as a compound phenomenon characterized by reproduction, recognition, accelerated learning and prompt reaction. Memory was then categorized as semantic, episodic, procedural and implicit. After making a short experiment with the ability of the audience to memorize certain word clusters, Assoc. Prof. Kokinov gave an historical account of the principal metaphors of memory from the wax slate mentioned by Socrates and Plato to the modern image of the 'film strip' or the colloquial idea of memory as a storeroom. To this Boicho Kokinov opposed the basic paradigm of memory in psychology and cognitive science, which saw memory as a process of construing the past. This constructive paradigm meant that besides 'forgetting', various 'warps' of memory were also possible, as well as false or 'illusory' memory, the introduction of aspects which never actually took place or the cross-contamination of different events. Thus the main experimental question becomes not the capacity but the accuracy of human memory, and the apparatus of research includes psychological experiments, simulation models and neuropsychological investigations.

To look into the mechanisms of one's own memory, to find out its workings and hopefully some new ways of improving it was doubtlessly an important subject for an audience of academics who normally have to manage and interpret significant amounts of information, as was clearly demonstrated by the ensuing discussion. We hope that the next lectures from the 'Academic Dialogues' series will be just as interesting and successful. ■



DIOSCURI project

In facts and figures

Academic year:	2004 - 2007
Number of fellows:	10
Countries:	Bulgaria
Academic disciplines:	Cultural Anthropology Economy Ethnology History Political Science Sociology
Average age:	42



Petya Kabakchieva on DIOSCURI and the Twin Sides of Cultural Encounter

The project

DIOSCURI is an international comparative research project which encompasses four East-Central European (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) and four South-East European countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Serbia). It is financed under the 6th European framework programme and coordinated by the Center for Public Policy – Budapest. The head of the project is Dr. Violeta Zentai, while Prof. Janos Matias Kovacs is our main source of scientific inspiration.

The key concept of the project is “cultural encounter”. Why? The vision for European integration presented in EU instruments implicitly contains a vision for institutional change conceived of primarily as legislative and organizational reform – hence the key priority is adoption of the *acquis communautaire* and of all EU standards. The approach taken by the team and described in the project by Janos Kovacs focuses on the importance of culture for understanding the depth of the integration processes; this presupposes examining the institutions of the EU and of candidate countries in the context of the more complex dichotomy of relations between the ‘West’ and the ‘East’, where the terms ‘East’ and ‘West’ are put in quotation marks to express the fuzziness of the boundaries between them. Thus the key term in the project is *cultural encounter*. Cultural encounters/exchanges are regarded as adjustment processes triggered by culture gaps (shocks, frictions, surprises), which – if

the partners manage to bridge them – lead to cultural compromises. Of course, the interruption of cultural exchange and the perpetuation of conflicts are not *ab ovo* excluded.

This, in turn, means that in an unprecedented way, ‘Eastern Enlargement’ is studied in conjunction with its counterpart, ‘Western Enlargement’. The ultimate goal of DIOSCURI is to go beyond the world of the *acquis communautaire* and discover forms of cultural coexistence in the enlarged EU which are not, and cannot be, regulated *ex ante* through agreements on institutional/legal systems and policies.

These cultural encounters are explored in three research fields – entrepreneurship, governance and economic knowledge. In the first field, which focuses on entrepreneurship, Tanya Chavdarova and Georgi Ganey investigate the climate of cultural cooperation in a privatized bank, while branches of the same bank or other banks from the same country are researched in other countries taking part in DIOSCURI. Ilia Iliev is looking into the case of small milk producers, while Ivaylo Ditchev analyzes the impact of local and global factors on the development of wine production.

Field II is centered around the idea of governance. The impact of the SAPARD programme for agricultural development is studied by Petya Kabakchieva and Ilia Iliev, whereas the transfer of knowledge in agricultural policy is the topic chosen by Daniel Smilov. Rafael Chichok and Haralan Alexandrov are investi-



gating the cultural encounters in the EU-accession project 'Sustainable Rural Development'.

To counter the practical aspects of this project, Field III studies the transfer of ideas in the sphere of economic knowledge. The model accepted in all countries taking part in the project is to investigate an independent agency for economic analysis, an academic institution and the introduction of an economic theory. On the Bulgarian side, Dr. Roumen Avramov looked into the Agency for Economic Analyses and Forecasts, the Economic Department of the Sofia University and the fate of New Institutionalism and its reception in Bulgaria.

Methodological questions

The focus on case studies led us to analyze not just the actors' interactions, but also the institutional frame they are acting in, the normative regulations and institutional culture embedded in the case. That posed the question of *institutional change as a result of a more widely defined cultural encounter* – between newly imposed rules and regulations and the old institutional culture; between a newly accepted organizational model and the old one; between new norms and old practices;

between new practices and old norms etc. So that led to two methodological questions: first, what is the most appropriate approach for understanding institutional change; and second - how to think about cultural encounters in that context. Without preliminary methodological discussion most fellows had reached similar conclusions; as Roumen Avramov found out in Field III, the New Institutionalism, with its sensitivity to the institutional change, with the clear division between the two institutional levels (the level of formal rules or organizational structure and the level of informal constraints, which belong to the sphere of culture) is the most appropriate paradigm for explaining the contemporary post-communist situation in the context of the EU accession; this was confirmed by Petya Kabakchieva's approach in Field II and shared by Tanya Chavdarova and Georgi Ganev in Field I. In nearly all cases there was a theoretical need for combining the "cultural encounter" approach with institutional analysis. That led to the reformulation of the notion of "cultural encounter", including in it different types of institutional and personal interaction and as a final result a relatively rich typology of cultural encounters appeared.

This rich typology of cultural encounters and their results reformulates the perspective towards the European integration from the point of view of power relations. The post-communist situation carries the scars of the (un)realized communist project and is quite different from the normative western model towards which it is voluntarily aspiring, driven by the idea of erasing those scars. *We have a specific power relationship: a foreign [desired and therefore different] power is imposing its symbols*

and power discourses, trying to change the existing social context, which is covertly resisting. Analyzing the processes of the imposition of European norms, rules and structures, we find something resembling a typical colonial ploy: in the effort to impose them as dominant and to "tame" differences, power discourses or "the symbols of authority are transformed into signs of difference," as H. Bhabha puts it. To describe the newly emerging phenomena, the term "hybrid" has been revitalized. So the research registers the appearance of a series of institutional hybrids, structures accommodating the conflicting cultural cohabitation of post-communist institutional culture and West European rules and norms. It is not clear how this conflict will be resolved: whether the western model will assimilate the post-communist habitus; whether it will adjust; or whether the "colonized" will "colonize" the "colonizer". ■





Three Sides to Every Story:

Roumen Avramov on the Transfer of Ideas

Your research topic seems to differ from that of the other DIOSCURI fellows. For a start, it is broken down into three case studies – an academic institution, an agency and a school in economic science. What brings them together?

The first connection is structural. This is the third field of DIOSCURI, a project devoted to studying the contact zones between Western and Eastern cultures. There are several such zones, but the project focused on three fields – an international bank whose institutional and organizational culture becomes the meeting place of local and foreign tradition; the processes in state administration and in particular the implementation of EU programmes for agrarian development. The third field – my own – deals with the transfer of ideas in the domain of Bulgarian economic science. The three cases you cited are related to three sides of this transfer. The research is conducted simultaneously in all countries taking part in DIOSCURI; at our preliminary meeting we decided to investigate a centre for analytical economics, where concrete analyses are made, a newly established centre for economic education (as the idea was to avoid traditional educational institutions) and the fate of one theory as it is transferred and adapted in East European countries. We had various reasons to choose the New Institutionalism, which is our third case study – not an institution but a theory.

What is the gist of the results you have obtained so far?

They were not that surprising, though they are very interesting indeed. On the whole, they confirm the results of our previous project, *AFTER THE ACCESSION*. Our findings are that these contacts usually lead to the creation of hybrid forms – something that could be expected and something we actually sought out. These hybrid forms are different in each of the three cases. The most advanced form of symbiosis could be observed in an institution like the Agency for Economic Analyses and Forecasts, which is a centre for macroeconomic research where ideas are easily introduced as the agency works with the newest developments of Western economic thought and most people are trained in Western institutions. We did not, therefore, sense any surprise from the encounter between East and West, as those people were directly steeped in the new paradigm; the clash did not consist in any major personal problems or tensions – it was rather the clash between this type of institution and the state administration. This is a very typical conflict which lays bare the differences between modern economic thinking and the economic strategy of the country. The suggested policies are often rejected; in most cases the problem is to overcome the institutional interests of the concrete administrative structure and reach a shared understanding of what it takes to create a solid economic policy. In the second case, that of the Faculty of Economics at the Sofia University, things are even more hybrid; it is more difficult to turn out professors capable of teaching the new paradigm. Besides, a number of the staff has been ‘inherited’ from older academic units. The third agent in this situa-



tion is the body of foreign professors, as the Faculty of Economics from the moment of its creation had a principle of inviting many guest-professors, mainly American ones. This complex situation makes the results more hybrid; there are individual cases in which the teaching is wholly within the standards of mainstream economic theory; there are people who have made a difficult transition from their previous manner of teaching to the new methods and content; and, of course, there is the new generation which does not encounter such a conflict at all. The other problem is that the quality of students is declining due to the crisis in secondary education.

Is there a systematic idea of what should be taught, or does it largely depend on the individual preferences of the professors?

Undoubtedly the latter, which confirms the conclusions of our previous research. It takes time to collect a critical mass of people for the curricula to acquire a more homogeneous and non-contradictory look. For the time being this critical mass is not there, even though the Faculty of Economics provides the better economic education in Bulgaria. It was created with the idea to tear away from the heritage, but of course it has been a difficult process, which takes time and the adaptation of personal attitude.

The third case – the penetration of New Institutionalism in Bulgaria – also revealed very hybrid results; but it turned out that they were quite similar in all countries included in the survey, even where academics have had more intense personal contacts with the Western tradition. In all of these countries New Institutionalism remained a marginal school of economic thought, inconsequential for the overall picture of economic science; but this reflects

the worldwide status of the idea. It is not and perhaps will never be in the mainstream of economic education.

Another interesting aspect is the way the idea is perceived by economists who define themselves as New Institutionalists. Often this is merely a way of masking blanks in education and knowledge, of blurring the fact that one has insufficient expertise in mainstream theories and techniques. This is also a common phenomenon, but in fact New Institutionalism is a highly mathematic theory. Another development is the conversion of Marxists into New Institutionalists; the two schools share certain distant postulates, which leads some scholars to think that they could easily translate their old knowledge into the language of a more modern theory.

Is there a tendency to replicate the milieu of Western theories in Bulgarian academic communities? Sometimes individual teachers act as 'representatives' of various schools, as if trying to reproduce the whole set of tensions and internal differences of foreign academic thought.

Yes, this is a widespread phenomenon. It is a kind of intellectual plagiarism and it is to some degree natural as it is prompted by a desire to join a greater academic paradigm; the first reaction after 1989 was the desire to make Bulgarian science part of Western academic thought through copying not only the basis of economic theory but various schools as well. These local 'transplants' were attempts to bring our education to global standards; yet this measuring up was neither organic nor uniform; some Western theories achieved greater weight than others. Both the authenticity and the originality of such imported theories remain very problematic. The academic agenda of most theorists is too unambitious; their

maximum aspiration is to transfer the foreign idea; this is easily explainable but also very limiting.

Is this tendency related to the research focus of your research? Such import is also a case of 'cultural encounter' where the academic positions himself as the intermediary between the Western and the local traditions?

Yes, it is, but it is very difficult to find any discernible trends. This process depends largely on the personality of the 'importer', what made him choose that particular theory, why does he take up this particular identity; this is actually a very individual choice. It is interesting to see how sometimes chance encounters might determine the future trajectory of any individual researcher and his advocacy of a particular school.

Your research and its findings sound very interesting. What are its practical implementations?

My field is the most non-utilitarian of the three. It lies within the sphere of ideas rather than practical economics. Other projects are more closely related to economic practice; banks, for example, should be very interested in the outcome of Tanya Chavdarova's and Georgi Ganev's research of culture clashes in the bank sector. The investigation of agricultural programs can also uncover valuable information that can be used for correcting the policies of various rural development programmes. These projects are oriented towards the practical adaptation of one culture to another; the search for a point of encounter and the overcoming of differences. My research is more abstract, though some of its aspects can also be used by anyone wishing to create an analytical centre for applied economics, or establishing a new educational unit. ■



Tanya Chavdarova on Cultures Clashes in the Bank Sector: From the East-West Rift to the Generation Gap?

Culture Clashes in the Bank Sector: From the East-West Rift to the Generation Gap?
How would you describe your work for DIOSCURI to a non-specialist?

Generally, the idea of DIOSCURI with its three thematic areas was to study the way culture infiltrates different social fields. My specific task was to examine how culture affected economic activity; it was a matter of internal consideration to define which type of economic activity would be surveyed. We decided to focus on the bank sector as the context to the possible culture clash. Of course, there might be no clash but merely an awareness of differences; but in most cases we found not only an awareness of difference, but a certain tension and even sometimes open conflict. So, we wanted to find out how different cultures interacted and how people managed or reconciled their differences. In other words, their ability to make cultural compromises whenever different backgrounds were at stake.

Is it justified to use general terms like 'Western economic culture' and 'Eastern economic culture'? Is there sufficient consistency to allow us to view the clash of cultures as one between 'the West' and 'the East'?

Definitely no. Most of our respondents refuse to talk in these terms. They tend to avoid this kind of clichés because most of them have worked in different parts of the world and prefer to talk about regions or countries they know well. Still, there is a specific field where they are inclined to talk about a 'Western culture', meaning the technology of doing business; the set of rules

for this type of economic activity which seem to transcend the boundaries of national cultures. The business traditions of Western society have been institutionalized for a long time, so that when we talk about a Western economic culture, we are talking about this set of rules.

Were your respondents interested in the final results of the study? Did they feel the need to reflect on the cultural aspects of their business environment?

Actually, some of my respondents participated in the survey with the explicit condition that they would receive the final results, which meant that they clearly saw the need for this type of research. In the course of work I met with two types of Western respondents (it was not that obvious for Bulgarians): some thought that people were the same all over the world and with proper attitude and upbringing they could always find ways to solve conflicts and alleviate tensions; others reacted almost painfully; for them these differences were related to periods of high tension at work and they often acknowledged that they had only recently started to pay attention to these cultural rifts.

What gives integrity to a large multi-national project like DIOSCURI? How can you ensure that the final result is something larger than the sum of the individual efforts?

Such integrity is quite difficult to achieve, bearing in mind that DIOSCURI involves eight national teams and three different fields, whereby each thematic field is divided between different case studies. The level of integrity within these



national teams and thematic fields probably varies; I could speak about the case study I took part in; we decided to focus on bank institutions and we managed to organize our work so that in eight different Eastern countries we have researched bank institutions from one and the same Western state; in most cases it is even the same bank. This is a very high level of integration; actually the highest possible level of integration within the framework of such a big multinational project. I could even say that the integration within the national components of our case study is greater than that within the Bulgarian team.

How did the results of your research differ from your preliminary expectations?

DIOSCURI stepped on the results of an earlier project, *AFTER THE ACCESSION*, where I had to make similar interviews with businessmen and entrepreneurs. I had, consequently, a reasonably good idea of what I might expect; but I did make some discoveries which were fairly surprising. I did not expect to find such a great rift between the younger and the older generation of Bulgarian bankers, between those who were in their twenties and those who were over fifty. I have talked with colleagues from other countries and they report the same phenomenon – the existence of a deep generation gap, the absence of a middle generation and the cultural conflict within the Bulgarian team. In other words, the cultural clash was not between the Western cultural attitudes and the local cultural attitudes but between the old Bulgarian generation and the new Bulgarian generation. The young employees seemed to belong to the Western culture and they easily ‘clicked’ together; Western employers had a conscious strategy of attracting young, Western-educated Bulgarians which had already been ‘acculturated’ to Western business traditions. Globalized education almost eliminated the cultural

rift for younger employees. So it would not be appropriate to say that there was conflict and tension between Bulgarians and the Western bank institutions; there was rather a conflict between the older and the younger Bulgarian generations.

How would you explain the lack of a middle generation?

The bank sector is very dynamic, full of mergings, affiliations, etc; all of those processes often involve mass layoffs, but this is not sufficient to explain the specific absence of this middle generation. There were people in their thirties and forties, but they did not have any clear and definite orientation. We saw a clear pro-Western orientation in the younger generation and equally clear attitudes in the older generation. Still, the number of interviews would not be sufficient to allow us to draw clear demarcation lines.

What is the main innovation of this project?

It involves, for the first time, a simultaneous investigation of the meeting of cultures within different fields – agriculture, the bank sector and institutions of knowledge. It researches various aspects of this cultural encounter and its possible consequences. The idea of the project is to demonstrate what we could expect when all eight states become members of the European Union and these cultural encounters become an everyday business reality. DIOSCURI investigates the similarities between these eight states; but an interesting by-product in our case is the possibility to recognize internal differences between the countries within the Eastern bloc; it is generally expected that the shared political past necessarily brought about similar economic cultures but this type of research could show that there might be significant cultural differences. ■

DIOSCURI Fellow Rafael Chichek on Cultural Encounters in Sustained Development Programmes

The purpose of DIOSCURI is to describe and analyse the cultural encounter between Bulgaria and the world, mostly in the context of introducing global practices in our country. The field I am investigating together with Haralan Alexandrov focuses on an organization that has set this cultural encounter as one of its primary objectives. We chose Leader +, a joint project developed by the UNDP and the Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture as a pilot project for future cooperation. So besides the purely academic benefit of seeing how the agricultural areas in Bulgaria adapt to the new conditions, this project should have a great practical benefit for those who take political decisions. And political decisions are taken by practically everyone – the community, its institutions of self-government, regional institutions and units of state government. The structure of the project repeats the same hierarchy so we oriented our research efforts in order to capture each level of its organization. We talked to the project beneficiaries – local people from the so-called ‘backward regions’ (not poor but lacking in social infrastructure – health institutions, schools and kindergartens – everything people in urban areas take for granted), their representatives in local power, people from the central office of the project and people from the central office of UNDP at the Ministry of Agriculture. The idea was to see how people react when such

practices are implemented. Our project had a double focus, investigating both the culture of the community and the culture developed by the organization in response to the challenges posed by the community. The technology we used was largely based on interviews that had to take into account both the specificity of the task and the specificities of the people; they had to contain certain hypotheses while remaining sufficiently open to allow our respondents to surprise us with something we had not even envisaged. I think we succeeded to a great extent. Our research showed that the cultural encounter was made a long time ago. This was not virgin territory; economy had already had its impact. We researched several villages in the South-West of Bulgaria, big Pomack (Bulgarian Muslim) communities living near the city of Gotze Delchev. To understand this cultural encounter we used the construct of ‘identity’; we decided that if there was a cultural encounter with ‘the Other’, the identity of the Self was being constructed within this context. We wanted to see how it was experienced on the level of the community. What we found was that Pomacks are a peculiar kind of people. The Pomack is twice a Bulgarian. As a Bulgarian Muslim he feels he has to prove his loyalty to the Bulgarian nation, to the Bulgarian state and the Bulgarian society. This was institutionalised in the army. To get promoted, a Pomack had to take greater efforts to

prove his loyalty. So, for these people identity is a very sensitive subject – they have been victims of the ‘Revivalist process’, they were not calmly accepted by society; until recently they had lived in very closed communities. So we expected this encounter to have caused great turbulence; on the other hand we expected that if it had made some people feel inferior (as is often the case), this would make the conversation a lot more difficult; we would get a higher level of socially acceptable answers. On the other hand it meant that in those interactions with their foreign partners those people had developed a double interface. This hypothesis was confirmed. On the level of everyday economy this encounter was made a long time ago with the arrival of Greek investors who opened their cheap-labour sewing factories and started the heavy exploitation of women workers, and with the export of seasonal labour to Greece. So the first image of the foreigner was that of the bad Greek exploiter. On the other hand for those seasonal workers there was one who was even worse than the Greeks – the Bulgarian government. What Pomacks learnt in their visits abroad was that the Greek government had a policy of serious subsidies, which was not implemented by the Bulgarian one. And anytime they raised the question of their low salaries, they were told that their own government was not taking care of them, so why should anyone



else do so? Then comes the second cultural encounter, the French investors with better industrial practices. People start feeling that the Europeans bring a better standard of living; this creates the image of the good foreigner. The new investors have opened a big textile factory with many well-paid employees. Interestingly, these people start sharing the concerns of Western workers: they fear that the business might be moved to China, where labour is cheaper. We are witnessing the globalisation of economic culture; the Pomacks from the Gotze Delchev region have the same concerns as the workers in Bavaria. The task of Leader +, however, was to encourage local entrepreneurship on many levels, both economic and social. This type of encouragement falls within the paradigm of sustained development, supposing that people would start taking care of their environment. Motivating young people to remain in the community was one of the basic tasks of the project; and the reason they wanted to leave was not the lack of money but the lack of social infrastructure, the lack of any cultural life, the perceived lack of opportunities. The implementation of European practice meant that these tendencies should be countered by encouraging entrepreneurship and initiative, by encouraging people to mingle and exchange their best practices – both locally and internationally. The result of this international contact was a dark and painful subject for most

respondents. The economic encounter was clear enough; the interests were clear, people were confident of their professional abilities. Social development, though, meant speaking about the values that regulate life in the community, and whether these values were functional enough. The levels of solidarity and entrepreneurship, however, are the source of great shame and drama. It turns out that traditional values do not suffice to control the negative aspects of envy within the community, the kind of envy that makes people afraid to stand out from the crowd. People find this very hard to discuss. It turned out that where we expected them to be living in a community, they were actually living inside their families only, refusing to make any efforts for the maintenance of shared territories. This might sound normal if you have no external referent; but when people suddenly see the alternative option, they often tend to despair and withdraw from the community even further. Local coordinators said that people were not thinking in the category of 'life projects'. On the other hand we established that the organizational culture of the project itself; the main emphasis fell on participation, the opportunity of having a say in how resources would be distributed. This led to a greater degree of trust and demonstrated that whenever people were trusted to take part in the decision-making process, they felt personally involved in making things happen. ■



Mila Popova on the Final Seminar in Kiten



The concluding workshop of the *Roles, Identities and Hybrids* project was held on the Black Sea coast in Kiten at the end of May. For a whole week the fellows presented and discussed their intermediary project results, welcoming guests like Dr. Katharina Biegger from Wissenschaftscolleg zu Berlin, Prof. Christian Giordano and Dr. Wolfgang Levermann from VolkswagenStiftung, Germany. The workshop was one of the most colourful events of the project – the intense working sessions were followed by some late afternoons swimming in the Black sea gulfs and by visits to the historical town of Sozopol. The workshop luckily coincided with the traditional Nestinari eve in the old village of Bulgari, so the whole team together with Prof. Christian Giordano and Dr. Wolfgang Levermann launched a safari-like field trip to see the famous “authentic” dances on embers.



The friendly atmosphere was conducive to various heuristic discussions. The most important of them dealt with the new theoretical challenges the project team is facing. The main concepts of roles, identities and hybrids, which were set out at the beginning of the project, were now rethought in a new conceptual framework through the idea of dynamizing social and humanitarian concepts and sciences. Usually institutions and norms are thought as prescriptive models and stable structures. Because the project is focusing on different types of transition transformation, it faces institutions which are undeveloped, “imported”, imitated etc. – thus, they are not easy to be conceptualized in these stable categories. The majority of the fellows’ individual projects problematise in one way or another the stability of the role. The project started with the presumption that there would be ‘hybrids’ – i.e. interesting tensions between various types of roles and identities etc. The research results, however, pushed this way of thinking even further: some of the individual projects





faced the disappearance of these stable concepts of institutions, roles and identities. This was a theoretical challenge that provoked the rethinking of the major categories of the project.

In the Southeast European region the situation is complex. Instead of speaking of multiple modernities, as the initial theoretical intention envisaged, what the project faced in the region and probably in the contemporary world, was a conflicting overlap of modernities and strange mixtures of different modernity paths. The major tension was identified as one between the imported Western institutional models and their local appropriation and ‘intimization’ (in the sense of Michael Herzfeld’s concept). In order to explain and conceptualize this tension the important Gramscian concept of hegemony was introduced – hegemony as a kind of exercising power in the cultural sphere. The postcolonial paradigm was found useful, as unlike the theory of multiple modernities, it presupposes that on the cultural level the global process of various modernizations sets different asymmetries, geopolitical and geocultural hierarchies. The project team finds that the initial multi-modernities paradigm does not describe truly this process of geopolitical and geocultural hierarchies. They could be seen as hybrids, but inside the hybrids there are geopolitical tensions and



hegemonic hierarchies between different cultural and institutional models – the hybrid is not something static, it is full of asymmetrical power relationships, which could be analyzed in the categories of postcolonial theory. But unlike postcolonial theory, which has never addressed this question, it is on the institutions that the project focuses - and this is the project's contribution. Thus, the project’s approach challenges several paradigms – first, the old modernist paradigm, claiming that there are successful and unsuccessful stories of modernization; second, the multiple modernities paradigm, as the project results question the peaceful coexistence of different cultural models and modernization models side by side, and third, the postcolonial paradigm because of its post-socialist political context and its focus on the problems of institutional culture.

The *Roles, Identities and Hybrids* project defines an epistemological problem: the researchers work with concepts developed in the West, while they see a different reality that does not easily fit these concepts. This is a

problem related to the problem of translation. The concepts of social sciences and humanities themselves are western concepts and researchers try to find the adapted counterpart in the Southeast European situation. From that point of

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view the importance of what the project deals with has to be rethought from this 'eastern' perspective. The concept of hybridity solves the problem only ostensibly as it combines different concepts but behind this remains the real problem – How do we translate western concepts in our situation?

The final stage of *Roles, Identities and Hybrids* will be an international academic conference in mid-2007, which will be dedicated to the thematic focus of the project and will contribute to the international dissemination of the project results and achievements. We are also envisaging a series of pre-publishing activities through constant communication between the project team members: an additional revision of the individual project results; pinpointing the initial thematical crossings, the historical and thematic foci between the individual contributions; identifying and formulating new heuristic insights, new conceptual challenges; and revising the initial theoretical model of the project in relation to the new challenges. ■



What attracted you to choose this area of study? How does your PLEXUS work fit within your other personal and professional interests?*

For several years now the Yugoslav legacy and its role in the cultural identities of the former Yugoslavs are at the centre of my research interests. This interest is also related to my personal experience – for five years I have lived between Belgrade and Ljubljana and have had the chance to observe that the common Yugoslav legacy still plays a significant role in identity formation in this area. Despite the many solid state borders that have appeared between the former Yugoslav republics, I believe that it is still possible to talk about a common cultural space, due to the memories and experiences that the former Yugoslavs share.

In my research I am particularly interested in the ways in which people who share that common experience or certain aspects of it remember and interpret their past today, when faced with drastically changed reality. This process of remembering can tell us a lot about the present as well as the past: The present moment gives shape to people's memories, enabling them to position themselves within the existing social reality and to negotiate and justify their statuses and roles. This is the perspective from which I approach the experience of serving in the Yugoslav People's Army, which many former Yugoslavs share.

Is your area well-studied or, on the contrary, understudied? Why do you think this is so? Were there (now or in the past) any restrictions on writing a sociology of the army?



... on the ethnic aspects of the Ex-Yugoslav Army

Tanja Petrovic

There are number of studies dealing with the institution of the Yugoslav People's Army, but it is almost always considered an important institutional factor that was mobilized in the project of building the ideology of Yugoslavism; a great deal of attention is also paid to the role of the Army in the breakdown of Yugoslavia and the subsequent wars. The approach is usually "from above", while the discrete experiences and memories of those who have performed army service remained out of researchers' focus. Without these voices and their memories, however, we cannot have a complete picture of the recent developments in the former Yugoslav lands.

Was there any mutual enrichment of methodologies in the course of the project? Can you think of a specific example?

The Yugoslav People's Army, like many other armies in the world, was an institution of a peculiar status, nature and functioning. It was seen as the "cradle of Yugoslavism" which belongs to all Yugoslav peoples, but simultaneously it had a closed structure and was organized in a rigid and hierarchical way. The extensive debates at our PLEXUS sessions on the nature of institutions and institutional discourses and their role in the public sphere helped me to observe the relationship between an individual and the institution of the army in the Yugoslav context as well as to understand the logic behind the interplay of personal, ethnic, and gender identities in this particular institutional context.

** All interviews by the editor*

Are you acquainted with any of the work of former PLEXUS fellows?

During our PLEXUS sessions, we had the chance to meet former fellows and learn about their work. I also read a number of final reports from previous years. Although their topics are very heterogeneous, they make a coherent and complex whole due to the general framework of thinking about institutions, discourses, roles and identities. This framework also helps current PLEXUS fellows to develop their project within this framework and provides a helpful and methodologically useful instrument of analysis.

How do you expect your project to develop? (i.e. do you intend to build upon it, or use it as part of something larger)

I started this project from a narrow – linguistic – point of view: I was primarily interested in the following paradox: while the Yugoslav People's Army was ideologically construed as a main vehicle of Yugoslavism, it was at the same time characterized by linguistic hegemony: only the Serbo-Croat language was used as an official means of communication within the army. By conducting interviews with the former Yugoslav soldiers, I wanted to know to what extent this linguistic hegemony in the army had suppressed their ethnic and cultural identities. The narrative strategies of my interviewees revealed, however, another important aspect of their identity in the context of army service, namely the fact that the identity of the Yugoslav army soldier is highly characterized by masculinity: serving in the army was an exclusively male experience. This led me to the fascinating field of discursive constructions of male identity, solidarity, humour and language. I hope that the project will develop into a complex and multi-perspective story of remembering and narrating the Yugoslav People's Army experience extracted from the intersection of public and personal discourses, from narrative strategies and language ideologies, as well as visual and verbal artefacts such as photographs and postcards from the army that complement the narrative construction of memory. ■



... on the Bulgarian Business Elite in its Quest for Economic Modernisation

Martin Ivanov

How is your project inscribed in the overall framework of PLEXUS?

In the low-trust Bulgarian environment the Conservative elite acquired the role of an institutional engineer and early moderniser. Creating a hybrid between the Japanese *zaibatsu*, the Korean *chaebol*, and the networks around the German *Grossbanken* it built an institutional capacity for speedier development. However, exogenous political shocks impeded the growth process, dooming Bulgaria to sluggish modernisation. Large corporate networks are one of the interaction zones where foreign institutional structures meet with the local social realities. If Fukuyama, Gerschenkron and Chandler are to be trusted, the social setting predetermines the applied institutional structures. Acquiring the engineer's role, Conservatives 'bought' a hybrid between the different models on sale at the developmental market, which was not a mere 'imitation' but a rational application suitable for the idiosyncratic needs.

What methodological strategies do you share with the other PLEXUS fellows?

I imagine myself to be on the edge between different social sciences – economy, cliometrics, anthropology, and political science. Such an interdisciplinary position helps me share common 'methodological strategies' with many of the other PLEXUS fellows despite the heterogeneity of our research agendas. Most of their topics are related to mine in one way or another. The common spirit of interdisciplinarity is exactly what brings us all together.

What do you think are the major advantages and/or shortcomings of the project?

Bringing people from such a diversity of scholarly fields is both intellectually stimulating and challenging. It is a pity that talking to colleagues from other scientific 'trades' is an exception rather than the norm within Bulgarian

academic environment. This is the major advantage of the PLEXUS programme. However, there is always a risk to 'dilute' your research with too many ideas borrowed from related sciences that would make it incomprehensible for both your own and for the alien academic 'tribes'. Finding the measure is the real challenge.

Do you intend to build upon your project in the future?

My PLEXUS research is actually a part of a lifetime scholarly project: to analyse the Bulgarian economic and social development and its relation to the broader European picture. The current research tries to address several key questions, which would deepen our understanding of Bulgarian post-liberation society. I hope to be able to broaden my focus in the years to come. ■



... and the Role of Blogs in the Public Sphere

Orlin Spassov

What makes blogs an interesting research area for a project like PLEXUS?

Blogs and personal websites are extremely popular and unexpectedly varied. Lately they have been undergoing a rapid evolution, merging into a more advanced common form. They integrate multiple possibilities of communication both inside and outside the net. Their authors range from bored teenagers to influential public figures. Blogs are a powerful means of direct online publication without any intermediaries and controlling institutions. Besides, blogs and personal websites offer practically unlimited forms of self-presentation. The repertoire of roles and identities grows indefinitely. It is worth noting that the private and the public spheres here are cross-contaminated in a new way that could potentially lead to the emergence of an alternative type of online publicity.

We should also bear in mind that blogs and personal websites are not an isolated phenomenon. Their development stems both from the internal evolution of the internet and the large-scale changes in popular culture and the media. And their social, cultural and political impact has not yet been sufficiently investigated. This field is so dynamic that research has yet to catch up with it.

Why are blogs different from classical diaries, on one hand, and from personal websites, on the other?

The similarities with classical diaries are few. The traditional type of diary belongs to another medium; it is merely the historical point of departure for the emergence of blogs. Practically everything is different: the style of writing, the implicit audience, the discursive devices and ultimately the motivation of starting a blog. With regard to the personal websites one can say that blogs are the new personal websites. They have all functions of a personal website besides additional options for feedback and content organization. It is not surprising that lately personal websites have been losing ground to blogs. And classical diaries seem to have disappeared altogether... unfortunately.

Does national identity have an impact on the peculiar character of blogs? Do any other types of identity have such an impact?

Blogs represent mostly the individual identity of their authors. Sometimes though, especially when the author is writing from abroad, he can make a stronger emphasis on his national identity. In other cases national identity is marked by the choice of the Cyrillic alphabet as the

three plexus fellows talk...



accepted script for writing in Bulgarian blogs. Unlike forums, chats, ICQ and other channels of online communication, blogs almost never use the Latin script. This shows that no matter how informal it might seem, writing here is clearly acknowledged as publication. And then the national script quickly regains its positions. But on the whole we cannot say that any separate identity plays a decisive role in blogs. On the contrary: identities here are shifting, situational, evolving. Blogs are always open to a new aspect in the biography or emotional life of the author.

If this was not the case, people would probably not need to write in this particular form, they would choose something else. The blog maintains control over the options of identity but not on identity itself, if I might put it like this.

To what extent did your work in the PLEXUS team influence your project? Why?

It had a great impact. My work on this subject was repeatedly discussed on the team meetings. I am obliged to all my colleagues for their active commentaries. The benefit of cooperation within such a competent team is really invaluable.

Is your research area well studied in Bulgaria and abroad? Is the existing research adequate to the public interest to this field?

Virtual publicity is the object of increased interdisciplinary interest. Besides its important cultural dimensions it has a great political potential. Business is also not indifferent to this sphere, guided at the very least by the search for new areas for the intervention of advertising and public relations. The latter is especially true

for the blogosphere, which is strongly commercialized. On the whole in Bulgaria there is a disjunction between the serious public interest in blogs and personal websites and the degree to which they are analyzed in specialized research. But this is not a specifically Bulgarian phenomenon. Technologies are very quick to interfere in the sphere of communication. For example it is hard to estimate whether blogs were necessitated by some insurmountable need for personalized publication or the development of standardized blog software gave the impulse for this new fashion of online self-representation. Because having a blog is also fashionable. In any case the phenomena we are describing are very complex. On the other hand, to create a personal website or start a blog is getting easier than ever!

How is your work on blogs related to your extensive research of East-European internet space?

In the last few years I have been working on problems related to the development of the new media and especially that of the internet in Southeastern Europe. My current research on blogs and personal websites in Bulgaria is a natural continuation of this long-term project. I am interested in the relationship between the impact of informational and communication technologies and the formation of a social discourse – especially in the intercultural field which transcends national boundaries in the European context.

Did blogs reformulate your idea of publicity in internet space?

Absolutely. We are witnessing a new type of publicity. The effectiveness of this kind of publicity, though, is a different matter. The high expectations in



the last few years are often not justified by the concrete dimensions of this otherwise varied communicational terrain. Virtual publicity is still too marginal in Bulgaria. The important agendas with topics of national interest continue to be set outside the net and with other means. The Bulgarian internet space is predominantly anarchic and network activities rarely make any concrete achievements. Internet debates, however lively they might be, are not at the centre of public life. We can ultimately say that virtual publicity is growing as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that generally faces the same problems encountered by classic publicity, rather than offering genuine solutions for overcoming its crises. The conclusions at the end of my research are more pessimistic than the initial hypotheses. Well, research results are not something that must necessarily lift the mood of the researcher! It is more important to understand the problem and hopefully make rational suggestions for improving the quality of publicity. ■



Şevket Pamuk Speaks on the Development of Financial Institutions in the Ottoman Empire 1600-1840

Şevket Pamuk is a Professor of Economics and Economic History at the Bogaziçi University. His major publications include *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism 1820-1913: Trade, Investment and Production* (Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), *An Economic History of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1500-1914* [in Turkish] (Istanbul, First Edition, 1988/ Fourth Edition, 1996), *A History of the Middle East Economies in the Twentieth Century* (with Roger Owen, London/ Cambridge, Mass.: I.B. Tauris Publishers and Harvard University Press: 1998), and *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1918* (Cambridge/ New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

On 12 April 2006 the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia and the Center for Liberal Strategies organized a lecture on the processes of economic history in the Ottoman Empire.

Istanbul, 1615



Introducing his guest, Dr. Roumen Avramov noted the importance of his *Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* and his studies in Ottoman economic history. The lecture referred to a new field of economics – the area that emphasized the importance of ‘institutions’, the written and unwritten rules in social life. Prof. Pamuk stated that if we wanted to understand the economic evolution of the Ottoman Empire, we had to consider its social structure and the influence it exerted over political economy.

He reminded the audience that the most powerful group in the Empire was the bureaucracy, whereas economically active groups like groups and entrepreneurs had limited political power and were thus unable to bring about sustained economic change in their favour. Changes did occur but only to the extent to which they fitted the interests of the most powerful social strata.

Prof. Pamuk made a parallel analysis of the institutions of private finance and those of public finance. He tried to assess the pragmatism and flexibility in the way private enterprises were financed, noting that the Islamic prohibition of interest was often ignored or circumvented. He described the Ottoman innovation of the money *waqf* where the person wishing to



support a mosque could not only set aside a building or other property but could also use the interest of a certain sum of money to do so. This led to the development of a credit market, but still Islam did not encourage the evolution to banking. The more popular form of financing businesses remained the *mudaraba*, or the business partnership. In Western Europe, this practice evolved through a series of innovations, but in the Ottoman Empire it remained virtually unchanged.

On the other hand, the financing of the public sector exhibited a much greater flexibility in using the system of tax farming to finance the military operations of the state. In tax farming, the state sold to individuals the right to collect taxes in a certain area for a given period of time. By demanding taxes in advance, the state effectively borrowed from those tax-collectors, but since interest was not explicitly mentioned, the state used tax-farming widely (the *malikane* system) and created a grand coalition of state elites, urban notables and private financiers. This was to become the greatest enterprise in the late 18th century Ottoman Empire. Prof. Pamuk went on to describe the various financial innovations introduced by the state, such as the system of *esham*, or life-term annuities and the introduction of short and medium-term interest-carrying government papers. He compared the evolution

of public financing to the Ancien Regime in France, stating that unlike the private sector, the financing of institutions developed with a flexibility well comparable to that of Europe.

Professor Pamuk concluded that changes in the private and public institutions of finance in the early modern era developed at a different pace, with considerable institutional change in the sphere of public finance and more limitations in the area of private financing. He argued that the explanation should be sought not in the influence of geography or Islam, but in the social structure of the Ottoman political economy where the politically powerful bureaucracy could adapt the rules for its own benefit, and the politically weak entrepreneurs were ultimately unable to do so.

The lecture provoked much interest in the audience, which contained many economists and historiographers. Questions revolved around the two-way causality of financial and institutional development, the role of corruption in the institutions in the Ottoman Empire and the functionality of *esham* in a largely agricultural country.

The lecture of Professor Pamuk clearly demonstrated how important was the context of Ottoman economic history for the understanding of Balkan economic history and Bulgarian history in particular. ■



The Ancient Turkish Mint





Professor Robert Hayden is an anthropologist of law and politics, and has done extensive work on the reconstruction of states and nations in the former Yugoslavia, following extensive fieldwork there.

He has also done fieldwork in India and among the Senecas of New York state, and has written on issues concerning the American legal system and its role in society.

Robert Hayden is a professor of anthropology at the University of Pittsburg and Director of the Center for Russian and East European Studies.

On 15 April 2006 the friends and fellows of the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia had the opportunity to hear Prof. Hayden from the University of Pittsburg, an engaging and independent anthropologist, speak about the Imaginary Tolerance in Bosnia. Prof. Hayden began by outlining the historical context of the Yugoslavian national ideology (the idea that speakers of Slavonic languages could come together under the same state) and the competing national ideologies that made this ethnically compound state very fragile.

He described the decline of the first Yugoslav state, the period of relative stability under socialism and the disintegration in 1991, when it was generally accepted in the West that Yugoslavia was an artificial state, although its population was still ethnically intermingled.

He noted the marginalization of minorities in the ex-Yugoslav states whose constitutions were

Robert Hayden: Imagining Tolerance in Bosnia

largely nationalistic in character, quoting the rapidly declining percentage of ethnic minorities and the tacit acceptance of this fact by the international community.

He then presented the one exception to the general position, the case of Bosnia which was said to be a natural community of different nationalities. This was often illustrated with photographs from Sarajevo showing mosques, catholic and orthodox churches built in very close proximity. This supposedly symbolized the Bosnian tradition of tolerance in diversity.

Here Professor Hayden looked into the concept of tolerance and noted the two different meanings stemming from the definitions of John Locke and John Stuart Mill. Locke saw tolerance as something passive, as non-interference, whereas John Stuart Mill insisted that tolerance meant actively embracing what is dissimilar.

Prof. Hayden demonstrated that the close proximity of different religious temples in Bosnia was not actually a proof of active tolerance as most churches were built under Austrian rule and their size and location was a challenge to traditional culture. He explained how in Bosnia people had lived intermingled but not without difficulties, especially at times when there was no univocal domination of one group over another. Actually, Bosnia was stable when it was part of a larger political structure, and when in 1992 it was argued that Bosnians deserved self-determination, it transpired that 'Bosnian' was not a political term as the peoples of Bosnia acted as Muslims, Serbs and Croats, voting each for their national party. In the fractured



political context of 1990 Bosnia where Serbs and Croats were interested in Partition, the concept of Bosnian tolerance was actively promoted as a myth that would keep together the Bosnian state. This was taken up by the international community and Bosnian 'tolerance' resonated well with the western concept of multiculturalism. The West recognized the state, thus imposing it on the Serbs and Croats who, together, formed more than half of the state population.

Professor Hayden concluded that the attempt to imagine a single multicultural nation was an attempt to ignore the problem. He suggested that the solution may come from more recognition on the part of the government for local types of tolerance arrangements, thus bringing Bosnia to something close to the ethnic models of Belgium and Switzerland.

Professor Hayden's lecture provoked great interest in the audience, especially as his concept of active and passive tolerance threw new light on the political idea of ethnic tolerance in Bulgaria. Most of the questions revolved around notions that were as meaningful in Bulgaria as they were in Bosnia, e.g. the mythologizing of the 'komshuluk' as a system of active tolerance, or quota systems like the Ethnic key which was functional in Yugoslavia in the 1980s. ■

The Imagination of That Community was Not Done by the Bosnians

Robert Hayden

In your lecture you described the joint contribution of the Western media and Bosnian politicians in creating the 'imagined unity' of Bosnia. In previous interviews you have criticized Western media for parroting NATO propaganda in the Yugoslav war.

How would you explain this lack of critical distance between the media and politics?

The immediate answer is that the media are always complacent in parroting propaganda and the American media continued to parrot propaganda from the Bush State Department and from the US military commandment in Iraq; this is what media do. The important thing is that they do not know anything about the place they are going; they need to get some kind of information so most of them just take the information that has been given to them and repeat it. That is the simple answer. The slightly more complicated answer with regard to Bosnia was that the various parties – those of the Slovenes, Croats, and the Bosnian Muslims – ran a very sophisticated media propaganda campaign in order to win over the American media and some of the media in Europe. They hired public relations agencies which did what public relations agencies do, they sent out press releases to the various major media and people used those press releases in their reporting.

Do you think that the academia can actually be an active corrective to the public role of the media?

Most of us that had been working in former Yugoslavia before took as much of a public role as we could; what was fascinating and discouraging was



that those of us who knew the region, the various languages, its history and politics, tended to be ignored in favour of the people who actually knew none of these things but were repeating something that would be more popular either with elements of the American public or with newspaper readerships. So you find some very excellent academic studies by the people who were best positioned to write them in terms of training, experience, knowledge of the languages, laws, terms and religions – Susan Woodward, Steven Bird, Paul Shelp and perhaps myself – have been ignored in favour of people who were uninformed, but could tell a simpler story and could tell a story that would resonate more with what people wanted to hear. The story that transpired from my experience in the region was not the story that many people wanted to hear.

The title of your lecture contains an implicit allusion to the concept of ‘imagined communities’. How applicable are Nationalism Studies on the Balkans? And would you call your own research part of this school?

Certainly; though the context here has caused me to reexamine some of that literature. Politicians may say that they were anti-nationalist but they continue to support particular nationalist causes – for example, the Slovenes, or the Cro-

atian nationalist cause, then later on the Albanian nationalist cause. Bosnia was particularly fascinating in relation to the concept of imagined communities, because the imagination of that community was certainly not done by the Bosnians. The idea that there was a simple Bosnian community is most definitely not an idea that has the sup-



port of the majority of population in Bosnia and Herzegovina; certainly the Bosnian Serbs and Herzegovin

Croats do not accept that. And they accounted for more than half the population in 1990, 1991 and 1992 when all these things were taking place; and they still do not accept it. So that was the imagination of a community, but it was a community that was being imagined by outsiders. Indeed the outsiders were encouraged in doing this by the Bosnian Muslims who had a strong set of reasons for wanting other people to think there could be a single Bosnia, knowing that they would be the dominant players in it; but it was really an interesting imagination of a community by foreigners, not by the people who were supposed to form the very community that was being imagined. But actually, when I started to look back into that literature, I found that Benedict Anderson explicitly adopted this term from a previous generation of scholarship and the original reference said that a community exists when a great majority of its members consider themselves in a very active sense to be part of it; and Benedict Anderson makes it passive: a community exists when a number of people have the image of the community in their minds. But that is actually very different. It is passive as opposed to active. ■

Gayatri Spivak: Nationalism and the Imagination



On 12 May the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia had the pleasure to host a lecture and a seminar by one of the symbolic figures in contemporary cultural debate, Prof. Gayatri Spivak from Columbia University. Her work, situated at the meeting point between postcolonial studies, Marxism, psychoanalysis and deconstruction, attracted an audience with equally varied academic interests.

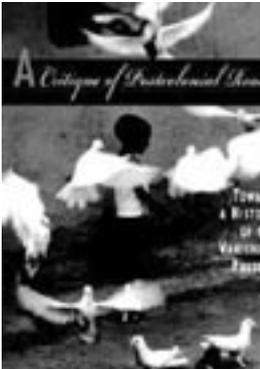
On the previous day professor Spivak took part in a seminar at the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia. Rather than taking on a mentoring role, she listened to five CAS members who presented their work in areas which touched upon her vast field of interests. Alexander Kiossev opened the seminar with an attempt to 'ensure the compatibility' of postcolonial and post-socialist criticism, pointing out differences and similarities between the two contexts – to be found in the shared trauma of the imperial

... nationalism was the product of collective imagination constructed through remembrance and that only the comparativist imagination could undo that possessive spirit.

heritage and the different attitude to the European hegemony. Petya Kabakchieva spoke about the epistemological and power aspects of the communist heritage, noting the different implications of using the terms 'communism', 'socialism', 'totalitarianism', etc. Dessislava Lilova described how the idealization of European civilization (so characteristic of the Bulgarian Revival) was suddenly challenged when the building of the first railroad cast Europe in the role of the economic colonizer and how the opposition 'barbaric/civilized' was overcome by the adoption of evolutionist theories. Todor Hristov compared Spivak's famous rendition of widow suicides in 'Can the Subaltern Speak' with the meaning of silence and sacrifice in the story of the Bulgarian soldier Gyuro Mihailov who died refusing to leave the burning bank he was guarding. Darin Tenev referred to Lacan and discussed the child's introduction of language as the definitive situation of not being able to speak.

In her lecture 'Nationalism and the Imagination' professor Spivak stressed the necessity of distancing the nationalist imagination from the state. Quoting her own childhood reminiscences of Indian independence, she argued that the traditional pairing of the nation and the state compromised the idea of equity and shut off whole groups from the public sphere. She described her experience with the 'tribals' of Bengal as an example of how the culture of various subgroups can be radically inconsistent with the nation-state that barely recognized their existence and the peculiar character of their culture, but nevertheless took the time to buy their votes. She stressed





the necessity of increasing multilingual competence in the field of comparative studies which would ‘restore the relief map of the world, flattened under one imperial formation’. Professor Spivak argued that nationalism was the product of collective imagination constructed through remembrance and that only the comparativist imagination could undo that possessive spirit. Again, professor Spivak quoted as an example the oral-formulaic used by the women from these illiterate aboriginal peoples whose vernaculars were not even included in the official statistics of Indian languages.

In the summary at the end of her lecture Professor Spivak said: “Nationalism negotiates the most private in the interest of controlling the public sphere.

I’ve learned the lesson of equivalence rather than nationalist identitarianism from the oral-formulaic. This leads me to propose a multilingual comparative literature of the former empires, which will arrest the tide of the creolization of native literatures. This will not compromise the strength of writing in English. Higher education in the humanities should be strengthened so that the literary imagination can con-

tinue to detranscendentalize the nation and shore up the redistributive powers of the regionalist state in the face of global priorities. Imagine this, please, for a new world around the corner”.

In the ensuing discussion the questions revolved around the proposed disentanglement of the nationalist imagination from the state; Alexander Kiossev suggested the potential danger of an ungovernable nationalism set loose from the framework of the state, while Ivaylo Ditchev suggested shifting the focus from the territory of the whole state to that of the region.

We hope that Prof. Spivak’s lecture and seminar have had a twofold effect on the Bulgarian intellectual community; on one hand, they have stirred a debate on hitherto unexplored perspectives to the Bulgarian cultural and political heritage, suggesting new insights, methods and instruments for dealing with the hybrid identities of our national culture; on the other, they have opened the channel for a fuller communication with the vast tradition of postcolonial theory, allowing Bulgarian theorists to speak up for their structural standpoint and lend a voice to their particular cultural situation. ■



Hans Hattenhauer: A Historical Inventory of Judicial Ideals

In May, the Centre for Advanced Study offered a new perspective to those interested in the philosophical aspects of law. Having organized seminars by innovative thinkers in this area like Prof. Christian Giordano and Prof. Joseph Raz, this time the Centre invited Professor Hans Hattenhauer from the Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel in Germany, a distinguished scholar of historical jurisprudence who had already visited CAS as a participant in the colloquium on 'Ritual and Law, Ritual and Power' last year. In his seminar on 'Judicial Ideals' Prof. Hattenhauer discussed the historical development of the judicial ideal and the various measures taken to guarantee its practical implementation. Starting with the laws laid down in the Codex Hammurapi, he marked the three principal elements of the law – the Statutes, the king (or official power) and divine justification. He went on to make a historical analysis of the different emphasis of these three elements of the judicial ideal in different historical contexts, explaining the advantages and dangers inherent in each particular configuration. Prof. Hattenhauer noted that Eastern cultures (including Russia) prioritized the role of religious justification and traced the historical development of the European judicial ideal from St Ives, the patron-saint of lawyers, through the Third Reich up to the modern 'managerial' metaphor of the role of the judge. Besides putting into perspective the apparently 'axiomatic' perception of the role of the judge, Prof. Hattenhauer's approach provoked burning questions about the methods of curbing blatant deviations from the ideal like the problem of judicial corruption. The seminar was organized by Assoc. Prof. Ivan Bilyarski and was attended by Prof. Elka Bakalova, Assoc. Prof. Rossen Tashev, Assoc. Prof. Hristo Todorov, Teodor Piperkov, Prof. Krassimira Gagova, Dr. Gergana Georgieva and Dessislava Naidenova.

On 12 May Prof. Hattenhauer gave a lecture on *The 'Slaves of God' – Christian Gospel and Roman Law* at the University of Sofia. There he discussed the controversies



Hans Hattenhauer is a professor of jurisprudence in Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany.

His interests are mainly in the sphere of historical jurisprudence.

His books include

- *European Historical Jurisprudence* (Heidelberg: Mueller, 2004),
- *The Practical Use of Historical Jurisprudence* (Heidelberg: Mueller, 2003) and
- *Fundamental Ideas of the Civil Right* (Munich: Beck, 2000).

around the effect of the Christian gospel on the situation of slaves in the Roman Empire. He marked that modern research pointed out the difference of a slave's life in a Christian or non-Christian house. A text in the book of Hermas, dating from early 2nd century, shows something of this problem and the way Christian communities regarded their slaves as brethren on one hand and serving persons on the other. ■



Religion on the Boundary and the Politics of Divine Interventions



The workshop on "Religion on the Boundary and the Politics of Divine Interventions" held on 14-18 April 2006 and the French Institute-Sofia, was one of the external academic events sponsored by the Centre for Advanced Study. Organized by Galia Vulchinova from the Institute of Thracian Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, it was the second of a series of workshops focusing on Religion, Change and the Politics of Divine Intervention. There, the paths of research and cooperation charted two years earlier at NIAS were expanded to include new institutions like the French Institute for Anatolian Studies, Istanbul.

The conference brought together 23 participants, mainly ethnographers, anthropologists and historians from Bulgaria, Greece, Russia, Croatia, Romania, Hungary, France and the United States. A list of participating institutions would reveal the dominant Bulgarian presence (mostly scientific workers from three institutes of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Sofia University), the tangible presence of the Hungarian ethnographic school (Budapest, Pech) and French anthropology (the schools in Ex and Toulouse). The two participants from the Max Plank Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle particularly impressed with the quality of their work.

The working project, which was distributed in advance and accepted by all participants, ensured a high degree of cohesion and cooperation. This was confirmed by their two-day

fieldwork in the Rhodopi mountain: the visit of three field sites directly related to the topic of the conference, allowed them to compare 'outside' and 'inside' perspectives, to examine different viewpoints of religious phenomena.

The two-day conference was divided into four sessions, which included the presentation of scientific reports and the screening of short films. Dedicated to the subject of Pilgrimages and Boundaries, the first session benefited from the presence of Professor R. Hayden as a discussant. The second session focused on Visions, Dreams & Agency in religious life – a problem rarely discussed separately, in its organizational entirety. This session gave the opportunity to make cross-cultural comparisons and benefited from a discussion orchestrated by a world specialist in the field, William A. Christian, Jr. A truly interdisciplinary effort, the third session (Coming Together, Moving Apart) brought together historians, ethnographers and anthropologists to discuss religion, politics, and the complex interactions between religious specialists and healers. The last session integrated new materials and reports under the common theme of Prophecy, Foundations, and the Post-Socialist Religious Revival. The time for discussions after each session and the intensive final discussion turned into small brain-storming sessions for most of the participants.

With its support for this conference the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia once again confirmed its role as an independent institution working for the development of science in Bulgaria. ■

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CAS

January 2006 – May 2006

CALENDAR
OF EVENTS

January 2006

4 January 2006

History Club Meeting: Roumen Daskalov (New Bulgarian University, Sofia):
"The debate on fascism in Bulgarian historiography after World War II"

9 January 2006

CAS Discussion Series: "Concept of Reflection and Reflexive Approaches in the Humanities and the Social Sciences"

23 January 2006

CAS Discussion Series: "Concept of Reflection and Reflexive Approaches in the Humanities and the Social Sciences"

24 January 2006

History Club Meeting: Evelina Kelbetcheva, (American University, Blagoevgrad):
"The Necessary" Forgeries in History"

25-29 January 2006

Project Working Session: Roles, Identities and Hybrids (Project Joint Session)

31 January 2006

Project Working Session: DIOSCURI project

February 2006

7 February 2006

Atelier for Biographical Research

10 February 2006

Project Working Session:
DIOSCURI national workshop

13 February 2006

CAS Discussion Series:
"Concept of Reflection and Reflexive Approaches in the Humanities and the Social Sciences"

20 February 2006

CAS Discussion Series: Luca Zucchi (University of Ferrara, Italy): "Image, Language and Knowledge: Iconophobia and Iconophilia in the Epistemological Debate"

21 February 2006

History Club meeting: Stefan Detchev (South-West University, Blagoevgrad):
"Stambolov and Stambolovism in Bulgarian Historiography in the 20th Century"

28 February 2006

History Club meeting:
Totalitarian Seminar „Against Some Lies“

March 2006

07 March 2006

Atelier for Biographical Research: Nikolay Nenov and Dessislava Dimitrova (Regional Museum of History, Rousse, Bulgaria):
„Biographies of Towns. The Oral Stories of Rousse and Toutrakan“

15 March 2006

History Club meeting:
Totalitarian Seminar
„Against Some Lies“

16 March 2006

Working Session: Roles, Identities and Hybrids

20 March 2006

CAS Discussion Series:
"The Concept of Reflection and Reflexive Approaches in the Humanities and the Social Sciences"

21 March 2006

History Club meeting:
The Balkans 18 - 19 Century

April 2006

12 April 2006

Guest Lecture Series:
Guest Lecture Series: Sevkret Pamuk:
"Evolution of Ottoman Financial Institutions, 1600-1840"

14 April 2006

Guest Lecture Series: Robert Hayden:
"Imagining "Tolerance" in Bosnia since 1990"

14 - 18 April 2006

Conference: International Conference & Field Trip "Religion on the Boundary and the Politics of Divine Interventions"

18 April 2006

Atelier for Biographical Research: Alexander Kiossev:
"Parallel Biographies: Ognyan Doynov and Lybomir Levchev"

20 April 2006

History Club meeting:
The Balkans 18 - 19 century

May 2006

4 May 2006

History Club meeting: Roumen Avramov (Center for Liberal Strategies): "Bulgarian Economic Knowledge: Cycles, Tendencies, Transitions"

8 May 2006

CAS Discussion Series:
"Reflection and Reflexive Approaches in the Humanities and Social Sciences"

08 May 2006

Seminar:
Reading seminar
on the works of Gayatri Spivak

11 May 2006

Seminar: Hans Hattenhauer "Judicial Ideals"

11 May 2006

"Academic Dialogues" Lecture Series:
Boicho Kokinov (Central and East-European Center for Cognitive Science, NBU):

"Do We Remember the Past or Do We Construct it? Is Human Memory an Illusion?"

12 May 2006

CAS Guest Lecture Series: Hans Hattenhauer:
"The 'Slaves of God' - Christian Gospel and Roman Law"

12 May 2006

CAS Guest Lecture Series: Gayatri Spivak:
"Nationalism and the Imagination"

12 May 2006

CAS Guest Lecture Series: Gayatri Spivak:
"Post-Colonialism and Post-socialism"

16 May 2006

History Club meeting:
The Balkans 18 - 19 century

18 May 2006

CAS Discussion Series:
"Reflection and Reflexive Approaches in the Humanities and Social Sciences"

29 May - 04 June 2006

Working Session: Roles, Identities and Hybrids
Concluding Workshop

30 May 2006

CAS Discussion Series:
Atelier for Biographical Research

31 May 2006

CAS Guest Lecture Series: Marc Abeles:
"Intégration contre nation: considérations anthropologiques sur le référendum français sur l'Europe"